

MYSTERIOUS LOVE

Collected Verse

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RED AS A ROSE

If spring can make a garden grow
Then love can make the colors flow
The prettiest shades of gold and green
And violet I've ever seen

Color me skies and flowers too
Color me happy or color me blue
Do you have a heart of gold?
I am too young to feel so old

I could use a splash of red
In this muddy flower bed
Underneath dead leaves and snow
So color me warm and red as a rose

ROCKING CHAIR

A thing of beauty can be rare
Or simple as a rocking chair
A sleeping cat, a cup of tea
A screen door letting in the breeze

Gazing out into the sun
Someone's car radio is on
Across the street and far beyond
Are endless rows of quiet lawns

So many errands left to run
Before the day is done and gone
So many places left to go
So many vital things to know

So many people left to meet
And bills that must be paid this week
So many things to do and say
So many things, but not today

A thing of beauty can be rare
Or simply touching someone's hair
So lie your head upon my knee
And spend a little time with me

THE SHY DWARF

One night after drifting off
Into a deep and weary slumber
A bashful dwarf approached me
And talked to me in my sleep

He seemed so meek and humble
Knowing and understanding
I hardly thought it strange
To kneel down beside him

So he might put his arm about me
And speak softly into my ear
Since he seemed to know me
I could not help but wonder

If I must know him as well
Yet surely, I would remember
Someone so kind and wise
I suppose from a long life

Of staring up at the world
While it stared down at him
And I felt such a kinship
I forgot he was a stranger

Let alone a shy dwarf
For none see you so clearly
As those who look upon you
From the bottom up

Nor appreciate so truly
The importance of kindness
As those who keep watch for it
From their broken vessels

HOUSE OF RHYME

Once I taught myself to rhyme
I found I did it all the time
If something's difficult to say
It often makes more sense that way

You cannot redress every wrong
Or always know where you belong
Or even know what's going on
But you can always write a poem

Calm and chaos ebb and flow
Looking for somewhere to go
Old memories from deep inside
Looking for a place to hide

So many wordless and alone
Forgotten and without a home
Full of broken pride and shame
Like a doll without a name

I see and hear them all the time
For everybody breaks sometimes
Little birds with broken wings
And every kind of broken thing

Broken dreams, broken toys
Broken girls and broken boys
Broken hearts and broken minds
All living in a house of rhyme

ORPHAN

A dying bird falls to the sea
And who is there more fallen than me?
With a broken wing the bird will die
But for the grace of God am I

I was cut adrift on this stormy sea
When all of heaven abandoned me
Were you happy, safe and warm
When I was an orphan of the storm?

Oh let me in! Let me in!
Don't you know me? I'm your kin
I am still yours though long and lone
Has been this weary road I'm on

MADONNA OF THE STREET

Squinting eyes and sun burnt cheeks
The same corner almost a week
People glance then look away
For there she is again today

She looks up in her haunted way
For something made me stop today
Smiles in confused despair
And apologizes for being there

She had a name before she fell
And if you ask her she might tell
About the life she had before
She lived out of a grocery cart

Today has been a lonely mile
So be the first to give a smile
A simple nod, an ear, a treat
For the Madonna of the Street

HOUSE OF SECRETS

Sometimes it takes a while to find
What matters most is in the mind
Who is the guard and who the keeper
To this little house of secrets?

Where is the lock that holds the key
To secrets safe inside of me?
I may not have great wealth or talent
But I may choose to love or not

Surrounded by a swirling mist
Like a prelude to a kiss
When I look within and see
There are no locks inside of me

There are no locks upon these doors
Only wide and open moors
Where I am free to come and go
And ask just what I want to know

CASTLES

What makes a house into a haven?
Try your own imagination
We mainly live and mostly die
In our castles in the sky

SMILE

Smile at me, smile at me
Smile for all the world to see
Your face won't crack in two or three
And oh, how silly life can be

You cultivate yourself with style
When all you have to do is smile
Nothing dresses up a frown
So why not turn it upside down?

Give a little smile to keep
It's a long road before I sleep
That grin that brightens up your face
Makes heaven out of any place

WEEPING WILLOW

A loving heart can sometimes be
Just like a weeping willow tree
Roots that grow around and round
And branches dragging on the ground

Searching deep for precious water
Quenching thirst that's like no other
Leaves so soft and shade so cool
Others stop to rest there too

Better take life and its chances
With your trusting outstretched branches
Than to cry into your pillow
Like the sad old weeping willow

LITTLE RABBIT

The poor little rabbit
A story once said
Went to bed one dark night
With an ache in her head

She tended her kittens
Until they were fed
And fell fast asleep
On their rabbit's nest bed

And then mother rabbit
Awoke from her nap
And hopped near some brush
With a hunter's snare trap

So sad to be hunted
Still worse to be caught
But at least she had heart
Whereas he has not

Just a cold empty feeling
Just as barren as snow
Like a lonely drum beating
Where his heart ought to go

STRAYS

This whole world is full of strays
As many as the nights and days
Cats and dogs and children abound
Like one enormous walking wound

Walking along the road at night
Or looking for a place to hide
How sad to to wander all alone
Without a bed to call your own

The blind, the sick, the mad, the lame
Who ever shall take care of them?
Not the movers and the shakers
Nor presidents and policy makers

Driving in their brand new cars
Tossing money through the bars
Always taking care that they
Keep their faces turned away

DAUGHTER OF THE DUST

Swept from pavement on the street
Trode and trampled under feet
I'll blow away and back again
For I am the daughter of the wind

I am dirt and yet I'm free
Better to do what pleases me
Do you want to have some fun?
I am the daughter of the sun

You may own the land and sea
But you shall have no hand on me
So storm and thunder if you must
I am the daughter of the dust

GRAND ILLUSION

The tide rolls in and then it goes
Morning's dew is eve's blood flow
Cripples and criminals stare from a cage
Blinded by tears or mad with rage

Or for perhaps the only real sin
Of nowhere to go and not fitting in
To somebody else's story thread
From a book you've never read

Drowning in a sea of plots
Hung by words or tied into knots
Trapped inside an endless film
Praying for the end to come

So what relief at last to find
'Tis but a trick of space and time
And all the myriad tales and woes
Never happened after all

MYSTERIOUS LOVE

Every little child knows
When dawn comes the night must go
So what mysterious love is this
That brings so much unhappiness?

I tried to love you, sad old earth
But you just kicked me in the dirt
And if not for some sweet sad face
I surely would have left this place

But fools depart while angels wait
When they knock at heaven's gate
Water quenches fire's flow
And hades melts at heaven's door

What is heaven, if not love?
Which makes the stars to shine above
And every blade of grass to grow
As above, so below

MYSTERIOUS MELODY

I sink into the churning foam
Like a ship that's run aground
Bruised and battered in a storm
On a journey far from home

Salt water comes rushing in
Against the sound of splitting wood
Amid gasps and screams of shock
As it heaves onto the rocks

But as I slip into the sea
I hear a mysterious melody
As if the wind is playing chimes
And the ocean beating time

Then I hear somebody singing
Urging me to keep on swimming
'Hold on tight for one more day
The shore is never far away'

LILIES OF THE FIELD

If I can find you in night so black
The moon won't shine there anymore
And the sun just hides away
In grief so that it rains and pours

Then surely you'll remember me
Where the season is always spring
And trees sway in a gentle breeze
So soft and low it seems to sing

Petals from a field of lilies
Soft and white as clouds of cream
Caress your cheek ever so sweetly
As if to wake you from a dream

THE WORD

A body shall die or voice go unheard
But who shall kill or crush the word?
When breath or touch cannot be near
Words can be music to the ear

Make a hero of a tragic part
Or mend the strings of a broken heart
Stronger than rope or iron cage
They shall not rot nor rust with age

Whatever the year, the week or day
The little word shall have its say
Cross mountains and desert sands
To deliver worlds into my hands

GOODNIGHT

Such a pretty night to keep
Though I should be fast asleep
Instead of sitting in the dark
Counting numbers on a clock

Eleven, twelve and one, two, three
Sometimes life is hard on me
Four, five, six and now it's seven
Someday I will get to heaven

STONE ANGEL

Angel, angel made of stone
Sits on a fountain all alone
How sad to see the stars so clear
Yet never fly nor go nowhere

Eagle on a cliff so high
On a mountain in the sky
You soar and hunt and fly around
And never have to touch the ground

I wish I had an angel's wings
Then I would fly and dance and sing
But I have wings that will not fly
And a love that will not die

THE FOG

I lean against the gray nowhere
Upon an old deserted pier
As thoughts of opportunities missed
Arise like teardrops in a mist

Is it the darkness or the fog
That makes a watch so long and hard?
Where is the warm, sweet gust of wind
On which my ship is coming in?

Searching, searching land and sea
This watch shall be the death of me
Wading, wading through the darkness
For that ship with my name on it

Don't be proud and never gloat
Lest you be next outside the boat
Standing in the gray nowhere
Upon an old deserted pier

THE HAUNTED SEA

She blew in on the morning tide
Across an ocean deep and wide
Planted saplings for woods green
And dug the beds for lakes and streams

She chose the colors for the leaves
That drift down from the autumn trees
All amber tones until the spring
Turns them into green again

Then she swept up with her broom
And climbed up to her children's room
She blew each one a little breath
Before she tucked them into bed

She rose at dawn to find instead
Of children rows of empty beds
As they had run both far and wide
Or floated out upon the tide

She waded through the shallow streams
Calling out her children's names
Searching every wood and field
Every cave in every hill

Every hiding place before
At last she ran down to the shore
She ran from one end to the other
Then pushed her boat into the water

Since then she's steered her little boat
And strummed upon a broken harp
She holds it close to her in grief
And calls her children lost at sea

BLUE

From the mansion on a hill
Or from the gutter I can still
See the moon and all the stars
The Milky Way and planet Mars

Whether on the darkest night
Or when stars are shining bright
I am still free to weep or sing
Or meditate upon these things

What is the future? Who can see?
When present is a mystery
I wish I could get mad at you
But that would only make me blue

FORGET ME NOT

You left me here so long ago
How could you forget me so?
I've walked this road and sang the blues
'Til there are holes in both my shoes

Forget me not, forget me not
Though the sun burns long and hot
And makes a fire to scorch and sting
Devouring most everything

Falling ash would turn to snow
Before I'd ever let you go
I'd turn the world upon its head
And haunt you still if I were dead

DAWN RAYS

I come to this place now and then
Looking for a long lost friend
Summer rains and winter snows
How many miles yet to go?

Eternity has come and gone
And now at last the rays of dawn
Every ray feels warm and bright
In the ebbing of the night

Every tear cried in the dark
Reflects the mirrors of your heart
Love once found is never lost
You are the friend I love the most

DESERT STORMS

Calm and quiet, dry and warm
Sits the desert before a storm
Clear and cloudless is the sky
Praying that the storm blows by

Then dark clouds begin to gather
Indicating stormy weather
Thunder, lightning, wind and rain
Whipping up the desert sands

Let in rain and let it pour
There's nobody keeping score
If you don't like the things I say
Just tell me to blow away

All the while I'm coming at you
You just stand there like a statue
And I feel bad when you won't fight
Because I am not always right

When the storms inside my head
Clear up, I think of things I said
And all the things you did not say
When you could have had your way

STRANGE LULLABY

Birds are playing in the sky
Little souls meet by and by
Angel, angel from my past
Understanding me at last

Last night we stumbled into hell
Today shall we be free and well
Fallen angels yet were we
Until we came to set us free

Life's a smile then a cry
Born to live only to die
Earth is spinning to and fro
For voyagers to come and go

Time is come and then it's gone
A moon behind a rising sun
Like pale ghost in the sky
Or a sad, strange lullaby

THE BURNING ROSE

There is a flame inside of me
A fire no one else can see
Dancing on the burning coals
In a stove that's always full

Have you ever seen a snow
Before the foot prints or the plow?
So pristine and out of time
It carves a picture in your mind

Or maybe you have heard a song
That you keep humming all day long
Or suddenly been moved to tears
By words you haven't heard in years

Then perhaps you've been in love
So deep inside, yet so above
All the petty worries and woes
It feels just like a burning rose

LAKE OF FIRE

I want to wade into cool waters
But there are only burning embers
Give me something for to drink
For I am feverish I think

My blood gives my poor heart a pain
As it goes rushing through my veins
I wonder if you opened yours
Would cold and icy water pour?

You just smile and look away
Someone forgot their place today
As you slowly close the door
Like you don't need me anymore

What kind of love would ever make
You want to swim a burning lake?
And yet, I swim for miles and miles
Even through a lake of fire

THE STATUE

Summer rains to winter snows
What is it you seem to know?
You never talk but do you feel?
My folks tell me that you're not real

Pretty statue in the yard
Why are you so cold and hard?
I want to hold you in my arms
But you are only made of bronze

If you really do not care
Why do your eyes fill up with tears
If I leave you won't you need?
If I cut you won't you bleed?

You're always so brave and true
Standing in the morning dew
Don't look at me so melancholy
If you love me then just tell me

Pretty statue in the garden
I just want to ease your burden
I don't care what my folks say
I will love you anyway

THE HONEY BEE

When I was a girl so young and free
I thought I was a honey bee
Drinking nectar from the heart
Of every flower in the yard

Entranced before the marigolds
I lost the beauty of the rose
Then everybody laughed at me
For I was just a honey bee

TOP CAT

Sitting atop a garbage can
Like a prince upon his throne
Staring through half open slits
With a mildly amused expression

As if he already owns the world
But is bored playing with it
Whoever gave a thought to own
Such a contrary feline as you

GILDED CAGE

The peacock's feathers make a spread
Of deepest blue and satin thread
Of green that's spun across a fan
And gold that shimmers in the sun

He knows he is the envy of
The sparrow and the turtle dove
So why at night can he be heard
To weep just like a wounded bird?

Tears fall from his bright plumage
As in the corner of his cage
He cries because unlike the sparrow
His whole world is high and narrow

So don't be taken in by places
Golden rods and measured spaces
For they can be as hard and cold
As any prison made of stone

THE TOWER

There were often times when
I used to feel like a princess
Locked inside of a tower
In the middle of a minefield

Anyone venturing too near
Did so at their own peril
And it was sad gaze down
Upon fields of bloody carnage

Or what remained of my poor
Tragic and unintended victims
But by then I had given up
As some things just don't

Seem to bear an explanation
One might as well try to
Explain colors to the blind
Or music to the deaf

Or evil to anybody
Some things simply must
Be experienced for oneself
Then again, important things

Always seem to require
A bit more diligence and effort
Or whatever it takes to jump
Into a treacherous moat

Filled with hooks and spikes
And scale the tower walls
Brick by brick to see what
Or whom is waiting inside

HOUSE OF CARDS

One day as I was walking
Down the left side of the road
I noticed a beautiful garden
Of trees, shrubs and all kinds

Of flowers, herbs and vines
Blooming or dripping with fruit
And in the midst of this paradise
Stood a foreboding old house

I gazed in a strange sort
Of entrancement and wonder
For although it was a bright
And sunny in the garden

The house stood beneath
A perpetual rain cloud
That was perpetually raining
So nobody visited there

Or knew who lived there
Or even walked by there
So I sucked in my breath
As I walked up to the door

Before finally exhaling
But before I could knock
The house blew away
Like a deck of playing cards

On a blustery day
Then it stopped raining
And the dark clouds vanished
As though they had never been

THE GHOST

Day to dusk and dusk to night
Walking straight into the lights
They see me but still look ahead
As if I am already dead

Or a ghost condemned to roam
Invisible, without a home
Along highways, deserted parks
Medians and vacant lots

Some speed up, some slow down
Others speak but not for long
Even if they sense it's wrong
For traffic lights wait for no one

So when it flashes green again
It's back into oblivion
For many people, if not most
Are really just afraid of ghosts

CROWN OF THORNS

Unquiet soul, though you are gone
You won't stay away too long
Your soul is like the deep blue sea
Too deep for anyone but me

I drink you in like cooling water
After walking in a desert
Where anybody else would choke
I feel no fire nor smell no smoke

Some people like the autumn leaves
Falling gently from the trees
Turning amber in their dying
Like dried blood from crucifying

Others love the baby's breath
Or summer's rose as red as death
So beautiful, yet so forlorn
It wears a deadly crown of thorns

OLD TRUE LOVE

Sometimes the way seems so unclear
Like walking in a cloud of tears
Or wading through a dismal swamp
Looking for some solid ground

You reach for a familiar hand
To have it snatched away again
Or you try to go back home
Just to find they've all moved on

Seasons come and then they go
Like petals dropping in the snow
Leaving only naked stems
Praying for the spring again

But love is like a fragrant bloom
Crushed into a sweet perfume
It does not wilt nor even fade
And grows more beautiful with age

THE FROG PRINCE

There is no corner so dark
Nor distance so far away
That I cannot feel your despair
And it makes me sad to think

Of a forlorn prince of a pond
Who knows deep down
He is not really a frog at all
And love is only a kiss away

NOW

High and low, fast and slow
Sad and happy memories flow
The future is here before you know
Because the time is always now

GHOST SHIP

Sometimes, I think you must see
Too much for your own good
While I have but a narrow slit
Cut into a thick, stone wall

As I strain my eyes to perceive
A dim and shadowy specter
Just before it disappears again
Beneath the dark, ocean waves

While you can see through
Even the thickest of fogs
Holding your magic spy glass
A poor, lonely captain

Of a poor, lonely ghost ship
Sailing upon waves of melodies
And strange words that finally
Floated through my window

FATHER TIME

I left the house to look for my mind
And found the face of Father Time
So dignified, so dark and tall
And the saddest eyes you ever saw

A face as cold as the face of a clock
Always watching how not to be mocked
Measuring minutes, measuring hours
Measuring inches between the flowers

But as I watched his eyes of glass
I thought I saw a tear go past
And slowly all my years of slumbers
Ticked away like so many numbers

Father Time, all things must pass
What is the future shall soon be past
And I shall love you with silly old rhymes
Now and 'til the end of Time

THE BLACK BIRD

Hear the black bird sing to me
A strange and mournful melody
'Pity them who own this world
Poor is he who mines its gold

Yet this bitter day is dying
Far from this prison I am flying
I, the bird with broken wing
Released at last from suffering

Tell of me whose paths you cross
How it was I loved and lost
Did ever hearts so overflow
As did ours so long ago?

Yonder comes the stalking moon
Like a ghost without a home
Verily, she smiles and weeps
'One more mile before I sleep'

THE RAVEN AND THE LARK

Said the raven to the lark
'See the rainbow in the dark
See the color's misty glow
For it is that time you know'

The lark looked up at him and said
'Won't you fix my aching head?
It hurts me so I cannot sleep
And I have promises to keep'

Said the raven to the lark
'If you will mend my broken heart
Then I will fix your aching head'
And that is what the raven said

AWAKE! AWAKE!

Long ago and far away
I sent my children out to play
So lost were they and so forlorn
They could not find their way back home

So I sent them off to school
Where Master taught the Golden Rule
But some were sleepy, some were dense
And some just jumped the schoolyard fence

Awake! Awake! Unhappy brood
You've learned the book but not the rule
You count your woes and shed your tears
But who will shed them for my dear?

The heavenly moon wept for his fall
And for the brightest star of all
The angels bent their heads to cry
For him the highest of the high

Awake! Awake! I remember you well
For I was there before you fell
When day went dark and all was lost
So was the one I loved the most

As I awake from this dream of pain
I shall not pass this way again
The night is gone, the dawn has come
An age is born, my labor's done

MADAME BUTTERFLY

Twisting, turning in the sky
Goes the pretty butterfly
Tiny rainbow in the wind
Without blood and without sin

Fly away without a trace
Far away from this sad place
Full of predators with pins
To run you through and glass you in

What is so pretty may I ask
About a butterfly in glass?
A hollow shell no more to roam
Like a mummy in its a tomb

Why oh why does this world take
All the wonders nature makes
And pin them down until they die
Like the little butterfly?

GOODNIGHT, SWEET PRINCE

In a garden called Gethsemane
A man kneels under an olive tree
Puts his face into his hands
And sets himself upon his knees

'Stay awake, stay awake
For my time is getting late'
As warm and bloody rivulets
Mix with tears and clammy sweat

Then a wind begins to moan
And scatters leaves across the stones
Heavy foot steps drawing near
As angry voices fill the air

Go to sleep and rise at dawn
One, two, three! Here comes the sun
To be a beacon and a light
Goodnight Sweet Prince, goodnight, goodnight

TEMPLE OF THE GOLDEN DAWN

Time to wake and meditate
For you have been asleep too long
Let your body be your temple
In the golden of the dawn

BED OF ROSES

Forty springs and forty snows
Makes for a bare and thorny rose
Flowers fade in summer's sun
And lose their petals one by one

Gently falling to the ground
All dried up and turned to brown
Like a hardened scab of blood
Or a creek that's turned to mud

Oh my youth where did you go?
All that's left is melting snow
A dying rose of faded red
Upon a winter's flower bed

But old leaves on brittle branches
Often make the best romances
Old but wiser too by far
Does not ask for moon and stars

I love a bare old thorny rose
Loving eyes and outstretched arms
To be with him I'd lie my head
Upon the rose's thorny bed

VALLEY OF THE BLIND

Groping down a long dark hall
Creeping closer to the wall
I feel my way against the night
Searching for a ray of light

Where is my way? How did I stray?
It was so different yesterday
Yesterday I had a friend
Now I am alone again

So long ago you went away
Still I wait, I hope and pray
I won't always be left behind
In this valley of the blind

DREAMLAND

Lullaby my angels two
As you sleep who plays with you?
Under rainbows do you roam
Returning to your peaceful home

Every angel good and bad
Needs a mommy and a dad
And if you have not them by birth
Never mind this sad old earth

Don't think you're loved any less
Much more than anyone can guess
And if your day is long and hard
Tonight you're gliding on a star

Tomorrow morning's ever near
Heaven is behind each tear
And every angel ever born
Awakes from dreamland when he's done

THE REFLECTING POOL

Gazing, gazing deep into
A crystal clear reflecting pool
Observe the beauty and the grace
And fall in love with your own face

Sometimes I think that I could be
Like that yonder grove of trees
Trunks so tall and roots so strong
They stand up to the shining sun

Other times I am a fool
Who lives in a reflecting pool
No face nor body anymore
Just a voice like an echo

Sinking deep into the earth
Budding, blooming in the dirt
His petals open to a flower
Where once there stood a marble tower

CHILD OF FORTUNE

The wind blows by, a baby cries
A baby cries, a child dies
A face that's streaming full of tears
But no one sees and no one hears

Then the crying stops one day
For no one heard you anyway
And so you run along to play
Laughing each and every day

You are not good fortune's child
But may you always wear a smile
Like the poor unfortunate
Flower in the cold desert

When the wounded bird still sings
And desert flowers bloom in spring
It soothes like rain on hard, cracked sod
And warms the very heart of God

ANIMALDOM

God bless the beasts and everything in
His furred and feathered Animaldom
Blessed be the earth and sky
And everything that crawls and flies

Whales in the sea, birds of the air
Bless the creatures you eat and wear
Pigs and chickens, cows and steers
The fox in the trap and wounded deer

Bless them in pain, forgotten, alone
Mute with no voice of their own
Remember honey comes from a hive
Remember everything's alive

The lonely dog tied to a tree
The monkey cage in the laboratory
Howling deep into the night
Waiting for the morning's light

A WALK IN THE CLOUDS

Put your head above the crowd
And take a walk among the clouds
Beyond the shrill, annoying noises
Petty thoughts and prickly voices

Take a walk on the seashore
Have you ever noticed before?
That the waves are nice and cool
And sunsets are so beautiful?

Maybe you were counting gold
Too sick, too tired or too old
Too young, too busy or too loud
To smell a rose or see a cloud

Where has God been hiding, fool?
Sitting there right next to you
Seeing through your very eyes
Laughing at you from the skies

THE BELL

Listen, listen for to hear
My little bell that rings so clear
You must stay very far away
And give me lots of room today

Touch me not nor breathe my air
Or someday you may have to wear
This little tinkling bell of mine
And have to leave your home behind

Watch your loves and riches too
Disappear and turn from you
Because a leper's only friend
Must be a leper in the end

BROKEN DREAMS

Nothing in the world it seems
Shatters like a broken dream
It is the ache behind the mean
Of shadows silent and unseen

In this fortress dream of sorrow
Exist no dawn and no tomorrow
Just hours that cut you as they pass
Like little shards of broken glass

Yet another and another
Sometimes night is meant to suffer
But look up now and see how far
They light your way like little stars

If I had a star to shine
For every broken dream of mine
The whole night sky would turn to day
And all my troubles melt away

COME IN

I often get lost for hours
In the lives of beautiful people
Living such beautiful lives
In such stylish ways

That everyone is interested
Because interesting people
Have such interesting problems
And it is hard not to dream

When you cannot venture
Outside your drab little room
No matter how suffocating
As there are only two doors

The first is in the front
And the other in the back
While the back is always open
It only leads to a black hole

Always trying to suck me in
Should I be so stupid or
Careless as to step through
Or even get too near it

The front door can opened
Only from the outside
So I stare straight ahead
And wait for you to knock

THE TIN MAN

Nobody really wants to be
Too late for anything
Or too early for anything
Because it's so very upsetting

To disturb the routine
No mind how ridiculously
It rattles along like a string
Of empty tin cans

While deeply felt emotions
Get buried still more deeply
Or locked away in a tin chest
Stranded in a dark forest

Doomed to hold an ax
And a sad, frozen smile
Waiting for a kind stranger
Or perhaps a farm house

Caught in the eye of a twister
To make a crash landing
Upsetting everybody's routine
And forcing cranky witches

Out of their dark castles
To fly around on broom sticks
Wave their wands in fury
And make rude remarks

And yet, it's their own fault
If they cannot fathom how
A deep and tender heart
Is more precious than gold

Or a pair of ruby slippers
Or some silly routine
That no longer makes sense
And rusted solid ages ago

EARTH'S IN LOVE

Seasons change and nature too
So it may die and start anew
The sky may go from gray to blue
And some of us are like that too

Some of us are like the earth
Hiding diamonds in the dirt
Or gold and silver in a cave
Waiting for the pick and spade

Hard as granite, cold as steel
Always heavy, always real
And always falling for the one
That must change from sun to sun

Like that fateful night in June
When the earth fell for the moon
And winter fell in love with spring
And all the flowers that it brings

SAILING

Wind in my sails, sun in my eyes
And I am sailing for paradise
But if I catch no ocean breeze
I shall paddle on my knees

As the captain of my own ship
I sink or swim on my own trip
Hear with my heart, see with my soul
And don't tell everything I know

THE SUN

You are so pretty and so fun
So how can I not love the sun?
In the morning there you are
I am the moon but you're the star

THE EARTH

I remember a long time ago
I was as clean and pure as snow
Before these heavy bonds of birth
Bound me ever to the earth

SHIP OF FOOLS

Welcome to the ship of fools
Wisdom hides and whimsy rules
And no one ever cares to think
Until the ship's about to sink

I'd sail the world and seven seas
If it would put my mind at ease
But this ship never comes to port
And this world just breaks your heart

Yet, opportunity often knocks
When the ship is on the rocks
Best take your chances out at sea
Than on this ship a passenger be

THE LADY EVE

Once upon a pale moon rise
In a place called Paradise
A lady knelt and wept with grief
And she was called the Lady Eve

Where oh where can my heart be?
Last I saw him by a tree
His eyes so blind with tears of woe
He did not even see me go

Heaven help a poor sad lady
Weeping for her grove so shady
As the last rays of the sun
Sink beneath the horizon

Once upon a pale moon rise
A bolt of light fell from the skies
Goodbye Eden, so far away
We'll meet again another day

THE BABBLING BROOK

Babble, babble goes the brook
It's not as foolish as it looks
Listen close and you may hear
Loving truth and beauty there

I want to float on pure emotion
That melts into a sweet devotion
Whether sun or stormy weather
I shall swim upstream to get there

Running swiftly out to sea
Laugh with me or cry with me
Water splashes as it moves
And true love never did run smooth

THE MOON ROCK

You are like a distant star
Against a night as black as tar
Or a moon rock dropped to the earth
To land upon the common dirt

Where I am but a small and meek
Starfish stranded on the beach
Praying for the salty sea
To send a wave to rescue me

Which is the more painful way?
Who can say? Who can say?
Winds blow east and then blow west
Before they settle down to rest

SILENT MUSE

Silence is the golden tone
Upon a jewel encrusted throne
Lucifer in all his glory
Cannot match a silent story

Of the simple pleasure of
Giving and receiving love
You don't have to write or talk
Just listen to your own heart

A softly falling nighttime rain
Misting through a window screen
Brings the scent of leaves and dirt
Of the still and sleeping earth

Some will say they have no use
For the silence of the muse
But they have not heard the chorus
In the silence of the forest

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

How could I forget that sad face
Staring a hole through me
Just before I hit my head?
Or the helpful friend

Disguised as a scarecrow?
A distant yet familiar voice
Trying so hard to wake me
From a deep and deadly sleep

In a field of poppies?
Or the voice of calm while
Trapped in a witches castle?
I did not recognize your hand

Even when was holding mine
Though I tried to understand
It was all I could do to
Stay on the yellow brick road

Maybe it would've been better
Had I stayed in Kansas
But I suppose some girls
Get caught up in twisters

A little less confusing had
You not played so many parts
But I suppose some wizards
Get caught up in Oz

IMAGINE

Down the hallway's polished floors
Past the heavy, double doors
Into the muggy city heat
Across the busy, crowded street

Down the pavement, past the cars
Pedestrians and parking lots
Busy looking, lonely men
Briefcases and phones in hand

Past the fumes from truck exhausts
Smells of grease from restaurants
Past the prisons and the locks
And fading noise of city blocks

Far from your old neighborhood
You walk into a cool, green wood
Soft mist is rising from a spring
Then somebody begins to sing

You ease yourself into the waters
Breathing in the steamy vapors
Clothing seems to drift downstream
And disappear into a dream

Pink rose petals float like feathers
Landing on the bubbling waters
As you reach to catch a flower
You've been gone a half an hour

TRAIN WHISTLE BLUES

Whistle blowing, engine humming
Sounds just like a train is coming
Full speed down the railroad tracks
No time to lose or to look back

What is it like to go somewhere
Travel far, like a star?
I wish someone would tell me so
Or else I'll likely never know

Past the houses and the stores
'Til I don't see them anymore
Like a sad old song refrain
Lost somewhere inside your brain

Why oh why pie in the sky
Does that train just pass me by?
On the wrong side of the tracks
And all my love letters sent back

Wind's so high it starts to moan
And I had better get back home
It sounds just like a child's wail
Or the whistle on the rail

SON OF THE MORNING

One night gazing from afar
I wished upon a falling star
Falling down from heaven's door
Until I saw its light no more

Oh Venus! Son of the Morn
You died the day the world was born
A flame dancing upon the fire
Of a burning funeral pyre

Leaving only ash and cinders
In the frozen dead of winter
Bleeding crimson like a rose
Dripping red petals on the snow

Until one day a miracle
Comes in from the damp and chill
Through a creaky, rusty door
You did not even know was there

She sits down by the fireplace
So happy to feel warm at last
For we are all but angels fallen
And your hell may be my heaven

THE REDWOOD TREE

Your love is like a redwood tree
So tall and proud for all to see
So deeply rooted in the ground
It hardly moves or makes a sound

My love is like a running stream
Always rushing it would seem
Over stones and banks of moss
To slip on as you wade across

Sunny days or days of rain
My redwood tree remains the same
A thousand years of sleet and snow
Cannot tarnish a heart of gold

Onto my redwood tree I'll hold
'Til winter chills my weary bones
And they lie bleached upon the ground
Except my arms still wrapped around

LAND OF THE LOTUS FLOWER

It seems a hundred years ago
Since I took to the open road
And drove a thousand miles or more
To find the fabled lotus flower

Cast my bread upon the waters
And live among the lotus flowers
Like one big happy family
In the land next to the sea

Slowly drifting without focus
Sitting on a cool green lotus
Vacant smiles and clueless stares
That disappear into nowhere

Across a pond or down a stream
Like a bubble in a dream
Or a pretty little boat
That cannot steer but only floats

PEARL IN THE OYSTER

Inner beauty never fades
And love can bloom at any age
But that need not keep you from
Wearing lace on your nightgown

Pinning flowers in your hair
Or blowing kisses in the air
Putting sachets in your drawers
Or getting really bored with sports

An oyster and a pebble make
A string to wear around your neck
Of smooth and snowy little pearls
But only God can make a girl

HEART, MIND, BODY AND SOUL

My thoughts are tiny butterflies
Fluttering their wings
Never resting long enough
To notice anything

My mind is like a hungry wolf
Or like a bird of prey
With empty beak and talons
On a frozen winter's day

My body is a boarded up
Old house that's been condemned
My heart is like a headstone
On a grave nobody tends

Common sense will tell me
That these things cannot be true
But my soul tells me it's lying
For it's still in love with you

Common sense will tell me
That it's time to move along
But my body doesn't listen
For my heart tells me it's wrong

A FAIRY'S TALE

When I leave this little body
Then I shall feel no pain
No one will ever pinch me
Or make me cry again

I'll shimmer like a dragonfly
With shiny rainbow wings
And sprinkle magic fairy dust
To usher in the spring

I'll never have to eat or sleep
Nor even have to walk
Just whisper into children's ears
The kindest little thoughts

So never be afraid to die
Nor cry for someone else
For they may be a fairy soon
Or you be one yourself

A thousand little fairy folk
May dance upon a pin
But I would rather watch you sleep
Than play with all of them

SLEEPING BEAUTY

I think she must be sleeping
As I cannot feel her breath
It's been a long, long illness
And she's still as marble death

She had a fever of the brain
And dreamed of many things
Not one of which could ever be
Nor ever sprouted wings

So now and then I'll visit her
To keep her memory
Light a little candle too
And float it out to sea

For the world was very cruel
To ever give her hope
When in truth there never was
And she the last to know

Still I think that there must be
In heaven or in dreams
A place for happy fools like her
To love and still believe

For never is a soul so sweet
So beautiful and deep
As the day it falls in love
Or when it goes to asleep

BOOK OF DAYS

As I look through the pages of
My fading memories
I place a rose between the leaves
That mean the most to me

Today has become yesterday
So comforting and quaint
A rusty, creaking porch swing
On a house with peeling paint

Smooth as an old piece of glass
Found lying on the shore
All its edges worn away
To cut and wound no more

What is the difference one may ask
From now and bygone things?
The difference is tomorrow
And whatever it may bring

How do you choose a memory
To last you all your days?
You give it a tomorrow
Or it will just fade away

OLD HOUSE

Old house you are a friend of mine
You and your cool venetian blinds
You are so many and yet one
Still, I never call you home

Home is clear, sweet peace of mind
In front of me or far behind
Above the space, below the line
So near and yet so hard to find

Every day I sweep the floor
Or hang the laundry on the porch
All while thinking to myself
One day, I'll wake up somewhere else

TIGHTROPE

There is a narrow bridge of rope
Between two mountain sides
Across a raging river
And a valley steep and wide

I dare look above me
Lest the sunlight blind my eyes
And if I look beneath
I may lose heart before I try

One foot before the other
Always staring straight ahead
And if I lose my balance
I shall right myself again

I have no wings to fly
And it's a long drop to the ground
Better then to take the time
To get there safe and sound

HAUNTED CITY

I haunt the dark and ragged edges
Grimy streets and sidewalks
Searching vague looks and empty eyes
Above feigned and rouged smiles

For a faint glint of recognition
How much more alive the cow
Pig, chicken, opossum, rat
Moth, caterpillar and roach seem

Compared to their blank stares
Like being lost in a carnival
Of grotesquely painted clowns
So you can only struggle silently

Smile back and play your part
And yet, sooner or later
Even carnivals get boring
Clowns remove their makeup

And behind their painted smiles
Perchance, they also feel lost
In a city that seems haunted
Because everyone thinks they're alone

LOVE HAPPENS

Happy is the circumstance
Of the lucky sidelong glance
At your true love across the floor
Of a crowded grocery store

It may not be tea with the queen
But when it happens, you'll agree
That you would love him rich or poor
Or if she only swept the floor

Some claim there is no happiness
In love too far out of your class
But I say they are deaf and blind
Because it happens all the time

WAIT UNTIL DAWN

When did the light that was always there
Dwindle away and disappear?
Vanishing without a trace
To leave you in a cold, dark place?

To be measured by and by
Not in times to laugh and cry
But in levels and degrees
Of boredom and of misery?

Little children laugh and talk
Couples hold their hands and walk
Mothers brush their daughter's hair
And fuss over the clothes they wear

Then the awful truth that comes
Just like the dark before the dawn
Is that you are all alone
And you are the only one

ASHES IN THE WIND

Passion is a fire's light
Sending sparks into the night
Little red and yellow stars
Shooting from the crackling logs

Fading into gray and white
After a short, unruly life
Into an ash so soft and fine
It scatters as the wind blows by

TOP OF THE STAIRS

I sit at the top of the stairs
Sadly contemplating the tragedy
Of being left chained and alone
In a cold, dark basement

As the chilling prospect dawns
That help may never come
You slowly lose your spirit
And as desperation sinks in

So does your anger, until
One day you bite somebody
Then are shot and thrown
Onto a pile of dead dogs

So they can buy a new puppy
And start all over again
For the dog waits to be bred
And the pig hangs to be bled

By harsh and impatient voices
Wearing blood smeared aprons
As the fox struggles in his trap
And the monkey gradually

Goes mad in his cold, steel cage
Surrounded by cold, steel faces
Speaking in cold, steel voices
In starched, white lab coats

Blind and deaf to the daily
Grinding, monotonous horror
Of the tragedy of their crying
And the beauty of their singing

So don't blame it on God
For how many times a day
Do we despise His humble cries?
And ignore His wordless song?

Yet, I cannot bring myself
To leave these stairs because
I know you're not mean or mad
You just want to go for a walk

SPUN SUGAR

The hum and flickering light
Of a television dances
On the walls of a dimly lit room
Dried flowers on end tables

Have long since lost their scent
Yet, still retain a strange
And lifelike quality
As they sit in their dry vases

Something else is strange
So eerie and unspeakable
It only quivers round the edges
For to see and recognize it

Would be to scream in horror
Which might wake it up
And there is nobody else around
But chances are they probably

Wouldn't notice anything
And it would take too long
To explain what it really was
Anyway, who would believe

Those sweet and sticky strands
Only look like cotton candy
And by that time
The web would be spun

ONE, TWO, THREE!

From the mountains to the sea
Roams the lonesome honey bee
One is lonely, two is better
Three is best and lasts forever

How many children have I birthed
Onto this sad and weary earth?
Time has come and where are they?
Running far, so far astray

Day and night they pine and moan
Yearning for their peaceful home
It is so close if only they
Could see it never went away

Both sun and moon shine equally
Over land or over sea
Good or bad or misbegotten
Not one of them shall be forgotten

Even deepest, darkest sin
Shall be as though it's never been
All Heaven's mine and hades too
Nobody knows what I've gone through

Dawn is coming! One, two, three!
Angels sweetly wait on me
Justice comes when love is pure
And true hearts live and beat as one

BLIND LADY

A lady sits upon the earth
Around her eyes there is a scarf
A harp is resting on her breast
Lay down with her and take a rest

I am not ashamed to say
I think of you most every day
Love is patient, love is kind
But most of all, love is blind

DRINK DEEP

There was once an ocean
So vast and so deep
That nobody could see her
So warm and so calm

Clean and pure that anyone
Could drink from her
And suffer no ill effects
And so they did just that

Yet, she also wanted something
She wanted it so desperately
She would endlessly lap against
Sandy beaches and rocky shores

Always searching for somebody
Capable of drinking her in
For she knew that then
And only then might she be seen

She didn't like being invisible
Nor divided into seas and shores
She was tired comings and goings
For after they drank their fill

They would walk away quenched
While she was far from satisfied
She had so much to give, after all
But they just kept walking away

Eventually, forgetting that they
Had ever drank or swam in her
So, she began to grow sullen
Her clear blue water turned

A murky and putrid green
While her temperature dropped
Until she was cold and frigid
And for a very long time

Nobody went near the ocean
Her stench was so unbearable
Nobody cared to drink from her
She was so cold and rough

Swimmers dared not risk being
Slapped about in her angry waves
Ships and boats sailed around her
But she took notice of nobody

So far as she was concerned
They had all broken her heart
And she might very well be
As rough and putrid as she liked

So she was until one day
A poor, injured seagull floated
Into the middle of the ocean
Upon a piece of old driftwood

He was burning with fever
And barely able to lift his head
To drink the murky, green water
First sips and then gulps

Not only did he not choke
But the more he drank
The more he wanted
So the bird drank and drank

Until his fever began to drop
While the ocean watched him
Hypnotized by the thirsty bird
For it had been a long time

Since she had felt needed
As she watched him intently
She began to calm down
Her waves became less choppy

As her spirits began to rise
So did her temperature
She began to lose her stench
And murky and putrid green color

Until she was clear and blue again
Indeed, the ocean was so intrigued
She decided to do something
She had never done before

She would swim out to meet
And introduced herself to the bird
Whom she knew by this time
Not to be a seagull at all

She mustered up her courage
'I am a person,' she began timidly
'Trapped inside an ocean of love
Though no one has ever seen me

Her sea green eyes brimmed
With huge, salty tears
Rolling down her wet
And salty cheeks as she spoke

The beautiful god could only stare
Speechless in his astonishment
That his disguise was penetrated
After an awkward pause he replied

'My wounds are more painful
And take longer to heal than others
So I disguise myself as a bird
To confound my enemies'

He paused again and looked
Far into the horizon as if wanting
To ask her something difficult
But not knowing how to frame it

'Yes!' she replied
'Please do stay with me!'
Then she clasped his frail hands
Into her wet, webbed fingers

And for the very first time
In her long and lonely life
The ocean felt quenched
And so he did

MOCKING BIRD LANE

One day walking down a lane
Along a fence, after a rain
I thought I heard a sad old song
Go back and forth and on and on

Way up high until it fell
Like falling deep into a well
Coming from a willow branch
Up in a tree, next to a fence

'The sweetest song I've ever heard'
I addressed the mocking bird
'But tell me please why are the high
And the low notes so close by?'

'I sing the low notes just because
Or for a past that never was
And the high to mock my sorrow
Because I may see him tomorrow'

Then with that she flew away
Never seen unto to this day
Around the lane or on the fence
Or in the willow on a branch

SEA OF TEARS

Whilst looking upon your picture
I saw a tear trickling down
And I thought to myself
How sweet, one tear

It was soon followed by another
Another and another until
The very floor boards were damp
As I gazed on in astonishment

The picture raised its fist and shook it
Before collapsing into a corner
And hiding its face in shame
I thereupon began to hear words

Of bitter laments and accusations
Emanating from every corner
Thinking the roof would surely collapse
Beneath the combined weight of them

I opened the door and walked outside
Stood in the yard and watched
As the clouds darkened the sky
And the sun retreated behind them

The night the moon joined sun and earth
To silently stare and frown upon me
It seemed as if all were mourning
And I was the cause of it

So I started to weep as well
As I did, I began remembering things
Like a dream I once had
Of a poor man stranded in a desert

Naked and chained to the ground
And weeping most pitifully
For no matter how hard he tried
He could not free himself

I then recalled a poor soul
I had kept saying 'no' to
Because I could not remember him
And I started crying harder

How weary you must be
Of my poor, mechanical heart
And yet, it was not always so
Once, I wept so inconsolably

All anybody wanted was for it to stop
I did eventually stop crying
Feeling loving and remembering
Please forgive me

DANDELION

I've often felt like a dandelion
On a warm summer's day
It only takes one strong gust
To scatter my seeds to the wind

Like people who blow in
Then out again on the next breeze
No more to be depended on
Than a bit of feathery fluff

It was not so very long ago
I felt my stem about to break
And of what use is a flower
Without her stem?

I'd always managed to bend
To whatever winds blew my way
Until I found myself
Caught up in a raging storm

Surely, the end must be near
Even should I survive the gale
Winter would soon find me
Slowly withering away in the cold

For the briefest of moments
I actually believed it was true
And then I remembered that
You really did love me

THE RED VIOLIN

You are like a red violin
I once bought in a shop
Though I could neither afford it
Nor the lessons to play it

I took it home with me anyway
As I knew it deserved better
Than a dusty old corner
In a dusty old shop

Most of the time I tell myself
I've no reason to possess it
It really should belong to one
More capable of cherishing

Such a delicate instrument
Instead, I keep it locked in the attic
It is foolish I know
How I stay up every night

Endeavoring to teach myself
Only it is my little secret
Because wouldn't they all laugh
To see me playing violin

THE LION'S PAW

There was once a poor lion
Who caught his paw in a trap
Passersby milled about and ogled
But none dared venture too close

Let alone endeavored to free it
Since they did not quite trust him
Not to pounce and devour them
If given the opportunity

He was rather ferocious looking
And more than likely angry as well
After sitting so long in a trap
'Perhaps, it is simply his fate'

They would comment to one another
All the while feeling a tad ashamed
Despite the dangers involved
But I do not feel that way

You do not seem so dangerous
As hungry, sad and hurt
Perhaps given a little kindness
You might even be tame enough

To be my big and beautiful cat
Sleep under the sun every day
And eat from a silver bowl
How does that sound?

ANGEL OF MUSIC

I once fell in love
With a very strange boy
Who only allowed me to see
One side of his face

The other side was hidden
As if by a mask or shadow
For a long time he carried on thus
Until at last he could no longer

As I began to glimpse the other side
I found it twisted in anger and grief
So deep was this well of sadness
I felt certain to be sucked in

So I began to wander away
Yet, no matter how far I went
I could still hear him singing
Faintly, then louder and louder

Until drowned out everything else
Only I really didn't mind
By that time I'd come to realize
I loved both sides equally

So the next time I saw the strange boy
I kissed him on both cheeks
Then gently chided him
Never to hide his face from me again

MONTSEGUR

Filing down a path so steep
They leave the ruins of their keep
Donned in coarse black robes and hoods
Prostrate on stretchers or barefoot

On the way one calls a hymn
And soon the rest are joining in
Until at last their voices merge
Into an otherworldly dirge

At last they reach the field below
All covered in late winter's snow
The wood stockade is wet and cold
And guarded by a pack of wolves

The able bodied climb the ladders
The sick are thrown in from their stretchers
The stakes are set afire by torch
On a chilly morn in March

Damp wood billows clouds of smoke
Until the stockade is engulfed
As the priests lead chants of mirth
To celebrate their handiwork

Hear the ghastly sounds and stench
Of choking gasps and roasting flesh
Yet, through it all can still be heard
The chanting of the funeral dirge

Lights extinguished one by one
In burning pyres of flesh and bone
Not one walled town nor mountain fort
Shall survive the hungry wolf

Shallow graves of blackened bones
Where once existed fields of gold
The last of them shall soon be gone
Because this world is not their home

Not a statue, plaque or trace
Marks remembrance of their fates
And yet, their memories live on
Because this world is not our home