

Awake at the Wheel

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I have been traveling far
Following gravel and tar,
Skirting the bright yellow line,
Seeking the light from the sign,
Barreling into the rain,
Wiping the windshield in vain.
What is this ache that I feel,
Staying awake at the wheel?

Where is the reason for the chosen way?
When will it bring me to the break of day,
Out of the longing night,
Into the morning light?

I have been lying awake,
Dreams that I'm trying to shake,
Phrases that should have been said
Doing no good in my head.
Too often have I begun
Battles that cannot be won
Why must I keep up the fight?
When will I sleep through the night?

Where is the reason for the chosen way?
When will it bring me to the break of day
Out of the winding night?
Into the blinding light

Bread and Water

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Some folks pretend that they aren't getting older,
Always are crying on somebody's shoulder,
Doing hard time, on their daily bread and water.
Other folks know that they aren't getting younger,
It'll taste better because of the hunger,
Doing just fine on their daily bread and water.

(Bread and water)
Beyond the land where we are bound,
(Bread and water)
No prison stands upon the ground.
(Bread and water)
We grind the flour from the seed,
Bread and water
Is all we need.

Some folks are scared that there won't be enough,
Gonna be gone when the goin' gets tough,
Jealously hoarding their daily bread and water.
But if we say thank you before we say please
We can all share in the wine and the cheese,
More than enough from our daily bread and water.

(Bread and water)....

To be forgiven, we must forgive,
Beyond the bygones to live and let live,
Each of us granted his daily bread and water.
The glass is empty, the bread is gone,
The night is over, attend the dawn,
Let's have some more of that daily bread and water.

(Bread and water)....

The Castle Gone

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A while back I'm wandering down
The streets of this forgotten town.
It seemed that it would do me good
To end up where my house once stood.
And sure enough, it still was there,
The rotting porch, the narrow stair,
The mailbox to the second floor,
The broken lock, the open door.

They say you can't go home again,
But still I've heard it's true
That home is in the presence of
The people that you really love,
The rest is up to you.

The comfy couch, the table round,
The curbside furniture we found,
Remember living like a king,
Just listening to the plumbing sing.
Oh, man, I really miss those days,
When pain was just a passing phase,
But still, I never would disdain
To live in that old house again.

They say you can't go home again,
But still I know it's true
That home is in the presence of
The people that you really love,
It's waiting there for you.

Child of Mine

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I am acquainted with the brink of tears
I lean there often, face into the rain,
It fills my eyes until my vision clears
And serves to wash away the salty stain.

Oh, child of mine, don't try to find
Your way alone, some things are known.
You start inside, your heart will guide,
So strong and kind, Oh, child of mine.

Behind the dam there is a rising tide.
The river, held from where it wants to go,
Will have its way, it cannot be denied,
Must be released or it will overflow.

Oh, child of mine...

There is an answer in the clearing skies,
The water shed in tears is not in vain,
It flows beneath the soul and makes it rise,
It is as natural as the falling rain.

Oh, child of mine, don't try to find
Your way alone, some things are known.
You start inside, your heart will guide,
So strong and kind, you're doing just fine,
Oh, child of mine.....

Doorman to Dreamland

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The doorman to dreamland is guarding the door,
The lobby is empty, they're waxing the floor.
There's gold in the marble, the chandelier's glare
Is making it glitter, I wish I was there.

The doorman to dreamland is wearing a frown,
I'm tired of gambling and need to lie down.
The streets of insomnia harbor the game
That keeps my mind reelin', they all look the same.

Oh, doorman to dreamland, you're holding the keys.
I know you can hear me, so please help me, please.
I need your amnesia to reset my soul,
For all of my winnings, I can't pay the toll.

Someday when I'm sober and pious and pure,
I won't have to wander in search of a cure,
And then we'll be buddies, the doorman and I,
I'll toss him a quarter each time I walk by.

A Drunkard's Epitaph

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A drunkard dies, his hand, no longer trembling,
Which often made the bottle difficult to hold,
Had twenty years since traded off his wedding ring,
In tribute to the liquor and the price of gold.
Despair was his addiction, more than simply wine,
Which only served to keep the hounding blues at bay,
And leave him in his blessed stupor, feeling fine,
To watch his friends and family turn and walk away.

For they would be the keepers of his memories,
And finally would cease to hold themselves to blame.
He had no recollection of his felonies,
And never would he fall upon his knees in shame.
A drunkard dies, his soul no longer keeping time,
Is not constrained to live within the moment past.
Forever now that clear-eyed boy can hunt and climb,
Released in days gone by and home again at last.

Fallen Waters

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What is it about some times
That makes the mind remember them?
Sunlit rugs and doorbell chimes
And patterns on a tattered hem.

What is it about some places,
'Round about the same old bend?
Bound to see familiar faces,
Flashes of a childhood friend.

Off the paths I often wander
Down the woodlands' deep ravines.
Then the past I tend to ponder
In the semblance of those scenes.

In the forest I am kneeling,
By the rocky stream I sleep,
Autumn leaves an ancient ceiling,
Fallen waters running deep.

Why is time so unforgiven,
When the mind can always roam
Back along the streams we live in
To the fountain springs of home?

Frequent Flier

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Sitting 'cross the table, talkin' turkey
With the old gray goose of grim despair,
Trying not to sing along in her key,
Trying to keep negotiations fair.
Shocking words of mocking birds are bitter,
Warnings of the mourning doves are dire,
Blue jays and gold finches are a-flitter,
All because I'm such a frequent flier.

Frequent flier, higher and higher,
Spread my wings and never tire,
To that spirit I'll aspire,
Flyin' free a frequent flier.

All the birds are voicing their opinions,
Seems I've ruffled quite a feather or two,
That I dare to enter their dominion,
Strangest doggone bird that ever flew.
Still I'll keep my cardinal direction,
Head up in the clouds above the choir.
Leave it to the birds to pass inspection,
I'm already billed a frequent flier.

Frequent flier...

Starin' at a heron feeling blue-like,
Ask my eagle eye how bad things looked,
Symptoms of a frequent flier are flu-like,
Still my goose is not completely cooked.
I may be a lame duck with a swan song,
Still my plumage is my best attire,
Long as I can sing this Audubon song,
I will always be a frequent flier.

Frequent flier...

Howling on Halloween

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Howling on Halloween,
The leaves autumnal down,
Which is what the witches want,
That goblins hunt and gremlins haunt
And jack-o-lanterns frown.

Howling on Halloween,
The weeping willows wail.
Trick-or-treaters stroll the streets
And every living soul competes
To tell the tallest tale.

Howling on Halloween,
The moon is moaning low.
In disguise, the spirits rise,
The ghosts and ghouls float through the skies
Until the morning glow.

I Can Have Everything

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Living through tragedy, coming on comedy,
Laughing at laughter, loving in love,
I been a'messin' around until I finally found
Someone who needs me, someone who cares.
I can have everything.
My mama tells me, I can have everything.

You can look round the world to find a perfect girl,
You can hold heaven right in your hand,
You might be too blind to see, it couldn't happen to me,
Someone who needs you, someone who cares.
You can have everything.
My mama tells me, you can have everything.

We are all trying to find some precious piece of mind,
We are all soldiers far from our home,
You figure once in a while you can make somebody smile,
Someone who needs us, someone who cares.
We can have everything.
My mama tells me, we can have everything.

Infidel

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She takes you for a ride in an old and rusty bus,
She's an earth goddess, she's a lady you can trust,
She tells you all her stories of the day she saw the light,
And you know she won't desert you,
No, she sure wants to convert you,
But just don't ask her how she knows she right.

'cause Jesus is our Savior and soon he will be here,
As long as you are one of us you have no cause to fear,
He'll rid the world of evil, it'll cringe before his might,
And you know he won't refuse you,
No, he sure would love to use you,
He's the only one among us who is right.

Infidel, you'd better listen well,
I'm getting mighty bad feelings from the movement.
Infidel, you'd better watch yourself,
I'm getting mighty bad feelings from the movement.

A hundred thousand people clap their hands and stamp their feet,
And you're the only one who seems to think they've lost the beat,
'Cause they can't hear the music, but they sure can see the light,
And you know it's getting stronger,
They're not children any longer,
And it's spreading like a fire through the night.

Infidel, you'd better listen well,
I'm getting mighty bad feelings from the movement,
Infidel, you're gonna go to Hell,
I'm getting mighty bad feelings from the movement.

In Memory

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Of all the people we could be,
Of all the different points of view,
The wonder is that I am me,
The wonder is that you are you,
And if there is no heaven or hell,
If memories are all we find,
What magic place is this to dwell,
Within a human soul and mind.

The older that I get each year,
The more I seem to have the fear
That once the time is come and gone,
You can't get back from dusk to dawn.
If Shakespeare were alive today,
He'd be among the first to say
That all the world is but a stage,
And everyone should act their age.

Lord knows just where I send this prayer.
I don't expect the answer there.
I simply like the way it feels
To heal my heart and cool my heels,
And though there may be no reply,
No chosen way, no reason why,
Tonight I swear to not despair
And pray that I might have a prayer

Leaves You in the Cold

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My car is hibernating
In a tow-away zone,
Scoop a snowball off the windshield,
Hate to leave that car alone,
But fall has spread the leaves aflame,
And rusted in the freezing rain,
I drove it for a last refrain
And left it in the cold.
I left it in the cold.

My shoes are wet, I lost my hat,
I left my gloves somewhere,
I haven't bought a present yet
But I don't seem to care.
The holidays are bundled up
And waiting for a cross-town bus,
Oh, how can everyone you trust
Just leave you in the cold,
Go leave you in the cold.

The man across the aisle
Is a lot worse off than me,
He's ridden on this same old bus
Since nineteen-fifty-three.
The world is full of sad old bums,
You're scared you might someday become,
'Cause you just might let everyone
Go leave you in the cold,
Go leave you in the cold.

Metronome

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Let me be your metronome,
Let me keep you keepin' time,
Be the one to take it home,
Be the reason that you rhyme.

Let me be your ratchet gear,
Happily incorporate,
Day by day and year by year,
Just the love and not the hate.

Let me be your catapult,
Throw your spirits to the skies,
Let me feel your lightning bolt,
Let me look into your eyes.

Let me be your metronome,
Let me keep you feelin' fine,
Be your home away from home,
I'll be yours and you be mine.

Middle of the Street

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You know my mama, my mama is so sweet,
But it's certain that she often does repeat,
When we're drivin' you just sit down in your seat,
Don't get no television till your room is neat,
You eat your vegetables before you get a treat,
And don't go runnin' in the middle of the street.

You know my mama, my mama is so sweet,
But it's certain that she often does repeat,
Don't take no candy from no strangers that you meet,
You wash your hands before we all sit down to eat,
You keep on tryin', don't you dare admit defeat,
And don't go runnin' in the middle of the street.

You know my mama, my mama can't be beat,
I wish she wouldn't so repeatedly repeat,
You can cry but don't you lie and don't you cheat,
Get out'a the kitchen if you can't take the heat,
You keep on tryin', don't you dare admit defeat,
And don't go runnin' in the middle of the street.
And close the door and don't forget to wipe your feet.
And don't go runnin' in the middle of the street.

Night Flight

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Night flight, the engines in the dark,
Don't fight, embrace and then embark,
Sleep tight, got clearance from the tower,
Night flight, six hundred miles per hour.

Parking ticket in a standing-only zone,
I left you there to pay the fine.
Can't help feel the distance on the telephone.
Can't help tonight I must be flyin'.

Sundown, I'm leaving you behind,
Some town, the farthest from my mind,
Come round, the drinks are on the tray,
Sundown, three thousand miles away.

Pictures in a wallet tell of times gone by,
And so my mind begins to roam,
Flashing red and green across the midnight sky,
I promise soon I'm coming home.

Pittsburgh

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Two rivers joining, westward bound
Cut deep into the rocky ground,
A fortress in the forest grows,
And now a graceful lady throws
Her bridges over train-set towns.
Old Pittsburgh has her ups and downs.

With bones of iron, veins of coal,
A miner's heart, a smelter's soul,
The granite mansions still can feel
The grandeur of the ghosts of steel.
The blasting furnace still makes sounds,
Old Pittsburgh has her ups and downs.

From 'cross an ocean cultures pass
To rising towers of steel and glass,
To churches, temples, mosques and schools,
Where Pittsburgh still is building tools,
That ever gracious queen of towns,
Old Pittsburgh has her ups and downs.

Sonnet to an Acorn

What raging axe has made the oak tree fall?
How long before its echo disappears,
The image that is not dissolved by tears?
How long before another grows as tall?
How many seasons must its massive weight
And all the fuel and lumber at its core
Lie rotting useless on the forest floor,
A monument to bigotry and hate?
What suffering must spread from these attacks,
When all of Man's ingenious means are bent
Upon revenge, with little effort spent
To loose the grip of hate upon the axe?
There is a chance to put an end to war
The likes of which has never come before.

George Stetten
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Stop and Wonder Why

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D'ya ever stop and wonder why,
You put your goals where they're not all that hard to find,
And still you never leave your dreams too far behind?
D'ya ever stop and wonder why?

You have found an easy way,
To psych yourself to make it through another day,
And in your hand, a list of interesting things to say,
But still you know the time will pass you by.

There's a new kind of lovin' at your door,
It's a kind of a fool for you,
Childishly appealing to those new feelings
That are too old, and too real for you,
And you know the time has come
For you to thank your lucky stars
That they're givin' you one more chance,
Givin' you one more chance.

But you have learned to do without,
You waste your time with people you don't give a damn about,
And every day you plant another grain of doubt.

D'ya ever stop and wonder why,
With all the times you thought that you'd forgotten how to cry,
Now it's easy, you don't even have to try.

Suing Saint Louie

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I'm suing the City of Saint Louie,
I'm suing the City, you see.
I'm suing the City of Saint Louie
for damages due unto me.
It damaged my heart, it damaged my brain,
And all I can do is sing the refrain,
I'm suing the City of Saint Louie,
I'm suing the City, you see.

If you're in the City of Saint Louie,
If you in the city I see,
I'll walk on my side of the sidewalk,
Be damned if you recognize me.
I'm damned if I don't and I'm damned if I do,
'cause all I can sing is a song about you,
I'm suing the City of Saint Louie,
I'm suing the City, you see.

Sweetness is No Good Here Anymore

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You have used up all my power,
Just to build yourself a tower,
Now your sweetness is no good here anymore.

I don't need to hear your lies,
You just love to sympathize,
Now your sweetness is no good here anymore.

Love without devotion
Makes the devil raise his head,
Telling all your separate stories
Don't believe a word you said.

Made me think that you were mine,
Someone else was down the line,
Now your sweetness is no good here anymore.

Used World

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Used world, world for sale,
Burns no oil, runs on shale,
When that's all gone, you'll need a sale,
And who will buy, who will buy?

Recent tune-up, runnin' well,
Brand new paint job, sure looks swell,
Leavin' town and have to sell,
Who will buy, yeah, who will buy?

To read the news, you'd have to think
We've pushed our powers to the brink,
We can't afford the kitchen sink,
And who will buy, who will buy?

The experts scan the falling skies,
And when we open up our eyes,
The truth should come as no surprise,
Who will buy, who will buy?

The world is slow to spin around,
From every city to your home town
The big machine is breakin' down
Who will buy, who will buy,
Who will buy?