

APPARITIONS OF THE COLD BUDDHA

(a life movement)

Greg Beaucage

18 Settler Street
Portsmouth, RI 02871
(401) 683-2340

CONTENTS

Degas Dancer	3
APPARITIONS OF DEAD INDIANS	
On Love	5
birth is a room	7
we have fallen	8
I have yet to find	9
Earth Removed	10
'The Bathroom Incident'	11
A Man's Words	12
The Creed of Discontent	13
Dry Killing	14
within the state of flat	15
Losing my Career	16
Upon Receiving	
the Nobel Prize	17
The Restoration of Love	19
Motion picture man	20
The Gift	21
I saw jet clouds	22
AS A MAN TO HIMSELF (a travel poem)	
as a man to himself	24
...AND OF GOD	
No Voice	47
While Unemployed	48
Beneath a Drop	49
Home	50
the ohm is	51
An Answer	52
we sit on the edge	53
...and in a nation	54
Confessions of an Atheist	55
Afternoon	58
NOTES	
Literary and	
Biographical Notes	60

DEGAS DANCER

The arabesque is
a triangulation
it is the perfection
of wing brazed to pillar
of grasping tension
touching evident space

her sight is a smiling dream
for this is the necessary
thought of an artist
one who melts human blood,
breast, rump, finger

and eternally out of reach
at the tip of her finger
is the artists finite
point.

Follow now the
bronze figure
feel the pulsation
of balance create
flow

To dance with the black woman
to exist in an eternal reach

APPARITIONS OF DEAD INDIANS

ON LOVE

1

perhaps a smile
on the face of
one of the nameless
recapitulates the moment

she is a rarity
there is no need for haste
her thread will pull me
through the crowd

Among people she is
the avatar of humanism

a constant moment of existence
for the mountain cool vision
the moment when
warmth is constant

2

the lines of her hand
follow windy thoughts

vast valleys of depression
separate inverse tunnel ranges
composed of points
each infinite in itself
each complete
like a heartbeat

she has cool precision to
follow the lines for
she has lived before
a confidence which breeds
on a lavacious piousness
with which she encompasses me,
threads me

3

I had no desire to 'fall in love'
to be led through dark corridors
of the sidewalk in search
of that smile

But the action of the line
brings only contentment
I am taken, as slow as a mountain
the sweat still on my brow

4

She is a fermentation of thought
a reflection of eternal echo
She holds my body supporting
usurpation of
spoken replies

she has encouraged me to listen
to the lone voice
and be mute to a definition
of right and wrong

she has encouraged
soft speaking,
and finally
the inhalation of torment

she has shown me
that God has given man
a policy

a predestined policy
through the clamor of crowd

a single
finite moment

in which
to see the smile

birth is a room
full packed with light

no disappointment, here
conception equals death

life trauma is
a cycle

the searching
a wind

it acts on the soil of the
soul experience

a birth in a room

We have fallen
down from the forest
into the city
in late night

landing far from the
lone lake
moose printed
and beaver possessed

I'm dreaming about
moss covered pine logs
delicately crushed beneath my feet
with those last fibers
left unrotten
finally broken apart

then the B-movie cut
to the city with a hammering
outside my window in the morning alley

and in a dream back to a pool of water
reflecting me
I imitate the indian god who
haunts this mountain
the reflection more vivid than
the white picture in the guidebook

We have left the forest
a jet flying high overhead
is the first human noise
I've heard in three days

We are on a canoe moving across the lake
like a strangely shaped log
both of us frozen
managuines moving toward the marsh
no movement
no unforeseen sneeze
no irresistable itch
to frighten the bear
eating berries on the shore

the canoe suddenly hits a granite slab
camouflaged by a soft moss toupee
gently crashing into the granite
harder than life

it echos between the mountains
the bear clumsily races for cover
ducks leaving pyramid ghosts on the water
flash a white wing tip reflection
in the early morning pond
and beasts unseen leave the shore
awakened from a deep sleep
only to find
we have returned to the city
falling awake, alas

I have yet to find
the all night bookstore
where Bukowski junkies
talk gambling
and take hits from
trenchcoat pocket
Tokays
& never shave

where flickering purple
neon lighting
reflects porn magazines
in the poetry section
and grease pervades each
sweaty page

EARTH REMOVED

(grandfather's voice)

The earth we plow is deeply brown.

We return from the fields
bearing potatoes.
The stew boiling on the smoky stove.

The black stove which is the warmth.

(my own voice)

earth uncovered
this shovel as a hand defense
protects me from
a stone wall painfully disturbed

releasing pockets of air
breath as old as
the hair of a corpse
buried for time to remove
traces of meaning and purpose

the thought of the grave dug
by the prisoners for
their own burial.

or the image of entombed hands
all have made this
a more meaningful task

'THE BATHROOM INCIDENT'

the darker-side of us all, crawling like a reversible thought, a zipper-head ripped open for all to see and this rifle barrel accusation pointed at my balls and there's never time to think subconscious things out

tonight I was reprimanded for these dark actions and I wanted to fight her but my position fell with a rubber sword as ammunition

over and over this inner-self, control is out of sanity, and now it is clear, 'the bathroom incident' is layed on the bed as proof of my guilt

these bathrooms seem to follw me around, making love on the bathroom floor or this confusing subreality, this incident which has placed me as the new arch villain of all women, suddenly the new coercive force behind sexual supression, my subconscious is dancing, it's Mardi Gras for the darker side

I want sometimes to be put in that brown box they reserve for the doomishly dark things that seem to have ruined a perfectly good life, a perfectly informed and liberated life, an otherwise interesting and talented life.

A MAN'S WORDS

there is an angle
within the scaffolding
surrounding the twelve meter
at which I can see
Maurice at work on the keel mold

the workers think backwards
in this way they will never die
even when women & cops
pronounce the name
of the yacht

there is affection in the wood
I've never seen it before
here out of my environment
in the void of daily detail work
where hand ballerinas move the planes

today I am a sail
I move with the worker's breath

THE CREED OF DISCONTENT

It started as just plain fun
a natural thought
this revolution
although I suppose you must
call it
counter-revolutionary
these degrading thugish beliefs

now a love or compassion
(even when compassion is contrary)
is out of the question
lust cannot be trusted

she says don't believe your leaders
every leader is just
an Adolf Hitler of another breath

I give you
freedom to be yourself
this is
revolutionary

when I read the worker's daily
she explains that
love has been tainted by
capitalism and the republican fascist jews

these words are violent
now
hatred and beliefs
have decided
right and wrong

now
that the revolution has begun
she is an actress
unable to defend herself

DRY KILLING

I was afraid
when we marched in New York
down Fifth Avenue and
stood in front of the
Rockefeller Center
chanting with little order

history repeats itself

for a moment I could envision
Red Sunday

within the state of flat
exists the nature of
the freight yard line

these horizontal compass
directions giving forth
the water where sailing
day in, day out
the question
which is a koan
what do you do with a drunken sailor
receives replies

the lines of a dusty freight yard

the modern docks with
crates from the Federal Republic of Germany

the men who move the crates
to trucks and box cars

a walking poet

the man who finds
this halfway world for
emptiness and rejection
to be a battle field where
lost civilization has portrayed
its epic story
in raised buildings
iron gridwork roadways
of lifted streets
steel lines, dust truck alleys
fish crates, and a sole
seaman's bar

LOSING MY CAREER

the sweat men produce
is like acid
she drinks her fill

and I know why
on those lazy summer days
she worries about

buzz saws and
sordid magazines
it is her cover

lying down to rest
afraid of being un-
covered I am

at least not
appetizing before
dinner

these are motion picture
days identity
is linked to

breakfast gifts given
by god
before the last

supper
losing my career
seems like her idea

UPON RECEIVING THE NOBEL PRIZE

we have seen the
misspelled
newsprint
with notifications of
awards
fruitlessly giving
a blessing

I am up at dawn for type
down at noon
up at night

bureaus fall from
my eyelashes
the tears are square and
brown
almost like
grocery bags full-packed with life

but here there is no rejuvenation
in the spring

raging foul-mouthed woman
looking blindly
into the crowded street
muttering obscenities
are you possessed?
I don't love you...
I do follow you, though,
now you are in my thought
you are despicable,
I shall give you a gun
for mother's day

fruitless women I have
know in American cities
they call up at night
to announce the rejection
of motherhood and modern man is
an anti-father
we rave our phalluses
at hateful old women

bureaus full-packed
clothing for the journey
ironically gorgeous pin-up girls
froth dreams
buoyant fornications

in an early morning stupor
life emerges and is
stifled

the circles are broken
grocery bags drenched in blood
holding semen and
spring

relecting the joke
of modern living

THE RESTORATION OF LOVE

...only then would I see pellucidly that I could still fall in love, even though I had bargained off hopes for the case where sex would appear after supper (which it did) and later relaxing with the thought that this was modern perfection and could make up for the unavailability of any type of a real relationship in our days

Even though the idea hadn't crossed my mind in almost a month, and I had planned this sole existence, so that some 'future plan' could be successfully executed, my soul dissolving with a silent pain which made a driving force, and I had just bought a colorful portfolio on methods to attack women with Judo, and all the people, it seemed, had settled in for a 'near beer future' when I truly wanted a 'champagne existence'

There appeared a woman,

in the window, climbing, implying that the communication between us was deteriorating and I was becoming stale and on and on about phallic symbolism, firing her rifle, still climbing over the headboard, screaming, 'they killed my brother, they killed my exposition and worst of all they killed my financial aid..' with copies of the E.R.A. fluttering down like feathers in a hen house, enumerating the merits of Blake's stance on angels, all the time with that rifle firing and the crust of the ceiling crumbling onto my bed, her jumping and loving, screaming remote expressions

Motion picture man flew by me on his motorcycle in a blur of
red and noisy blue smoke.

He tooted his horn and was gone, in the black tar which is a
thread to other great American cities.

His importance to that day should not be overlooked, as one
should not overlook certain instincts.

THE GIFT

they rush out with their
beer bottles and poles
at five a.m.

to the docks
and meet the crew
and are gone and
then slaughter
in the ocean

and get sick
from the waves
and stumble to homes of friends
fish in hands, dripping the

blood on the
kitchen floor
cigarette hanging from
dried lip
held on by the last drop of sweat

but I love the fish and
can only say thanks and
do you want a beer

they're gone in a hurry
and I'm left
with a bloody mess
of fish and scales

free food

I saw jet clouds
in the sky
surrounded by a pale blue
they flew north

I wish I could join them
but I must journey
on subway tracks
then catch a ride
sleeping with mosquito women

I look at the sky
and see birds and jets
heading north
over the green mountains

as a man to himself

it is time I straightened
my obligations to pursue
a perfection of life

to realize thoughts

to find that security
after time
distorts people

to drop out

(perhaps too late)

to take future on the road
tearing risk from concrete freedom

this fountain of sunsets is
a hobo vacation for me

it treads this nation
past gypse slopes
of billboard cares
past unknown disasters
and places that exist only in context
past what they tell me is
a time of life

but I believe there is time
because I am interested.

I.

this journey of urine smelling public floors
where the fathers fall from the sky
in a european drizzle
is upon me

fathers sailing on time
becoming forefathers

I know the reality
of the day before their journey
their screaming voice
a penetrating generation echo
hanging like tomorrow morning
in the air

I tried to bring these things together
stirring self-fears
impatiently awaiting
their ruling

II.

just a bum
stuck in Buffalo!
under the overpass of
the Cleveland bound interstate

I change my cloths for the
police state tollway eyes
knowing that
I can't afford to miss love

separated by fear
today is tomorrow

III.

night is
sleep with godly
mosquito women
who bleed the Ohio
state troopers

the rate is slow
blood dries quickly
with Minnesota bus bound travelers
before me
time is the only terror

I make a mental schedule
of layovers and Jesus
should have stopped in Canton
to want for a bed
to know that
life is a hot baby

it seems too hot
realizing that
events are not planned

now even hot has a different meaning

IV.

Toledo is a river
to the lake
a place to create
route ninety scenes
and romantic hitchhiking slogans
about Wisconsin beer and women
cool blended river I call it

where some Ohio dude
yells from his car
'get a job'

I think that
it takes a lot'a river
to cool things down like
love and this amazing
cat at a Cleveland on-ramp
mumbling southern jumble
jumbling about 'loo see anna'

he talked to me
like an adventurer
only here on a bus
this is a joke
this country bluesman
with a corncob pipe
this sleepy figure of America

his 'yaz sa' and 'no sa'
are romantic truck sound sweat night escape

V.

America has
laissez-faire alloy rivers
like the river
through Chicago's freight yard
leading to cold Gary

a true rubble reconing seaway for wild capitalism
migrating from the calm storage of Plain's grain
to the Midwestern mechanical movement

a slow steel-gurgling oil
rushing to support the skyway

the motion is progressive
or so they say

VI.

an unshaven cheek is the
upper Wisconsin hill
where forest fired tree stubs
wait years for
new life

VII.

the power of a Saint Cloud
Saturday
is in a dog
which informs this world
that I've taken refuge

in the bird which informs me
that it will have no part in this
vagabond scheme

and the two cats who
with a certain type
of unsocial insight
rest

VIII.

the morning dove hoots
foreshadowing
the train whistle

it leaves the yard two
short toots and one long

I met an old gentleman whose
adventures
called hoboin'
took him through the 1930's

rushing from hobo jungle to

Cleveland and back

now with his wife
returning from the Allstar Game

IX.

the hiss of air conditioners
permeate the morning

hush the sun already hot
the day moving along

the screen door and foot steps mean
I'm on my way

X.

in a Montana night
trucks meet hitchhikers
with blaring doppler horns
and crushed beer can salutes

I am a cow
watching the night
on top of a bluff

I see lights reflecting
the Yellowstone River
near by Custer reminds me to stand
for the great American west
which has become oiltowns

they give off beacon warnings
of rattlesnakes
in the rocky hills
littered with pickup truck cowboys

when that glacier returns
there will be a prairie rebirth
washing these memories downstream
with the rattlers

XI.

morning Montana has gotten up
feeling apart at the seams

it's early enough for truckers to
tell me what's going on in this country
early enough
for the watchdogs to still sleep

I'm that hobo making tea
on the hill overlooking town

I'm the kid from 'back east'
with hopes for Washington State
today
that gypse with a mosquito bite on his lip
who isn't missing the sunrise
who sees a ying-yang vision
in this boomtown wilderness
which the west has won

XII.

the coal train is a black snake
on a bleak riverbed land

on a hill outside town
a cross is lit at night
to remind the people
living in trailers
that God is the only answer

in the badlands

He waits in the freightyard
for trailer loads to heaven

XIII.

some indians have escaped
with promises of new lands

but the power
of an indian was in this land

there is only one land
it was a circular land

wasted

it rolls by
in a diesel

there is a great sadness

IXV.

oil refinery pig stye smell
Billings, Montana gas station
picnic table billboard railroad
this Yellowstone River
gives wild rock formations to friendly people
with thank you orange juice and
some chick thumbing on the interstate

XV.

stare at the indian cliffs
in the Montana noon sun

no fucking fun stuck in it

but still hanging loose
digging it all
a truck stop fantasy

forgetting to eat all day!

XVI.

tell me to take it easy and slow
where rocky cliffs
are like rock cake
on the plains

finding it hard to live up to the
jagged image
of an indian hitchhiker
going to Spokane

XVII.

I thought it was the heat
which brought this illustrated full bodied
wonder in a diesel
to a halt in Butte

it was a wasted universal seal
and his hope that here
at the foot of the Rockies
would be a dope toting traveler
not me

'David's mine, you want a beer?'
which I soon replaced with
two six packs and my stories
about the road

later an invitation to a
pitbull-father-trailer and
mountain based explanations
of gold prospecting and
the Hell's Angels proved too much

David America Missoula

I forgot Richard Hugo's
Missoula mountain university
and all the no breakfast ideas of
those lovely driving days

I even forgot the trailer war with
the self-defeating society
where work leads to needs
and needs lead to work

I almost forgot
the highway water need
and that funny Kerouacian song
from the nymphs of the roadway
next to a driving stream
two miles down a dusty dirt road

XVIII.

When they crossed
the Great Plains and entered the Rockies
perhaps the forefathers felt
this full-packed experience
this country yearning to become
a home

XIX.

giving up

because a dead animal at the side
makes me too tired to
hitchhike my way out of
this police state of mind

because there are better
pickpocket ways to learn
and jive lord talk to learn
with no mercy
for the depressed

because hobo heaven is
ready for immigration
but I'm still
floating among
packman kids with
zerox ideas about
their lives
alive to bum a cigarette and
find a place to sleep

the old bars are sad to receive
Saint Helen's steam beds and stories that
are just
another immigrant's idea about quick traveling and
me
just a plop in the bucket
something to fly over
like the Great Plains

sleeping away
out there waiting for a free ride
to this sneeze of life
traveling that hard way
where the real heros
aren't worshipped
aren't prosperous

they don't need prosperity
they have gone away or insane and smoke
another cigarette in the loose track
of a speeding night

XX.

people with a police stare
give me only
bus talk

like the Columbia River
one that never feels for it's sanity
in the eyes of the early morning
perfect blue

waking of a disbelief
that picks apart my mentality
serving it to the god police

eyes always watching
carrying this sentiment
down river to Portland

XXI.

the lady told me what the box was for
for rape
for bruises
for flat cars
from Kansas City
she said
'now I got me a box to call my own
might just settle down for the night'
with that wino breath
then this dude from West Virginia
with a crazy hat
says my home is
a diesel truck
but could spare me dime
for a decent kid
with family back east
who don't dig me
but I can read!
I said read the Bible buddy
I don't have money
for stud hat holders
out here

gamble on those roulette wheels of the highway
for local beer trucks and
too far from home to care
in allies by the railroad yards

they all have western hard times eyes
those who give the others a reason to work
for that feeling of security

don't show me and tell me about
how animal human monstrosities fear
full blooded things or this
great great system

just find me a place to grow
away from the growth of the road

that scrub brush road growth never gets too big
just learns to last

show me flower growth
of mountain tops not desert plants
scraping to be alive
in a slowly collapsing world

I know there is a place to hide
in the metal of the future
and the past beside me now.

XXII.

the way the raven flies
it takes the breath from swallow thoughts
coasting above treeless
fields of wheat in the undulating grandness
of inner Oregon
among the galant farms where that
belief in a pioneer
mythology never died

plow me under
when I
die let the earth
take what it needs

plow me into the
vast Oregon territory
with mild winters
and happy summers
plow me away from the dusty prairie
and the 'langweilig' Plains
ship my cargo to the west
for burial in a dream killing
Mount Rainier setting
where the sky is blackened by
natural fallout
my bones ground for the Japanese
my flesh fresh for the raven
my soul planted in the grand northwest

XXIII.

the inspiration answer
is not on the road
travel took to it's defeat

maybe they were wrong
figuring me for the independent one
the road love

XXIV.

a pine forest out of the
prairie and here in the Cascades
wonder thrives in sandy soul
and small resort towns

XXV.

there was a cloud
over Mount Shasta
a halo

there are places
where there is no doubt
the hand of God has
molded the earth

XXVI.

the bus to Wendy's has punk rockers and
a hippy oriental dope smoking fiend and
military blacks and worker bees

they all say
'it takes a long time to reach Palo Alto'

then later calling her at three in the morning
finally crashing on the
football field with a sign
pointing to Menlo Park and
my first shower in the
California sprinkler timer plan

naked, dragging a wet sleeping bag
across the goal line
crashing under the eucalyptus tree
finally scoring on this trip

I just caught the last bus so I know something
had to be right, but what?

thinking about bus rockers in the back of my head
they don't like my style
but I've come a long way tonight

XXVII.

campers and rifle ranges
in the hills
surround the bay

a sea only ten feet deep
with eucalyptus
women rolling dried salt
in the late July haze
the night leaves a photo image on the hills
which the Chinese breeze folds back
for the white sun

to shine past cheap
city lights

rocking and rolling the
jazz drunk clouds

XXVIII.

hammock swinging in the
California sun

body perfect scenes are studied
in the university but I've got
a certain kind of satisfaction in knowing
where I'm at

with beer and simply
enjoying a type of meditative relaxation
in the Saturday hammock

and the plums
have fallen from the tree
dropping carcasses of the unused
fruit to rot on the patio
a squishy path to the hammock leaving
purple toes for the flies to lick

killing time while
those plums on the patio rot
in the cool breeze off the hills
there are no seasons here
this is a vision
of birds eternally chirping
of reasons for rationality
without seasons

there is always next week for
tickets to Boston
always next week to find a job
always next week when
maybe there will be a
change in the weather
the threat of an earthquake
in the sun

San Francisco is an anthill

in my vision
we are a nation of army ants
warnings are received
like scents in the air
they pass the nuclear odor
down to the
street people
who can not conceive
of violence in this
tedium

so the water is wasted
on lawns to keep
the Mexicans south
of the border lean

the nylon rope is stretched

at the end of the hammock it
makes me think
about the muscles
of the body perfect
university

perhaps I will not last the day
and will wander back
insane across Kansas
mumbling savage tears
and love affairs
unable to grasp
the beauty of our macho ideal
our cast iron deal

XXIX.

the photograph sits on
the shelf next to a copy of
Walden Two
her grandmother looks strangely
like my mother

stranger to hear
old Led Zepplin songs on
her porch
over looking the
rolling brown hills
with my bicycle
rear end hurting
cursing
while pretty teenagers pass with
a hidden intent of sexual
affairs
which of course always end
too soon

I'm hallucinating California
in a beer bottle glass
splinter
smiling at me from
a map of the North American continent
daring me
with wind chime incantations
further on to Mexico City

XXX.

down on the beach
red trunked kids
and amusement park
wheels somehow make my cigarettes
seem out of place

where boogie boards
cruise the beach tide
by Santa Cruz beauties
and happy children everywhere
almost as if the sea
were semen impregnating
these arien virgins
with surf sperm but
the water's too cold
and the sun's too hot

XXXI.

The old folks at the bus stop
and my two bucks in spare change
are waiting for all night burlesque shows to open

and I don't need a
business atmosphere today
there's plenty of time for a beautiful
black bus to downtown
through Redwood City and Menlo Park
through that peninsula world to the
towering earthquake city
where art seems to be born
where trains carry full loads of smiling faces
to tourist places
where sweating leaves move the air
creating a natural airconditioning

XXXII.

when I lose my
black beret which
I stole from a friend

I hope a black man
with curly black
mexican hair and
a Chicano accent
picks it up on a
San Francisco street
corner waiting
for a bus to East Palo Alto
wishing he had found
a cigarette instead

XXXIII.

the bus wreck in which
I am caught

observing myself
with keen eyesight
waiting for the Sunset
peaks to rise above

the foreseen turnpike spot
where self-observation
create an identity

where profacies come true
in a Daley City blood bath

XXXIV.

the workmen are
hammering on the roof
of God
pounding on the sky of
the mission church

XXXV.

the ducks are fed today
by a bread bomb which
disturbs the otherwise
placid Loyd Lake
crashing through the golden
tranquility of San Francisco
like an earthquake

the ducks rush away
some squack
but return
individually
to this spot
in this city

XXXVI.

eager to move on to something
which returns the seeing eye
inquisitor to that chapter
in the polite wards of the airport
where Boston want reaches
the reality of
the money for movement
cash-in

I want it all
a melt place with redwood walls
encased in a three hundred year
incorporated industrial cog machine

a flat hill river place

later things come together
suddenly thrust
on the subway
in a lady bug fallout
backpack giving out
and then this window
overlooking a Cambridge sidestreet
with collection notions and
me the
garbage collector of
the stainless meters which move
each of us along
back from his sojourn
with ideas about this nation
these being truly my own
ready to spend my last five dollars on
a bottle of champagne
to celebrate
and explain

'I looked at the sky for a while
and saw birds and jets
heading northwest
over the green mountains'

August, 1982

XXXVI.

eager to move on to something
which returns the seeing eye
inquisitor to that chapter
in the polite wards of the airport
where Boston want reaches
the reality of
the money for movement
cash-in

I want it all
a melt place with redwood walls
encased in a three hundred year
incorporated industrial cog machine

a flat hill river place

later things come together
suddenly thrust
on the subway
in a lady bug fallout
backpack giving out
and then this window
overlooking a Cambridge sidestreet
with collection notions and
me the
garbage collector of
the stainless meters which move
each of us along
back from his sojourn
with ideas about this nation
these being truly my own
ready to spend my last five dollars on
a bottle of champagne
to celebrate
and explain

'I looked at the sky for a while
and saw birds and jets
heading northwest
over the green mountains'

August, 1982

NO MORE

IN THE CITY OF
NEW YORK
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
ONE THOUSAND NINETEEN HUNDRED

...AND OF GOD

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
DOES HEREBY CERTIFY

THAT THE ABOVE
IS A TRUE AND CORRECT
COPY OF THE
ORIGINAL AS THE SAME
REMAINS ON FILE

NO VOICE
The white stucco facade
a doorway relief
I walked uphill

there was
no recognizable face
in the window
a wind evacuated place
where someone was home
on that sunny day
permeated by dust

WHILE UNEMPLOYED

why, on a cold December dawn
we roll out of bed to
move downtown
with hundreds of sleepy
faces

it can't be hunger
there is food in the cupboard

maybe it is the voice of our mother
saying, 'go to...'
which follows us down subway tunnels
to the sleek towers

perhaps it is the togetherness we feel
breaking from the maternal bed

why do the policemen police
the painters paint
where is there logic
where there is no hunger

it is dangerous to think
that things are linked through
cause and effect

it is dangerous to give reasons
that do not make sense
that have no logic

perhaps we move in the frosty morning
to avoid the questions
we would otherwise have asked

BENEATH A DROP

The leaves change after the long rain.
Three days like blood dripping,
in this drip-dream morning,
I never know what I'll come up with next.

The clouds are icebergs in a wet age.
In this way the storm
reminds me that it is from the Great Lakes.
On the street, each rain drop casts a shadow.
There is heat rising from the subway opening.
The urine smell is brought to mind
It emanates from the dank halls,
the sordid shops,
the subway tracks.
The city, like the rain drop, is a microcosm.
This fall chill has made even these empty places
seem warmer than the wet street.
I look from beneath the rain hood,
through a window
to a place where there is no sleep
no book to read,
I have brought only notebooks here.
I never know what I'll come up with next.

There's always people talking.
Today they're talking about Houston.
The waiter comes to my table.
I tell him the woman is always late,
always working overtime or late for lunch,
always talking with someone about Houston,
and it seems always to be raining.
I think about the drop.
There is never a reason for the wait.
In this rain,
I never know what I'll come up with next.

There is a poem written in my palm.
It is a love poem
in which I find myself a captive.
'At least it is warm here,' I say.
I look down at my hands.
They hold two filled notebooks.
One red for excitement,
one blue for reflection,
the third is missing,
it was green.

HOME

The two monks drive the wooden cross
into the frozen New England soil

dreaming occurs when the time of
dream and day coincide

it is night
the iron fence encloses the
small burial ground
the monks are faceless
they are nearly without body
they are occupied
yet attentive to my actions
my heart escapes me
I must return to the house
once more home for the holidays

the house is empty and cold
my breath turns to fog
there is no furniture
all is devoid of life but
there is a certain
warmth here
away from the specter

the ohm is
the small notebook

the root of expression seperates
diary notes from
form creation

spirits speak through us
in the circle of lives
we write reverse fiction
stories become our existance

I thread the future from the last day
to celebrate I take three New York Times
from the machine
in a reversal of manipulation

and I return to the forest
with pack and tent
to celebrate the Buddha
before he exists
to find that I am the creator
to permit reality

I try not to go too far
down that poney tail of the wild freedom
far from business needs

or can you go too far
inside the small notebook

AN ANSWER

I dreamt I saw the hawk image,
with birds there can be no compassion,
the icy beak and cold black eyes
gave no indication to the soaring nature.

There is a spot in the grass
where it was done,
it is anointed with empty beer cans
and snack containers,
these are entrusted with the memory.

Now it is fall,
I am the sole remembrancer,
I walk through the hawk image
accompanied by the spiritual world.

The sound of a crash,
before it happens,
is all of the noise the waves have made
for all time.

Before the crash I know
love itself has a dynamic nature,
there are waves of emotions, waves of desire,
only lovers would bother to care.

There is a uniqueness to each act,
I dreamt I saw a woman in the hawk image.
She told me, before the crash,
where it was done,

but not why.

we sit on the edge of the field
watching the strange celebration
there is some mumbling
dreams of wind create
cloud shadows on the surrounding mountains
the buzzards have left dinosaur imprints
in the air

these are to be the precursors
reminder that we have our beginnings in
the land
moving to water
then to flight

from thoughts we have created
voiced explosions

...and in a nation
where thought itself
is questioned
even thoughts that
are chanted in
animation at night
even thoughts that
are felt
when fear is
the answer
to any problem
and the windows
like the ears
are closed,

I found on a street corner
after a parade
dead falcons
and coca-cola pools
reflecting the
sun, and a strange dream
about helmeted patriots
flocking to podiums
of awareness
with an eerie
rhythm
like marchers
on a street
wet with blood

CONFESSIONS OF AN ATHEIST

1

Anasazi ruins
form the backdrop.
Articles about
human cultural tradition
from Africa to Napal
line my room.

This morning
I have noticed how
the coffee makes swirling
clouds in my cup.

The objects in the museum were from Africa.
They were mostly masks.
One of them was from Nigeria.

In it, art and cultural tradition
were unified,
mixing like the slightly soured milk
in my coffee.

I am noticing the backdrop to our art,
my art.
I compare my art to that of the Nigerian mask.
I notice that my art is devoid of religion.
I am thinking about Blake.
I am thinking about Rossetti and Whitman.

There is a need in my life
to know society
and to feel that what I have done
is not to alienate,
but to synthesize.

2

I have seen the objects in the museum.
I have thought about suicide,
and decided it is not a good time to die.
I have received strength from the idea.
But this is not confidence in my life.

I have transcended the thought of work.
I have transcended all but the barest needs.
I have overcome sexual needs,
and travel lust,
and cultural training.

All of my ideas, it seems, are masks.
I am acquainted with Suzuki
and his disciple Snyder.
The thought beat can be suspended.
Heart dreams are made of paper.
The spiritual wind is traditional
but this is not confidence.

These masks are brought upon me.
Through them I can perceive clearly.
Even the ancients deduced this,
that human interrelations are based on a facade.
Some masks are more sublime.

I possess a statue of a woman,
it is from Kenya.
It was given to me by a woman.
I believe that it has spiritual properties.
I have thought of burning it,
but am afraid that it would not be destroyed.

3

I am wandering in the ruins of a great indian tribe.
Inherent in my presence is a belief.
But I have a gun
and have used it before.
In its warm barrel is logic.

After death we walk in the halls of the ancients.
We perceive through the earth,
that which is imperceptible.
We sense things which move without content.

After death we become insight,
we become genius,
we become human spirit.

All that holds us to this rock,
all the physical forces vanish,
and we walk in the halls of the ancients.

I have thought about suicide,
but have decided it is not a good time to die,
that I am afraid of death,
after all.

4

I have noticed
that there are very few
aged atheists

today I feel old
a friend has died

5

There is an emptiness in a cathedral.
It is obvious where the money goes.
The tinkling of coins fills this home.
There is time to wonder who built the structure,
for if man is part of God
does he worship himself?

But these jokes only confuse the matter.
I am so behind Blake
that it is impossible to play catch-up.
It is impossible to reach for his insane hand,
to help me through the darkness
of the thought beats
suspended around me.

But I have deduced that
life has two sides
the common and the solitary.
In solitude we have
birth and death
and the times we think of suicide.

In the common we have
love, hope and religion

and art.

AFTERNOON

naked in the kitchen
isn't enough

the cold buddha coughs
her picture hangs in my memory

the buddha motions for tea
all of the things I
should have done

NOTES

LITERARY

This book represents a movement in the poet's life. Its opening section, Apparitions of Dead Indians, reveals the situation, personality and perspective of the poet. The central piece, As a Man to Himself (a travel poem), transforms the poet in a realization of his position within his nation. In the final section, ...And of God, the narrator deals with the spiritual nature and meaning of his art.

Many of the poems were written using journalistic notes as an idea source, melding these ideas during subsequent inspirational sessions.

As a Man to Himself is a travel poem derived from a journal taken on a hitchhiking trip from Boston to San Francisco during the summer of 1982.

Afternoon first appeared as a Stonelight Cooperative broadside.

BIOGRAPHICAL

Greg Beaucage was born on May 2, 1958 in Springfield, Massachusetts, educated at the University of Rhode Island where he received two B.S. Degrees; Zoology and Chemical Engineering (Minor in German). He has lived in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Frankfurt, West Germany. He is a jazz pianist as well as a poet, and has written several short stories. He is a founding member of the Stonelight Cooperative, a group of Rhode Island based poets who publish broadsides, sponsor readings and hold workshops.