

## Contents

The Chieftain.....	1
A Monstrous Mischance.....	2
Distraction.....	3
De Puta Madre.....	4
Clairvoyance.....	5
Taming of the Dragon Tail.....	6
Zeebo.....	7
The Wolf of Wall Street.....	8
Dimension X.....	9
Space Camp.....	10
Piano Lessons on Wednesdays.....	11
Volkswagen Man.....	12
Smilefest.....	13
Myrtle Beach.....	14
La locura del encierro.....	15
Night Sailing.....	16
Chetco Marine.....	17
Multisport.....	18
Elegiac Nostalgia.....	19
Who am I?.....	20

## The Chieftain

Once in Tongue my Grandfather  
found a lucky fishbone that contained  
the secret of his genealogy

It whispered in his ear something  
that must have been profound  
for his complexion changed like a blueberry eating brat

He looked at me with his tall Viking smile  
and said the knowledge is hidden in the highlands,  
sending me on a quest for the tree.

In the middle of my Grandfather's epiphany, we were  
soaked with water from two laughing boys who were  
riding on a loch ness monster.

Just as quickly as we were so rudely deluged with water by this lake  
the trio disappeared abruptly underwater.  
Perhaps those boys were truly Merfolk.

Nearby, a redneck tourist was infuriated by what he saw,  
and threw a stick of dynamite into the water.  
The spray from the depth charge surged into the sky.

The particles of aquamarine shimmered in the air,  
pausing long enough to stain my eyes,  
taking the form of a thatched home atop the hillock.

## A Monstrous Mischance

King Kong rages through the jungle  
With a “kiss me” attitude

And swishes down a silent existence  
With the push of a button

Ganga growing guerillas with machine guns  
Dump fertilizer and plastic piping on the hillside

While the lofty dove breathes  
Roving for peace

Sandals and stained shirt from a day hiker  
Lie in a heap at the edge of a ravine.

A striped toucan calmly soars above the canopy  
With a sprig of basil in its beak

Lurking far below, a face of Nature  
Hides under a thick entangling mass

Volcano scars seep their way to the surface  
Like blood stains on a topographical map

Unknown ancient beasts, from alpha to omega  
Grip their domain with the greed of survival

Even the birds of paradise  
Find little solace in the sky

## Distraction

Distraction is a virtue.  
Daydreams become reality.  
I am climbing a tall mountain.  
The flag on the top is a pub.

Daydreams become reality,  
And a maze of trails lead up.  
The flag on the top is a pub  
roaring on the summit.

A maze of trails lead up.  
I ponder the paths, then don my wing boots.  
Roaring up the summit,  
Flying over obstacles to a medieval reunion.

I ponder the paths, and don my wing boots  
While holding the cure to this ethereal fountain.  
Flying to meet the obstacle at this medieval reunion  
The Mckay clan greets me like a Viking prince.

While holding the cure to this ethereal fountain.  
Joyous hardy roisterers drink ale and eat haggis  
The chieftains greet me with somber faces while  
dyed faces tell me that freedom is earned.

Joyous hardy roisterers have had their fill of food and drink  
The poisoned well has been cleansed  
I must part from this state, for now  
Distraction is a virtue.

### De Puta Madre

Once in Valladolid, my host father took me to the sotabanco,  
where we were served copazos larger than a Tuna's ribcage.  
I had danced, mingled and rocked out till bones became numb.  
Eyes burning and gasping for clean air, I had forced my way outside.

Deep breaths of cool A.M oxygen focus my vision and grant me confidence  
with khaki pants and azure collared shirt, I realize there is plenty of madrugada left.  
As I turn back inside with a fresh second wind, I am buzzed by two laughing boys  
screaming down the narrow street on a two-stroke Aprilia.

I hear the legal bac limit is .15, and I momentarily worry about those two boys, but  
I am interested in returning to this lovely Alba, who answers my Spanish with English,  
*and vice versa*. If talking has ever been more enjoyable, I could not recall when or where.  
If dancing has ever been sexier, it would probably involve a religious ceremony in Brazil.

Running full speed on a diet of carbs and natural energy...  
Like the late sunset that has long fallen below the valley, I too must retire  
Three days until my preordained ticket steals me away from this strange place  
where the embraced peace of mandatory nap time clashes with old logic

My adventure having ended, I am left with photos, memories, and regret  
I have absorbed a mountain of fresh picked catnip in these short months,  
yet I never made it to the summit of the Mulhacen Peak.  
Only in my dreams do I survive this unquenched fire.

## Clairvoyance

Gravitas is a green dot dancing in my vision  
 I am chilled by epiphany, sitting on the floor  
 Listening to the voices of neighbors and distant friends  
 A vortex of voices spiral between my eyes.

Chilled by epiphany, sitting on the floor...  
*Have you seen the way he runs across the dunes?*  
 A vortex of voices spin truths and lies.  
*Did you see the way he kept his eyes on you?*

Did they spy me racing across the sand dunes?  
 Telekinesis funnels in radio wave voices  
 Did I really keep my eyes on her?  
*Don't take it personally, he only meant to thank you!*

radio wave voices hum like static electricity  
*Well there you have it, nice guys finish last.*  
 I only meant to thank her.  
 The clearing of my mind makes this dimensional rift crumble

Who says nice guys finish last?  
 Is this a world were jerks are anchored atop a pink totem pole?  
 Justice and truth are funneled within.  
 Gravitas is a green dot dancing in my vision.

## Taming of the Dragon Tail

An angry steed is coaxed out of the stables  
while knight errant prepares for battle.

Donning helm, plate and gauntlets,  
to protect from that grinding bite.

His foe with slithering tail  
is covered with sparkling black spikes.

Mounting his bucking and braying steed,  
pulse quickens and vision narrows.

Prepared for a grueling bout,  
he steadies his life marrow.

Sir knight goes into battle headlong,  
knowing too well of the danger.

Spurring the beast with a twist of the wrist,  
and the skill of an Army Ranger.

The serpent's tail whistles through the air.  
whipping closer to his being.

What dangers behind the bend ahead  
cause adrenaline to sing.

Swishing forces paint a picture of doom.  
Is there valor and honor in seeking your death?

This world has no shortage of monsters to tame,  
and sir knight will seek them out until he breathes his last breath.

## Zeebo

Chanting and Screaming in the dead of night  
we ran through the woods with youthful delight

Young men will tell tales and vie for the crown  
but we egged the home of Zeebo the clown

The smoky dank mansion at the end of the clearing  
gave way to stupidity; a full lack of fearing

Four brave knights with nothing better to do  
well armed with a dozen, lined up and threw

Briskly racing through the entangled wood  
yet still so far from our own neighborhood

An engine started roaring sending hearts to frantic soaring  
perspiration pouring and a wish for safe and boring!

A myth is not pretend when it's created by your mind  
nor pretend the sounds ghastly, a tittering from behind.

He jumped from his car to catch us on foot  
His shadowy form was darker than soot

Our exit disappeared in this unfamiliar place  
the woods became evil and joined in the chase

A mystical power with disposition sour  
prays to the demons for his lunatic hour.

I don't know how he caught us but he did with all his rage  
and here I lie in darkness like a lion in a cage.

## The Wolf of Wall Street

Flipping BAC on the lows of March  
he envisions a sturdy 3 bedroom beach house,  
2 car garage, 1 giant living room—  
all his.

Shaking the dusty Magic 8 Ball  
for CTIC, PIR, ICBT...  
Then dreams of Pamplona, racing through the cobbled street,  
yanking the tail of that disgruntled black bull—  
no empathy for those drunk assholes, gored  
till the bloodbath stains their white shirts  
already marred with wine splotches.

His nightmare is the alarm at 6:20 a.m.  
With goopy eyelids shielding  
The pixilated glow of a digital goldmine...  
The trader sees pennies spiking skyward  
around his positions.

Hunting down bankrupt equities  
in search of a bailout, the wolf  
preys on forgotten scraps,  
fangs rip apart Bill or Warren's 401k  
as if he may never eat again.  
There is no wolf-pack in this jagged taiga.  
They all howl up the snowy hill  
with the caribou carcass on top.  
Ready to eat their fill,  
or stop short before sliding  
into that icy creek.

The monitor is a red piece of pie  
and dividends are dashed  
by a lack of due diligence.  
The panic selloff was followed by the  
shredding of papers, the theft of potted trees,  
and shuffling through the help wanted ads  
of a newspaper.

## Dimension X

Stretched out on the table with  
the magnetic dish wrapped around  
my head,  
linking my mind with deep space.

exotic metal focuses the  
third eye  
into a cosmic beam  
crafted of computronium.

While men in lab coats  
tinker with the translucent  
concave lens, garbled white sound  
permeates the skull.

The voice broadcasts  
through the vacuum and void  
and the internal volume spikes  
from the distance of Andromeda.

DR. BARKER! Pierces the depths  
with the intonation  
of OZ. My body no  
longer exists.

Warped galaxies melt into  
a singularity. The alien contact  
hacks my brain like  
a parasite.

Silver polygon peaks  
with azure sheen jut  
in all directions like  
a crystal prison.

The burning of my last  
memory fuels  
the ion emitting craft  
to the next dimension.

## Space Camp

Knees aimed at ninety degrees,  
secured in the cockpit  
of the rumbling washing machine—  
propelling back skyward, hands  
grip the air yolk control.

The homeschooled space walker  
with shuttle wallpaper  
frequents the local library,  
absorbing Saturn V rockets,  
multi stage Lunar Lander,  
intergalactic warp drive time bender.

A rushed lesson in English  
precedes the story of a mission specialist,  
selected for his scientific mind  
and his fight for the dream.

A brochure came in the mail  
with pictures of age group youths  
testing their mental aptitude in high-G  
simulators, human gyroscopes and  
tours of the real Space Shuttle.

He went door to door that summer,  
mowed the neighbor's lawn,  
took out their trash,  
dollars accumulate his mini safe.

When the family went on a Florida  
vacation, they detoured the Kennedy  
space center, where he was an outsider,  
imagining he had the right stuff.

The end of summer suggested a way  
for dirtbikes and comic books  
to devise new outlets for the mind.  
Just ask him who he wants to be,  
when he grows up.

## Piano lessons on Wednesdays

Once a week my mother would drive me  
to the upscale neighborhood of  
redbrick homes and dense old trees.

I scribble through the theory book  
in thirty minutes time,  
naming notes and dots and ties  
and staccato bumps in the road.

My mind houses the music I translate—  
8-bit Nintendo tunes on my old brown  
upright. Her den houses the black baby grand.

Two handed scales in G minor  
morph into Inspector Snoops, who wishes  
he were Inspector Gadget, or Sherlock Holmes.  
Fingers strengthen with repeated measure.

Mother sits on the couch with  
a pleased look on her face  
and a Nora Roberts novel in hand.

Edvard Grieg dispatches an angry mob  
with pitchforks and lanterns, marching  
up the spiral mountaintop  
to the hall of the bear king.

The prickling sensation from the back of my head  
through my neck electrifies left and right brain,  
a shameless advertisement from my teacher,  
demoing what I would learn and become;  
what I was meant to be.

Four and half years after that first lesson  
I am at home, looking through old books;  
my parents accepted my decision to quit.  
That last recital in the old church with the girl  
in the next room playing my song  
hammered flat my unique, talented  
sense of...me.

## Volkswagen Man

The southeast appreciates the 1970's  
when a cream colored Westy  
burbles down a back country road of cornfields and dogwoods,  
windows down and a clean-cut  
hippie kid grinning to the Doobie Brothers.

We had spent weeks rebuilding,  
sandblasting, painting, and restoring.  
I was still wearing my cap and gown  
when my father gifted me the keys.

Pull out bed, pop top, propane stove,  
brown fabric curtains,  
complete with a girl who asks me  
if I "wanna get down".

When I got lost trying to find the airport,  
doing loops in the ghetto of Charlotte,  
a crazed duet of cranker bitches  
rammed their Nissan into her ass end.  
Smoke billowing from the engine bay.

A semester at CPCC passed and the  
specialist finally got around  
to making her look good as 1978.  
The engine bay was oddly dusty...  
The muffler fell off on the way home.

Driving cross country, I was toting  
a half full case of oil  
and my intellectual atheist cousin,  
chain smoking Al Capones,  
"Hell is an invention of mankind."

She was beaten and abused,  
hot black blood streaming onto the cement of every gas stop.  
We didn't complain, we drove through the plateaus,  
salt flats, and redwoods,  
One day she will live again.

### Smilefest

Every smack of the doumbek sends acoustic triangles tramping through my ribcage.

This elemental chasm creaks and leaks the waters that sunk Atlantis,

yet I will run through this wooden sky; dance among psychedelic fortresses

of neon translucent prisms that exist on a plain more real than our own.

Women with glowing teeth and multicolored armlets glide in and out,

pulling streamers around an erect maypole.

I offer a girl my socks and leap from our campsite,

returning from the forest with an armload of dried firewood.

Our warmth attracts Barefoot Manner, who come to share in our ecstasy

and offer their wisdom. Their voyage will lead them to a packed earth coliseum

of ukuleles, banjos, stamping feet, flailing arms, bong hits, and overheated bodies. Some

folks migrate to the tent of an eager lover, while others land in a bus at the edge of the field

with steel bars, and deputies phishing for the man with dreadlocks and pockets full of fungi.

Sunlight comes quickly and we say our goodbyes and become a throng of walkers

with packed tents and telescopes on backs.

My VW bus rolls over the grass, dodging budding shoots.

## Myrtle Beach

High School graduation and the muggy stickiness of May...  
Reason enough for a foursome hour trip to Myrtle Beach.  
That bean-pole figure and straight dyed blond hair...  
South Carolina with its Bojangles sweet tea flavor  
saturates the mind with a poisonous lust.

We check in together. I avoid suggestive glances.  
I force conversation about the fun times ahead, or the wallpaper.  
You unpack your bikinis and short shorts.  
That one provocative line still glued behind my tongue  
won't come naturally.

A wall of cascading resorts formed a railroad tract along the wide groomed sand,  
the beach becoming a mixed up mass of families and cat callers.  
Our group excursion led us down through the salty boardwalk.  
We toured the haunted house on the strip. I held your hand  
in the warm darkness, halfway pretending to be scared.

Fuzzy morning vacation and we relish the vitamin-D sauna  
and rolling bathtub water of the Atlantic.  
Friends, beer, wind-up radio, Marlboro Lights,  
Tales from the foam pit of the Freaky Tiki.  
I milked the pity card when nearly drowned by that kid  
He looked so tranquil with a small hand politely asking for help,  
Throttling my neck as I tried to pull him in from that invisible rip.  
I told you how I had to kick him away to save myself.

Alone in the Jacuzzi, your foot touches mine  
for a moment, but the contact electrocutes me  
like misaligned jumper cables.  
my leg jumps back from the spark.  
Repeatedly.

Leaning in for a kiss, you tell me  
You think you're in love,  
with Daniel,  
my best friend.

## La locura del encierro

The small blue backpack stuffed with rations,  
cheap muffins, beer, train ticket  
escape from the towering prison  
formed of antique stone walls.

The drunk and disheveled city—  
a slosh-pot of Europeans, Basque,  
broken glass filling the cracks with  
the stench of one hundred years tradition.

Megaphones held by amateurs prayed  
to San Fermín with the volume blaring.  
A sea of red and white drowns  
my rational brain.

Crawling under the thick wooden fence  
“¡tienes cojones así!” taunts me from a dark haired  
punk perched safely on top.  
having crossed under, the mass blocked retreat.

cameras on booms, spectators on porches  
looming like vultures overhead.  
“This is better than chasing a bloody wheel  
of cheese down a hill!” pummels  
through the sweaty murmur of the crowd.

A nearby rocket popped bodies to attention.  
An invisible wave of energy washed  
the weight from my legs and swept  
the pink mass into a bait ball.

Six hundred kilos of abused meat  
stormed through the narrow runway,  
seeking its chance for immortality  
even as it races toward its own death.

I ran with the crowd a short ways  
Until I found a crack in the wall to hide in  
Reds, whites, and blacks blur past me as I watch,  
Stunned.

## Night Sailing

We slide down the property to the water's edge,  
sharing sails, batons, preservers, and oars.  
Down to the kelp covered beach  
and the puffer boat, lines dinging  
against the mast as it laps in the bay.

We spin the rusty combo lock  
and release the fiberglass hull,  
sliding our feet on sandy bottom,  
granting her freedom to ferry us  
to the other side.

A strong desultory breeze  
heels the boat on a course  
southwest, a starry sail  
to devils hill.

Sounds of a trickling creek  
permeate through the gap  
in the centerboard.  
Our speech drifts from silence,  
to the meteorite that cratered  
the snowy tundra of Siberia.

The sandy silhouette on the bow  
pulls us toward its graphite mounds,  
the quarter-moon casting a tractor beam,  
finally stopping us with a skid.

We could be Indian explorers  
as we climb and descend rolling dunes,  
the final tribe heeding the call  
of white blooming sound.

The swell with intermittent crashes  
crescendos with a tide rising rhythm—  
an orchestra for the heavens, that twinkle  
warning messages.

Heavy feet plow to the summit of devils hill.  
The vista reveals a new map  
that slants directly into the blackened water.  
The sailboat drifted from sight,

into the abyss.

### Chetco Marine

The coastal town of Brookings, Oregon,  
with deep green mountains engulfing  
the Chetco River and your new chandlery,  
a small blue building on open gravel land,  
adjacent the south jetty at the mouth.

I remember when you bought the place from  
that balding attorney with the silver '69 Stingray.  
He and his paid-for whore spent a week  
in your store... counting up his profit  
from the abundance of dead inventory.

The shop sat within walking distance  
to the dredged docks of the harbor.  
Easy access for a fisherman to pick up  
cordage, electronics, or XtraTuf boots.  
Mom learned the business too quickly.

One summer I came up to work,  
and saw how these men spent  
their time paying her visits  
with forceful slow-motion hugs  
and compliments that reeked of crab.

Jim frequented the store, although,  
I only saw him once.  
After reaching under the seat of his Dodge pickup  
for a swig of Jack, he walked past me like a rude customer  
to whisper hollow promises in her ear.

Sitting passenger seat, I glanced  
at your glazed eyes.  
I'm not sure why you offered to show me  
where he lives, but I silently counted  
the number of mailboxes on that mountain road.

## Multisport

The horn rattles my joints. I scramble,  
fall into the bubbling lake, fight my way  
to a clear line, calmer water, avoiding  
the kicking, scratching hands and feet,  
stretch out, a black torpedo. I point

toward the orange buoy, bobbing  
gently as my legs. Like that, I find my rhythm,  
human seals dropping behind me.  
Timed breaths reveal my mirror image.  
The fog sinks down to the surface.

Hands gripped on aero-bars  
navigate the winding descent to  
the miles of flat pavement.  
Glycogen burning legs hammer  
away thoughts of phase three.

Legs are gelatin bricks  
and the thermostat plateaus,  
the pace set by the old guys,  
experience guides their lungs  
through the cave.

The mind hits a wall  
and I envision the end,  
but it retreats from the next bend,  
the factory in my body  
burns up its nutrients.

The fire in my lungs  
forges iron, but is quenched  
by the final mile. Not another  
pair of legs will pass mine.  
I see the blue runway.

## Elegiac Nostalgia

In an archaically vivid memory, I am sitting above your shoulders in a backpack.  
 The quiet vibration of earth and the sounds of your voice ripple through my hands,  
 resting on your baseball cap.  
 I was a 2 year old witness of the undying redwood giants,  
 My paternal vehicle driving my first memory.  
 A few years later,  
 hands braced between the handlebars of a throaty Husqvarna.  
 I was a boonie bouncing towhead,  
 wide eyes peering over the edges of cliffs  
 as we flew along the crumbling edge  
 of dirt hills in rural L.A.

There was no family conference before the migration.  
 Only the failed promise to my mother  
*Five years at the most*  
 Charlotte, North Carolina, First in Flight  
 took responsibility for our altered destiny.  
 I still bragged to friends  
 How jumbo jets couldn't fly till you signed them off.  
 Humans in aluminum tubes relied on your skill.

Mother, relishing in her buzzed girl talk with new friends  
 Bashed your carefree and privileged past,  
 rattling off the toys purchased  
 from the towable sailboat,  
 to that compound bow in 1992.

Time spent in the bible belt converted you into  
 the strict, frustrated father. *What else could it be?*  
 you would scream at me for coming home after midnight,  
 forcing me to sneak out, to explore the high-school party scene.  
 You hated the powerful influence of my friends,  
 sloshing, sinking, drowning,  
 in a Miller Light wasteland.

Who am I?

*Tuwatha tuwatha, loktwar dalanora.*

Willow's incantation morphs the cursed witch  
into a muskrat, a crow, an old woman form.

My own is more fortunate, for I am a human  
that scuttles the past and flies without wings.

My imagination wants me dead, despises competition;  
eyes flooded with tanned crisp lines, hands that sense softness,  
feet that connect to the magnetic fields  
while traversing the miles of hardpan desert.

I am an inventor of investing, and an investor of inventions.

I am called by the Paideia to pluck spiders,  
trap their gossamer fibers, spin my own protective cap and cloak.

I am a pro dreamer, amateur lifer.

I am awed by my heritage, but respect the gift of mankind.

I am a man of destiny, but my purpose is known only by God.

My library, junkyard and vault are segregated, but attend the same school.

I am a scientist, my lab is my body and hypothesis awaits theory.

I am a Pisces, but the planets did not teach me to swim and surf,  
the 12<sup>th</sup> moon does not force me to perceive or judge.

The shores of my island shrink with global warming  
and expand with recollections of a nuclear family.

My heroes build and nourish the future generation,  
trekking through history to give their DNA a chance.