

## *The Creation*

We are, each and all of us,  
But a forgotten science project,  
Grown from a bowl of primordial soup  
Gone missing on the bottom shelf,  
Behind the mayo in God's refrigerator.  
The sun is a 15-watt bulb on a cosmic scale,  
Day and night regulated by the opening of the door,  
As God reaches for another beer.  
Under the urging of this light  
We have evolved, twisted, morphed and differentiated  
Into shapes varied and mysterious  
Yet somehow the same.  
We have developed consciousness and self-awareness,  
But not understanding.  
We believe we have free will  
But in truth have none at all.

We are but an ongoing chemical reaction,  
Conforming to the laws of nature,  
Elemental and complex,  
Fractals dancing in a quantum state.  
So forgive me as I fall in love with you.  
I know the formula, the ingredients  
And the cooking time.  
It requires only the near occasion of you,  
An inviolable separation,  
A touch of self-deception,  
Some hormones spiced with pheromones,  
Stirred by the chorus of a thousand memories.  
As it was in the beginning,  
Is now and ever shall be,  
World without end,  
Let it begin.

## *The White-tail*

Ivory tines above the bank  
Stab the fabric of the marsh,  
Out of place among the reeds  
Now brown and cracked with winter.

I pass, then turn and nest my boat  
Among the mire and reaching vines  
And ponder in a moment's pause  
The virtue of not knowing.

Then stepping gingerly ashore  
I climb the bank where cockles rest  
And see among the fallen leaves  
The source of this disruption.

Seven points reach from the ground  
Smooth above and rough below,  
Fixed beneath the autumn quilt  
Onto a fine mosaic.

The skull itself a work of art  
Interstices enduring,  
Tracking like the valley stream  
The wandering Shenandoah.

Sinuses and passageways  
Speak mutely of the genius  
That took us from a single cell  
To earthly domination.

The teeth magnificent in form  
Dissimulating fractals,  
Scissor-like with arrow edge,  
Intended just for browsing.

The lower jaw lies just aside  
Its teeth aligned and waiting  
While scapula and ribs abide  
In never changing order.

The spinal cord went long ago  
As did the skin and muscle,  
But vertebrae lie still aligned  
Tracing their final journey.

How long, I wonder, was he here,  
As often I have paddled by,  
And filled no doubt his vacant stare  
His solitude disturbing.

So let his parts now have their rest,  
Wintering in the forest,  
But skull and antlers come with me  
Exploring down the river,

Now lashed upon my kayak's prow  
Surveying open forest green  
Where first he mated, fought and browsed,  
The white-tail once more dreams.

*The Slippery Slope*

Unconditional

Supportive

Sweet

positive

Creepy

regard

## *The Cost of Doing Business*

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The rib, when it cracked, yielded with a disinterested puff,  
More the deadened rap of a funeral drum  
Than the spit of a rim shot accorded to a major bone.  
The collar bone, broken years before,  
Had gone silently, or with voice overpowered  
By the splintering of the helmet.  
The leg, as fine and noble a bone as there is,  
Went with great fanfare in a clash of bodies  
Uncontrolled in the racquetball court at midnight.  
The toe, ironically, out-screamed them all,  
With a crack that shouted dislocation  
And a pain that would not be denied.  
But leading the way, a trophy from my first flight,  
Flapping my wings at the top of a Georgia pine,  
And landing without grace ten feet below:  
Seven-year-old ulna and radius snapped and displaced.  
I recall still the ether used to sedate me  
While the doctor proximated the bones,  
The months of itchy plaster cast holding my arm  
While the bones healed and the muscles withered,  
The cast serving to collect scrawled messages  
And bludgeon my sister.  
Perhaps in the next life I'll be more careful,  
More respectful of the only body I have,  
Step back from the edge.  
But in this life I have 200 more bones,  
Each willing to sacrifice itself,  
As payment for my next folly.

## *Unforgettable*

No, my memory is, and always has been, far above average.  
That has been an established fact since my school days,  
Spent happily at that place with the tall trees in front,  
Elms, I believe, or chestnuts perhaps.

That is quite the reason my classmates elected me to office.  
I'm sure you recall that, my dear; the stirring campaigning,  
Bands in the halls, streamers on the walls,  
And you fawning on my every word.

You weren't? Are you sure? Of course you are correct, my dear,  
(We must humor the old girl, mustn't we?  
For all her beauty, she is a little light on the memory)  
But had you been there, you would have loved my speeches.

And I was brilliant at the A-levels,  
Never has there been such an analysis of Cicero!  
No, I'm sure it was Cicero. Perhaps it was your brother  
Who deconstructed Addison.

I recall in detail everything about our first apartment  
In that lovely country over there on the continent,  
With the red-curtained windows overlooking the Pantanal,  
Where we watched the mountain goats graze.

Every night we dined on cheese and olives,  
Drank wine, listened to the guitars,  
And made love under the full moon,  
Poor but pure of spirit, as only youth can be.

And our children! Such beautiful babies.  
Just one? Are you sure? Of course you are correct, my dear,  
But after he grew up, he was handsome, wasn't he?  
She? Yes, of course. Mothers would know these things.

But let us hurry along now or we'll be late,  
I have the address on a piece of paper somewhere,  
Get your coat and that thing you wear on your hair,  
And I'm sure any moment I'll find my keys.