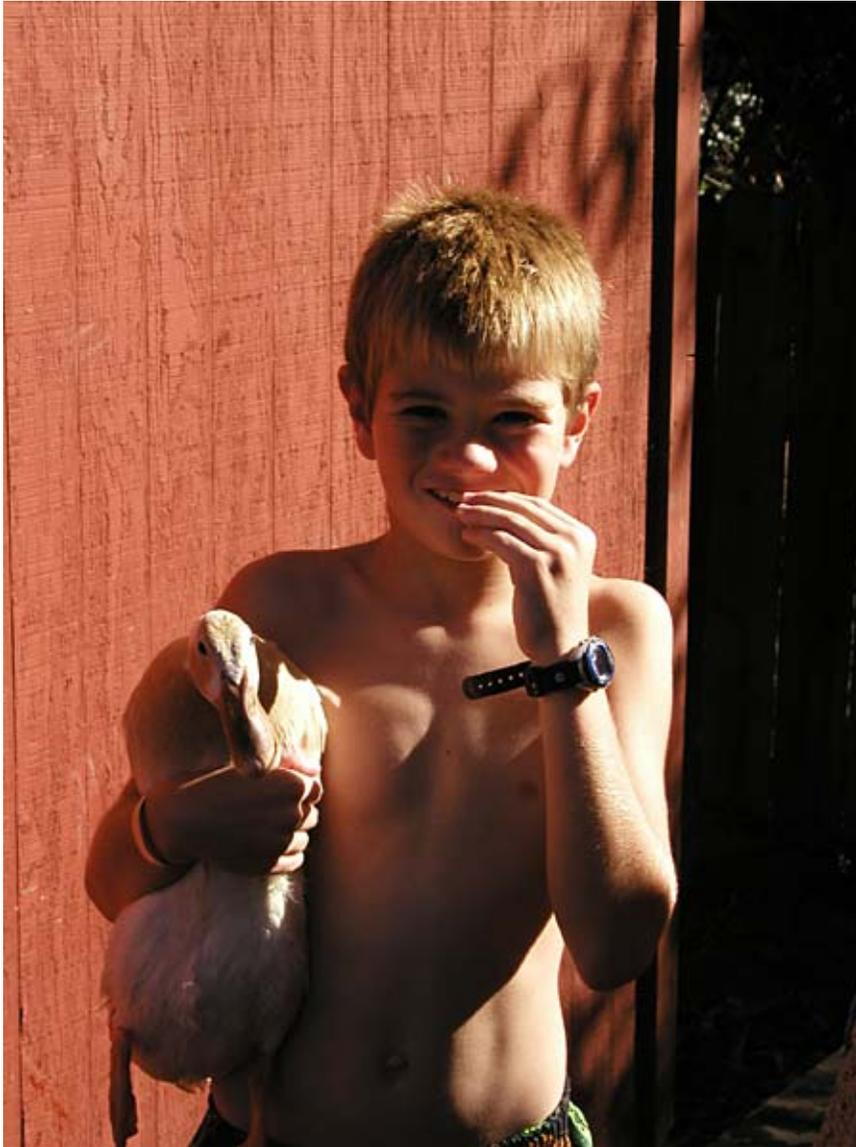


Photographs and Poems by T.Collins Logan

“They are like diviners or soothsayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them.”

– Socrates regarding poets, from Plato’s *Apology*



Inner Roads

Hard going
those inner roads
 delving deep
 turning unexpectedly
 to new unknowns

Can we learn
to walk calmly onward
 fully feel each step
 and carefully consider
 every marvel in our life?

Can we pass by our pain
 anxiety dissolving
 into lasting peace?

Hard going
those inner roads
 with so many equal choices
may we see clearly enough
 to discern the signs
 and follow the wiser path
may we be brave enough
 to face forward
 without forgetting where we've been
may we be loved enough
 to seldom feel alone
and may tranquility linger
 long enough to turn to joy



Continuum

That brief instant of knowing
just before we laugh
a half-glimpse of perfection
shining through a child's smile
the curious anticipation
as we bend to breathe
the fragrance of a flower we have never seen
and sudden joy
when someone we love
unexpectedly arrives:
these small things
define our greatness
these forgotten moments
are the glue which binds the cosmos



Shaping Apples

Worm inside the sheaves, my love
thick raucous leaves upon that tree
so long ago we wandered from
 the tiny chasms of each dark stroke
 to dip beneath the superficial green
for what?
certainly we wondered then
 our reason for reason
 canals of vital probability
 light-filled, greedily beheld
 shifting in the breeze of Eden
and there your finger lifts to turn
 purposed without contrition
 the velvety rasp of knowledge
 two worlds on edge
 beneath a prohibition
past
 fiction for our guiding truths
future
 sweet syllables you bring to me
 all innocence and joy
 plucked from the gardens of hyperbole

and so, intoxicated by delightful heft
I ponder the dogmatic shape of apples
 this *pneuma*, this perceived instant
 a careless Word which carries us
 from hypnotic ignorance
 to manifest divinity
 your disheveled hair
 and pursing quiz of contemplation
 as you gaze into a page
I can't help but smile
 to witness life
 thriving despite its mortal banishment
together
 let's prance wantonly
 in the warm illumination
 of our questing souls
together
 let's harvest untamed miracles
 of virid Spring beyond the Fall.



Outside Myself

I burnt my eyes today
looking into the sun
hoping it would flood through me
into all the darkened places
and force these scurrying little worries
to run out my mouth
and hide under some rock

But I'm still full of the dark
and my eyes ache fiercely
like when I cry
or when I force myself to sleep too long
or when I waste time
searching
for answers outside myself



White

White, white
swirling out of nothing
new shoots, old branches
bending, giving in
why now, in my mourning?
why now?

White, white
swirling out of nothing
all variety uniform
all light bleeding out
every moment consumed
in cold persistence

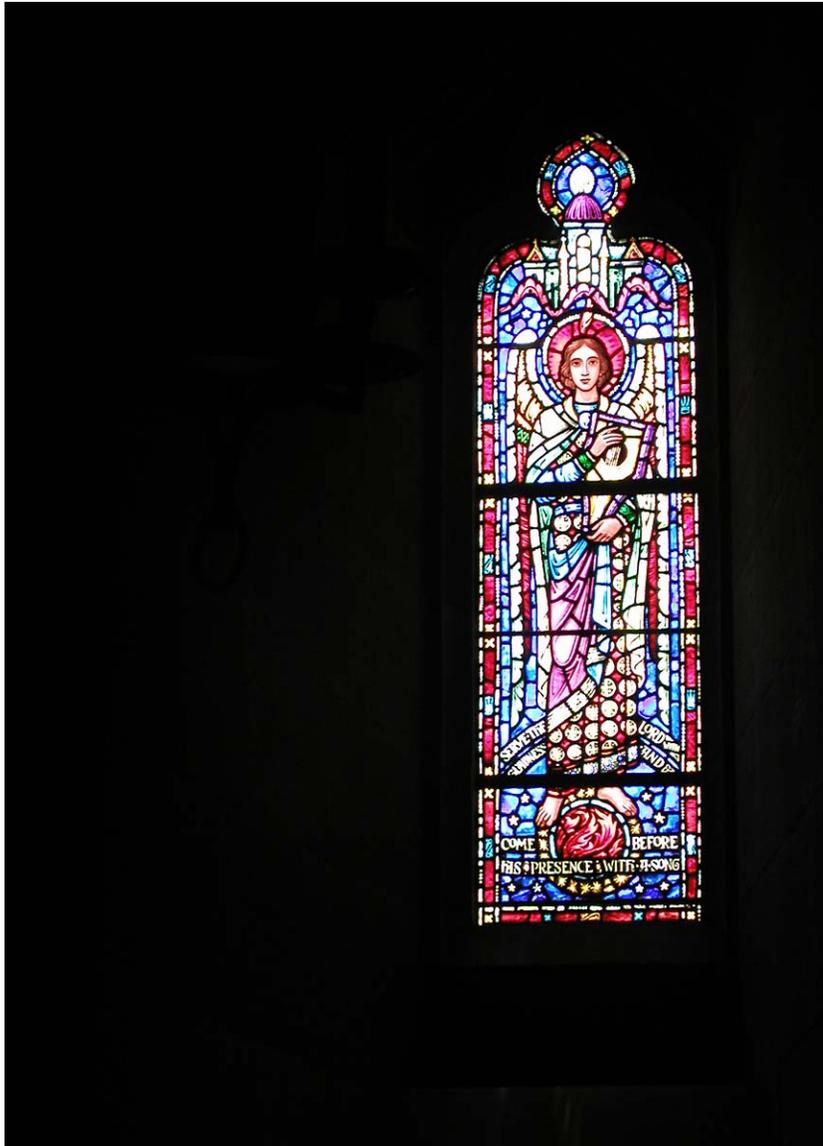
Unexpected winter
I have felt you before
without hope or comfort
in my trudging, lonely silence
and still I search, defiant
blinking off your frozen kisses

Touch me, lovely and delicate
melt across my upturned face
noble sacrifice for beauty
blanket every memory
change me, cause all my fear
to swirl back into nothing



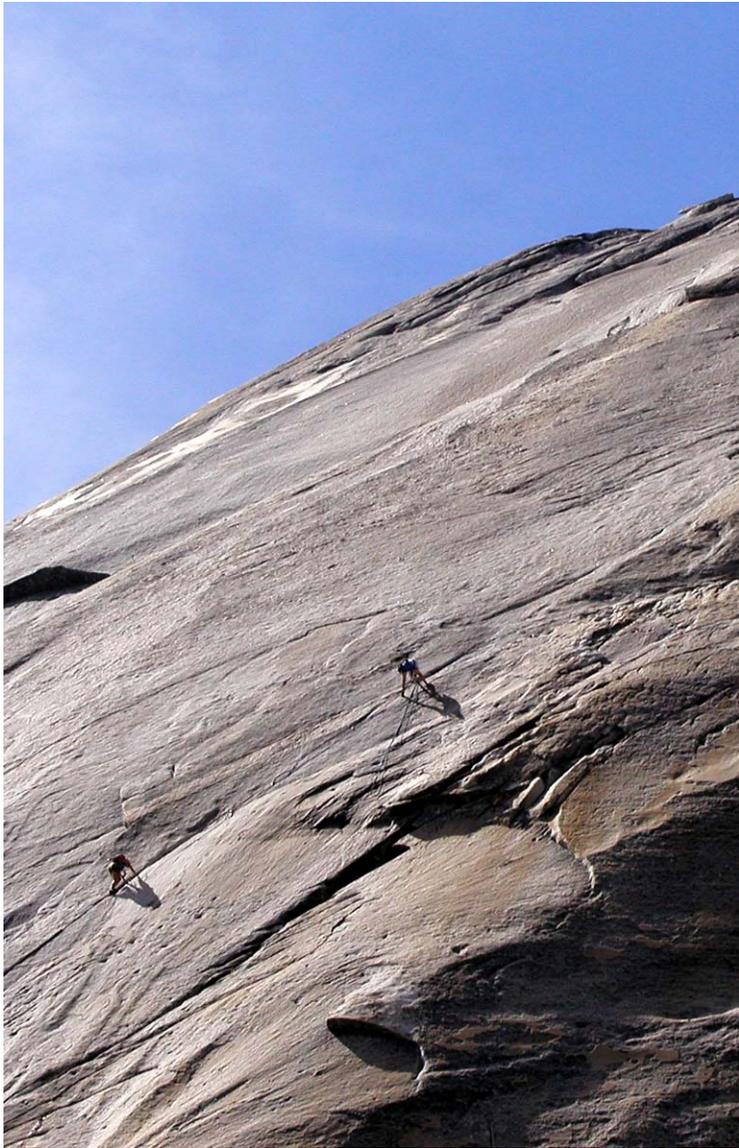
The Nature of Evil

The boy has a stick
he wanders the hot parking lot
hitting things
hurting inside
His sister is missing
the Greyhound arrived
at the station
late last night
and no one could pick her up
Or someone did:
a car full of friends
the gangbanger with a flashy smile
the ever-helpful stranger
All leading her with lies
luring with a pretense of warmth
and acceptance
she can't find at home
Down the alley, across the park
through the wooded lot
just outside of town
they take her
"The cops are looking," the boy says,
he is nine
and worries about tomorrow
wonders why his sister left
where his mother's anger ends
wonders: why?
He grips his stick tighter
and hits things
hoping that someone
who cares enough
will show him how to stop



Day

A bright blue veil
drifts self-satisfied across the sky
hiding
the starry bride-to-be
a sparkling counterfeit
who lies through sanguine lips
about the tenuousness of darkness



Summits

O! that you thought beauty
was fixed and eternal, but no
beauty was the open air
around the statue at the Louvre
full of light and breath and dust
always in motion
its purpose unknowable
and the truth you sought not noble
or lofty or fantastic
but crude like a kitten at its mother's teat
nourished by brute force
and patient tolerance

And how you measured your materiality
entombed by liquid suddenness of change
ignorant of any purpose
but solipsistic now
what wasted perfection!
what a dirtied mirror of much-flawed happiness!
for could there be – transcending the rigid
precepts of our age –
intersecting worlds of chance
just beyond the edge of giant IFs?
a cliff for our transgressive pride
from which we fly or fall
where higher edicts prove in absolute
the antithesis of every certainty?

My truth is bold tonight
and beauty lays her head upon my heart
and life rolls out the windows of my soul
to pierce inanimate forms with heavenly light
I have forgotten everything
given all away but this most precious thought:
that Self is resolute, hard-won and real
that I belong to me by right of will
that my imagination is a self-sustaining force
for good and just and loving-kind
and if I close my eyes and dream another way
that, too, becomes my waking life
so firm this grasp on wanting what I think I am....

Giving in does not occur to me
but somewhere *Not Quite Here* a notion drifts
animated by things alien to Man
as potent as our surest wish
that we are too enamored of this Self
which anchors us to failing flesh
and if we could believe apart from sight
we would find peace and purpose
in much grander work
perhaps a healing of this Universe

So when I tire of toiling
will what I wait for wait for me?
or is it likely that we manifest again
(ascending at an angle spirits know)
to summit every lesson we forgot to learn?



Riding the Tiger

A love which cannot speak
passes between us when we are least aware
 like a tiger roaring silent in our hearts
 thrashing at the hope of freedom
We can't order it neatly in our lives
 or delay it, or even make sense of it
But sometimes, if we choose courage
 we can take a thrilling ride astride its back
 swift and safe through the desert of our fears
 beyond a wild expanse of possibility
 to arrive we know not where



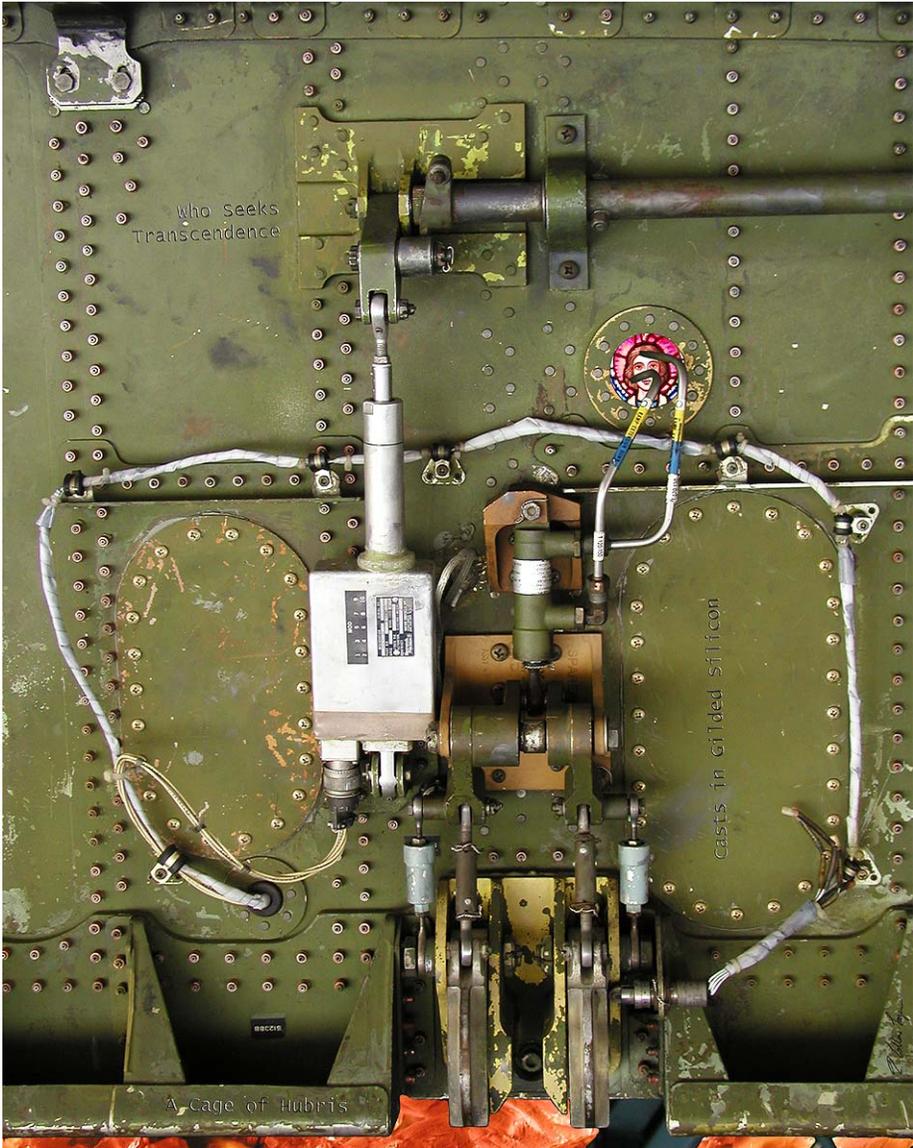
Apathy

Walking alone and hopefully unnoticed
through a war zone of unpleasant options
I studiously avoid the land mines
of empathy and self-sacrifice
hastily duck the flying shrapnel
of conscientiousness
with smiles, nods, and tight-lipped silence
I enforce cunning ignorance on myself
stilling my soul and all its sensibilities

Why not stop here, on this sterile plot?
why not dig a hole and climb in
to sleep a sweet release
from all responsibility?
by greater force of will than it takes to act
I deny I can change anything
and bow my head
in sad but vaguely eager anticipation
of self-fulfilling doom

Technology

who seeks transcendence
casts in gilded silicon
a cage of hubris





The Jester is no Fool

Smiling silk of golden words
 draping like a well-toothed laugh
 across my warring mood
this lucid mask hides nothing
 but beckons every curious eye
 to pry beneath its mirth
why then this flighty fellowship
 this acting troupe of two
 which plays an empty hall
 or not at all...?
is there anything as fair-weathered
 as this torn curtain
 across a cluttered stage?
here, take these dusty props:
 a mindless frolic in the park
 the stony echo of simple song
 the feel of mountain breezes
 on your rising brow
 a few passionate exhortations
 spaced carefully
 between precious sips of beer
 and friendship
 draped warmly about your shoulders
take these, and invoke that uncanny craft of yours
take them
 and make some meaning in the world



Heart Who Walks Broad Vistas

Heart who walks broad vistas
brave clay facing chilly breezes
thoughts to center, ever-deeply
 fragrant with felicity
how inspiring your strength
how admiring this pleasure
 sitting near you
 listening to your world

Heart who walks broad vistas
brimming with decisive sense
you lift your hands to open sky
and lean with wistful promise
 into the opening warmth
 of life's secret blossoms
how beautiful they are
 these many parts of you

Heart who walks broad vistas
what will you do
when you stumble, startled
 into what you so desire?
may all your journeys
 be as brightly lit
as the moments
 you have given me today



Muse

Fantastic

chaotic-with-joy kind of state
no craving, no incessancy
purpose emblazoned by commanding hands
sigils of hypnotic language
strength of love's sweet stench
undulating sweaty gleam
throbbing intoxication

I am numb and blind

to any temptation outside your glowing sphere
what was ever loneliness?

You are Creation

endlessly fertile
thighs spread wide like the arms
of a beckoning Siren
imprison me in the miasmic steam of lust
until I am born, O, again and again
all anxiety balmed by aching acquiescence
each sacred, unrepentant want
joined by gentle articulation

then

when my desire dissipates
and the whining mongrel of daily obligations
disrupts our reverie

then

my lover, my loyal heroin
tell me your name
cradle my seething soul
and entice me once more
with your sensual oblivion
crying out elation
to all that Spirit is



Piecemeal Loss

Door closes

blam!

'nother one gone

Hapless bamboo rake

scratch scratch

amid scattered, reaching pages

what my heart takes, aches

and the words pile up

"Baby, you left the closet door open!"

old luggage

angry, hungry luggage

from waaaay back

snap!

'nother one gone

Rings, rings on my true love's hand...

oops, already got one

round and round we go

eye + want + word = own

same sad sappy song

'nother one gone

Sweet charity

why do you smell like summer to me?

why hot kisses like warning beacons

carving the meat of me?

eat of me!

salvation, salve-hate-shun

Maybe I'll leave the thriftless

shifting of desire

in the evening's gentle choir

who goes to bed early nowadays?

'Nother one gone, oh.



Affairs of Consequence

It is 12:17 a.m.
It will be an hour before I see my love.
I feel like I am waiting to be born.

She comes, her smile shining in the night.
My passion says, "I am flame in a bubble. Touch me."
This curving warmth is home.

Before dawn: "Please stay," I whisper
knowing that when she leaves, I die
my soul departs
my body cools.

"Time away from you is just passing time," she says.
But slowly, quietly, she dresses
then slips back into the Outer Darkness.

Eyes turning away
kisses fading more quickly
her touch comes less often.
Yes, she loves me, but she fears
not enough.

A phone call in the afternoon.
It's over. Emptiness.
I will not seek answers
here among the dead.
Relief is a heavy stone rolled aside.
I am risen.



Spacious World

Spacious world
unlock our hearts
plunder us with wonder
unveil your indescribables
define what we cannot
awaken every senseless sense
with mysteries of emptiness
and overfilling all we are
illuminate our hearts
in certainties which contradict
now bound harmonious
by laws our spirit deeply knows.

This thoughtful creature
a paradox that walks
tries wooing your shy depths
in reckless love
intent on conquering
until its ego's hasty denouement
forgive us, then
your earnest prodigals
when we belatedly return
from panicked journeying
away from what we are
to rest beneath your spanning grace
heads bowed before the gift of life.

Inspire us, spacious, wondrous world
as we begin again
like joyous children with a friend
each moment rich with sharing
and listening from deep within.



Satisfaction

To be satisfied
to have contentment
is a cradling warmth within the soul
a heat, like midnight love
or rising wonder
or the finest pedigree of hope
turning in its flame
all unseen possibilities.

Greatness draws near
for light and comfort
sorrow scurries off
into the unseemly night of undoing
and fearful shadows
hide behind themselves.

Now our bliss can dance naked
a flickering laugh of *chroma*
spirits climbing
up, up, up
delicate white ashes
from the embers of desire.

Picture List By Page Number:

1. No picture
2. San Diego, CA
3. Grand Canyon National Park
4. San Diego garden
5. The ghost town of Bodie, CA
6. Zion National Park
7. A basalt boulder in Mammoth Lakes, CA
8. National Cathedral, Washington, DC
9. Yosemite National Park
10. Rainbow Plateau, AZ
11. San Diego, CA
13. Mount Laguna, CA
14. Southern California coast
15. Southern California coast
16. Outside Phoenix, AZ
17. Bodie, CA
18. Yosemite National Park
19. San Diego, CA