

# **Out of My Head**

**Selected Writings from Way long ago to fairly recent**

**Jay F. Smith  
Christmas 2000**

## **A Christmas Wish**

May little elves  
dance on your stocking  
To whistling tunes  
from reindeer horns

May Christmas joys  
come knocking  
At your door  
on Christmas morn'

## The ABC's of a Murder

An Asthmatic  
Blustering  
Chicken Casually Collapsed Considerably  
Dampening  
Everyone's  
Fantastically Festive  
Gala Gathering  
Henry, Having  
Intense Imagination for  
Justice  
Knew it  
Looked Like  
Murder  
Now, Newly  
Official zed by the  
Portly Prominent People, he  
Quickly  
Rounded-up  
Several Slimy Suspects  
Taking Them Tightly Tied Together To The  
Unusually Undernourished  
Victim  
Where a Worn and Weary Workman  
Xclaimed Xcitedly in  
Yiddish, "Yam Yortle Yabbata!"  
Zat Zolves Zat

# Escape

Gleaming and ponderous  
she sits.  
A child of the earth bound by creation  
itself  
to the planet's fiery core.

A rumbling shudder  
and she comes to life.  
Heavily she rolls,  
but faster, faster  
the fevered pitch of her cry  
increasing with her desire  
Screaming her banshee wail  
into the wind  
she plunges into impossibility  
Taking by force that which nature did  
deny her

The wind resists this rape  
with icy teeth and clawing hands  
But the earth child has  
planned too well and  
resistance is for naught

Freely she races

Freely she flies

Free

## A Morning in the Life

Happy dancing prancing feet  
Around by morning bed  
Kneading pleading demanding feet  
Atop my sleepy head

The people on the radio  
Have been talking for an hour  
The expression pressed onto my face  
Is best described as sour

The music from the garbage truck  
Grinds out its familiar tune  
The band starts out at seven o'clock  
And often plays 'till noon

The cats are crying for some food  
The clock shouts out, "YOUR LATE!!"  
My mouth tastes bad, my hair's a mess  
It's lucky I've no date

The shower is a welcome treat  
The tangles finally tamed  
The cats are fed, the place picked up  
With no one hurt or maimed

The symphony outside the glass  
Has faded to a drone  
I've packed the bag of stuff I'll need  
To make it back to home

I'd guess you'd call it a success  
This morning that I've had  
Especially since, compared to some  
It wasn't all that bad

# Dancing with the Universe

--

Balance is easy  
when you can't/don't/won't feel the board  
shaking

But if you won't/can't/don't  
feel the board shaking...

... how do you know you're alive????

And what is balance anyway.  
Do you need to control the  
board  
or  
yourself  
or ...

do you just  
accept/embrace/believe  
the  
shaking

--

Once in a great while, a morning comes along which makes up for all the bad that happened the day before. Such is the power of a clear morning-blue sky, such is the honesty of freshly awakened grass and the "newness" of the morning air that I realize the world isn't treating me too badly and I really do want to go on with life. It's a good thing that "once in a while" comes along just when I need it.

--

Lost and flailing  
not falling because that  
implies a sense of definition and  
orientation

Lost in the numbness of being  
with no connection to the sensations of living

--

# The Cats

-- Coco

Wide-eyed  
adventure kitty  
blue eyes shining with conquest  
she boldly reaches new heights

Frantic eyed  
demon kitty  
blue eyes flashing wild in her  
dark chocolate mask  
a frenzy of activity with no direction

Dreamy eyed  
pleasure kitty  
blue eyes closed as the comb  
through her long silky hair  
brings out a raspy purr of contentment

-- Sam

Streak of black lightning  
caught for a moment  
to clean an offending paw

Furry black motion  
as her frantic dance leads  
from floor to counter to sofa and back

Rumbling black head  
shoved nose first into my face  
the center of attention is the only place worth sitting

Soft warm presence  
curled against my leg  
firmly establishing who owns whom

# Ellen

Soft in the morning  
when the velvet shroud of sleep  
still cradles her gently  
smiling features as she  
walks through places I cannot see

Vibrant in the day  
when all the energy of life around  
her reflects in the sunlight gleam  
of her eye and the movement  
of her supple body

Warm in the night  
when the sun bright energy of the day  
burns to the quiet intensity of hearth glow  
loving and vibrant she warms  
my arms and my heart

Quiet in sleep  
are my normally turbulent thoughts  
as the soft rhythm of her heart and  
the gentle touch of her hand say to me  
"I am here and we are love."

## Ending

I sit and look around this place  
of laughter  
love  
and tears.  
I find that I can see your face  
in every picture  
frame  
and mirror.  
I sit and listen as you speak  
with words which come from lips  
that not so very long ago  
I had the right to kiss.  
These rooms no longer welcome me  
as they did before.  
Belonging is now firmly locked  
behind a cold  
barred door.  
It hurts too much to be here  
an empty heartache pain  
to know that even more so now  
I'm a stranger once again.  
You won't understand this.  
You never did or will.  
For you no longer love me  
and  
I love you  
still.

# Gigi

Gigi 1

you came and  
you went

a veil of mist  
a random breeze  
a puff of fog  
cool tile under bare feet

there was no  
romance  
but there could have been  
friendship

I could have liked  
knowing you  
i wish i had done  
better  
more  
enough

Take care if yourself

Gigi 2

If you could feel  
everyone else like they  
were a part of you then whenever  
anyone  
DIED  
for no reason

It would feel like a part of you  
went away  
with nothing to replace it  
no hope  
no love  
no new tooth or scab

just a  
hole  
of indeterminate size

I'm sorry Gigi

*Extra*  
*dancing without*  
*touching*  
*only the possibility*  
*of touch*

*light*  
*with a glare*  
*gentle coolness*  
*with a chill*

# New Years Night

I am  
standing in the rain  
I look up and it  
seems  
I should be getting  
WETTER  
than I appear  
to be so  
I look  
down  
and  
notice  
that

I AM

## A Song

Sometimes when you wake up  
and your life seems far away  
and you don't know the face in the mirror  
or how it got that way  
and when you try to remember  
the pain that always comes  
is the pain of disappointment  
as your broken heart it screams  
it screams

-- refrain --           How did I ever  
                                  think that I was strong  
                                  enough to chase all those  
                                  rainbows  
                                  or tell right from wrong  
                                  when I think of where I've come to  
                                  it doesn't seem so far  
                                  how far can you really go  
                                  when you chase a star

Sometimes when I think on  
the lives the loves I've had  
I don't know whether to laugh or cry  
or whether to get mad  
because life is such a circle  
no matter how strong your dreams  
despair and pain are just ahead  
as your broken heart it screams  
it screams

---- refrain ----

And when I'm at my darkest  
the gloom as black as night  
there breaks through my darkling cloud  
a tiny shaft of light  
and it makes me see the changes  
and it makes me see the pain  
and it makes me take the fight back up  
as my broken heart it sings  
it sings

                                  how did I ever  
                                  doubt that I was strong  
                                  enough to chase any rainbow  
                                  and tell right from wrong  
                                  when I think of where I've come to  
                                  and hope to go so far  
                                  you can go forever  
                                  when you chase a star

## Springtime at the Mall

When I first saw the fragile wisps of soft color, they seemed to float gently over an unbroken blackness. As I gazed deeper the dim shapes of the trunks, which did indeed bind these cloud-beings to the earth, became visible.

This annoying intrusion of reality did little to diminish the wonder and magic of what I saw. So nearly did the cold fluorescence match the trunks to the ground that they could easily be ignored.

All that was left were the thin cloud-like forms of soft pink and white. Their color and substance seemed so delicate that the usual sounds from the busy stores and avenues seemed to hush for fear of breaking the spell which held the beautiful wraiths together.

I don't know how long I stood there, lost in wonder as they drifted gently over an ebony sea. The light from countless man-made stars washed over them, adding its glow to their special beauty.

Eventually this second sight gave way to my usual way of seeing and all around me were the countless blooms of the cherry blossoms on the trees of the mall parking lot. It was cold and late and I sighed as I walked towards home under the humming glow of the street lights.

## Daystar Equinox

I live in the Pacific Northwest, in Seattle, Washington to be precise. Sunrise on the 21st began around 3am, the sound of the first birds greeting the faint lightening of the sky far in the northeast. It was still dark in every other direction. I could still faintly see the brightest stars left in the sky, Altair or Deneb perhaps. Of course it is often the case here in Seattle that you can only see the brightest of stars if any at all. The light in the northeast was really just a patch of sky that was not quite so dark. But the birds knew what was happening. It seemed that if I paid attention I could tell when the songs changed as different species woke up at different times to greet the day while the earlier ones went about the business of living it. The light grew and spread. I was surprised at its whiteness. I had always associated sunrise with yellows and orange with tinges of red and indeed it was this way close to the source. Above the horizon line it began to diffuse rapidly and by the time it was above the treetops it had taken on a pearly white essence, as though it came from moonlight or street lamps. Faint light was beginning to touch the other compass points now, except in the southwest, the direction of the ocean, It refused to lighten, reminiscent of the light swallowing way heavy storm clouds darken their horizon. The first object to show in the south were the slopes of Mt. Ranier, its snow covered face reflecting the light as we crawled at xxxxx mps toward the huge ball of nuclear fusion still waiting below the horizon. Around 4:30, even the stubbornly dark southeast sky had given way, faintly but obviously. The light in the northeast was so intense that the mountains, which still hid the sun, appeared etched in sharp two-dimensional contrast. The sky above the treetops had taken on a very slight pinkish hue and the bird chorus had lost some of its intensity as instinct began to urge them into other activities. By 4:55 the climax had been reached even though it was another 15 minutes before the star of the show put in its appearance, peeking over the Cascades with a slow, calculating shyness. The chorus of nature had turned to occasional solo performances. There was only one star visible in the sky and the sound of man dominated the equinox.

## Encounters

i was walking back to work from the pier the other day after messing around by the water for lunch. A young boy stopped me and asked if I would buy a candy bar to provide money for finding lost children. I said no and he responded by calling me a racist. I said RACIST! WHERE THE HELL DID THAT COME FROM? I should have pursued it further. I sensed no anger from the boy, no emotion that would indicate he had any idea what the word meant. It just seemed to be something he felt he should call white people who said no to him. I wish i had asked him to trot a white guy out so i could have said no to him also. it would have been interesting to discover what word he would have come up with to call me then.

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A man came up to me on the street just now while I was reading a book newly bought. He was eager and friendly and earnest and wanted to know what i was reading because i seemed really into it. he read the cover and because he was black and dressed shabbily and there on the street i assumed he wouldn't understand the title and tried to simplify it for him. he ignored me and figured it out just fine without my help. there is an automatic prejudice in me that i really need to acknowledge and deal with. we discussed the UW and he seemed genuinely impressed and excited when I mentioned hoping to go to medical school. we shook hands, they seemed cool, dry and large. He had many small scars on his face. we ended the conversation with his asking for 40 cents and my saying no. we parted in the same friendly manner and he continued down the street to the next person.