

Accompanying albums like *As the World* and *God Pounds His Nails* are sections of Greg Kull's "The Anatomy of Man." Many have wondered about this publication - was it ever released? Many have emailed about obtaining a copy of this work.

Below is the "The Anatomy of Man," complete and unaltered. The 14,000 words that make "The Anatomy of Man" were written from February through August of 1994 while the album *As the World* was being produced. Accompanying "The Anatomy of Man" is a selection of Kull's earlier writings, all contributing to what the author calls, "words and sketches." "The Anatomy of Man," represents the beginning of a prolific period where another eighty or so poems were written in 1994, 1995, and 1996, culminating in the fictional novel, "The Revolution." In the last quarter of 1996, one more work started, another novel, "On the Grounds between Progress and Convention," but it remains unfinished.

## *The Anatomy of Man* By Greg Kull

### ***I. Introduction***

In the month of January, nineteen hundred ninety-four, I began to document an anatomy that began long before. I decided on a title perfect for work that was continuously evolving but had already developed a form and character. I feel this may never be truly complete. Although I believe there to be soft spots in this anatomy, to be whole and to remain honest I have kept all portions.... even the weak. I am far from perfection and so shall my reflection, my perceptions, and my anatomy.

The title comes from a newspaper clipping I had tacked on my wall years back announcing Her Majesty's collection of Da Vinci's anatomical drawings called The Anatomy of Man.

This was inspired by everything.

### ***II. If I Were a Writer***

If I were a writer I would not set this aside until it was finished, and if I were a good writer it may never truly be finished but able to end comfortably, resolving itself like the day.

If I were a writer I would live like a pirate because of words, stealing what adventure I needed. I would live like a mad scientist because of sentences, absorbed within my own ideas. Words have allowed butchers to sail with bakers, forks to play with spoons, tigers to become butter, and families to live in shoes. I would continue, permitting raccoons to wear boots, rabbits to dance in large groups, deer to arm themselves, and fish to debate with the algae they eat.

If I were a writer my story frog would differ and not turn into Prince Charming when kissed, but a deep pool when hot... and I would bathe in my own opinion.

If I were a writer I would sprinkle snow on pretzels to remove excess salt and prescribe hiccups to relieve hidden fear.

If I were a writer I would set you in a secret place, comfortable and cozy, letting you smell handfuls of soil to remind you of the world and I would let you escape before I insulted you with advice. I would give bundles of scented words to girls, ninth inning homers to boys, first kisses to grandparents, and audiences to egos.

If I were a writer I would try to find a balance, not always relying on wonderful scenes and heavenly scapes; sorrow and pain are words too and should not be ignored. I would learn from sacrifice and deal with strife, letting them be emotional tools to help me.

If I were a writer I would keep and nurture those moments that moved me. I would rest on them like petals stuffed under my head, and share them only when they came together as exploding flowers of thought.

If I were a writer I would not pull my sentences from their horizontal lines to place them in the shape of a heart... just to help you better understand love. Love is best left alone, not cheapened by red ink.

If I were a writer I would try to stay away from awkward, pristine words, hoping to avoid stiff sentences. I would want my poems to be natural and worth more than the price of a twenty-five cent word. I would push to feel a flow, a smooth rhythm; like speaking. I would remain easy, lifting my feet and holding my nose when my thoughts got tangled in commas, clogged by colons and lost in nonsense.

If I were a writer I would begin sentences with conjunctions and end them with prepositions, and not answer to any high school english teacher for doing either.

If I were a writer I would be unjust. I would shrink people for not flossing and send their four foot frames to movie theaters where they could move along the aisles refilling popcorn buckets and handing out chocolate covered raisins.

If I were a writer I would be just. I would travel to every theater and butter the popcorn myself.

If I were a writer I would create characters worth judging. I would create enough, so you could choose properly whom to admire and whom to loathe. I would let you take them home, relate and be friends. My heroes may not understand everything, be all that is good and right, nor stand against all that is thought to be evil. They may be very ordinary, but they will also stand up like every gallant fool who slayed a menacing dragon, and innately act as any hero would.

If I were a writer I would receive payment for my words... enough to save me from the dreary and sometimes inescapable routines that belittle life. I would be free.

Most of all, if I were a writer I would write. I would be glad, satisfied and whole. I would not be driven mad by contained expression. I would not look over my shoulder with regret. I would move you, as I have been moved.

Someday I will be a writer.

### ***III. The Anatomy of Man***

I am full of life.

I am a poem.

I am living.

I exist today, within this instant, this moment. I am free, inspired by what is now, then now again, and again and again, until it is over and gone.... then time will put me to sleep, simply, carefully, quietly and alone.

I am the sunrise.... I need not awaken when the rooster thrust morning upon me.... morning is jealous of me.

I see, hear, think.... sleep, feel, talk.... dance, bathe, walk.... laugh, whisper, cry.... understand, comprehend, suffer .... and express.... all without regard.

I am amused. I am a smile. I am a tear.

I am a loafer.... a gazer.... an idle thinker. I stuff my face in the lawn and sniff.... I float in pools, belly toward the hot sun and spout fountains of new rain.... I dig my hands in clay and mold.

I believe.

When colors don't touch.... when words sit as different thoughts.... when the days make no year and the years no life.... I search for the gaps.... the in betweens. They touch both sides.... they lie measured against the colors and the memories and go unseen.... they are not listed.... they are untold.

We are the simple men.... we are the gaps between the brightest colors and the loudest men.... we are the unwritten rhymes.... but we make the picture.... we make the poems.... we crown the faces.... we are simple men.... I am a simple man.

I am not red, blue or yellow.  
I am violet, green and orange.

I am a hypocrite.  
I am not perfect.... I am a poet.

I am the rug on the dusty floor.... I am your boots.... I am your light wind.... I am your cool drizzle.... I am your quiet and peace.... I am here to comfort.

Thank you for your talk.... thank you for your ears.... thank you for your time.... thank you for sharing the beautiful sun, the hill and its view....  
thank you.

Thank you for the fight.... thank you for your friendship.... thank you for tolerating me.... thank you for the inspiration.... thank you for your love.... thank you for making me cry.... for today I am better.... thank you.

Thank you for your guidance.... thank you for your fire.... thank you for the freedom.... for I have learned the most powerful of all the loves.... the love of thinking.

Thank you for questioning me.... thank you for shaking me.

In one particular instant I am whole.... I am calm, happy and me.... then I am so unsure. I am so very unsure.

I am scared.

I live by my actions, my decisions, my rules.... rules I have accepted.... it is all I must do.

Sight is narrow when only the rule of men applies.... when we are content in the light of justice.... when we are strong and right and confident. God applies to all.... he is more than the mender of injustice and the answerer of prayers for help.... he is all that is just.

I kill no one.... I steal from no one. If your rules allow for murder, rape and theft, it is not me or man you must answer to in the end.... it will be God asking you to answer to yourself.... it will be you that views your wrongs and you will cry and hurt the pain you have caused.... forever.... this is hell.

I am a dream.... I sleep to rest, that is all. I sleep days at a time and feel no guilt.... a day rushes by but I do not. I am here ready to begin again.

If I am cut I can be stitched. If I am gray I can be brightened. If I am broken I can be mended. If I am dull I can be sharpened. I am resilient. I have faith in the next moment.

I stay in my room for days. I am nameless in my room.... only me. I am without a title.... I am me. There is no news, there is no mail, there is no office, there is no discussion, there is no schedule, there is no appointment, there is no insurance, there is no race, there is no president, there is no injustice. I am fashionable and I am naked.

We push our hair.... we brush our teeth, we soap our bodies, we rinse our mouths.... we look at ourselves in the mirror and laugh at the thought of "we".... it is me in the mirror.... it is I who will live this life with my teeth, my hair and my body. There is no perfume in my room.... I stink of me.

At times I forget me and lose. I am washed between the lines, I vanish into false pride.... I am not everything. I am only me.

I am isolated. I examine myself. I dive inward.

I am the rose that brightens the bush.... I am the thorn that protects the rose.... I am the bush that holds it all together.... I am the soil for the bush.... I am the worm for the soil.... I am the rain for the worm.... I am the ocean for the sky and the sky for the rain.... I am the river for the ocean.... I am the canyon for the river.... I am the woman bathing in the river.... I am the beautiful woman.... I am the rose that brightens her hair.

I am the moon and I pull the waters.... I am the moon made from cheese.... and the cheese stands alone.

I am not the great expressor.... I am not the word that will stir your soul.... I am not a wise man nor his mountain to rest on.... I am a receiver, moved by life around me.... I am a simple man.

If I must be on this island.... then I must. I have worlds here too. I am safe floating my way. If I am on this island where are you?

Snow flakes are not individual without a microscope and people are not individual without autonomy. Snow flakes make snow balls.... snow balls make snow men.... snow men make snow societies.... snow societies make snow norms.... snow norms make snow deviants.... and here I am.

Egos cause no harm.... egos shoot no guns.... egos rape no women.

If flowers could spit.... we'd spit together. If paint could move.... we'd move together. If rocks could skip.... we'd skip together.

Time is no more a monster than my laziness and boredom no more the monster than my guilt.

I am a simple man and I am sorry for my arrogance.... I am sorry for my callousness and competitiveness.... I am sorry for not saying hello.... I am sorry for not seeing your island and appreciating its beauty.

I must go see.... I am hungry.... not for food, but for more life. Today I add more colors. Today I present myself. Today is today.... that is all.

The sun feels warm on my cheeks.

I am pure again.

I do not fear death.... for I have lived!

I am childlike, in awe and alive. I am not slowed, tangled or pushed knee deep by the past.... I am not detached or separate from my memories.... they are not a corpse.... I live so history can live again.

A cloud's shadow will come and the night will hide the sun.... I am not frightened.... I am my own light; lit with wonder.

I am aware of my outside and I am moved. I watch and engage.... I am responsive and indifferent.

I am mindful of my inside and I react. I explore and defend.... I am what I am.... that is all.

I am full of life.

And I am full of doubt.... whispers.

Without support I fall.

When branches can't reach the tree and the leaves become scattered.... I have doubt.

Where are my books? where is my comfortable music? Where are those great thoughts?.... the answers that fit so tightly?

Do I rest on the past?.... balance upon reference or lean toward the future.... push for tomorrow.

The little patch of gray moves and shades the deep greens of grass.... it covers the butter yellow of those unnamed flowers.... it blends black and white and pools of blue into roadside brown. It prevents the sun from warming my cheeks.... my nose.... my eyelids.

Doubt makes my work ridiculous, my opinion hollow and my confidence weak.... but the table still supports my paper.... my hand rest upon it and I know.

When backgrounds become foregrounds and laws righteous whims.... I doubt.

I doubt a completion.... I doubt another idea.... I doubt heaven and hell.... I doubt love and its miracles.... and I doubt me. I doubt existence and become an atom floating randomly about.... heading nowhere.... then I doubt if this can be.

When doubt comes it is a weed.... it disrupts my garden.... my radishes fight for soil and my tomatoes for light. I lend my earth and my water.... but doubt continues.... it finds its own food and grows.

To follow what I have.... to lean on what I have.... if I question I will not doubt.... if I know I will question.... and follow chance.

This song makes me smile and this feeling makes me strong.... I want more now.... I can do more if I flip off sleep.

Within days I will be far from this blanket of comfort, I will float somewhere again.... being pushed along.... flailing within the currents.

I live from island to island. I dive under and hold my breath and stretch for the beach.... the soil.

I must doubt.... I cannot remain safe.... I cannot stay within this tune, this cup of tea, this pleasant smell.... all my colors. I live to doubt again.... to quake and shake and crumble. My eyes are thinner.... my hands are harder.

Turn from simmer to boil, boil to simmer.... and back to a boil. We all bump into each other.... we all collide.

I shovel and scrap to get a better foothold.... a sturdier base. When feet find and rest on a bottom.... a bigger push, a bigger blade drives me under again.... the motion continues. We reach to grab and push to pull.... we are but motions ourselves driving others under.... filling their footholds.

Do I live to die?.... wake to sleep?.... grow to shrink?.... breathe to cough?.... drink to float?

Do I live so hard and drive myself crazy only to be part of the soil and maybe someone's memory?

You are a signature.... you are a picture and a meeting.... a handshake and a sighting.... you are known.

I have lost all titles.... all breaks. The day does not break.... midnight begins dawn and dawn begins day and day begins night and so on and so on. Words need not break.... thoughts and ideas relax amongst themselves happily cushioned against doubt.

Ode to this and ode to that.... I say ode to everything.... including doubt.

Ode to me.

Ode to you.

Ode to horses and their carts.

Ode to farms and fields.... screams and slurs.

Ode to ideas and love and ode to birds.

Ode to this beginning.... and ode to the anatomy of man.

May his torso support him.... may his legs move him.... may his neck guide him and his head narrate. May his head be confident amid the clouds and happy in a hole.

May love find me.... I'm tired of looking.... please come collide with me O great miracle of love.... run me down.... trample me.... show me your strength and I will show you mine. Take me inside my torso, away from my neck and its direction.... away from my head and its cowardice.... take me inside my chest to my pounding heart.... fill my blood and sweep my body from its thoughts.... give me love!

Change your color.... change your skin. You are still a lizard and a snake. Only the caterpillar will know flight from change.

I see no sleep tonight.... I am awake.

Thank you O great room! thank you O great motivator for igniting me once again. Thank you bed.... I love you too. Thank you heroes.... I can't help but worship. Thank you O age and thank you all ages before.... I lean on you.

Libraries, volumes, stacks, shelves, words, thoughts, pictures, galleries, movies, songs, reels upon reels.... enough. Come on neck turn my legs.... come on legs turn my torso.... towards and away from the crowds.

This sprang from doubt.... thought to thought, that is all.... sleep in between if you must.... but these days bleed together and line up becoming life.... my life.... a life that swings and soars as mighty as all of music.

And this music is in the air tonight.... and it will be in the air tomorrow as well.... music is the air and can't help but be.

Tailors make clothes and musicians makes songs.... I thank them for sharing with me. These clothes and these songs are but a part of me. To you I am the clothes I wear and music is a song you hear.... but we are so much more.

Hear hear hear.... I know you hear.

A song plays and I see you stir.... I see you rustle.... I know you hear. Hum, sing, dance, listen, clap.... it is music!

Our heads are not filled with music.... it is not contained within us.... music is all around looking for the door and the day.

When in the pasture music is the view.... it is the sky and clouds.... it is the yellow dandelions carpeting the rolling green hill.... it is the distance and the sweet smell.... at wood's edge rests a deer, clover leaf and dew ~ a chord to resonate through the forest.... when in the ocean music is the waves thump thump thumping on the beach.... when in the heavens music is the stars.... the sun its lonely song.

Music is neither the lighthouse nor the fog.... it is the light between them cutting the grayness of mist.... it is security for a little boat.

Music is a sound.... it is a whistle pouring from a kettle, a twang vibrating from a string, a clap of hands or hit of spoons or scratch of stones.... it is the snares and horns that march proudly at the parade.... it is a one hundred piece orchestra coming to full force with the crescendo of life.... it is a simple triumph.

Music is powerful cannon fire and painful bullet hits.... it is a simple defeat.

Music asks for change and incites this change.... it calls up notions and delivers friends and memories. It will make you quietly cry for absent lovers lost to painful bullet hits.

The train keeps time as the hobo strums his guitar or blows through his harmonica and it is music adding the flavor to his story.... and the meaning and purpose to his wandering moments.... he is free.... and at home with music.

Music does not come from schools or texts.... it comes from every breath and every inhale.... from every instant. Music cannot be restrained by theory or leashed by perception or even corralled by song.... I say leave music to music.... it is not yours to keep.

Music is the uncovered book.... it is the invisible color.

Take the song as a pebble and shine it and enjoy.... but remember it is only one pebble, one small chunk shaped and ready for you.... so sing!

I am lifted by song and turned, moved and excited...I am bruised, cut and bleeding.... then I am placed next to you. I am open and wanting.... I can see the goodness in you and appreciate your smile.... I am not alone.

I need not sing for the flowers or the coffins or the birds and traffic.... I need not sing for good weather or food or friendship or fame.... I sing because I do.

I need not sing for the rain or the moon.... I need not sing for the fish.... the fields of wheat, of cotton, tobacco or snow.... I need not sing for the miners or engineers.... or doctors or animals.... I sing for it all.

I sing for everything at once.

I sing for all the songs.... I sing for music.

Rejoice rejoice.... I say rejoice.

Come see.... I am only sleeping. I am not a thinned out skeleton.... my nose and mouth are not stuffed with mud.... it is dark, but will be light again.... it is quiet, but will soon be full of sound.... the worm does not nibble on me yet.... rejoice!

Shake the weight you pull.... fly from the structure from which you lean.... jump into the light around you.... move your arms and swim into the brightness.... prick your finger and bleed, lick your blood.... count the berries on that bush it is there for you.... swing from the nearest branch it is also there for you.... dream long into the day.... dream dream dream.

It is always near.... inspiration is always near.

Don't forget to live O brother, don't forget to live!

Man is not born to depend on man.  
Man is born.... that is all.

I try and try.... I am not born to drink the milk you pour for me, I am the milk.... come stand by my saucer full of life and I will stand gladly by yours. Shake friends.... spill out and wet the floor.... run run run out.... go!, do not puddle. Be glad to mix with me and I will be glad to mix with you.... we will run faster.

Good-bye great saucer.... I thank you.

O warmth do not stay beneath my blankets come with me into the morning and sit with me high atop my days and do not look down.... look far and out.... and enjoy the view the days have given me. Enjoy your view too, brother, sister, husband and wife.... there is none better.

Push back from the reflection it is not true.... it wobbles in my cup.... the baker is the artist not me.... his bread satisfies your hunger.... his cakes feed your children. The farmer is the artist not me.... my food is laid out but on a different table.... come sit here, my baskets are full.... I will share.... I must feed you and see you smile with wonder. Come drink for we are always drunk.... drunk of ourselves. Drink me and I will drink you and we'll raise above this table and ceiling and sky.

I am thankful for all of us and this company, this song makes it so.... but it does not continue and we must.... so do not balance me on your scale there is nothing to weigh against me.

Leave me be.

Do not tack me to your wall.  
Do not tie me to your mantle.  
Do not compare me to yesterday.... I am today.



Love is not white, love is not a veil.... put away your flowers.... put away your rings.... clear the pews.... you rain rice on me and I will rain on you forever, so stand back for I need no service.... I need no glad tidings. We do not stand next to love.... it is not here for us to admire and hold.... it is not a gift or note of well wishes.... it is unplannable and unforeseeable and great. When we have been consumed by love and see no longer.... we are dizzy with it and giant. Love shoots through the earth.... it is every daisy.... it is not built from stone, it is not practiced, normal, anticipated or required.... it is love!

Love does not come at twenty or twenty-two or even twenty-six.... it does not steal from the night, the night steals from it and the stars borrow their glow and love asks no payment and it comes always.... Love I welcome thee.

My throat waits to take you in.... to take in what is unseen, what is always truth.... you are beauty and I am ready to receive.

I do not question love's lasting.... daisies grow where they will.

Use use use I do not choose.

We both see truth and we both know beauty.  
Yours is yours and mine is mine.... that is all.

And why shouldn't beauty and truth be the news and all the news?

What of the news today?.... of the names places and events?

The television, radio and papers are filled with the news of the day.... go find it there.... it is not news to me and I care little for it.

I want to hear the news of life!.... brought to me by life itself and edited by all the wonderful poets.

Fill the reports with new thoughts for this is the news for me.

Tell me of what we've cured today.  
Tell me of the moon and its cheese.  
Tell me of some uncharted land.  
Tell me of our heroics.  
Tell me we are all laughable and bold.... and could stand to be a bit more courageous.  
Tell me of the simple sunshine standing on your sill.  
Tell me about the faces and if you relate.  
Tell me of these faces and that they are glowing with thought and hold mountains of inspiration for us all.  
Tell me no more of my broken brother and what pains him.  
Tell me no more of the burning buildings and riotous cities and of looting and killing and raping hating loathing cheating hurting deceiving bombing corrupting.... tell me no more.... I hear no more!

This upheaval is not revolutionary.... this news is old.... it is a contradiction.... it is the same inhumanity and wickedness.... it is the news of yesterday and yesteryear.

I invest no time with gloom.... my attention has other interests.... I don't find the pools of blood sensational.

The farmer's wrinkled skin is sensational to me.  
The doctor's skilled hands are sensational to me.  
The inventor's tinkering is sensational to me.

A mother's love is sensational to me.

A child's genius is sensational to me.... bring all their small hands I will warm them when they are cold.... bring me all their great thoughts I want to think and question amongst them.

Did anyone find a four leaf clover today?.... let me know.

Did anyone dig their hands into the soil today?.... let me know.

Did anyone receive flowers today?.... let me know.

Did anyone grow out of their shoes today?.... let me know.

Who are the beaming fathers?.... let me know.

Who are the mother's that gave birth?.... let me know.

Who is happy?.... let me know.

Did anyone share today?.... smile today?.... dream today?.... laugh today?.... live today?.... let me know.

Did anyone see a poet today?.... let me know.

Where do the poets hide?.... I am looking.... find me the poets and walk them into the daylight and into the street I need to see their faces.... we can all sing together.

We can all be moved.

Bring me the presidents and prime ministers and generals and bankers and lawyers.... bring me all the newsmakers so they can see the poets and together we can rest and look and view the poem in which we live.

Turn off your luxuries.... they dull your senses.

Enjoy what is real.... cold is cold.... enjoy!

Pull down your hoods and remove your shades.... see the faces.... see the man across from you. He too has a special song.... he too has a special memory and a dream.... he too deals with what is dealt.... is he German? is he English? is he American? Spanish? African? Irish? Japanese? Slavic.... or is he a man?

Come poets make him a man again.... give him back his anatomy.... we all cup our ears to hear.... so step up and give us joy or give us sorrow but give us the news of the day.

Today my news is the passing of my life's spring.

O wonderful spring don't leave me to summer.... I enjoy your freshness so.

It is no use.... youth is gone.

O summer of life I do not resent you.... you too will be missed when autumn rounds the corner. You have brought me my promise to myself and you have brought me the anatomy of man and you have brought me a different life.

O how fortunate am I.

Answer your calling answer your calling answer your calling!

You who feel that you have not been called, do not stir at these words and do not look angrily at me for you too are chosen.... you have been chosen to live.

You are the rattle I hear.

You are not forsaken.... you are let go!

You do not want my load.... yours is enough. Mine is constant, mine is tugging and pulling.... mine is ambition, a relentless ambition.... that keeps simple goodness and past achievements from being enjoyed. It won't give me rest.... so I sleep.... but this is only to hide, this is no solution.

I cannot guess how I will hold my duty when life becomes winter but for now I do not hold it at all.... I am held by it.

You that have been called but do not answer will be sucked inward and crushed and shoved into the earth from the burden you carry and your eyes will always look down and the flowers around you will wilt and turn gray and the faces around you will frown and you will become indifferent, stoic, weak, and unstable.

My early summer has shown me this.

I find no beauty in what God gives me and I am lost to even the most obvious truths.

O my early summer! I will remember thee. When I am asked if I have struggled I will smile and point to you.... my early summer.

But now.... how fortunate am I.

I have answered my calling and can move freely about and I recognize my calling as the voice of ambition yet know not where it will lead me.

Still I can see you and your body and I recognize you as more than a neighbor.

I mustn't note every occupation for you to be recognized.... for you are recognized everywhere.... you are my neighbor where ever I am and you are great.

You are the chapters of the great book.... you are the stalks of the great field.... you are the feathers of the great bird.

We are all great but I must say some are greater than others.

Although man is created equal, equal he does not remain.... man himself sees to this.

How dare you make the lion feel small and wicked for his mighty roar. I say roar at will.... roar loudly and roar often. I say let the peacock strut his plume.... he looks better that way. Enjoy his colors they are more magnificent than mine and yours.... they are more magnificent than the robin's but the robin has a prettier song but this cannot be compared to the song of the sparrow's but the sparrow can't hover like the humming bird but none of these birds have eggs as grand as the ostrich and he keeps his head in a hole.... unlike the eagle, the proudest of them all.... but even the eagle needs the mouse and the mouse a kernel of corn and for this he must depend on the soil and water and sun.... and for this we are nothing near great but in awe of nature's greatness.

We paint big to make ourselves grandeur and to who?  
We have myths to make our traditions richer and for what?  
We have heroes to make our future appear brighter and why?

We only live to die.... and in between we have pleasure and pain.

No.... we are not equal.... better or worse I care not.... but we are not the same.

We are the same with hands.... yet we hold different dreams.

We are the same with eyes.... yet we hold different truths.  
We are the same with feet.... yet we walk different paths.  
We are the same with teeth...yet we need different foods.  
We are the same with beauty.... yet we love different people.  
We are the same with days.... yet we live different lives.  
We are the same with God.... yet we attend different churches.

The individual amongst individuals.

We all imitate.... I am proud to flatter you so.

Come run with me.... please enjoy this pace.... if not I must ask you to stay away for this is the pace I will keep.... it is part of my promise.

I am content.... I needn't see this town though I am new here.... it is me I must see today.... I must attend to myself and my anatomy.... it is calling. I hope this confidence continues though I know it won't for doubt is always waiting for me.

There is no more looking for inspiration.... I must make it.

I must continue, I must believe, I must always want.... I must write the words that bring the music and I must be within this anatomy, within this body of work.... within the beauty and within me.

And then the clowns will come again and be more than funny and trees will need forts.... and kisses will be years away and tents will be castles and sticks swords and I will know no more or less than I do now.

What have you loved?.... really loved?

I will go within soon.... I give my body and my soul, I give it all to understand.... and I give the anatomy of man before my eyes are shut forever.

I have lived for twenty-six years and for twenty-six years I have watched life and its people.... I have taken in and absorbed what I could but now my soul calls me to watch myself and its person.

No man is smaller than he who hides from his own inner darkness and pain.... he who has not the courage to face the demons within himself.... and mine is pretending.

Soon I will go within.

What is a year alone against the many spent together? This is no experiment.... I feel more the laboratory rat amongst people.... amongst people that want me to be more like them.

I will work, create, and hopefully discover many more beautiful worlds.... I will paint and sketch and write and sculpt and sleep.

My days will not begin or end at midnight.... they will begin when they begin and it will no longer be a day for I will also be alone from the sun. I will live through me and my own moving blood and thumping heart.... O the joy!

Soon I will go within.... and become bigger than before.

I will not bathe.  
I will not shave.  
I will not put one foot outside my house nor let one foot in.

I will eat the food I have stored and if I eat it all and become hungry I will eat myself.  
I will climb ladders and swing from balcony to balcony above my studio floor and I will survey all I can do.  
I will start to accumulate works for my new room.... the first after the main studio.

The new room like anything created will also have feeling. It will be fit to house the works I've created during the year.... paintings and sculptures built into the walls.

This room and the many I will add will become my place...my own museum. More rooms, more and more rooms will be added as work is finished.... and no work will leave.

It belongs there.... like me.

It would be awkward in some city gallery.... it has no reason to hang there. It mustn't be bought by some gray haired fat lady in a polka dot dress with diamonds and a small dog.... to be put in her penthouse suite.... it is not hers and all the money in the world can never make it hers.

She is not entitled to keep this beauty!  
Tell her to make her own.... this is mine!

It is not for judgment by even the loftiest fine art critic. How dare he judge art at all.... he should sell sides of beef or wrist watches and chains, it is all the same. Stay far from my place.... my work asks no opinion from you nor does it need one. Go review turkey hand drawings and propose contests so that you can judge forever.... but I tell you stay far from my place for I am not poor and struggling and bohemian made.... I am rich atop my piles of golden days...and I am me.

Children come.  
You that see.... come.  
And you close to life.... come.... bring it here to share.  
And you close to death.... come and smile with life once more.  
And see what I need to see!  
For this is only a plan.... a dream.  
This is somewhere in my tomorrows but I pray it is near for I must go within soon.

And be consumed by thought.... away from the noise of the world.

O beautiful world leave me be today you are too big.... let me idly sit.... for today I must think and I think long.

O yes I am amazed to be alive! I am amazed to come from woman and now stand six feet tall.... taller than whom I came. Me just an egg?.... unthinkable.... me just one of the millions of sperm fighting for that egg?.... I am nothing against this.... yet I am what remains.

God you are beyond great and nature you are beyond wonder.

Why this body?  
Why this anatomy?  
Why these thoughts?  
Why do I appear the way I appear, why am I a man?.... not woman? or goat? or lake? or mosquito?  
Why does my laugh sound as it does? and why can't I laugh always?  
Why are you my brother?.... and not a sister?.... why are you my neighbor?.... and not a stranger?

Yet I am a man. From womb to war. How funny it is to think men fight.... tell me of the great one, the great war against the great enemy.... enemies then, allies now.... what next?

We are all skins of moving blood, of pushing and pulling joints.... but still we are no different than trees and stones with mass.... yet we are all bodies of thought and of great functions.

O marvels of our anatomies don't go unrealized! Remind yourself of yourself! Touch your skin, your hands will not burn.

O don't let me forget my hands or feet or eyes while I get mixed up attending to the duties of a day.... simple senses and gulps of air mustn't be ignored but celebrated.

Run and touch everything.... run and smell the world.... run and be glad you can.

I put my face in the mud not to remember the soil but to remember my face.... I walked in the rain not to remember the sky but to remember my body.... these things I do.... and not to act the part of the estranged artist or eccentric thinker or provide meat for my poem or merit to my life.

These things I just do.

My words are far from clever and far from plot and far from fiction and far from your smoky coffee shops and far from sonnets and far from rhyme but my words are near to my soul and at times truer than anything I see around me.

Don't wonder of your arm only when it is broken.... don't cherish your sight only when it begins to blur.... don't complain of a long, inconvenient walk, be glad you are free to move at all.... for someday you may dream of walking.

Think long of food after it crosses your tongue.... why does it taste so? and why does some seem distasteful to me? What is sweet? and what is sour? How are these proteins, enzymes, bones, blood, cells, tissues, hair, joints, organs, processes, thoughts, pains, and shapes me? Think longer of this. Think long after you toss that rock.... why are you able to toss it perfectly to me without figuring arc, velocity, weight or density, or without negotiating wind or gravity? Think long of your arm that throws and holds and cradles and carries without you knowing anything of your shoulder, elbow or wrist. Think why we are great! Think long of a clock's tic and of it's smallness against all of time but think longer still for it is your tic and it is crucial.

Think long of different times and of the men, women, boys and girls with their arms and feet and their hair and pains and kisses and of their steps and of their mornings and of their music and of their dreams and fears and of their loves and of their labor and of their families and holidays and think long of their little moments for they too were crucial.

Think long of the boy who received a bullet in his chest. Think longer of his thoughts while his body lay bleeding in a Virginian pasture and think longer of that sunny day in eighteen hundred sixty-three and why his life ended amid a battle that once seemed adventurous? Lay next to him before he is again forgotten and touch his warm blood and feel his heart slow and see his eyes go black and ask him to define glory and ask him what it is that he has really loved?

Think about your sunny days and how fortunate you are to have them. Think long of your grandparents and of their early summers and of their sunny days for they once dreamt and thought as youth would think. And where do they sit with their dreams now?

Think longer of your heroes and the levels you wish to achieve.... and try to be content and ambitious in the same moment for I am having trouble.

Think long after you move across the floor. Think long after you move across a yard. Think longer why you move at all and why we move away and towards each other.... and why it all becomes routine.

Think long about what I say for it is a meaningless, lonely sound without your ears.

Think long and I will think long also and I will wonder why it fills my heart to write these words to you and not you to me.

Be content with thought be content with yourself be content in time and be content with your days and be content to change if you must and from this you will flower into beauty and you will know truth.

From woman to war.

From woman to soil.

From soil to sun and to woman again.

Is the flower a flower just by poking through the soil?.... a man fresh from the womb?.... I say no. Little one be patience .... your head a bulb of tightly clasped pedals.... your body a fragile straw stiffening in the light. Little one reach up to face the sun.... time will bring color and yes time will bring a flower.

Why is it then we rush with thought?.... Why do we hurry to spout half baked truths?

I have contributed to this noise I hear.... for half truths and half thoughts are not flowers but the noise of the world.

So into my yard I march and by a nearby quarry I sit, setting my load next to me.... thank you quarry for this wonderful view.... next to you I will plant myself and next to you I will build a great house of books.

I place a book into the wall and I stand looking up into the ceiling.... I am surprised at the size of this house. I wonder.

In curiosity I push Whitman out from his place in the wall.... out from his place in my house of books. Through Whitman comes the light of day and a new view. I take in the new view but soon I spin on my heels and push Emerson through.... and again in comes light and a new view. Then I become excited and impatient, and hurriedly push Thoreau through.... Remarque through.... and Harper Lee.... and Rand, Stevenson, Morley, Crothers, Lucas and Kafka, Lawrence, Porter and Fitzgerald, White and Hemingway, O'Connor, Maugham, Buzzati, Boyle, Nabokov, Welty, Munro, Capote and Mansfield, Babel, Andric, Thurber.... I push them all through and I push all the unmentioned through and in comes all the light.

Yes in came all the light.... leaving me to shake and to doubt and to stand with nothing but my limited view and my fragile anatomy.

And with my half truths I reached for more and up toward the sun and I became a flower to me.

In bloom.

With confidence.

With clothes, color and sound.

In bloom with hate.

O hate I face you.... I must.

It is me I hate.

I do not hate you.

I do not hate you.... I do not hate you.

It is me.... my discontent lies here next to me.

In bloom I drink more tea.

Boil some water and add those leaves.

In bloom I am drunk and more than stupid.

In bloom I am ridiculous but I have my anatomy to soothe and satisfy me before I sit with regret when my tomorrows all become yesterday.

So here I say I want to be famous and hover above the world.  
For this I am told to hate myself.  
This world rewards humility and I have none for I am great.

I am sorry.

Beware pretender for it is you I despise.

"Tea for two and two for tea..."

I too cherish simple pleasures but always simple I am not.

I envy your smile and your carefree tune but what song do you sing when it rains on you?

Where is your sunny whistle and light step when you are confused, tense, burdened, and tired of your labor and tired of your debt and you are tired of your inadequacies and tired of another morning?

Where is your humor when you are all alone with no one to entertain?

Where is your carelessness and wit when you want.... when you are not heard.... when you are embarrassed?

Where is your loving spirit when you criticize and hate?

O perfect artist full of struggle and fad.

O you who sing and paint and write and sculpt and tell tales of only creating for oneself.... why do you show your work?

Why is it wrong to want to be known.... to want to be popular?

I say stand up.... share your work and admit you want it shared and admit you'd rather have it liked than disliked.

O unthoughtful scholar.... where is your silly talk and laughter when you are tested and caught in bar room debate?.... your shouting has lost its carelessness.... what is it that you will prove by argument's end?

And you have no ego?

Go parrot elsewhere.... you are worse than the gossip you spread.

O I have anger.

Ode to this anger for it is real.

O I complain.

Ode to this complaining for it motivates me.

It is the fake person I loathe.

I must be honest so here I vent.... for hate lives in me next to all my affections.

Tell me how I should turn away.... tell me how I should be bigger and not bother. Tell me again it makes me laugh.... for I have seen you argue and I have seen you criticize and I have seen you hate. So please tell me again.

I am weak with this hate but I am growing stronger with my anatomy and I am thankful. I am better to recognize and confront this hate than have it hide and swell.

I am lighter without it.

And I am young and I am in bloom.

And maybe I bloom in a garden without you.... but I hope not.... for I relish all colors.



Classes schools teachers texts notes exams and grades.... students students students what do you learn?

What could you learn that is more than yourself?

What is it that you really love?

O I loved to play!  
And play I did.

Stand straight in the box.  
Hear from the bleachers.  
Hear from the bench and be glad to be in the box.  
O I loved to play!

Eye the holes.... eye the boys and their position.  
Eye their uniforms and how they wear them.... eye their socks and their gloves.  
Eye the ball.... soon it will come toward me.

Come boy throw it fast.  
Come throw it and let in never end.  
Give me your pepper your smoke your heat.  
Pound your mitt again.... I can wait.  
You must come to me soon.

O you with your hands on your knees.  
Prepare spit crouch and spit again.  
We are all little boys and this is our game.  
This game is bigger than the world.

Bigger than all of the world!

O you with your hands on your knees.  
What is your situation.  
What will you do.  
Will you wait or charge?  
Will you stand in front and not be scared?  
And when the ball hits your heel and rolls up your arm will you panic and lose control?

Now pitcher throw it my way.... they are all ready.  
I can't hurt you too much.  
You are up by two with no one on.

Now bring that ball my way.  
Yes that's it.

Watch the strings.... it looks straight.  
I have but a moment.  
Come on anatomy work.  
Twist dig turn grip and swing and swing hard for I want the fence.  
Come on eyes watch that ball closely it may not come again.  
Watch it closely.... my hands need to know where to go.

All of this!.... this grass and dirt and cleats and our little caps.... all our little caps.  
Diamonds.... strikes and doubles.  
Suicides.... pitches and homers.

O the air is perfect and dinner is a ways away. But do not tarry this is the one. This game is all that matters.  
Bases and bats and maybe a tree in the way.... but its a triple.... I'm telling you its a triple, if the ball goes in.... it's a triple.

All of this and my friends too.  
And now this swing!

If that was my ode to the game I am duller than I thought.  
No that was only a quick look back.  
O I loved to play.  
No that was only a push.  
And I am glad I can look back.  
And I am glad I have something to look at and that I can look and smile.

And I am more than thankful to have friends!  
Thank you.... all of you.

Ode to the playgrounds.  
Ode to the bike rides and pools.  
Ode to our competitiveness.  
Ode to our firsts.  
Ode to our age.  
Ode to every day that put me here.  
Ode to those summer nights.  
Ode to flashlights and to tag.  
Ode to you.... you are my greatest friend.

Do you still see?  
Do you still want?

Come lets be pirates and explorers.  
Come lets be great.  
We still can.  
I know we can.

O tell me how labor is money and money is freedom.  
Tell me so I can laugh.  
Tell yourself again.... so you too can start to believe the foolishness.  
Wad your cheeks with gum and walk outside. Run fast and dive into that puddle.... and remember.

O is it your soul that's thirsty?  
Well that is another matter.  
Turn in my friend.... it is all there. You must first see your soul if you are to quench its thirst.  
I am not counsel and I apologize for my advice.  
I know these songs are old.... but it is no matter for these songs are mine.... and it is here I lay them next to each other.

Every little word a cell.  
Every sentence a bone.  
Every phrase is tissue.  
I am making a man.  
Come scientists.... come see what a poet can build.... come be mad with me.

The laughs are sweeter when sugar is all you eat.

Leave the mirrors.... I like the view.  
It took three days to get here.... three days to quiet the noise.... three days and forty-seven cups  
of tea to push the noise away.... but here comes thought.

Here comes what I used to hold within and ignore.  
What results will it bring?  
Will it bring truth today?  
Is this where all the heads point?  
Is it truth you are after great philosopher?  
What truth?  
Your truth?  
There is no common truth old man?  
The only common thread is our anatomies for we both have mass.  
I say truth is not Greek and truth is not Roman nor English and truth is not old.... it is as new as  
my next breath.... every moment truer than the last.

O yes it is here.  
And it is as deep as the ocean.... and all the fish are its proverbs.

Truth is not wind or time.  
Truth is not made for or by any metaphoric wordsmith.  
Truth is truth and that is all.  
And someone wake Keats for it is not beauty either.... beauty remains itself. It wants no truth. It  
needs none for it is beauty.  
Add all the adjectives and meter you wish but still it remains.... you can't hold truth in poetry.  
Add your influence and a little persuasiveness so all can follow you and when they do, it will be  
truth you kill. It will be all of their individual undiscovered truths that die as you cram yours in.  
Come little minority.... move and grow and become a majority. Come lead for awhile I supposed it  
is fair.... and tell me if the grass is greener when you get there?  
I sit distant from it.... I sit in my own yard and enjoy my own pretty green.  
But come tell me anyway.... social order is news to me.

Is it your room where you dance?  
Is it your room where you are the hero?  
Take your room with you always.... and you will always be comfortable.... and you will always be  
yourself.  
I will see this and smile and remember my anatomy and also be at ease.

No one owns my rapture!  
Ode to rapture for I have a new word.

O what a day!

O what a day indeed!

What is this anatomy? and when will it end?  
This anatomy is me.  
A young thought.... that will not end.

Quantity has provided some honesty.... an objectivity to edit mediocre verses.  
This I see as good.  
I am able to let go.  
I have enough to let go.  
I have said I am making a man and it is true and in the end this man will be a writer and so much  
more.

But I mustn't hurry my anatomy.  
Patience speed.... for I am only twenty-six and well on my way. I have taken the first step of a hundred.... the hardest step to take.

O what a day!

Beginnings are difficult.  
So much doubt, so little money.

I admire many.  
George Bernard Shaw wrote five pages per day culminating in five books he considers preparation.  
Preparation! Preparation!  
Thoreau retreats to the woods.... Dickinson to her gardens.

Talent and persistence.  
Hero worship.

I am amid a great transition.  
I throw myself at myself.  
I begin from nowhere.  
I begin with a weak vocabulary.  
I begin with a sparse knowledge of literature.  
I begin without a story.

If it has all been said before.... why do I continue? Why do I write it all again?  
Because it is as new as now and now and now.  
History sits here with me.... I am its new voice.  
The present allows, asks and needs new voices.  
Content remains constant but communication does not.

I make the echo louder.

I believe everything is rational.  
And that everything has a point.... even the pointless.  
But in this there must be sense.  
To propose there are no rules is making a rule. This cannot be.

If you're proud to be different? Then why influence? You deter in others what it is you are proud of in yourself.

I am only as different as you. The difference lies between us.... as unknowing lies around us.

Too many voices.... and sometimes not enough.  
Too many ungrounded, unresolved opinions.

I think sometimes we shouldn't talk.  
I think sometimes I shouldn't write.  
But then I hear the half truths and the noise of the world rises. It makes me uneasy. It makes me unhealthy. So I will write and add my bit to the noise.... in hopes of having one quiet day.

One quiet day.  
One day to look at ourselves.  
One day when the world sits quietly.

We are too busy to enjoy ourselves.  
We are too comfortable to be completely free.  
We need our security.  
We are determined to prove we lived.

Why discourage idle life. It may be the most ambitious life of all. It is not easy to do nothing.  
Lazy days force thought.

I applaud self examination.... everything else is hiding.  
I want to find pleasure without travel. I want to explore myself before I explore the world.

I want to love myself.  
I want to love you.

How wrong I've been to judge you so.  
I am ashamed to think so narrowly.  
I am ashamed to think so selfishly.... that my likes must be your likes.... that my ambition must be your ambition.... that my struggle must be your struggle.

I envy you.  
I envy your simple smile.

As the world revolves, it revolves around us all.

And as it turns and spins and sputters it will come, maybe slowly, maybe quickly, to a rest.

If tomorrow were my last.... I'd do my best to smile today.  
And if it were an end, I'd end happily.

But if it were not.... and the end were to fall the day after.  
I'd have gotten one free day to make good.  
And if the end were to get lazy and wait fifty years.  
I would unknowingly be glad to live.... smiling one day after the other.  
And if these days were added by ones.... I'd have such a wonderful life.

And all trying days will soon rest forgotten.  
And this is life viewed from a distance.

Standing atop a roof.... this house is my ground.  
Floating higher above.... this roof becomes a dot.  
One dot lying next to all other dots.... each another house, each other home of crucial moments,  
maybe love, maybe quiet, maybe a fight, an argument, maybe worry, maybe all the things that  
happen in every other dot....  
Gazing from the moon every personal world becomes pepper.  
Every sun a star.

While traveling to the moon a thousand turns are detours too closely seen.  
But from the moon those thousand turns are one line traveled.

Tack the wind well and you will rest on the moon.

And so the moon is truth.  
And smart commerce and diligent labor bring a kind of wealth.... a familiar wealth.  
But do they solve any mysteries?  
Do the highest piles of gold ever reach the moon?

And there has been many trips to the moon and many journeys for truth. Who's journey do we refer to, admire and remember? Who do we remember?

All of man.  
With art the memory of man.  
With history the record of man.

Memories last only as long as the body that keeps them.

And I want to remember you, all of you.... tying your shoes, brushing your hair, eating your eggs, scratching your stomach, powdering your wig, applauding your theater, holding your children, feeding your pets, riding your horse, opening your gifts, sharing your joke, drinking your wine, building your home, turning your soil, defending your town.... your family.... yourself, closing your shades, preparing your meal, wanting your friends, wanting your say, reading your news, saying your prayers, singing your hymns, judging your neighbors, washing your face, holding a smile, fearing the dark, tending your fire, aiming your gun, rubbing your hands, kissing your wife, reviewing your maps, respecting your superiors, hating your boss, saving your money, hearing your footsteps, speaking your mind, loving your husband, quitting your job, whistling your tune, counting your sheep, drinking your milk, churning your butter, hiding your desires, holding your tongue, losing your way, seeing your love, enjoying your peace, keeping your pace, losing your temper, begging your pardon, stressing your point, fixing your tractor, boarding your train, pounding your mitt, heating your metal, tightening your belt, getting your grades, paying your taxes, filling your buckets, applying your makeup, picking your flowers, slicing your meat, buttoning your coat, wringing your socks, missing your home, wanting a home, killing your enemy, fighting your temptation, wasting your time, describing your likes, forgetting your manners, learning your trade, taking your lumps, stirring your soup, trading your sandwich, bothering your parents, needing your parents, fooling yourself, stealing your dinner, bending your legs, opening your fist, holding your courts, climbing your trees, sipping your tea, shoveling your snow, writing your letters, painting your pictures, cracking your whips, straining your voice, resting your head, closing your eyes....

Though you have lived and lived fully, you are mostly forgotten.  
This obsession is obvious and plainly vain.

Letters into words.... flowers into fields.... people into nations.... minutes into days.... days we mostly forget.

And all the loves of life are worth remembering.  
And all the pretty faces.  
One day black One day blue One day gray One day light because of you.  
One day bold One day patience One day perfect because of you.

Body of smell.  
Body of gentle form.  
Body of motion.  
Body of body.

And if I draw you, my sketch would only be what you allow me to borrow.  
And no hurt or absence will weaken or wither my memory of you.

I am thankful to have loved as little or as much as I suppose I have.  
Thank you for removing the morning chill.  
From you I have gained much.  
And this I accept without question.... this I gratefully accept with thanks.

If hurt comes.... it comes.

Forfeit no love or chance of love, puny or great, to avoid any hurt.

Love of love.  
Love of sun.  
Love of life.  
Love of woman.

So much to love and share. Her beauty is given to me. Stay a bit.... I enjoy the sweetness. I cherish life's sugar.  
Tight to her chest I hear her heart.... pumping her anatomy.  
Forget me and mine.... I want this anatomy.  
Ode to your anatomy.  
I am corrupted by you.  
And this pool we are in.  
One night of bodies without thought.... for this I am fortunate.

I have faced some love.... passionately, unconfused and daring.  
I am surrounded by the handsome and unique.  
I am surrounded by beauty.... perfectly, undefined and limitless.

Not all love is to be given or shared.  
Some remains. Some is kept and savored.

O poor Amory.  
O desolate Dorian.  
Amory, Dorian and me.... set the table for three.  
We'll start with soups of vanity.  
Soups of vanity.  
Bowls of reflections.... sit straight and sip yourself.  
How does it taste?

I have returned.  
Back from the confusion outside my room.... Screwtape was right to keep man from his comfortableness.... advising tempters to push patients into the world.... to push them through the rye.

O Holden Caulfield please catch me!

I am staying here all day.  
I love my room more than woman.  
My smells my sounds my organization my paintings my books my tools my chair my lamps my pillow my fan my room.

I am staying here all day.  
Comfortably secure.  
Refilling my empty soul.  
Painting apples.

To be.... to be to be to be.  
To be nice to spiders.... crawling close.... webs help collect dust. My dust balls may be big but they're easier to find.... easier to collect.

I am sorry for clichés and greeting card poetry.  
I am sorry for amateurism and wanting so much.

Kerouac was beat.

Which generation was lost?  
You silly girl.... you are pretty.

Me.... this apple and some paint.... an empty canvass.... a pen.... some paper and a match. Get some film so I can share. Is fire timeless?

Click goes the camera.  
Click goes the dried bug beneath my foot.  
Plunk goes the seeds on the heads of birds.... pretty and ugly. Always credit the tree or seeds will go to waste.

An incident is only an incident. We are an accumulation of these incidences.  
I am not one poem but the whole.... a complete anatomy that supports its parts.... making the ambiguous more specific.... more accessible.... more relative.

I sleep curled in a ball.... I am round.  
I am round like a fist.  
A fist that will not beat this country senseless.

I am round.  
Rolling towards all of my tomorrows.... rolling, bumping and bouncing towards an older age.

Ode to grandparents.... your bumping is mostly gone. Ode to you for it is your minutes and hours that have brought me here.

Ode to your hands... they have held so much.... your hands held my mother and father and then me. Your hands have held countless slices of bread, shook countless other hands, packed countless snowballs, felt countless panes of cold glass, wiped away countless quantities of sweat, thrown countless rocks, struck countless matches, applauded countless friends, dropped countless bars of soap and reached for the glow of countless little lightning bugs.

You once stood hip-high to your father and you whispered funny secrets and hid candy in shoes and raced into fields without tiring.

Little ones come near and listen.  
Age shares.  
Listen to what becomes from what has happened.  
Listen to dreams that were once dreamt and you may now be dreaming.  
Listen to good advices.  
History sits before us.... listen.  
Listen well.

I am blessed with family.  
I am blessed for they are good.

Family.  
Love.  
Family.  
Around tables around Christmas trees around birthday cakes lit with candles around pools and campfires.... around thought.

From family.  
Learned respect.... responsibility.... of God and of his love.  
Learned to try.... wish.... cry.  
Learned.... simply learned.  
Learned value.... persistence.... reward.



Learned of consequence and potential.

From brothers.

Learned to wrestle.... win.... care.

Learned.... simply learned.

Learned to be proud.... to be myself.

Learned of integrity and of sport.

And it has been family from which we first draw.... but then we sip and sometimes guzzle from new pools.

Hello on my first day.

Hello from the woods.... from the clearing.... from the city, town or farm, hello from any place except the one erected for me.

I embark further into poetry knowing that it could never reach any popularly accepted truth.... but instead fall from truth like water under it's cloud.... and if a poem should go beyond truth and see it's noble glory this world would flip over and spin backwards, and gravity would expel instead of pull and we would all float in a cool vastness beyond comprehension.

So good morning from a distance.... good day and good night to you all.

Good cheer.

And when the apples we have carved wrinkle into hollow faces.... and the orange poses with the plum.... and three faces stare blindly into the flame of a single candle.... and the books stand as ready soldiers.... and Mondays end Sundays as July ends June.... I say hello again.

Hello from America. The year two thousand is but a moment away.

But a year is but a year.... with some put more in focus by war, invention and the activities of timeless souls.... and I prefer all the years.... to hear even the quiet years.... to not match past verse present while criss-crossing the generations.

Though I do not pull on sandals or knickers or a kilt and I do not wear a suit of armor or leaves in my hair or a derby or spurs, I do cloth my feet and hips and shoulders just the same.... though I do not hunt or grow my own food, I eat meat, bread and vegetables like any man or woman who hungers.... though Sparta is no longer at war with Athens, and America's north and south remain a union, and England is done fighting everyone, it is still war and it remains, no matter how big or small for it remains as does hate and ignorance in each of us.... we have had Hitler and Stalin instead of Ghengis, Attila, and Napoleon.... though I do not believe the world is flat, I may be thought foolish in years to come for believing it is round.... though I do not attend the Globe to see tragedies I have been to Broadway.... though I am not persecuted for my religious beliefs or part of a society dominated by the church, it is no matter for my religion is not power or greed, golden chalices or stained glass, it is not high pulpits or steeples or regal gowns, it is not Sunday mornings or twice a year, it is God and it is everywhere, simple, ugly and great.... though I do not use a carriage or single horse, I am still traveling.... though I do not read by lamp oil, I am glad I still read.... though I do not navigate my direction by the stars, it is still north, south, west and east.

This is never ending.

And it is all crucial.... I dare say it isn't. But on any given evening throughout all of man I guarantee there to be at least one if not five hundred thousand young men who feel the calm of dusk as I do now and wonder of their tomorrows as they review their yesterdays.

These things hold true no matter what period you examine.... for it has been the anatomy of man constructing these periods. So look no further than yourself to see history.... and view history to better know thyself.

And applaud the leanest calf.... he will remain.

Remain to smell.... follow.... and find.

Cherish your will.

A child is born unto himself.... not the world. The world is the outcome.  
Each new self becomes longer and stronger and heavier. But in one horrific moment the body is gone and it's manners and knowledge do not stay.

I scream into a deaf night.... into a chorus of screams.... and the noise turns and tears towards me again. I scream for a man, a good man, hanging from a tree and ask my scream to fill the gap to the ground.

That same gap is between you and your words.... between your promises and now. I want to view you as more, and mostly do, but your gap is glaring and your words are only flowers in a vase.

I have yet to see a dead man cry, though from heaven comes rain and we are cleansed to dirty ourselves again.

Equal not equal black white male female young old right wrong.... labels for lazy thinkers. Labels are for soup cans and racism is for cowards.... it is an excuse to hate and hate is a poor cause to champion.

I have never seen a man whipped though I sting just the same. We have all hurt. Some hurt cracks the air and some hurt is an air that subtly suffocates. Some hate is vague and even sold as good by clever talkers.

A product is a product as long as it makes the pocket jingle.... electric mixers replace snake oil and popular singers replace bearded ladies but all organ grinders know diamonds are forever.

The land is ripe with advice.... shop well. Opinion springs from all around your feet.

Agree with me agree with me agree.... with me.

There can be no you and I. We come fresh from the womb but once and only once can we hope to be so fresh.... unless there is genius.

I cannot learn to forget but I must forget to truly learn. These are not smart words.... they are true.... as true as the moment in which I write them and I know these simple words have worth. Weigh them against gold and see.

These words are mine.... I do not borrow. Find influence and you'll find plentiful suppers.  
My belly is shaped by bread and my head is shaped by you.

If I spit out what I have eaten.... see I have eaten wisely and would rather burst than belch. No one should breathe stale air. Parrots share advices but create nothing that the mountains can't echo.

View this feast.... this wonderful banquet of thought.... dishes of persuasion.... plates of opinion.... bowls of color and song. Eat from it all and use the fork of confidence and doubt, the spoon of good measure and the knife of ambition to keep bites smaller for speedy digestion. But eat!

Or eat what you will.... but allow me to offer a cup of imagination for I drink plenty myself.

May I top it with battoppers and grundles?

I met a happy skunk who liked deer and brown rabbits as company. We sat together.... there may of been eight. We enjoyed a little fire and I called my brother for I knew he'd appreciate their talk and they'd enjoy his song. O what a night!

I walked out across my yard, a field, and I stopped before the trees.... it was black as pitch and my feathers are yellow-er than the sun. A waist high man waved me in and since hobbits are gentle I went. We smoked his pipe.... it was a better tobacco than any I had ever smoked.... and he taught me to blow smoke rings. All night we made shapes.... funny shapes.... and we described them to each other. Then I pointed him toward the fire and I walked further in.

How could I have known we've been able to fly all along?.... and I thanked the tree for telling me so. I flew to the top of his branches and scratched an itch he couldn't reach before I went into the sky. Flying is much like swimming and I like them both the same.

I circled many times and even tried some flips before the stars became blurry. I dove down just above my friends sitting around the fire and they laughed and waved.... but decided to stay with the warm glow for they were having good fun.

Up up up I went and I bulleted through a cloud leaving a hole behind. I saw strange things and rested on the moon before dropping down.

Down down down I went and I bulleted through the earth leaving a tunnel behind. I saw strange things but I did not rest for it was uncomfortably hot and oddly eerie.... so I surfaced.

To wake and eat again.  
For I am always hungry.

But tonight I cannot dine with you.... I cannot sit with you.... we cannot meet at the bar or take in a movie.... tonight we cannot talk until two or look for something to do. Tonight I am found. Tonight I mustn't go anywhere or move from this spot.... I have been moved already.

Tonight I must improve my anatomy.  
And give it a better shape with words.  
Give Capra his shadows on the wall.... Vincent his colors and brushes. Give my brother his song.

Ode to expression.... all expression.  
But praise the simple word.  
The plain spoken word.  
Over looked because ordinary.... powerful because common.

Tell me of scenes.... of portraits and paintings.... tell me of music.... of statues, of shapes and of sound.... tell me of anything you wish but tell me with words.

Describe what you see and what you feel.... describe describe describe.

And let your simple words be more than noise.  
Make your words your spine and bones.... durable and weighted. Let them not be fashion.... or changing fancies.

The greatest art is thought.... it is the root.  
The greatest expression is speech.... for you are not silent.

And the greatest belief is faith.... trusting the unknowing.

You are not near, so I will write.  
Come close and I will speak.

My pace has quickened.... I am coming closer.... for I am alive enough to fall into any pool, to make any wish, to lasso any moon, to help any friend.... raise money or earn wings. I am alive enough.

And I am strong enough to see.... for it is undoubtedly a wonderful life.

With sweet persistence stacking the wood.... sweet persistence stacking the wood.

And sweet persistence stacks the wood.... while life stacks the days and the days stack the mornings.... for it could be said that it will soon be morning, or rather morning ends the night, or soon comes morning, or come morning end this night.... but it comes regardless and brings another whole day. A day to carve apples.... preparing for black marble.

A form of solid stable fixed stone to show my restlessness and change.

Standing motion amid a great commotion.

Every cut, every chisel hit, every hammer swing leaving what remains.

For we are not crazy.... we are the remains of these collisions.... you are chiseled by the blows.

And we all remain together.... no matter where you choose to stand or what you choose to see or how you choose to talk.... we remain together as people.... yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I say this from lake side and from comfort, while enjoying the wealth and freedom of a country created by war, preserved by war, defended by war and strengthened by war.

Ode to the simple soldier.

The foot soldier of rank and file.

Ode to his insignificant significance.... to the miles he marched.... the winters he endured.... the friends he made and lost.... and the pain and death he tolerated.

For in a hole or trench when confronted by the enemy, the unknown problem, the other uniform.... and the nearness shows a face.... and the enemy becomes a man.... a father with a child, a son with a mother, a husband with a wife.... a simple man not unlike yourself.... and you question the fighting and killing and think it senseless.... and the ghastliness that was as terrible as humanly bearable becomes worse with confusion.... and you can only cry for a minute before you are pulled from your pocket of reason to stammer again into the smoky noise of insanity.

I say ode to you, the soldier.... you saw earthly hell and endured.... endured to return home to a pine outside your window, a swing under your porch, a girl in your heart.... you returned home to live.

I say ode to you, the soldier.... my western front is all quiet, thank you.... I need not die.

But as sure as the coming of night and day, war will return.  
It is a part of man as any part of his anatomy.

Raise your banners high and chant peace under blue skies and hold hands and sing of harmony while the sun shines bright.... but war will come again.

For in our tomorrows when the soil in which we stand becomes common enough for every man and we are content.... we will fight for the moon and for the heavens and then we will begin again with new countries, new frontiers, new noble aims, new dreams, new forefathers and there will be a new America.... as we are a new Greece.

We Americans are amid the aftermath of a dream.... a re-occurring dream.... we are the sons and daughters of splendor, the products of fertile ground and the objects of freedom.

We can do better!

We musn't regress to progress.... we do not need a dark ages to have a rebirth.

My America is great still.... but my America is lost.

James Otis paying income tax is laughable.... Thomas Jefferson with a social security number is questionable.... John Adams meddling in the affairs of far away countries is unfathomable.... John Hancock preparing his horse for a yearly state inspection is downright comical.... my America is dreadfully lost.

I see no leaders, no representation, no honor in the Presidency, no guts in the Senate, no virtue in Congress.... I see nothing to follow.

Where are the men?.... to follow or fight.

And our people are mostly complacent. In a field, a wide open field of some size, sits a very small spot of raw sewage. Into the field a group comes to talk. They rest in seats placed by the sewage. Throughout their five hours of talking and laughing they complain of the stench.... the terrible, terrible stench.... but do not consider moving their seats any where else into the field.... I witnessed this.... we are numb.

A sustained fatness will bring a driven leanness.... and America will be thinned to dream again.

And we will enter the fifth age of America.

A new inspiring age!

First we created, then we preserved, then we strengthened, then we grew fat.... soon we must change again.

The year two thousand is but a moment away.

In a matter of days my anatomy will give way to my worldly possessions.... as I continue on, the excitement mounts, the energy grows.

Read the anatomy thoroughly.... read it alone.... read it aloud.... read it to others.... read it repeatedly.... but read it.

Keep it as a friend.

Share it as a flower.

Hide it as a treasure.

But read it.... and strengthen your anatomies before you are drawn by worldly possessions.

And think of a new America.

Think of her always.

And remember her characters.

As I remember one.

Home from labor.... I feel young and so ready to live. A scene wanders by and it puts me to thinking.

Older man.

Unknown man. Simple man.

Tilling your garden through.... twenty-five foot square of earth.... just a little bit of earth.... a patch of dirt from an earth so big. Faded knit trousers, green, suspenders to hold them high.... he appeared content. My grandfather.... my dad's dad.

And maybe all could be as this.

Calm.

Dark quiet night with a wanting light.

A fine ending to a fine day.

I am not tired.... I am not tired of living nor am I tired of work.

Labor is much.... we all labor.... and to some it is a freedom.

I am not tired of the man who worked his garden.... his little piece of ground.... bringing life back from a greedy soil.... work that soil forever, she must give back a bit of what she takes.... turn, till, plant, water, weed, water again and watch.... protect what is brought from the ground.... and share.... always did he share.

I didn't know.

Funerals and father's tears.

I didn't know.

He was true.

To him we were full of soup.... full of wonderful soup. I want to be full of your soup again.

Tools, tools and more tools.... more than any store. Electrician, plumber and carpenter.... fix fix and build.... no need for men to come.... he could keep his own house.... build build build and fix.... till weed pick and eat.

I didn't know.

He drew his hands to his face as if to play a horn.... he smiled a mighty smile.... toward heaven....  
"Gabriel I am coming."

He is gone.

And now I know.

And hope to know always.

That which comes before me.... as grandfathers are before fathers and fathers are before sons,  
as chores are before play, as soup is before the spoon, wine is before wit.... a knee before any  
leg and this rhyme before me.

For is it true, to come from you

Advice full of merit

Or do I see behind your back

Others you should credit

You see....

I tell no rhyme, that could be mine  
for giants spoke before

but today is new, as it is for you  
and there's plenty more in store

My words are small, against it all  
But don't they show some thought  
And why not feel as though they're real  
As the history we have bought

So....

I thank you friendly rhyme, for a splendid time  
But now's no time to teeter.... with any silly meter  
For you are only sugar  
And I believe I'm sweeter

And then it all becomes ridiculous.

But not half as ridiculous as me.

Not half as ridiculous as what bothers my attention.  
Not half as ridiculous as the time I waste.  
Not half as ridiculous as what parrots hold as true.  
Not half as ridiculous as a parrot's whine.  
And certainly not half as ridiculous as rock~n~roll.

The more ridiculous perceived, the more seriously received.

So paint your hair blue.... paint it red, shave it off or grow it long, very long, and wear torn, tatter,  
black clothes and crosses and pierce all parts of your skinny body and be hard and be tough and  
be righteous.... but be ridiculous.... and shock the given establishment and shock all of authority  
and shock your parents and shock yourself.... but you do not shock me.

For I have seen the ace face.... the dance hall king.  
And I have run with him.  
I have howled with this whole town.  
We have howled so long at the moon, the moon is howling back.  
And the town chases itself by morning.... and the ace face chases heels all day.  
All night faces are unprotected in the light of day. I live under the sun as well as the moon.

And as a tree catches the wind my framed view is filled by it's rustle and I hear the music below  
my feet and as the kitten's rear carelessly bounces, disregarding it's front.... I run through ideas....  
and I believe.

I still believe.  
Without money without woman without insurance without what seems required.... I still believe....  
my anatomy makes it so.... my health my dreams my accomplishments my hopes my friends....  
my unknowing.... and my life of fiction make it so.

So come banks, come moneymen, come men of comittee.... chase me down and hold me tight....  
pass judgement, put your hands in my pockets and pull potatoes, pull lint, put your hands all over  
me and see I am real without money. Come bothersome person of insignificant business, bring  
your rules you'll need them, bring restrictions, bring your pitch, bring contracts and standards and  
schemes and talk talk talk talk talk..... bring everything that disturbs this simple warren.

I am leaving.  
I am leaving.

Your noise makes it so.  
The warren is crowded.  
I am leaving.  
I am looking for rabbits to come with me.  
I am looking for rabbits.

To be at ease.  
To be calm.  
To be silent.

To say I love you.  
To have intentions. Good intentions. To care.  
To believe. To try. To be real and jog with Gump.

Seven and seventy. Coming and going. Bald to bald. Fragile once again.  
Birth and death. Entrance and exit. The time between is ours. The time between is left unsaid.  
The time between is life.

Be courageous always and live an adventure. Live a wild story. Fear no one with blood that moves as yours, that is a body as are you.... no body of breath holds any position above you, or duty against you.... they are not your maker.... they only breathe as you, tire as you, wake as you.... go stand run.... let your anatomy be and you will be, as you can be.... wild.... and free of any situation as your body is free of others.... we are not connected.... ever.... you are born and severed and free and you will pass as one, the one that came.... as they will also pass and do not regret do not regret....

I regret waiting so long.... for I am full of life.... and I am a poem.... and I am living.

#### ***IV. De Turkey Hand Drawings***

Da mop wast makin' its lasd couple zig-zags across'd dat marble flo. I only gots to clean up my supplies den put out da trash, and gets on home. Doze halls is awful spooky when da place is empty. Every one of dem walls is done up with dose painted dead faces. All dem eyes. Thousands of dem eyes. Can't sez I likes dem portrait rooms, butts to gets to da annex I gots to tolerit all dem ancient faces.

Afder I gets out da portrait section, I gets walkin' tru our latest phenomena. It's a downright crazy sitation. Every mornin' we gets more turkey hand drawin's sent to dis dang museum den we gets all mail combined. I'd be da sharpest looking chap in town if I'd gets me just one person to wager dat dere was still anyone left in da whole world dat hadn't done no turkey hand drawin' and sent it here to dis museum. Dis museum not only has da biggest and da best gatherin' of turkey hand drawin's in da world, butts it gots da only gatherin' of turkey hand drawin's in da world. Couple years ago we gots one sent to us from across'da ocean, some Duke Ferdinand or somethin', and awhiles back some rich gent, dey said he a Rockafeller butts I don't thinks he was any Rockafeller, dough he may be, 'cause he comes on in here spendin' a king's ransom on so many turkey hand drawin's dat I don't thinks he'll ever gets finished lookin' at 'em all. Den I hears dey gots some historian fella comin' in talkin' 'bout havin' turkey hand drawin's done up by da Red Barron, John Jacab Astor, before he go down in dat Titanic, one done by some fella Thomas Carlyle, and den dey even says dey gots one belongin' to Mr. Teddy Roosevelt.

Now I likes dese drawin's and all. Don't takes me wrong. I guess me likin' 'em so is what gots me in trouble in da first place. When I gets done cleanin' dem floors I always take out da trash. Every night for awhiles I been takin' out more dan usual, if you knows what I mean. Paper all tied up in bundles wrapped in burlap. You works here as long as I been workin' here and you kinda know everythin'. Well now, I figures dey had me throwin' out all dem turkey hand drawin's dey didn't like. Sure enough if one of dem burlap coverin's didn't tear open and all dem turkey hand drawin's



fall'd out in da alley. Well, I couldn't use 'em all, my place isn't big enough, but some I likes more dan others. So I figure if dey didn't likes 'em enough to hang on deir walls, I'd gets to hangin' 'em on my walls. You know somethin', I thinks I gots better turkey hand drawin's den dey gots. Maybe dat's another reason why I'm in all dis trouble. Anyway I still throws away most what dey wrap up in dem bundles. It's only now and den dat I finds me a turkey hand drawin' dat I takes a likin' to. Dey sayin' I gots me a peculiar taste. I just likes da ones dat look more likes a hand dan a turkey and dem gentlemen at da museum go for da ones dat looks more likes a real turkey dan it do a hand, dat's all. I ain't gots me no peculiar taste.

Dis been goin' on now for some time. Everyboby 'round dis dang mixed up world keeps drawin' da turkey hands. Dey send 'em to da museum. Da gentlemen at da museum takes what dey likes for deir walls and I takes what I likes for my walls. One day I gets to sittin' outside my place lookin' at da turkey hand drawin' dat I gets me da night before and a passerby gets a good looks at da drawin'. Sure enough if he didn't start makin' a fuss over nothin'. Sayin' dat I gots me one of da finest lookin' turkey hand drawin's dat he'd ever set eyes on. He makin' such a fuss, dat I starts gettin' all proud and uppidy knowin' I gots dis dere drawin'. I tell him dat's nothin' 'cause I gots me a whole bunch of dem drawin's right behind me in da house. Man if he didn't takes one look inside my place and start actin' likes he'd been stung by a whole hive of angry bees. He starts a runnin' outside my place screamin' dat I was goin' be a millionaire. Pretty soon I gots me more people den I can handle comin' to looks at my gatherin' of turkey hand drawin's'.

Dey say I gots me a rare gatherin' of dem turkey hand drawin's. Some rich folk been comin' 'round payin' some real good money for da drawin's I gots. Now da world sendin' me deir turkey hand drawin's and da gentleman at da museum are sayin' I stole'd da drawin's I gots from da trash. I don't knows whats goin' happen to me, but I do knows dat everybody should just gets to keepin' dier turkey hand drawin's for demselves 'cause dey could be millionaires just likes me.

#### ***V. A Bird in a Tree***

Once upon a time a pretty bird lived in a tree. This tree had only recently become large enough to generate seeds. Plunk ... plunk ... plunk, each of the seeds dropped; only to hide in the tall grass beneath the limbs from which they fell. The pretty bird squawked a mindless squawk and to the seeds it gave no heed.

One day a higher limb shook and rattled a seed loose. Crash... directly on the pretty bird's head. In his anger the pretty bird gathered the fallen seed into his beak, crushing its contents whole. To the pretty bird's surprise the seed had a taste; a favorable taste, a taste worth sharing. His little feet could only hold a few seeds, so many trips had to be endured. But the pretty bird enjoyed sharing his new found wealth and to each bird willing to try the taste, an acclamation was given of the tree. Tales of the tree soon spread and countless birds flocked to it, to hide their heads in the grass, beneath its limbs, crunching the seeds whole. The tree smiled to see all of his seeds enjoyed. For reason of season the seeds stop falling and the birds left.

As autumn gave way to winter, and winter leaned towards spring, new seeds developed to drop; only to hide in the tall grass beneath the limbs from which they fell. Again one bird sat on a lower bough giving no heed to the seeds. A higher seed wiggled loose, finding the top of the ugly bird's head. Angered, the ugly bird gathered the seed into his beak, crushing its contents whole. The taste delighted the ugly bird and into his small feet he collected many seeds. Other birds were also delighted to taste the seeds and thanked the ugly bird for his graciousness. Feeling special in his new found attention, the ugly bird ignored mentioning the tree. The ugly bird enjoyed the praise bestowed him and would not have it shared with the tree. Although many trips were made by the ugly bird and many seeds were shared, only half of the tree's seeds could be carried away. The remaining seeds lay wasted amongst the blades of tall grass.

Throughout the years many seasons turned, numerous birds, some pretty, some ugly, were clobbered by falling seeds, and as always the tree dropped its seeds, sometimes only to hide in the grass beneath its limbs.