

Notes of the Poet

This is the second edition of “American Ulysses and Selected Poems”. All the poems in this book are in some way influenced by the Baha’i revelation. Some are also influenced by different religious teachings and history. And some of the poems have to do with mysticism going back to Rumi and other Persian mystic poets. A few have to do with mythology. A number of poems have been added since its first printing, one of the reasons it is being reprinted now.

“American Ulysses” was written during the years 1985-1987 while I was living in Ireland, and was first published in 1999 in Renton Washington, a town about fourteen miles south of Seattle. Some of the poem was written at thirty-five thousand feet, while flying back and forth between Ireland and America. Some was written in Dromahair where I was living at the time. Other parts were written in city Sligo, nearby where Yeats is buried, and some in Dublin.

Initially I had no idea this would be a poem. It was just poetic notes on restaurant and airplane napkins, the back of menus and the like. It wasn’t until about a decade later while living in Renton that I put it together, much like stringing a pearl necklace.

“American Ulysses” tells us, at the beginning, that one must be reunited with “the king”, Baha’u’llah, sometimes referred to as the King of Glory. He is one of the many Manifestations of God, (such as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Krishna, Buddha and Zoroaster). The poem goes on to say, “A man with a cane stands at the ocean”. Baha’u’llah is this man.

Poems that are very personal to me are poems from the section “My Return from the City of Denial”, in which I write about how racism and prejudices have affected me as an individual. America’s destiny, Baha’is believe, is to lead all nations spiritually, which is talked about in the poems “Make Peace with Yourself”, and “Is America Standing”. In order to accomplish this however, we must first confront and overcome our own ingrained long standing prejudices. I am finding this takes a long time to do, since prejudices and racism are an integral part of our society. We have been raised with them since the beginning of our nation and long before.

What inspired me to write the poem “The Cave”, a poem of nine sonnets, is the unique divine governmental system which Baha’u’llah established. Baha’u’llah wrote down in his own pen this divine system, including a chosen successor in His will and testament, which no other Prophet in the history of religion has ever done.

Everything, I believe, has spiritual virtue and reality to it. This is what is behind the poem “Color Journal”; that every color has spiritual virtue. I often refer to nature, for nature Baha’u’llah says, “is God’s Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world”; that if one studies nature carefully, it will give such clear evidences of the truth as to make one “independent of every eloquent expounder”. To investigate nature then, may insure that ones independent search for the truth will be fruitful.

In the poem “Ode to Tahirih”, Tahirih was one of the earliest disciples of the first Baha’i Prophet, the Bab. She is regarded by Baha’is as the most holy woman of her time. Baha’is regard her in the same light as is the daughter of Muhammad, Fatimah, the

holiest woman in Islam. The two poems “His Last Exile #1” and “His Last Exile #2” refer to Baha’u’llah’s exile to Palestine (now Israel) from Adrionople, (now called Adirne), in 1868. Baha’u’llah was exiled four times in His life over a period of forty years.

In the poems “Ode to Shaykh Ahmad” and Ode to Siyyid Kazim”, Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kazim are heralds of the Bab, in the way John the Baptist heralded Christ. The poem “The Twelve Days of Ridvan” refers to twelve days in 1863, when Baha’u’llah first revealed He was the promised Messenger of God (as foretold by all the Prophets of old) who would be sent to unify the world. Ridvan, meaning “paradise” in Arabic, was a garden in Baghdad where His Revelation first took place.

In the poem “If One can not Hear”, Vahid was a major disciple of the Bab and was renowned for his learning; Townsend was an early Irish Baha’i who was likewise renowned for his learning. In “Anatomy of a Martyr”, Quddus was the chief disciple of the Bab and became a martyr for His cause.

May you take delight in journeying through these pages as I have taken delight in writing them.

American Ulysses

Prologue

I asked
The essence of Rhyme
What to sing,
And She replied,
"I inspire you
with poems,
with sonnet and ode,
with haiku.
But what I would sing,
if you would know,
is reunion with the King
by the sea...by the sea,
and hear the voice
of swans that sing
to light and wind."

A man with a cane
Stands at the ocean.
He waits for Ulysses.

Reunion

Change is the world with fire and air.
Do we look for God on heaven's stair,
For how can a fixed and settled thing descend?
Eternity waits where waves meet sand.
Do not despair. Ulysses sought, seasons turn,

Light in the blind man's mind burns.
The hollow men on the land reap dust,
Not knowing the ocean is near

Nor that the stars of the Hunter
Touch and kiss the Bear. Do not despair.

The sea sends waves to the mountain,
Pounds, pounds the ruined castle.
From the fields of wheat and chaff
They return from where they've been,
A giant wave brings saint, leper, lame,
To sip their mead as gold
Among the heavens young or old
Though past heavens are now gone.
And many waves then one from Zion,
From Carmel's Gate, not of wood and iron,
Visiting dream and dreamer,
Light through Plato's cave
Sharpening his stone,
Dance to dancer.

From the edge went a horse
Whose hide sheds light:
A Horse not of Troy
To snare deaf fools,
But one whose reigns give sight
Whose voice and mercy cools.

On the edge of roses
Nightingales sing: "oh sweet Remembrance!"
Whose Voice the prophets sang,
Whose song bells ring.
Say: 'all things are of God,'
And from one to the next we climb
Then pray, we leave the shores of time.

"Aye, 'tis true, but let us rest our minds
on thoughts more simple. Your baby's cheeks
look cute with dimple. And did you hear
what happened to the man who owned

the store? 'Tis a pity; never more!
and is the rookery still in O'Rourke's
chimney?"

For centuries now they've seen
No smoke, nor felt rain,
Only thumping, thumping, thumping,
To conjure auguries out of Cain.
A golden voice on a gold cross
They gazed upon, and withered like dross.
Do not despair. Ulysses sought, dreams turn,
Light in a blind man's mind burns.

So what about the dimples?
No, now is time to leave
Amidst the weather fair.
You must return, you must return
To set the table, fix the chair.
For "He whom God will manifest"
Will fill the home, the home to bless,
And tomorrow, and tomorrow.

The Wave from Carmel grinds the stone,
Scatters to ash the hate and bone.
And in its place, upon its ruin,
An orange tree with muse in blossom,
With calm and cantor for a lonely Horse,
And streams of crystal consciousness
As the Purest Branch
Crashes through the skylight
To the floor below
Piercing ribs on the world,
And all the world can know;
And in his dying, the world lives more
When the sacrifice of Isaac
Returns to 'Akká's shore.

His soul concrete in the unseen world
Opens Pandora's sacred box,
For Pandora had not one, but two;
One of dark, the other good,
'Twas both brought mankind
To its Manhood.
If you have not known yourself
You have not understood
The turning of the seasons.

"That spring has indeed returned is not
a reason to forsake my superstitions.
For why should I denounce the wound
when ignorance keeps my life from fleeting."

Rather, like ravens that watch for lamb and calf
To fall, and cease their bleating!
Yet still the red light of dawn
Sheds its winter coat of bracken.
Signs of fading time
Through a magnifying glass focus
And after their turn, re-focus
On a brighter dawn,
While planets concentric
To a thousand dying suns
Burst like billiard balls
In a back room brawl.

"But please, please, let us talk of simple things,
will your baby, do you think, soon crawl?"

Or is this just another intervention
To protect the mind from knowledge, wisdom.
Perhaps there's news today of heaven's
kingdom
Written on the red and yellow leaves that fall,
Written on the brow and brawn of kings
And ecclesiastics in Death's death knell.

"Oh please, please do tell. But hurry, hurry
I must be back for tea by the sacred well."

"To the sea, to the sea" the Muse ponders,
Where on a green and gold tangent
Ulysses' mind wanders:
Green from ether's mist that cools the earth,
Gold from the golden staff
That pounds out second birth,
Thumps the earth to call the herd to come,
Thumps the womb of winter on the run.

Awake! awake! at Summer's nocturne:
Do you hear through joy and fog and wind
The calling of the red-metal nun,
Just outside the jaw-edged reef,
Beckoning for sweet relief.
On New England's Calendar Bay
The scent of Fall clouds
Is fine to start the day.

2

It would be nice to end this thought.
Can you not forget the crime,
Smell the tinker-bell salt,
And hear the wind chime?
But no, we will not stop!
Stop now, nor all through time.
Countless numbers never tasting solace,
Only brine in the wound, their only lot.
Perhaps to end where things end,
With a tear or a dot.
And what happened to the rhyme?
Where has the rhyme gone

8

That rises to hasten,
Rises to calm,
And a wave to conquer?
And the Swan
Who tosses this way then that,
Whose wisdom eclipses the great,
Whose ageless trumpet shout
From the aboriginal heart
Sends a wave for peace;
And again peace, and again
A call for heaven's feast.

Do not despair.
In the Lighthouse rhyme echoes down the stair,
It echoes outward, it blinds the foul and fair,
It blinds the beggar and the nun,
So bright its light
Oh Christ! Has kingdom come?
Has the Thief stolen light from Sphinx's eye?
Have the Nightingale and Phoenix risen?

Have they returned to resurrect the dot,
The Point round which the angels turn?

Have they? They have, and will again return!
Does Spring ever give a final trumpet blast
And after winter cease its sweet repast?
Does any cycle play a last duet?
But no, not to prove this argument;
For the crudest ear will catch its waft
As it wends its way aloft.

3

There is time for life,
There is time for death;

Time for fleeting breath.
Eyes of the Maiden gaze
Within un-numbered veils.
You ask , "what next", as we watch the Watchman
Cast wood on embers:
Has doubt so permeated your members?
Do your limbs not respond to your every wish?
Does your mind meander, a phlegmatic fish?

To be baptized with water or fire
Conjures remembrance;
His last hour his disciples slept,
His Final hour nations wept
With a great weeping,
And still the sandman's sleeping.

Then why have you slept,
Oh serpent of insistent self,
Why wait and come to dearth,
He's coming now
And soon to birth,
Earth seizing immortality,
Statues moving gradually.
Then on a sudden
Old world myth,
Dust and heaven
Embrace and kiss.

"More milk, I beg, this tea is too strong.
a weak heart won't hold the bard's tale
straight and long."

4

So back we are to idle thought,
Though gentle ones drop as rain.

The mind, tethered at rope's end, taut,
A knife through sleeping waters
To sever pain and soar to heights of thirst,
Longing, longing the dream to burst
And return to ashes and dust;
Better to ashes and dust.
Do not despair. Ulysses sought,
Poor men seek, creation's water broke.
A thousand thousand angels
Lowlier than Saul went astray,
Then come Resurrection day
Strove a hundred Herculean tasks

Stripped themselves of arcane masks
And disappeared to realms invisible above.

“Perhaps on a fertile field
we'll see what dove or pheasant she will yield.
I hear that gourmet coffee
goes well with English toffee;
perhaps to see an Arabian horse race,
to burn ourselves in summer's face,
then maybe, maybe if you please,
we'll settle down to take our ease
and watch Ulysses return to shore
upon a lorry tire, upon a modern lore.”

Yes, we could sleep;
Wait for the wound to heal;
Did you walk through the door
Or leave any sign to tell?
This wound is ancient,
Deep, very deep. As old as hills
Or slaughter of sheep.

We will end in the ocean!
Let us go there to rest,
And with blood and black ink,

Write poems on our chest
Where the dream turns to waking,
Walking down stone steps barefoot
To keep the fire well lit
On a New England night
For fear that dawn will rise
With pennies on closed lids,
Though children's rhymes
Taunt and mock death.
Even Death, whose wage is sin:

"Shall we let the homeless in,
to squat on Persian carpets
or drink Ripple from Waterford crystal?
Shall we spend our days and ways
chasing myths? "

If the mystic Maiden appeared
Decked in white lace
From heaven to earth
In an Unknown face,
And if this symbol beckons,
Do we follow?
And how do we follow?
Where do we follow
When She leads
On Her black mount
Through impenetrable night
To a land Ulysses found not

Hidden behind the Throne,
To a place where words run hollow.

How to paint a word
If an atom's weight is fine
Enough to be a sun,

Or microscopic particles
Of children's tears that run
A mighty river to cover earth.
The river runs deep in the heart,
A ship that seeks its final berth.

So what to speak of life?
A happy escapade, his face.

The child kicks to leave
And only children's hearts arrive.

The walls fade as Nature lingers,
"Your baby's hands have little fingers."
I hear as I pay for coffee ere I go,
The rain, then, turns to snow.
Snow that comes with falling peace,
Peace that settles with a prophet's ease.

Though a fixed and settled thing indeed,
It falls in form to water flower, weed,
And fructifies with one consent
A harvest made of light's constituent.
Politics whose party is but one:
'Tis clear as truth, the thievery's begun!
Then Nature spoke, and with Her longing,
Swans upon the lake were singing:

"Ye must be gone now,
ye must be soon,
'tis not time to think of
the old day tune.
'tis sad, ah yes, 'tis sad but true.
let go the tether before you're blown,
blown by the gales of Lough Gill shores
that run through windows, rush through doors,
that blow from the East, from 'Akká's shores,
that sing of heaven's ancient lore,

sing and blow the trumpet's tune.
ye must be gone now,
ye must be gone now,
and let us go soon. "

The first be last, the last be first,
Aye, every man will drink his thirst.
A drop and a river fall into the sea,
Lost within Immensity;
A candle and a blaze to the sun return,
Return from where they began,
Where days and nights are one,
Where Light still burns in man.

And how will Nature run
When she's chained?
How to fight when earth is ordained;
Ordained beneath our feet like trees
In ground before the wearing wind,
Or a grove of crosses
At Calvary's strand.
A drop of martyr's blood
Surpasses ocean's of sweetest wine:
A needle's eye reveals more light
Then Stonehenge in her time.

"Oh please, a drop more tea before you go?
'tis been too long since I've heard dear Cicero."

There is peace in birth and death,
Calm in a good man's last breath,
Peace like calm that follows tempest's storm.
Oh natura! To anima rationalis you mirrored form!
Socrates drained the martyr's cup with glee,
Knowing that their bitter drops
Would touch and free his soul

From this discarded world.
Through the door the dry leaf blew in
Is seen what is left of our ruin.

5

There is time for flowers in the wind,
There is time for love, there is nothing save.
Time to prove and time to resurrect the grave.
Time for thought 'round every bend.
There is love like sunlight pouring,
Love in a child's little snoring.
So we must set the table, fix the chair,
Unsheathe the comb and groom hair.
But quick! They are soon arriving,
Their trenchant thought consume

With musical spoons and forks
That jingle in the wind
And jingle shells that never end.

And what of love divine
That sails with every sailor,
Floods the darkest mind
Flashes its lighthouse warning
Stoic on the Isthmus.

The buzz of light
On cottage porch
In early Autumn's eye
Tames the fly
With melancholy
For watching spring and summer
With such folly.
For in the cradle the kingdom swarms
While the child's power forms
Then stirs, and turns, and with a yearning,
Fire in his mind is burning!

A prayer for the children of the New World;
A scream from the gut of Jonah's whale
That God will take hold of leviathan's tail
And lift it out from the midst of heaven's water,
To bring peace to the landlord and the squatter,
To bring peace to the black man and his white
brother.

Abraham offered his all to fire!
He would rather have burnt himself
Than place Isaac on such a pyre.
And what of Jesus Christ?
Need more be said than the wooden cross
With nails He made his bed?
And of Muhammad's sacrifice, alas.
Husayn! Husayn! Husayn!
Euphrates' sands were merciful to your feet;
When blood spilt forth, the ancient earth drank!
And of Bahá'u'lláh!
When His Purest Branch was severed
From the sacred tree
The world fell down.

The blood of the martyrs is on the table,
Blood of Abraham, blood of Abel.

6

If fire raged in the heart,
Would chance put it out?
An arrow pierced Achilles' heel
While the arrows that struck Ali
Were for His soul's departure
From this world of carrion,
Of sighs and time, of grandeur.

The first's love, brave Achilles',
Was of this world's abode,
The latter was unsullied.

Were not those souls within the Ark
Protected from the flood?
Was not Husayn's desert
Stained with heaven's blood?
To praise The Most Great Name
The crimson Ark lies frozen
While Letters of two dozen
Stand still, marble-esque,
And angels cry, encrolled
As Persian arabesque.
Then why does hope linger
And expectation hunger?

"We went to the market,
knowledge to buy and sell,
though all the shops were closed
with no one there to tell."

So did they wander distraught?
Or go to every town?
This commodity they sought,
And the more they looked
A fiercer hunger craved
And soon, so soon,
This knowledge enslaved.
And appearing before
Desert's rain illusion
They reached this well thought out
Madman's conclusion.

These doubts they scurry,
Crabs on stony beaches
Hurry from Tsunami.

They gnash their claws,
A plague defeated.

Listen, hear the Manifest:
For such He suffered
That all would perish
If touched by a sigh
He uttered
While wings blazing
A moth that's fluttered
Too close too soon;
For how can the madman
Meet and kiss the moon
Or the soulless
Hearken to the loon.

"The kettle has gone cold,
the fire has grown old.
Shall I wither as the fig tree
or rise to raise the dead?
I'll sit on the edge. Please, please
draw another chair and take your ease.
Another coffee, light with cream
I'll drink before I think
of red and yellow leaves
fallen by the sword. For I have
killed them all already, killed
them all! Have killed my fathers,
mothers, daughters, sons,
for I have bought and sold God's rooms!"

Do not despair. Ulysses sought, oceans churn,
Light in a blind man's mind burns.

A searching eye finds peace
Digging in the desert sand,
Or in the palm of a farmer's hand,
Or beneath a date tree, trembling,

The Virgin birth remembering.
Saints from the land of Light's birth,
The King of kings
Has come to earth!
Ancient land Daniel tread,
Land whose stones Muhammed led;
Twelve hundred, three score days fell
When peace opened like a scallop shell.

And what of heroes shaking on the sand?
What greater proof can the seed adduce
Than the fruit in a farmers hand.
Harvest's moon and hunter's envy,
Stars fall in a frenzy;

Sun and moon and stars turn,
Then a new heaven shone.

All the prophets and their saints
Cleansed the sacred halls,
Broke the heavens
And leveled the hills.
Steeds insane to God's gaze,
Dumb meteors, they crossed the sky.
The law from Carmel went forth
And resurrected hearts of earth;
Isaiah's promise, fulfilled,
His camphor cup then spilled.
At night the watcher David wrote:
"Hear the song of peace!
the song of love swans sing
while on the water or on the wing."

A fixed and measured fire is a settled thing indeed,
It burns in form to purify the seed.

Beneath the surface
Of an ancient hill, dried to root,
Glow embers from drought.
Then at some time that's fixed in doubt,
The hill explodes. Oh Carmel! Cry out!
Warriors of hidden realms appear,
The soul's translucent mask to wear;
Return and war to chain
The burning pit,
The river Styx itself
Like heaven, splits:
All muses kiss
The boots of roan Apocalypse.
Angel, demon, tumble, grapple,
Saints awestruck fixed in a spell,

A new human race
Quaffs heaven to its fill.

The Man by the ocean,
Turns His cane from the land
And raises Ulysses where waves meet sand.

Epilogue

Then the child wakes, and with a quaking,
Heaven in his voice is waking:

'Tis the old world, let it lie.
'Tis death of the old manor.
Let it flitter as a fall fly
blind in its fools gold glitter,

and let it die.
So walk across the earth,
To all quarters run
With torch in hand
And cornucopia.
Pass by Narcissus
As a page in a story book,
Fear not thyself
And as the old world dies,
The page will be ignited.
So die in Christ!
And with Him be united.

Author's Note

There is a line about a place
Where down the blind are driven.
How many times in tempest storm
I have been there, but waking,
 was forgiven.
There is a town that dwells the sea
Where food is freely given,
How many times I came there starved...
And dying, yet was risen!

END

Selected Poems

I Am Lost, Oh Love

I am lost, oh Love, upon a sea,
Within a ship so firm and fine,
How strange that one could be so free
Within a place so strong and sound.

Oh love who placed me in these walls,
Oh love who makes these walls of light,
Love who sends Her water falls
From mountains of majestic might,

If thou wishest me to live,
Through me blow Thy holy breath.
The touch of Thy new Name thou wilt give
To one who from the shore has leapt.

Thou beyond both first and last,
Thou who has come with bugle's blast,
To every poor one Thou wilt give,
To every soul Thou shalt say "live".

Ode To Tahirih

My heart is frozen, then comes the wind,
It stirs the quiet cloud and sleeping sea.
And gently waking I stretch and bend,
Swords and clouds cut my soul free.

Hidden Words hide within a cloud,
Baha's words are swords that gently probe my
soul.

Wake me! wake me! let me sing out loud,
And everything I see take toll.

Oh Fatimah! Your grief has been avenged;
You have returned in Hidden Words!
A Wondrous Letter born from cloud and sword,
The Pure One, Christ-like in female robe.

His Last Exile #1

His last exile was as the first,
Pangs of grief from every side,
The lovers feared to die of thirst,
And every man and woman cried.

What ship that carried God's own Voice,
Blest beyond all vessels gone,
A lonely splinter from its planks
Would cause each waiting soul to song.

But song from such a primal past,
Buried beneath these feeble letters,
Agony beyond our Paradise lost,
And beauty dimming peacock feathers.

His Last Exile #2

His last exile was the first,
Sighs of grief from every side,
The lovers yearned to die of thirst
And every man and woman cried.

What ship that carried God's own Voice,
Blest beyond all vessels gone,

A lonely splinter from its planks
Would wake each wailing mother's song,

Though song from such a grieving host
Is buried beneath these tragic letters,
His pain surpassed Job's wandering ghost,
His shackles freed the sinners' fetters.

Ode to Shaykh Ahmad

Wrapped within,
this glass in stone
falls down.
Pine needles spin
from a clarion world
following fast upon my heels.
Dreams to remember
of a harbinger to twin prophets,
clad in silk,
and sword a pen
of divine virtue
wedged between a changing world
too fast for teeth to hold.

Ode to Siyyid Kazim

What

What Quranic fire charred the earth?
What feet with silken sheen
Tread hot coal with eyes.

I have seen the morning rise
On the inside of things,
Round and smooth,

Or jagged and square.
There are no shadows
In a windowless room,
sun shining from
The upper left hand corner.
There is no room for shadows
In the heart of a sun.

When

When fifty thousand prophets
Have come and gone
More leaves and trees with one sight
As far as the eye can see.
With one voice
Wind stirred,
And sap rose
To feed silver leaves
Light as feathers.

Light

Light plays music on the forest floor,
But a golden world can not shine
In hearts of lead,
Nor a crown make the world a king.
He left commissioned words,
Watered and tendered lovingly,
Then left.

Left

Left many fools to wonder
The meaning of a rose,
to wander the earth.

He

He left children speaking riddles
Vast and moist;

Ancient children
Holding the world aloft.

Sought

Sought "the Mother, the Secret, the Soul"
In bare feet with beards bent to clear a path
As wide as the heart.
Found strangers trapped in stone and wood.

Took

Took them by the hand,
Cupped in his palm,
And poured them on the earth.
A thousand trees in a grove
of dead wood their dried leaves,
Amber symbols, singing with the sound
Of deer hooves rattling.
Their life gave life.

We

We can not measure such a hand,
Nor leave self without a guide.

Oh Baha'u'llah!

Oh Baha'u'llah! Your Cause
Goes forth; any time we repeat
Your words, clouds disperse.
Can lips of love speak, without
Speaking Your verse?
Or lightening strike, without
Striking the earth?
Does your fire of love blaze
And not kindle the heart?
Do ships on your ocean
Need compass or chart?
Oh where but to the sea
Does all return, when fire
Is cool water, when love for You
We yearn. Is beauty but a sight
Or sound to hear? Only when
Our eyes and ears know
That You are near.
Can one consider happiness
A stair? Only with the rail
Of Your all loving Presence there.
Lost in a sea of prayer;
Lost,.... in a sea of prayer.

Where is the Hidden One?

Men on horseback
Travel to far off places
Carrying sacred things in suitcases.
The winds blow and the seeds
Of apples fall: all is crystal clear
Except the Personality
Of the Hidden One. The lover's eyes,
Though dry from heat,
Rain down tears in all seasons.

So where has the Person
Of the Hidden One gone?
To claim to know is claiming Godhead.
Did God's Messenger appear instead?
One might better answer all wisdom,
All sciences and all that's known on scrolls
That could blanket the universe.
We turn our heads and chatter,
Not wanting reason to
Condemn our estate
Or banish our soul.

I am a White Flower

Book 1

"I am a white flower, you are a stone wall",
I say to my heart, my mind.
"I will crush this stone, silently.
Silent and deep my roots go
and surround with tendrils.
Some day a heavy bird will light
 upon my white flower,
Its talons massage my bloom.
Until then, the rock will have to fly.

Book 2

"I am on to something big"
It is not to say of where or wit,
So I will fly from sun flowers tall
Then back again to touch my wall.
I build and tear them down.
Tears and laughter crack and flood
A universe moving to the right,
Not concentric spurs of light.

Perhaps I conspire with myself
To grow shaded near lava rock.

Book 3

I eat a grapefruit cut in half,
I breath in deep and laugh
and laugh.
Then skipping cross an ocean path
I reach an edge, and, drawing near,
atop a volcano green and sear,
White clouds rise and hug her crest.
A prophet's voices is heard.
It bids me descend.

Book 4

(Of this Island I will speak thrice:
Once of land and once of whales.
Their echoes speak of fire and sea;
The last, my heart, was lost to sails.)

Book 5

A generous path down the volcano. Lined:
Lined with azaleas, rhododendron,
Ferns, dwarf palm and dwarf pine.
Figures emerge and go towards,
Towards a flowering tree;
Blossoms too many to know.
Steam escapes and curls down a knotted
apple row
Lifting its white flowers up and down.
I descend.
A blast of heat fills my nose,
Red lava touched with rose moves me,
The birds are deafening. It is late afternoon

And they are louder then ever as they storm
the volcano.
They are a hollow feather.
Another sound, deep and resonant, slides under foot
Reaching my hair like wind chimes:
The song of whales.

Book 6

Two whales beneath the volcano.
Their song rises and falls.

Across the ocean my body calls,
I see my body beneath my white flowered stone.

Book 7

When the whales talk the volcano shakes
And a sound whistles like a mighty pen.
The whales are one with the molten sea,
Their love sends out sweet constancy.
When I reach the bottom it is smooth glass, only
Tails mark the liquid that is cool
As light passing through the void of space.
This is also the way in which their haunting speech travels.
Even through my stone.

Book 8

Their gray tails and backs break the surface,
Twin Letters form and reform a silent verbal pool.
They sound the depths to a mark unknown.
The earth creates, and again once more

As they call creation from liquid stone.
I watch and can not move. I am allowed to watch.

Book 9

You can not go home to your own backyard
When you have been touched by the wing of God.

Book 10; *I return*

The bird grabs my heart,
I will never be the same...never the same;
Stunned by ecstasy long overdue
I set sail for the open seas
And rush before the wind
As a child's heart rises to my throat
Singing the meadow lark's song,
Offspring of the Two guide me,
They pull and pull and pull me along.
My stone is lashed to the boat's bow on my
Maiden voyage.

I Have No Strength

I have no strength: the mosquito annoys me.
Oh God! Protect this helplessness
For my own self would fail me,
The dark forest confuse me,
My limbs would shake.
I would not leave my house for fear.
Oh Lord, make me keep your strength

Inviolable and pure.
Daisies, Black eyed Susan's,
Lupine and Buttercups endure the night.
Simple field flowers suffer heat and draught,
Wind that rips trees from root.
Keep my roots firm in your love.

I Am Weary

I am weary, oh Lord.
Sins of my generation weigh me down,
Turn my eyes dull.
I carry them when I go.
I turn to You, they are with me still.
Arguments and their philosophers shrivel;
What shade can stop the sun full faced!
Leave me not unto myself.
My enemies are my passions, save my passion
Of Your time in thick chains,
Your summons to fools and their kings,
Your sacrifice for our love: leave me not to myself.

Ode to the Psalmist

Poetry can not come from a rock
Without an anvil of sorrow.
Yet soft and flowing water
Will issue from my heart.
My eyes fail my feet,
The path is lost in the mid-day sun
To sight and blind alike.
Will not the coat of Joseph
Bring Earth to Spring?
I see the face of Glory!
My path: the light in His eyes,

My feet will not fail at the gate,
No man will keep this one from this embrace
For He is merciful.
Though my sins be piled
As sands of the Nile;
Not the Sahara, no not the sands
Of the earth can stay His grace.

Ode to Bahá'í Martyrs of Iran

I see the drizzle of the rain
And hear Thy loved ones from Iran,
Whose tears fall on the sacred ground
Where the roots of the tree of life have spread.
They call the name of Bahá in the night
When the henchman's sword is fast asleep;
When the hangman's noose
Blows gently as a wind chime,
A silent song of martyr's love so deep.
They call the name of Bahá in the night,
And descends the Holy Spirit wrapped in light
As peace upon the poor man's brow,
Or cool water through a desert flow.

Oh Chastity!

Oh Chastity! Gone are those who covet thee,
Buried 'neath the snow of death
Are those who desire thee:
Oh where are those who are jealous
Over those who are wed to thee!

In Memory of the Psalmist (Written in Dublin)

The Lord, my Lord, he visits them
As they wash cloths in the river
And in the valley,
As they wash in the laundromats
By the fast highway,
He goes to them who toil with the earth,
Who raise children through birth and death,
To those who sweat under starched white collars,
Searching the isles of law
To make plough-shares from wars.
He visits behind bars who plead his forgiveness
Though tomorrow the gallows will feel their weight,
And he forgives them.
The Lord my Lord, he beckons
Children in the schoolyard,
He softens the tyrant's heart,
He sends his waters to near and far places;
He does not discriminate!
He sent forth the bees
As Muhammad sent forth,
Sent them to the mountains, to the valleys
To gather healing for men from flowers pure;
They gather their keep from mountains of roses
At Ridvan each year.
They buzz on Carmel,
They search through Quranic Isles,
Through verses come by Evangel's door,
and Torah.

Christ's Return

A balm of peace exploded in my head,
And tranquillity, that blessed plague,
Through out my body spread.
It effected limb and member

To such a state that fire blazed
Though none could see an ember;
" A fire?" some might ask,
Still waiting Christ's return,
" Then you're condemned to hell"
Yet such a fire burned and blazed
Though stranded in a well!

To Build a Fire

To build a fire in Ireland
You need wood chopped from anywhere,
Half dry scraps, moss strewn,
Any broken piece will do.
Coal, blacker than your moon-less night,
Turf hatched from acid bogs
Cake-like, dried to a brick,
Cut from lime green mountains.

To build a fire in Ireland
You need faith in things unseen;
The wind will dry her
Though the rain is unrelenting.
Thankful for one sunny day,
A smile, a cock of the neck
From a briar wool coat
Ancient as sheep are ancient.

To build a fire in Ireland
You need a five P box of matches
From the stone cut pub,
Stone to strike a fire in,
Patience if the first bares no flame,
Notwithstanding the chill wind wailing,

" Dost Thou wail or shall I wail "
Waiting to enter with the friend knocking.

To build a fire in Ireland
You need the salt of the earth,
" For if the salt has lost its savor
Where-with shall it be salted ".
Pure salt distilled in a crystal womb
In the heart of the hottest sun,
Salt to sprinkle on the tomb
At the time of the Promised One.

Anatomy of a Martyr

"You're going to go and stand before the King,
there is no doubt; put on your wedding ring"

Quddus went, took his ring into the square,
And with his life sang and fell.
The butt of the gun, hilt of the sword
That smashed his orbits, crushed his malar,
Caved in his parietal: and he stood before the King.

Odes

To Be

To be spring though fall;
His spring encompasses.
In America the leaves that fall
From trees of late or early,
Some to mature, though severed.
The poets' tongues today have sharpened
All the metaphors to be made,
Of things to things to be wrought.

Then can this tongue speak
What few, so few, have found, though sought.
'Leaves are yellowed'
And the trees lay bare their waste.
Many that have turned will turn again.

No Man

No man knows the time.
On the Isthmus the poet stands
Stumbling, a blind gull
Trying to recall
Days of soaring
Lost now.
No man knows the time.
Ignorance stands: a blank universe
Warmed by the sun of gold,
Concealed by ignorance,
Until the script of light
Inscribes its name:
"O noble Ignorance transformed!"
Running to the sea,
Passing the grammarian's hesitancy,
He leaps into the prophets' rhyme
Never to reappear.

And Then

And then there was a white flash,
White as if surrounded by white,
A white not of this earth.
And it was over
In a song of fire,
Fire that moved as water,
Moved by the hand of God.
A fear, perhaps:

A single, devoted, enveloping fear:
Love one could say it was:
The progeny of peace,
The ontogeny of oneness.
It was over in a white,
Sight-giving flash;
War and hunger, envy and anger
And all that is wrought
Of man's day and broken glass
Had ended for all time.

I Hear the Sound

I hear the sound of war, but wake to dream,
Of gods and men free floating in my stream -
That I walk upon without a toe dipped in
To the waters that are so very thin
They break as if a glass, to press and hear
The voice of coming wars that bring one near
A deeper stream, much deeper - bottomless;
Whose drops of water bring eternal bliss:
Each drop a trumpet with a note to tell,
The Lord of Lords is tending Mount Carmel.

If One Can Not Hear

If one can not hear the darkness sing,
Or in Springtime seek out the Beloved's ring;
Then how will Light find you and compose
From your life blood a song to stir the rose?

If sap that flows like blood through trees,
Moves swifter than the heart set free -
Then what is freedom worth in time,
Or liberty to the Prophet's rhyme?

The place that knows its placelessness,
The solid form that leaps and flows,
The poet's tongue that tastes the tasteless -
Derive their all from the Beloved's rose.

Incantations may rise like heaven,
And the nearest prayer seek out it's name -
But insanity did act as leaven
And sheared the wisest of their fame.

Consider the Point round which all now turn;
How Vahid and Townsend changed their ways -
And rethought meaning as meaningless
When face to face with the Ancient of Days.

That the Phoenix no longer needs to burn
And turn to ash that it may rise -
Is but one degree of one degree's turn
Of five hundred cycles that eclipse the skies.

To See the Phoenix Rise

How sad in war we kill and maim
And think we've captured praise and fame -
Or that a tank must crush the earth
To feel we have given freedom birth.

And stranger still bombs fall from skies
In hope to see the Phoenix rise,
Or that a parent striking child
Believes that this will tame the wild.

And who believes that swords of might
Can force the darkness to be light,
Or that the act of calumny
Can set the inner anger free?

Yet stranger still - and the source of grief -
Is that all should suffer ones belief,
And that the right to criticize
Is rightfully owned by sage and wise.

I am Dumb

I am dumb, oh love, with dread and awe,
God's lion in the forest deep,
My tongue is singed with what I saw,
These eyes and ears my soul won't keep,

Oh Tongue that can only speak the Hour,
My speech that fails by night and day,
Tongue that voices snow and fire,
This throat that claims its rock and clay,

If my soul is tempered fine,
Draw it from the sheath of light,
Whirl it round and round a line
Of words you spoke that gave me sight.

Then this voice will cry as Thine
In the dark or in the day,
Your Voice will turn my heart to wine
And as the lovers, you will slay.

I Am Passing Round

I am passing 'round my head I hold,
That all may see I am nothing more,
Than what the slave and knight behold
Can cast in iron-wear ever more.

And when the dawn has passed the rail
That thrusts its presence into time,
I'll be beheaded as the nail
That's shorn so it can be refined.

Then by His grace I'll vex the land,
A single soul whose feet would wear,
The shoes of the least one of His clan,
And happy with my given share.

Women are the Key

Women are the key to every fire,
It's not that I must have them or desire.
For world peace which burns down every heart,
Women hold the key to every fire.

Women cut the key to every truth,
It's not that I must have them or desire,
Except that truth is what I choose to sire;
Women hold the key to every fire.

When fire burns in every village tower
Love will find its way to burn so bright,
Where lives in every womb the final hour;
Women are the key to every fire.

Oh Baha!

Wander, wander, in the night,
Until all song is filled with glee;
'Til the Lion yields its right
As guardian of the sacred Tree!

Tremble, tremble, in the light,
That the soul returns to birth
As starlight fills the ancient flask
And Lions dance the Tree with mirth!

Oh Baha, You sealed the light!—
Until You came to break the seal—
That You have done eternally,
That the hearts alone can feel.

Ode to Daffodils

When the Arabic Trumpet sounded,
Trumpet daffodils closed their flowers,
Trumpet Swans along the shoreline leapt
And Zion, while rejoicing, wept.

Every ocean, lake and stream
Cleft their waters to make great walls -
Each as tall as the Red Sea clove
By Moses to make safe passage.

Then crossed each ocean, lake and stream,
The loved ones of the Lord,
In the throes of celebration
To find and drink one drop.

Hear the Song Birds Singing

When the eastern sky has died,
And the eyes of all have turned,
To the west will travel souls
Where love has burned.

In the turret they are so anchored,
In the light they are so shown,
Through the flowers they wander
These souls that are well known.

When the western sky is dimmed,
And the eyes of all are sealed,
To the east will travel souls
Where love has been revealed.

Oh hear the song birds singing,
Through a Rose that bears a Name,
That is like the church bells ringing
In a valley of God's flame.

Through Virtue

Through virtue does the rain pray,
To find some earth in need of rain,
In great need does the heart beat
To taste of love, though through it pain.

The qualities of love are known;
They dance upon the starlight fair,
And as the lover's hearts are shown,
The universe lets down its hair.

Then rain comes down to move the earth,
The seed opens out to free the night,
And love in measure pours its due,
Consuming darkness and the light.

We Are, O Lord

We are, O Lord, beneath a Tree,
Whose roots go deeper than the soul,
Though spears of grass we haply grow,
These blades will dance through every town,

And sever, as they whirl and spin,
Each heart that comes within their sphere
From all it knows and all it could,
That by Your leave You'll call them near.

Then leaves upon this Tree will form
To overshadow all the earth;
But still this Tree spent not a word
Nor deed to claim to all its birth.

I Bled My Heart

I bled my heart, my heart was pierced,
My love was christened on a vine
Of flowers growing by the first
That light had sent from pollen fine.

And dripped my heart of honey pure,
From the vase that must contain
Not of dust that does appear
But sweetness from the blessed vein.

Now the substance flowing fast,
From heat that thins the blood inside,
Makes the vessel doubly cast
That steals from life the flesh and hide.

My RETURN FROM THE CITY OF DENIAL

Sweet Memories

Sweet memories drip slow and honeyed,
Quick and rain. In tears they come.
What lessons, my youth in Maine,
Not frost, only death
To escape his breath

I traveled down that lane.
Old hot tar under foot
I walked the yellow lines
To cool my feet.
In those years I ran,
Hid in places where no place could touch,
But still he followed,
His sweet breath,
I thought not his shadow, short or long,
Could follow my hiding song.
It was a lie.
Sweet and slow, bitter and fast
This hiding could not last.
" I have made death a Messenger of joy "
I heard, and followed that creative word.

I walked those empty halls,
Lonely columns supporting non-existence,
I walked there, and left broken,
Left my coat and tie at the door
Then years haven't crossed that floor.

These memories in dreams were later razed;
Then now I'm sane, they call me crazed.

My Medusa, My Walls

1

The walls of judgment surround,
I must crush them
In the crucible of a common Cause.
A hideous multi-headed serpent
My Medusa.
They laugh and whisper their judgment.

A single heart beat beheads them,
The walls dissipate and fade,
Its voice, snickering once upon a dream,
Leaves me life.
Such a vast opening beyond my walls.
Lo ! it is my soul waiting to open,
Waiting to rise to itself, face to face.

My efforts, spent,
I will not face these walls more,
There is no door to leave them;
They it is must leave!
A tight fist holds these walls together,
My fist must open
And not depend on my judgments for life.

What life so solid and closed?
I weary of holding my walls together.
The walls crumble
And butterflies rise from brick,
Walls crying 'Jericho' fall, and I wake.

He had stopped looking at seagulls
 After the walls were built.
 The sea bird cries became so common
 So near to the sea.
 He still dreamt floating over rivers,
 Rivers encasing sleeping souls
 Moving toward the sea.
 What else could he dream.

Maybe when he ran
 As a young boy, heart bursting,
 Running through tan fields turning;
 For joy he ran and felt no wall,
 What times Ulysses never saw.
 In older years, with no walls,
 He met his child.
 They held hands and laughed.
 They talked of many things
 Clearly, and seagulls
 Lifted their souls
 To dance with water
 As it was in the beginning.
 An aurora of laughter and joy.
 And they walked the gown
 Of the Maiden
 That trails the sky.

My walls reformed,
 They do me harm,
 Brick and mortar, parted once,
 Return to block the waking
 That began back when I began
 To face my denial.
 Oh how miserable and vile!
 I fought it and forgot it strong,
 I sang most every song,

And returning from a place most dense
It grew and leapt and danced upon a fence.
It jeered and laughed.
I take a brick and throw,
It falls and other bricks from it grow;
My walls reform
They suffer every storm,
Rage and envy, fear and flight,
A serpent with more heads than night!
It grows up tall, no leaves nor rose,
No beauty to fill a single nose.
I cut it, cut it, cut it down,
It spouts up twice its strength
A pillar made of stem and thorn.
It is beyond my scope alone,
Save through turning;

I have seen the sun
Hot as alabaster.
A host of angels
Stand behind
A chair, a throne.
But why are they not seen?
Their voices, soft, a silent tongue
Singing from a stream.
A tongue speaking in tongues,
Winged, it knows no wall,
No medusa, only light.
I have seen the sun
Flying as an albatross
With new wings
O're its own dominion:
Where ever the shadow
Of its wings fall
A new creation rises.

Reunion of Black and White

All is forgiven in the lost desert.
When two brothers part in youthful anger and scatter;
Two gusts of wind, severed they wander,
Incantations rise from blistered lips as they ponder;
Then all is forgiven in the lost desert
When they see their illusion
Lead them to no water,
Lead them to wander in the lost desert.
Opposite ways do not stretch forever,
They circle and touch
In remembrance of brothers laughter
Before the first foot set on the desert's hinge,
Beneath the shelter of parents' arms
Under the awakening:
Then in the heat loves gold is tested.
A fool will not find his way from sands illusion
Nor will the blind in heart
See the rose in blossom.

I Hold You Oh Forest

I hold you, oh forest by the Pacific:
Your madrone trees, your cedars vast
Holding arms aloft, bowing soft.
To spread my arms o're fields I come,
To hug her peace, asleep from root to mast
Flowers waving in green multitudes,
To knowingly steal this peace
And with it feed vein and bone,
And at day's end relinquish this same peace
To our loved one earth; Mother to all or to none,
Her black sons and daughters a mystery
and a song,

Her white offspring mirror the sun
As black and white mirror each other.
Oh tell me the difference between the
birch and walnut.

—

A Pin Has Pierced the Sky

A pin has pierced the sky,
A single, generating, point.
Its head unfolds; drops through
The eagle. Like a stone it falls
In an atmosphere of love.
A germ of moisture within
Gives birth and forms an egg,
Whose bugle call speaks
Within and breaks the shell:
It shatters winter's earth.
Shrill feathers whistle,
A flute caller hears
The dense of night crack.
What new day dawns from this point?
A plumb line, the stone falls,
Its vertical thrust, its thrust to earth.

Relinquish

Relinquish your life to the earth, my body:
Let blood mingle with earth,
Let sighs and tears replenish their source;
God has not created this subtle form
For an end not remembered.
Let vein pulse with root,

Bone dance with trunk and flute
Bleached by sun, rain,
'Til salt sting and years fade.
The joy of life invades the universe
When ecstasy reveals its final rest.

My Racism is Deep

My racism is deep, it is yours,
A sleeping Medusa,
There are thorns in my feet
That my heart feels
Though I walk a stone path
With agony and content.
I look to my plate
And eat what crust of bread;
All my eyes focus in
On a common inheritance.
Riots broad and thin
Break mine unconscious ground,
An evil plant
From its dark place,
Petals with toxic dun
Stripped to the core
Its pit cracks within
And light upon light
Calls from every glen.

Oh my denial!
What ship at sea avoiding land,
Even green, safe land,
Bountiful fruit and shading tree,
What stone at depth can fathom light.
My denial feeds its pain

On lonely seas.
Ships pass by,
Unknown cries on all sides,
Agonizing cries heard by none,
A darkness thick in all sense;
Smells too familiar but unknown,
Sounds too painful for
A king to have born,
Sight that won't leave my eyes
For fear it will see and be seen,
Hand and limb avoiding touch
For hidden reason,
Hunger that won't taste life.

The Cave

- 1 The captives of the Cave choose their chains,
 What incarceration for their choice!
 Irons wrought from lovers slain,
 They are free to leave, but choose His voice.
 The King is what stands and lives the Cave,
 His song its pillars, roof and ground,
 They tell us why the stallion holds the slave
 And camels walk cross Hades to His sound!
 They that enter wear sandals of fire,
 Cherry blossoms and roses their recompense,
 Their time, the never of fruit gone sour,
 Their light, a part of dark's absence.
 What king stands in a place not fit for a king?
 What Christ and Father bore our pain in a ring,

- 2 What prophet speaks his heart if not to sing?
 For Spring has come to heaven's gate
 And everywhere flowers are in bloom,
 Paradise is none too soon nor late,
 This Cave is many mansions in one room!

Outside its pale a mystery fearful to behold,
A darkness and light not to digest,
Where the dying sun yields naught but cold
And low raven's song of crone its only rest.
Sprinkle on the winged bird a grain of salt
And earth bound it will fall to live in dust
Where every bird of prey must soon be fought;
These birds have tried to out reach Icarus!

- 3 But enter and see the red sun rise,
Then set and rise and suffer no eclipse,
While love is ever in the lovers' eyes,
And words of love are on the lovers' lips.
How strange to know the sun gone down
While light abounds and rises,
One may think one's come to heaven's town
With daffodil, that's followed soon by iris.
Flowers grow and flourish in every path,
Glass contained in rock they fill a niche,
Free from nature's ever changing wrath,
While every other task is in their reach.

Then a calling touches heart and vein;
Though seed bloomed when Christ rose,

- 4 Tall flowers can be broken by the rain.
How sweet the taste of dew that nurtures men,
And the Queen whose breast their nurtured from,
What bird that sings and nests be like the wren,
A gentle one whose heart heard the drum.
These divine ones dance for a thousand years,
Without a thought they beg for laws,
Rules that rule here are ecstasy and tears
And hope floods their soul as stars.
The cloth they wear are of another's hand,
Made of wind and song that carved the earth,
The fates and gods are ruled by their command,

Their lilting melody brings birth,
And gentle breeze at dawn their breath.

5 When laughter wafts as a single beat!
When freedom laughs and visits evermore,
Freed from love's venom and fatal dart,
The world with all its care can not reach here.
Dancing round twin trees they come and go,
Birds angelic dance 'round every head,
A blush in them from dancing heel and toe,
While in their claws they hold a silver thread:
Fine line! you can't be cut by any sword,
The edge of Life will not, can not, sever!
The bite of Death will not snap your chord
Which bond is stronger than child to mother.
Bathed in virtue when April came
The thread was made from word and grain,

6 Then wove the warp and woof again.
Oh catalyst of light that stands between us
And chaos surging in the sacred Plain,
A lowly pearl and nine gems for justice,
Liberators in the heart to reign.
Oh Guardian! with hope and touch you bring
A clear visage on a dark path to guide,
And House of Equity forever ringing;
Twin seas with one sequential tide.
No movement made without heaven,
Nor sparrow drop and not a sigh from God,
When pen in a child's hand did act as leaven
And nurtured fruit and tree from furrowed sod.
You carried your weight to the end!

7 Oh Greatest Branch waving, touching all,
Even with the Cave You count space.
The Master knows each beck and call,
Brave Servant, whose life is God's face.

Robe of the King He walks the throne,
 Footsteps measure heaven with a stride,
 Famed nightingale with peacock crown,
 What sentient Mountain holds this Mystic bird?
 What feathered pen sung Tablets of a Plan;
 His Universe, wrapped, wakes to breathe.
 Oh Exemplar carved in human form to live!
 'Abdu'l-Bahá by name and state forgive
 This tongue that speaks, for it has spoken from
 a well;
 What perfect Persian Song can voice chant or tell?

- 8 Save the Báb the scriptures hail
 Launching the Mariner's hidden rhyme,
 Who put to rest the search for grail
 On seas of unremitting storm.
 “No ship of fools”, you called to every quarter,
 Within that Ark no creature comes to harm,
 Neither saint nor demon suffers want of water
 Poured by such a loving Psalm.
 He closed the Prophets' reign,
 (We and our universe spin 'round his Temple),
 He breathed a cycle yet again,
 And made each thing immortal,
 By raising from earth immortal green
 And every color seen and yet unseen.
- 9 Pray what Voice charms our heart?
 Moses saw rise from earth what we stand before.
 Though Thief and Law wait upon the step,
 Do we answer when He's knocking at the door?
 A thousand years 'till the Word of God will sire,
 Expectation cries at every dusk,
 Does Gabriel trumpet with light so dire?
 (Bahá feared for the New One's distant musk).
 Nay! the Hand of God will not be troubled,

None can stay the breeze of Spring's intent!
The grace of God has wakened from its bed
And offered up its heart with Isaac, spent.
Oh Glory! You are everywhere, yet hiding well:
Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'u'lláh, what truth you came to tell!

The Twelve Days of Ridván

On the First day of Ridván
The True One gave to me
His Song of eternity,

On the second day of Ridván
The Adored One gave to me
Words from the ancient sea,

On the third day of Ridván
The Omniscient gave to me
The Nightingale's song
Wrapped in ecstasy,

On the fourth day of Ridván
The Creator gave to me
An eye from the peacocks down,

On the fifth day of Ridván
The Fashioner gave to me
Silk shoes to walk upon,

On the sixth day of Ridván
The Most Holy gave to me
Sight from the brightest sun,

On the seventh day of Ridván
The Father gave to me
Fire from the burning One,

On the eighth day of Ridván
The Healer gave to me
Mud from his hand,

On the Ninth Day of Ridván
The All-Knowing gave to me
A bridge so I could stand,

On the tenth day of Ridván
The Mother and the Soul called out
And fell upon the dust,

On the eleventh day of Ridván
The Hour drew nigh
And handed to the earth its trust,

On the Twelfth Day of Ridván
The Compassionate, the Merciful,
Looked out upon the West.

MAKE PEACE with YOURSELF

Make peace with yourself.
The forest will wait.
Ocean steady and surge
green and acorn
daffodil and eagle
your soft footsteps
tumble to the river to the sea
a heart smiles
across fields of wind

clouds tickle the earth
her silent laugh
rejoices root and tendril
leaves drum
on the blue skin of sky.
The World will wait for her
lost people to return
to Her ways.

Down around the sunset
whale song chimes
the red sunset!
Wind plucks strings of color,
taught harmonic color,
stretched, but free as freedom
plucked to the beat of
leaves beating blue
from a world looking in,
a call of oneness,
a Spring blue within blue
peace from green eyes
dancing in blades of grass.

Pine-scented needles soft to the foot
light through spruce arms
cathedral above, raven's nest
perched to watch, spy
and cock of neck

in a pale of pine orange brown
scented to the dun;
red and black birds
dance the earth as if a drum.

On the way to four ways:
north goes the cool to warn,
east goes the new of dawn,

south goes heat to fire,
west will set the hour.

Oh forest with color
bright under earth
blinding in a flower
deafening roar of leaves in wind
deep whirring stands of pine
a chattering and a laughing of birch;
tell us the Name you call,
tell us of the rise in tides
you see dancing waves and shout
nocturnal tides tendered
by sand pipers stout
white and dark wings
darting over surf and rift
calm over rock alive and stoic.
Between forest and sea
candor blossoms in the dell.
Wet the sea pounds
echoes, stones tumble
to a loud, a mist Pacific
rises from smooth souls
its vaporous mind hovers
on the edge
of a noble forest, ageless limb
gallery of trunk and leaf
aware to the storm
yielding to the silent
gentle, the violent delicate
that uproots to rest
(oh, sweet, sweet rest),
wooden forms dance
from crest to crest,
their brothers and sisters
away in forest green
hear the world of sea
wonder and amaze,

wait their turn to turn
to mist and haze.
Oh hear the sweet parade,
touch of earth, tender the earth,
promenade beneath the feet.
Once upon a time
forms of clouds spoke their mind
echoes still lingered
slow to the move
reflected on clouds
they reigned with rain
skeletons of butterfly wings
echoes of rumblings
lightning and feather cascade
atoms split atoms fuse
between what is dawn and muse.
Once upon a time
made peace from self to self
far under earth
in a river so cool.

Oh to sleep and rise
with silent echoes,
to gardens with Spring
and Autumn never dull.
Oh wondrous Mystery!
Dream of dreams!
seasons turn to pulse
and laugh, red pulse
in rock and violet
skin of earth greets
a happy sigh of leaves
greet a day in dreams
where nothing grieves.
Burst of bulb, explode of pink,
crimson, purple hue,
orange as orange can be
and Vincent blue

joy and smile, Spring of springs,
all things birth from one
beneath the life of things.

Another time a silence
stilled the animals
in their tracks.
Then moved by quiet
known to those
who know her voice
they knew the world
was one again so danced,
and in their dancing
was rejoice!
Oh darkest Mystery, land of day,
tell us what you tell us!
Lips of earth parched
thirst for sunflowers
dandelions of yellow fields
buttercups in green folds
sun that changes color
metallic yellow to yellow
vast blue to setting red
green as leaf shedding life
white as horse
that carries wind across a place.
So we wander
across a plain
where time is lost
bewildered at the expanse
turning and turning
melts into the physical
tamed by the gentle,
the power eternity of Mother
acquiescent moving waves of grass
echo voices from blade to blade;
a song of life is in the glade!

It is obvious a song clear and close
memories tingle sound of waves
sand and broken shell
crackle hiss the
passing of each swell
in time each foot
that makes its time
leaves its memory
the cycle of undertow
ceaselessness of change
sincerity remains
when thoughts obscure
are gone to not endure
her restful churn.

I place each foot
upon sand's bed where
dreams that toss in closed lids
are tossed, and healed
without malignant thought,
but simply placing each swinging limb
of seagull chimes
pierce the skin
to where linger in placeless
poets, martyrs, people unknown
to earth as grains of sand;
O awake America!
See the rise of dawn rise to hilt,
rose and eagle, horizons tilt
that shatters to set no more
on eyes asleep
and ears dull
echoes grow, rumors die,
nothing hides the earth
from sun but sky.
Dance with colors of the heart
beauty of black and white,
red of east and west

lead parade of
smiles and laugh,
yellow skipping on the path,
rainbow steps ahead,
root of light.
and there i am, seeing all
and seen by none
sand and shell
rose and eagle, geranium
in gardens green
leaves of this world and unseen
dancing seas twin as one
skin of spirit moving
over land over seas
waving over waves
flying next to gull
and flying not
climbing mountains green
and not so green,

embossed a letter among letters, word of an endless book
on canvas strong, back arched billowed to heaven carrying
its Ark from millennium forgotten to millennium unknown,
ship of God sailing land, sea, and sky. There am I, one
letter among letters, letter in a mighty word; America the
beautiful, America the balance, America the Justice giver
and still unjust, the summoned one, holder of trusts and
abuser of trusts, defender of widows and maker of widows,
solace of grieving hearts and grief bearer, hope of men
and women and tyrant thereof, freer of all colors and
enslaver of all colors, lover of earth and crusher of earth.

Oh rise great Nation!
let ashes dark
be cedar and rose,
foul turn to sage,
to frankincense and myrrh,
base tin to gold and drum.

Oh rise great Nation!
Voice of prophets
echo shrill and green,
till in the West find ears
that lie on shores
chambers catching
lap and drum of sea
song of gull
telling what the
earth can know.

Oh rise America!
sing your song
foretold, etched
song in memory deep
Tablets soon that came
a thousand generations
found in one; now, O rise!!

Is American Standing

Is America standing strong to hold the burden?
Is my America standing tall - her feet are wet, and
yet....
Is my country," 'tis of thee", prepared to call to peace
the Nations
When and where they will respond with:
"Yea, Yea, We are ready, say no more - We are
there!"
Is America the Beautiful standing side by side her brother
and sister Nations,
Arms linked and locked, holding tight to a fragile but
fate-held peace?
Have we heard in our hearts the Master's words,

And in our minds have they blazed, so sacred their
light!

We are expanding and breaking fetters binding
History's might!

Breaking down, tearing asunder demarcation lines
Separating one from another since a moment after
the beginning,

In the Great World Segregation - starting when
The second man conceived himself superior, and
drew a line.

Is my country 'tis of thee' ready to forge what no heat
can forge -

To glimpse the Eternal and, seen clearly,

Etch "Peace" into bomb shell casings

That will either deck museum halls or be recycled

In this great new Cycle wherein radiant and loving
minds and hearts

Will be the only weapons of choosing or choice.

Are we standing tall so when God's love

In God's Return is made known generally

"We the people" will bow low, our rulers will bow
down,

Our powerful kneel, and our rich bow down?

Is my America standing upright to protest within her
own self

Her ingrained prejudices and the remnants of Racism
devouring,

Like locust giant heads, our waves of amber grain?

My God and my heart tell me to be happy; very happy,

But to wear no tainted smiles.

Last Night

Last night a dream the world has had so many time before;

It was the one, during which, the Nations ended war.

This time, though, all wars had stopped,

For the Lord of the Age had come,

And the courses of the signs to Leo had finally now run.
The dream, more like reality - no white fair driven snow -
Was nonetheless not powerless to bend the royal brow.
Then from the bottom of Haifa's bay up to the Lord's tower,
Kings, Queens and Rulers placed upon their heads their
nation's flower.

And wandering so peacefully - no hurry in their gait -
They had no thought to hurry as they wandered through
each gate.

As they strolled they seemed to dance
Though feet never left the ground,
And knights they were with long sharp lance -
Pure gold with rose buds bound.

Justice

Justice is not blind;
It is the Begetter,
It is the Redeemer,
It is the Consoler,
Unto it we all return,
And from it we are born.
It's sight is like this:
There was a dark cloud in the sky
Like a spreading glaucoma,
Then the sun sent forth a wave of light
Whose speed was like that of the
Hidden thought of God
That has dumbfounded
The greatest minds
For eons without name,
And who can fathom the sea of His light!
And the dark cloud was reduced
To less than ash and dust
And great smoke covered the earth
'Til God breathed a solitary breath

And the given Name that was left on earth
Was Justice and its latter Name Mercy.
There are events in the course of human life
That Justice alone can describe.
Within its pale of excellence
History itself is consumed and recast
And those that love its fire
Hurl themselves into it as if to say
“ Yea! I desire too to be consumed
and recast in Justice’s image.
Oh Pillar of the world, remake me!”
Some kind of Justice is given out each day
And Mercy follows where ever Justice goes,
Lovingly picking up in its wake the healed
That lie ready to take new flight.
Like the father that holds
The wedding gown for his daughter,
Mercy carries the train of
The wedding gown of Justice,
And the rose petals scattered
By the handmaidens of God,
On the Temple’s crimson carpet,
Are the eternities of the Lord.

If You have Held a Baby

If you have held a baby
and known its name,
you have an idea of the love
I crave that has compounded
the daily vigilance softly sung
in an old Christian hymn: about
the heart of love, and the joy of love -
about the family that is with you
and the senses taking on dimensions
through the coming of another Christian

hymn. In the Father is the Son, and know this well; love has sent the frost that makes visions appear. Your love and your father's and your mother's love always starting from what is more than the present, will be together with a type of light that envelops that is joy! Love takes the blame that one is blamed with And suffers it to change until it is gone and eternity intervenes. Love sends countless Teachers Who yearn to suffer for us. Love charges the unjust with itself and changes it to love. Nothing can stand before or after the force love moves. A spirit's hands, a soul's hands, are always present for the homeless, the sick and the poor who move by God's will and, unknowing to themselves, are the judgments meted out to all whose paths they cross. Love moves before the moment and is waiting when the nameless depart this earth and, as joy invades their entire being, stand upright and are met by God's Host of Prophets standing happily to wait and meet those souls who, with patience, lived until their time drew nigh. How many the stranger never met who will be like loved ones, How many the faces long forgotten will be remembered with joy, How many the friendless faces passed in life will become closest friends. I have laughed and laughed with the happy joyous thought of us going round and round a Tree, getting closer and closer throughout eternity.

Everything Passes

Everything passes beneath the sky, or, in orbit, cries
Like fine silk pressed against the face. Everything comes
Back to its place of rest, and nothing is lost. Do not
Grieve at the approach of your own death; we will
Go there together. I can say this in truth so you
Will wear no gloves. Everything passes
Away in time, setting in motion its own birth.
Everything passes through a core of mercy
Like a fine tissue filter which is finer than
The finest woven silk cloth. Everything passes beyond
Itself at first and then proceeds closer and closer to God.
There is nothing that is unremembered, while everything
Is reborn and moves on. Everything passes in grades
Of contentment and joy and, from where it begins,
Everything is mentioned except that which God chooses
To forget which is an ordained measureless forgiveness.
Take off the gloves before you leave, and enter pure
and holy.

I Have Seen

I have seen the coming of an age
Bent over like an old man drinking water.
Nature took center stage
Demanding from all the rights to use Her
As she wills; and not for our own cause.
I have seen the going of all wars.
I declare my fate this day
was to be here;
And so you are reading this in flight
Against the spinning of destiny and might
That it may pass us by, and, without insurance, go.
And turning, we take care of the earth
As raising up our young

As if the earth had from our own loins sprung;
And not for Her to entertain us, as we see
Her life pass by.
So go with me in all ways, when I go
And take the Earth, our Mother, in hand this day.

COLOR JOURNAL

Is any color greater than the song,
when a single tone generated the artist's world,
when all color found in a dream
returns to the sun from where it came
as the drop to the river to the sea.
So, also, embrace the earth, my song.

SONG

On the shore of Squam Lake in
rocky water a crimson red
leaf whose
brightness
overwhelmed me at that particular
moment.
Surrounded by life its
gen-
ious was what it didn't display;
so powerful, reminiscent of sacrifice,
sitting near weightless, detached, virtually
hidden and never to be
seen again, perhaps. Its hidden power
revealed inspired these lines.
How desirous to be
as this simple leaf! So
perfect in shape, oblivious

of self, asking no reward for its
beauty and symbolic message.

Red within

red:

red as

Christ.

Red leaf in hidden glory,
Tell us where life begins:
Is it the children's rhyme and story
That makes the child laugh and grin!
Is time a paint brush catching crimson hue,
Tell us of morning sun and dew.

This leaf is a hinged door; a soft
push, even gentle wind and
fields of metaphor lie beyond. It is
a red horse running; galloping to the
leap. Those with hard ears wait the other
side of the jump, and hearing
no hooves landing, they leave in
despair while the horse was not of this
world but. only. in. appearance

Oh horse divine that leapt
Beyond both earth and air,
You left those waiting on the sod
In grief and blind despair!
But few whose hearts were
Floating on heaven's lake
Heard the thunder of your hooves
That broke Saint Peter's gate!

Bahá'u'lláh spoke of the color red. All colors,
syllables have as their prime
factor a divine denominator. It
is red the last color of
the sunset that fades. It is red a

harbinger of the beginning,
of the
end; that opens the day and
a closure of things great and small.
The remembrance of
God.

His red memory knocked on the door;
Spring had begun, yet they slept on.
It pounded and pounded as before:
Only a child in his crib heard and wept.

Who is Bahá'u'lláh? If the Báb
is the "Point round whom the realities of the
Prophets and Messengers revolve" then who
or what is Bahá!

Twenty thousand souls whose red blood
made a garden path,
To refresh the heartless with soul and cheer,
Pure and glistening as the dew they sacrificed
beneath our feet
Before He would, nay, could come near!
His holy Remains that form the Center
for Carmel's seat,
We know, we think, His Gate that swings
before the wind.
Then who is He that rules across the Bay,
Whose gentle breeze shook Mecca and
Jerusalem.

Green is a color to experience. Of
course all colors are, but green binds
them together. It's a color soft underfoot
and taken for granted until
gone from sight, then missed
intensely. In my north it leaves its love in

winter in dark and blue greens of pines
and cedar.

Green memory towers its rooted lineage,
Green from yellow heat and blue-black earth,
An unknown word from a sacred passage
That gives this color tint and birth!

A life color from such bright content,
Brightness pushed out by heat and hand,
On earth whose work is never spent
Hawks watch and wait far above the land.

A green turban passes far below,
Green that found its complement in red,
A headdress from which all colors flow;
And in a dream beheld Husayn's head,
Then drank a bloody draught from heaven's well
And told of One He came alone to tell.

Trees talk to the wind when it
comes. And when it doesn't come
they wait. They are so
patient; their waiting is without thought.
There is no hurry, or 'Oh when will you
come'. It is as if they create
patience by virtue of their
constancy. This thought calms
me.

Oh patience moving with the wind,
Tell us where your song began;
Is it found along the shore and bay
Or in the leaves that turn to red and gray.

A white vase, the other day at
the farm house on a wood hand
carved table, a day when time

spoke specially to the white vase
and revealed its
timelessness. How could there not
be a God. The white vase
was more real than
itself.

A simple item talking to
me about a mystery so real
and wonderful; so gentle and delicate.
It was
love, celestial, creating, all-powerful
pure.

A white vase, simple, clean and pure
Waits the opening of the door.
Waits the break of day
To change to light from straw and clay.
What vessel it is that speaks my heart!
Does its mystery contain both end and start,
We sit and talk and drink our tea
And search out our eternity.

And of the color yellow all
creation is in debt. What tongue
can sing of the sun! The Báb, the
point through which all creation
was generated, was wont to
stare, nay gaze devotedly at the
sun as if waiting
Bahá's descending its golden rays. Those
who saw Him enraptured on
His rooftop in midsummer's
heat, oblivious to all else, lost in
meditation;
what thoughts went through their limited
minds?

What color is this, burning in the sun?
Could anyone deny its glowing rage!
The Voice that talked to Moses on the run;
Was it yellow Bird as gold within a cage?

What tongue that spoke to Shiraz, Mecca
and Jerusalem
Was it Leo's heat at lions highest stage?
Heaven' is past, carded, an envelope within,
The spear of Bahá pierced this folded age.

And on earth the spirit of
Bahá makes the elements to
dance. Yellow breaks through red
and black-brown earth quietly. Weeping
Willows take blue water from
stream and sky and shoot fire
from limbs that quiver and sway.

When April showers, I will come and dance,
And take a draught from the swelling stream.
What name is called will leave no chance
That Nature has heard, but men still dream.

Then Willow roots will rise as piper's reeds
And play a yellow spring-time lute cacophony,
The name Bahá'u'lláh will leap from lip to lip
And linger, eternal, as clover honey.

Blue is the balance. What
unites and fluid. It brings
peace and final
rest to sacrifice. It covers and
uncovers. Thus it is that
blue runs like a stream
through both worlds.
How soothing a blue or blue

- violet is
 in a field .
 Red, yellow or
 green are what eyes
 first see but heart
 rests on this mysterious
 vast. And of all blue
 the deepest and most profound
 is black.

Beyond the blue of sky is black
 The deepest ocean, sight within sight,
 Then what is beneath is no dumb lack
 Nor space above mere missing light.

The blue of peace or mystery of eye;
 What leviathan of spirit has God raised,
 Black beyond white eagle in the sky,
 The Blackest mystery whose name is praised!

Pink is a declaration of
 faith; soft beauty; a
 special gift from spring
 to the lover's eye. It
 wraps the soul in
 peace, in a pleasant
 dream it sang its
 song and welcomed the
 wanderer at the gate. Many
 a numb mind pass by
 its tranquillity, so this unheard
 symbol, veiled by mud
 and dust returns its
 secret to earth.

What pink sky, ripe at evening dusk.
On this lily pond fruits blossom
In an hour red and blue clouds grow musk
And sacrifice for the lover's bosom.

What lover is this, hung on city's gate?
What faith, pink to the piercing eye!
Are they sacred herbs that Fate must grate
Or violent self that hangs its own to dry.

And the leap
from pink to purple is a
sigh. This grand color outlines
spring and summer's heat
will not frustrate its
flowering. Its robe is
submission. An acceptance of all
unknown:
" Do not wear me with feet unsure " it warns, " I am
beautiful and my request simple and stern." When the
artist has reached
this color he has
traveled an immeasurable
distance and there is
no turning back.

A purple robe moves unseen,
Its ears talk and listen to the wind.
No storm can dull its living sheen
Or tear its petals, much less break or bend.

When this wilted form is placed outside this womb,
The purple robe I'll wear with perfect stand,
And in cool shadows of a mansion room
I'll change my colored robes with perfect hand.

Orange purifies. It is a
 chaste and tempered knife on
 earth. An accent beneath
 any moon or star. A comforter
 that Spring is near, or that
 Fall pumpkins still carry summer heat.
 It is the prophet's voice
 crying life into the world;
 the messenger between the
 yellow of tears and the red
 of longing. The green pine needles
 put their sharp edges down, submissive
 under foot on the orange
 path.

What orange breath of life
 Circles round and round my room?
 Is it Isaiah's footsteps walking cross the sky
 Touching the orange canvas of the moon?

A poet's breath sighing o'er the lake
 Brought to life the crying and the loon,
 Then what pure Orb circles my house with life?
 'Tis Christ returned! Then leave the dark of
 reason.

Brown is a river
 moving slowly underfoot. A
 sea of earth where all
 returns..... Many colors
 mingle there in the brown
 of life..... then leap to
 dance in buttercups,
 red maples, purple roses saintly rooted in
 this density..... Like the black of
 the eye surrounded
 by white, is the brown

and red earth are
sustenance for all.

The prophet's silence lives there
Then when its voice bursts out
It frees the heart from life and care
And sets the wolf to shout.

Oh sea where all returns!
But not an ocean blue,
A brown deep within that burns
Veiled from eyes that weep and rue.

Brown is a mystery, it moves without motion,
Its red core of earth is all its ocean.

Gray is the sound of stampeding
horses, or the roar waves
tumbling stones. A sound that
purifies the ears and eyes at dawn
and dusk, that holds
memories pain until the end.

A
mother soothing, containing her
child's night fear. Gray unifies all
colors; they find rest by
freedom
of
self.

Gray wisdom, where the owl's sweet voice,
Sweet reminder that death is choice,
True death of self before the wind
A long hot road to walk the end.

Oh banshee! Your name I know now,
 Though you leave no trace in winter's snow,
 What night eagle calls alike to world and star:
 Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'u'lláh, O Bahá'u'lláh.

Rainbow is a
 color, single and self
 subsistent. A pillar of creation.
 A bridge. All other
 colors dance, willingly
 acquiesce to its
 sovereignty. It is diversity. The world
 is so diverse, so many
 variations and variations within
 variations. Causes within
 causes. The world is
 so diverse it
 can be explained
 by one word
 and one word
 alone;
 Unity!

When I was young I knew the color blue,
 And the rainbow after scarlet rain,
 They spoke to me of this world and others too;
 Could it mean that God has come again?

Diversity! Your colors blaze forth,
 Oh Unity, your oneness subdued the rest,
 You claimed you'd rise from blood and wrath
 A single voice from peacock's reigning crest.

Oh Oedipus! You plucked your eyes from deep
 remorse,
 But I have seen another Father, who gave me life,

Out upon the sea on Joseph's horse,
So tell me why my eyes are spared from such a
knife!

If one could see just what these eyes have seen!
They have touched the rain-bowed hem of God,
Though still the color I rest upon and seek is green,
The tears that issue forth from my eyes are red.