

Bucket List

- Travel around the world at least twice
- Win the Arc Poetry Poem of the Year contest
- Visit grandma's grave
- Visit Johnny Cash's grave
- Read one of my best poems to Leonard Cohen
- Learn to play the harmonica
- Learn to dance
- Go on a cruise
- Go to Mardi Gras
- Go on a game show
- Meet a geisha
- Meet all of my online friends
- Feed Mojo the alligator
- Crash a wedding
- Go on a bender
- Have an affair
- Become a teacher
- Live on an island
- Find God
- Start a family
- Take a long hot bath

Beard Killer

Moving into December
they told me
this is a controlled environment
lose the beard,
if it ain't
Holly Jolly
if it ain't
Kris Kringle

You were a wild enchanter,
an upper extremity
pointing to my heart's desires
I tried to save you
But something happened -
a slip of the hand
flick of the wrist
an obscure mirror
blind spot,
underestimated the point
of my chin
couldn't find the culprit
out of the 12 pc. Kit
and now you are gone
a whole
civilization
down the drain
spiralling
Atlantis, scattering
the ocean shelf

this is not a loss my friend
This is a double homicide
on pride and style
this is how
you show Hemingway
to bite the bullet -
I fell into their demands
This is the face
of conformity,
silky
but not smooth

Till the next Mauvember
or NHL lockout
till I can avenge you
I'll bet the next horse
on the beauty
of scars

The Trail Ends Here

A spaghetti legged hermit crab reaches the plateau of an agitated shoreline:



a wind-swept sneaker

The left side of my face

resembles my father's side



A side cameras

rarely

see

Because

it adds ten pounds

On My Parents' Twenty Fifth Wedding Anniversary

With the dinner done
my father retires to bed
while I help my mom with the dishes. The TV is on for company. Another unmentioned
anniversary spent in silence –
Daniel Radcliffe and the rest of the Potter gang gallivant
and wave their wands at our TV screen,

standing up, we lean on the backs of our chairs
while the dishes dry.
Notice that I never said that my dad forgot the anniversary.

Is this how my mother pictured marriage?
I ask her how the ceremony was to break the ice,
I had only faint notions through photographs.
Mom's answer came
from staring at the ceiling, the epiphany a needle detracted from a rain cloud

I look up half expecting to spot a leak:

"It rained on our wedding day."

A Tim Horton's under Construction at the End of My Street

~ For Jeff Seffinga

A friend of mine once said
that we measure our time
in coffee cups, indeed I took this
under consideration as I waited
for the light to change. I watched
the construction workers dazzle
over the monument of in-
progress, sipping "Timmy's" coffee
lethargically, leaning on yield
signs and shovels.
The record of progress is written
on the land.

In my travels going home I've come
across Tim Horton's coffee cups,
dozens strewn across lawns,
upchucked to the brim of trash
receptacles and sewer grates.

Like I haven't seen enough of them,
or construction sites
already.