



Rain paints Louisville with a silver sheen.  
The town smells like a fish hatchery  
when rain settles in for days.  
Green algae grows on sidewalks  
and shoes will rot unless you dry them.

Strangers in raincoats hurry across streets,  
dodge the spray of cars with squints.  
Stop action: a tidal wave of water  
thrown up by a bus, frozen in mid-air  
above soaked pedestrian  
who meets the muddy baptism with a grimace.

Apartments stack in squares the private places  
between diseased trees and wire poles.  
A half million private universes hatch  
ecstasy and nightmare.

Victorian porches please the eye with a fantasy  
of walking the ribcage of a titanic sea serpent,  
bleached by time to a palisade of bones.

## Recording and Remembering

I have come to understand that the act of recording, be it the written word, image, sound or video is an important and valuable thing in itself. I have gigabytes of still pictures and I don't regret shooting a single one. I only regret the pictures I didn't take and the journal entries I was too busy to write. I am still working through my boxes of photographs and old manuscripts, collecting, scanning and saving stuff, even if it doesn't seem very good or artistic. It's my history, and that makes it valuable. The funny thing about my mind is that I'm really pretty smart when it comes to understanding things, but my memory isn't worth a damn. If I don't shoot a picture, jot down a journal entry or something, I lose it.

The famous Salvador Dali painting, "The Persistence of Memory," gets at it. Everything seems to be fluid and melting, as if the whole world might soon dissolve. Memory is too often like that, flowing away and settling into a puddle of distorted images. Some events I remember acutely down to the tiniest detail. Others are just gone, or remain in a misty, indistinct form, just out of reach of conscious recollection. When I write or photograph, or whatever, the persistence of memory is vastly enhanced.

*Syd's Journal*

# Syd's Journal

## Singular Vision

You have a thought, a feeling or an outrage, and it occurs to you to write it down, make a video or draw a picture that expresses it. But then you think there are millions of others out there thinking the same thing, many with greater communication or artistic skills than you have. So, you end up not writing it, not drawing it, and your vision is never captured or recorded. Mass culture has convinced you that your point of view is inconsequential. This is a loss.

Expressing and recording your personal history is vitally important in its own right. It needs no further justification or rationalization. It has intrinsic value. Because of our awareness of the sheer multitude of humanity, we tend to assume that there must be a million other people with the same thoughts and impressions that we have, and hence, our impressions are insignificant. There is really no logical basis for this assumption. The opposite may actually be true: that for at least a moment in time, our personal vision may be singular, and vitally important.

It isn't exactly front page news, but the mainstream mass media is a polluted source of information. By "mainstream mass media" I mean the whole complex: television, motion pictures, newspapers, the recording industry and commercial publishers. They share a common fatal flaw in that they live on advertising and are accountable to business interests whose first priority is to turn a profit. Do you think that Rupert Murdoch built News Corp. in order to provide us with a deeper and more accurate description of the human condition? Does CNN care what's going through your mind as you sit in your kitchen trying to decide what to eat for supper? Probably not. If the record of the mainstream mass media is all that future generations have of us, they will neither know nor understand who we are.

One might not care about what future generations understand – I happen to care, but not everyone does – but most of us do care, at some level, about understanding ourselves and being understood. If you make a habit of capturing your experiences, you will collect in time a picture of your life. The medium doesn't matter very much. It can be pictures, words, sounds or objects. You can come back to it periodically and you will see different things in it, often things of which you were unaware at the

time you snapped the picture or made the journal entry. Especially through the lens of time, greater understanding can come. I often have the experience of finding things in my journals and photo albums that point out something very clearly to me now, and I marvel at how blind I was to it at the time.



Sometimes, working on a creative piece can bring out something that I'm struggling with and help me to become aware of it. Prior to the creative work, there is just the feeling. The process of recording it to paper, film or megabytes often helps me to identify an experience I'm having. It may even help in a therapeutic way and allow me to make peace with something that is eating at me.

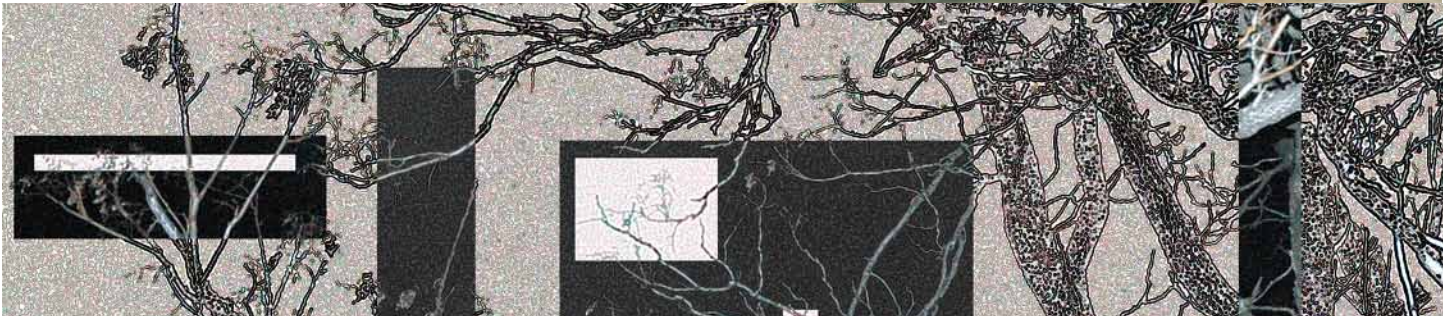
Mostly, I do this stuff because I love doing it. I love the activity of creating pictures and writing. I would do it for that reason alone and be completely content. Most of the time, I'm not doing self-therapy or creating a record of historical significance. Most of the time, I'm just having fun. Nevertheless, I believe that the personal history angle is important.

I have lived long enough to experience how lives and ideas get left behind as culture rushes rapidly forward. I have lived long enough to forget interesting episodes in my own life and I'm glad I jotted down a journal entry which provides a touchstone to the memory. Sometimes, just a few lines or a photo is enough to return a wonderful moment to memory. I have a strong sense that much has been lost and swept aside, even in my own time which to me doesn't seem that long. Whole lives that were once important to their families and communities are now little more than records at the court house. Ways of living and thinking, some of which still have great value, are left by the side of the road in the inevitable march of days. Creating personal history hedges against this loss. It doesn't

*"Singular" continued*

prevent it, but it saves something.

As the artist and the subject, you can't judge what's important or what isn't. You have to leave that to others. Do you think that Beethoven could have told you that the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> symphonies were going to be really important and the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> weren't going to be? No, he was just Beethoven doing his Beethoven thing. I have long suspected that the Apostle Paul had no inkling that his letters were going to become half of the New Testament. We can't know the value or even the whole content of the things we do. We shouldn't even try. But most of all, we shouldn't allow ourselves to be hypnotized into thinking that everyone else is thinking our thoughts, and that our own experience is of no consequence.

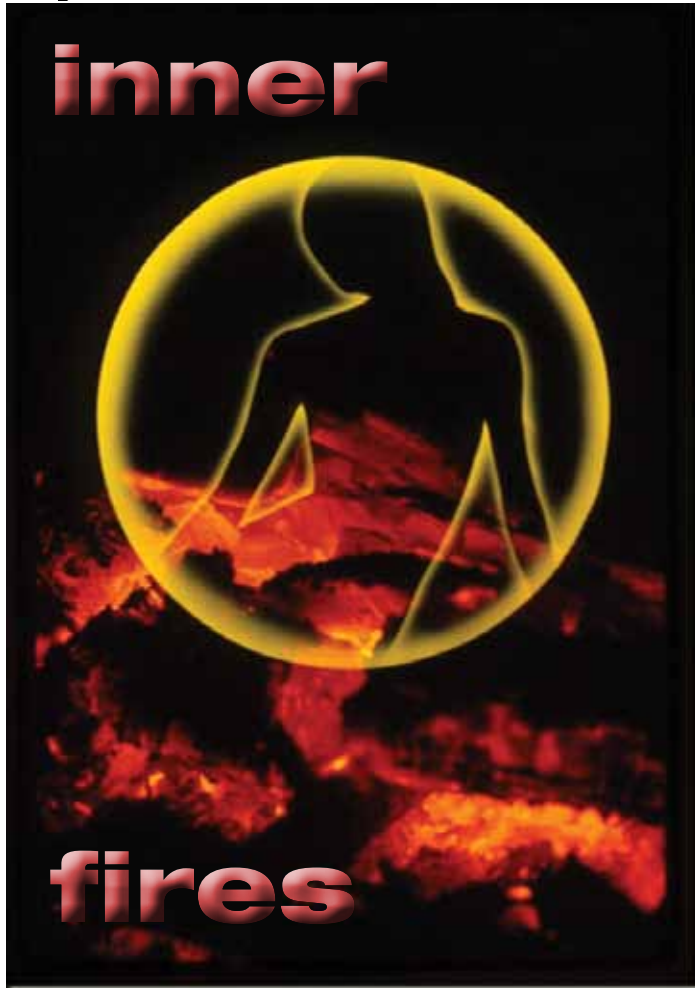


Silhouettes on the Beach:  
the sun melts in gold.  
The all-but-mythical days  
in the islands, picture postcard  
walks in the sand,  
still hang their images  
in Denver's shopping malls  
and bounce echoes through  
road houses in Bowling Green.

A snapshot in my album:  
the minstrel and his hat  
framed by the tropical street,  
conceals with its comedy  
the riptide of hunger.  
Even the guitars could not  
fully voice it.

*Syd's Journal*

# Syd's Journal



The inner fires were hot then. It meant not sleeping at night and doing things that we would later try to block out of our memories. That doesn't work, by the way. We pulled some capers that I still don't like to talk about, most of which had something to do with getting naked and exploring the Dark Side. It felt good at the time — not truly relief, but a respite from conscious identity. We read Blake, tantric yoga, Kerouac, Hunter Thompson, William Burroughs and every other wild-ass we could get our hands on. It was a hell of a party. I'm sorry you missed it.

The apartment on Keats Street  
dripped water from the ceiling.  
Radiators shot nervous spurts of steam.  
The walls saw every forbidden thing  
and to look at them is to know this.  
Shadows of soft gray play across vague lines  
caught slightly out of focus.  
Shadows swirl like the primal waters  
which spawned new forms of life.

Some of this was just a matter of being young. I see it in my own kids now and chuckle, knowing at the same time that for them it is deadly serious stuff. Some of it was the super-heated time when we lived. I still like to think that we were in some ways special with our vision, although my cynicism constantly seeks to erode that bias.

The inner fires come from the unconscious, the dream world, the Shadow — whatever you want to call it. It's that scary, unknown side of us that we can never quite control or predict. The creative person has to cross into that world because it is the fuel of the vision and the crucible of the work. I always liked the images of alchemy and I read a lot of Carl Jung because he saw that chemistry playing out in the images of the medieval alchemists.

Buildings fall and mountains burn  
when fiery little anima  
comes out to play,  
She dances the sidewalk,  
teases the boys,  
cooks up dreams  
in her boiling pot.  
She will not sit still  
for a photograph.

She allows no binding embrace.  
Anima sang strange songs  
through my window as I slept.

Witch-Sister,  
like fools we chased her  
through the moonlight,  
thinking we could catch her.

This would be the perfect place to insert the cautionary sermon about the dangers involved with invoking these forces, but I'm not going to do that. What would be the point? It's like saying that if you hang steel, you might fall or if you swim you might drown. So? It's not like we really have any kind of choice in the matter, unless of course one of our parents was born on another planet with a completely different biology and nervous system — then there might be a choice. Otherwise, if you do creative work, you play with fire. Deal with it.

“Inner Fires” continued

Even if you don't do creative work, you're going to feel the heat. If you follow the Jungian model, we all come to a point of confrontation with the shadow, “the mysterious conjunction” in Jung's parlance. This is necessary for the person to fully integrate into a whole person, so you might as well spin out some songs, stories and pictures on the way.

In clothes made ragged by design  
to show the endless flaying of our souls  
we walked lonely streets  
never failing to draw the attention  
of police and older men passing by.  
Streets in Big City have their own shamans  
who can turn the summer night  
to a thing of ecstasy or dread.  
Street Picture: power poles rise  
like pillars of the temple.  
Cryptograms lay hidden  
in the signs of liquor stores.  
Night fed upon our electricity  
and our juices made forms in the air.  
Trees reached up like skeletal hands  
to grasp the toxic darkness  
and held it close to the earth.  
Fog hung motionless  
like the vague words spoken.  
We unwound that night  
like threads of an ancient curse.  
Left the strands there on the sidewalk,  
and stepped quietly away.



# Syd's Journal



## The Wind at Mt. Carmel

I don't know why I had to go there, but I had to go there. I had to see Mt. Carmel, the site of the Branch Davidian compound where 80 or more people died in a botched raid by the ATF and FBI. We were traveling down to Austin to visit my mother and our route took us through Waco. Mt. Carmel isn't actually in Waco; it's a few miles to the east of town. There are no signs which might direct tourists to the place. You have to know where you're going. I'm sure the town of Waco would be more than happy to forget that Mt. Carmel ever existed, and to escape the linkage of their town's name with tragedy. It won't happen anytime soon.

It was a sunny May morning in Texas. The temperature was already climbing into the nineties. The sky was clear blue and the land looked lush and fertile. Golden rolls of hay sat in green fields of grass. Lush young corn stood in rows. This is good farmland, not the postcard cliché of desert so often

associated with Texas. My son, Alex drove the car and I followed the map, navigating us into one of the darkest moments in American history.

My anxiety began to rise as we neared the place. Would the gate be locked? Would someone come out and run us off as a couple of sick vultures come to poke around in the bones of the dead cult? What would be waiting for us there? As it turned out, the only things there to meet us were the wind and our own dark visions.

We drove right to the site. I'm pretty good with maps. I remember thinking that I could have found it without a map – just follow my intuition. I grew up on little Texas roads like that. The gate was open. We drove in slowly. There's a tree in the middle of the gravel road with a stack of granite stones, each with the name of a slain Davidian, stacked on either side of the tree. A little office building stands to the right of the road and double-wide a little further in. We looked at the windows and waited for someone to flag us down or come out to ask us our business. No one did.

They have built a little church there, more or less in the center of where the compound stood. We drove up to the church and stopped. I opened the car door and put my right foot out, and suddenly a strange apprehension hit me: I was about to put my foot on hallowed ground, un-insulated by the shiny Nissan Maxima. It was a weird sensation. I put my foot on the ground. Nothing particularly remarkable happened except for the sense of reverence that swept over me.

We immediately began to walk, simply walk, and look at the ground, this earth where so much happened. From the church, the first remnant of the compound you see is the swimming pool. It still has water in it, but it's rainwater, green like any natural pond with bulrushes growing in it. In the southwest corner of the pool is a pile of concrete rubble pushed into the pool by FBI bulldozers eager to cover up the evidence of what happened there.

I would like to say, "I don't have a dog in this fight." I'm no fan of renegade federal police units with murderous intentions, but on the other hand, I don't care much for apocalyptic cults with kinky sex practices. I didn't like the Clinton administration

*“Wind” continued*

under which the attack occurred and I didn't like the Bush administration before it, under which the action was initiated. I think Koresh was a sexual deviant with messianic delusions. There aren't many good guys to be found in all of this, except perhaps the Texas Rangers. But, I do have a dog in this fight, and it's the same dog that every American has. We have a right to be secure in our homes and personal effects. We have a right to worship as we see fit. We have a right to a fair trial. We have a right to not be subjected to cruel and unusual punishment. We have a right to live free of the mind control of self-appointed messiahs. It has been 15 years since the flames consumed Mt. Carmel and these things are still unsettled. We have a dog in this fight.

Just after noon on April 19, 1993, a friend of mine called and said, "Turn on your TV." I did and watched with millions of others as the Mt. Carmel complex burned to the ground, and only one survivor, Clive



Doyle, was seen coming out of the building. The attack fueled the most intense anti-government sentiment in this country since the Vietnam War. Two years later, the Murrow Building in Oklahoma City was bombed in retaliation for the Mt. Carmel massacre. The litigation and investigations went on for years. "Remember Waco" became the battle cry of the "militia movement."

Even to this day, what actually happened and on whom the blame falls remains in dispute. Clarity has never really been reached.

Now, I was standing on this hallowed ground with nothing but the wind to talk to me about what happened there. I had bought a white straw cowboy hat to keep the sun off my head. The wind would suddenly gust up and whip the hat off of my head as if to say, "Take your hat off in this place." The sun was hot and I put it back on

I don't know how much time passed before I remembered the cameras. This trip was about pictures. What I saw, I shot. I went back to the car and fetched the Lowepro two-camera backpack. It carried the space-age Nikon D70s digital SLR and the 1980-vintage Nikon F3 35mm. I carried the backpack

to the edge of the swimming pool and unzipped the main compartment. The wind gusted up and threw the cover back. "Photograph this place," the wind said. I pulled out both cameras and shot a few quick frames of the pool and "the underground bunker" before I gave the digital to Alex. I went to work with the F3 shooting color slides.

Fifteen years have passed since tanks and choppers roared across this land. Nature, in its way, has covered the scars with grass and pink and white flowers. A memorial grove of fruit trees stands to



the south of the compound site. The Davidians have built a plain little church approximately where the tower and "the concrete room" once stood.

Alex first noticed the ant hills. The top of the soil is white, perhaps from some chemical leeching from the ground. But when the ants bring up soil as they build their ant hills, the earth they bring up is distinctly ash gray. The FBI tried to bury what happened here with their bulldozers but the ants won't allow it to remain buried. They bring the ash to the surface. It is the ash of a community, of a building, and perhaps it is the ash of human bodies incinerated here.

When you come to this place, you feel powerful things. I have seen so many film clips of the assault that I could visualize the building, where the tanks were, the desperate gun battle, and the fire. Strong emotion sweeps over you like the Texas wind. I certainly don't approve of Timothy McVeigh's action, but standing on this blood-soaked ground I could understand his rage. David Koresh may have been a bastard – I don't know, but I do know that 80-some people didn't deserve to die like this.

I walked the foundation line of the building that once stood here. It is still visible. Finally, we shot all the pictures we could think of and felt the feelings that the place evokes. It was time to go. Cameras again packed into their case, we fired up the little car and drove away. A part of me is still there, haunted by the memory, unable to let go of "the worst day in the history of American law enforcement."

*Syd's Journal*

# Syd's Journal

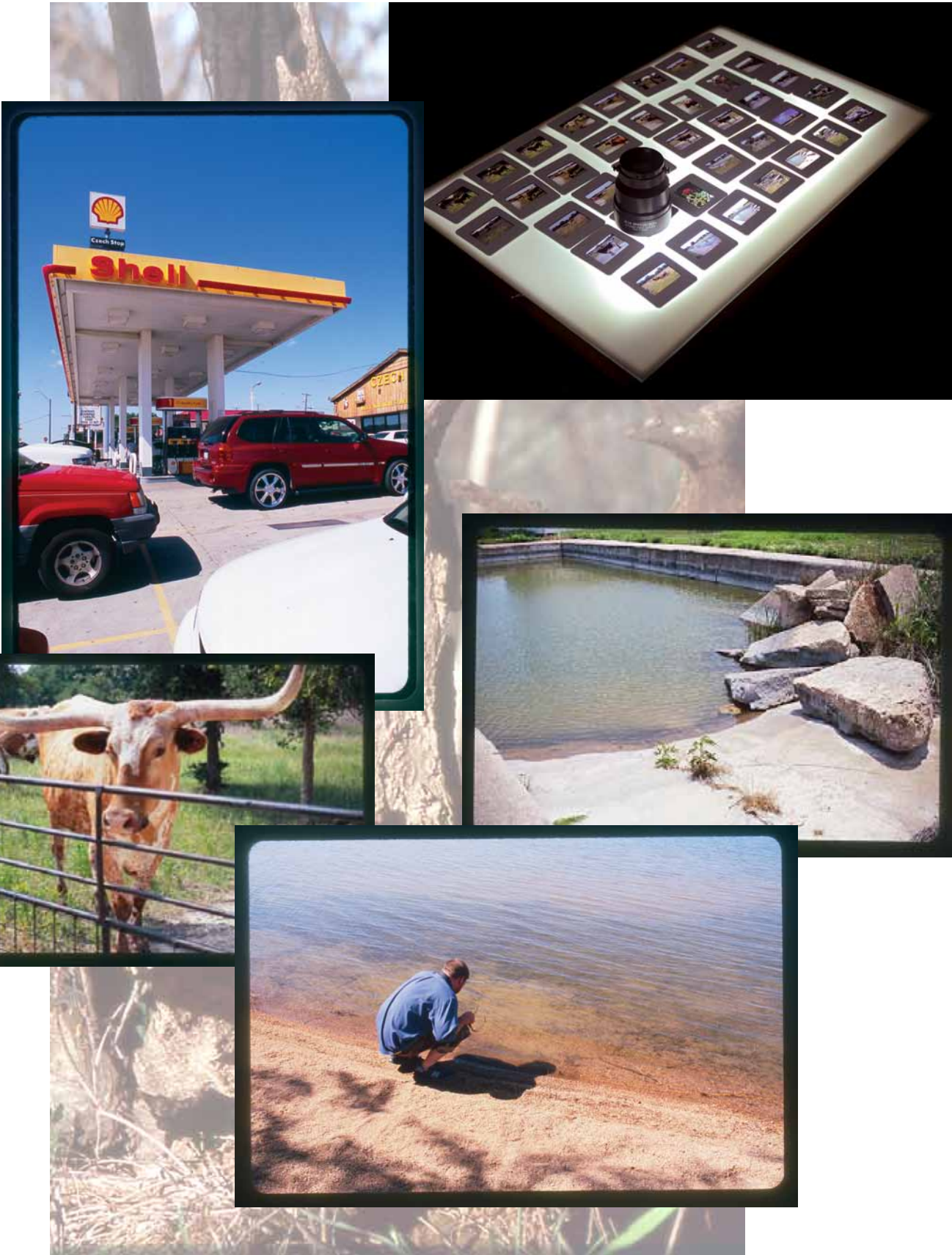


## Doug's Spurs

Doug was my father's older brother by five years. He was killed in France in 1944. It fell to me to be the keeper of the few artifacts of his life: these spurs, his pocket watch, dog tags, casket flag and Purple Heart. Also, my middle name, Douglas, was from him. Doug was in a unit that was guarding Patton's supply line during the Battle of the Bulge. The Nazis tried to break out to the south and cut Patton's lines of supply, but failed. Doug was killed in that battle. The first my grandmother knew of his death was that the birthday card she sent him was returned with "deceased" rubber stamped on it. It reached her before the War Department's telegram. War is not kind.

Doug died eight years before I was born so I never knew him, but I always felt a bit haunted by him. I had his name, and my grandmother would slip and call me "Doug" at times. I think this was part of her grief process. She never really got over his death. My father was a Marine medical corpsman. He was on the boats headed to Iwo Jima and he would have hit the beach on the first wave. My grandmother had him pulled off the boat on the "sole surviving heir" rule established after the Sullivan brothers were killed. This infuriated my father, but probably saved his life. Odds are that I wouldn't be here had Doug not died.

It is strange when someone you have never met has such a powerful impact on your life that you feel as if you knew him. And, I am probably the last person on Earth who has any feeling for the reality of his life. He lives only in my meta-memories now. When I stop remembering him, he will be gone. I hope I don't haunt anyone who hasn't been born yet, but then I don't have to. I have a family that I love and friends who I cherish. Doug didn't get a chance for that. I'm all he has.



Syd's Journal

# Syd's Journal

## I Want to Go Moose Hunting with Sarah Palin

October 27th, 2008

I spent the afternoon doing a trigger job on a Rock Island Armory M1911A1. That's a .45 automatic pistol for those who don't know the nomenclature.

I got it down to a crisp 3 ½ lbs. of pull with no creep. I added a custom hammer and an extended beavertail grip safety because I was getting some serious hammer bite. Sarah would appreciate this trigger job. She likes guns.



*I want to go moose hunting with Sarah Palin.*

Now, I'd have to buy some kind of stud rifle like a Weatherby Mark V Deluxe or a Browning A-Bolt topped off with a Leupold scope. You can't go hunting with Sarah packing some Wal-Mart special.

I'll admit it. I'm in love with Sarah. I've always had a weakness for brunettes, especially those endowed with proportions like hers. We would have to figure out a way to disable hubby's snowmobile so he couldn't follow us – three would definitely be a crowd – and we would need a couple of bottles of good bourbon to help her get over her religious scruples, but that wouldn't be too hard. When you get the Pentecostals liquored up, they start speaking in a whole new language.

She'd have to teach me how to field dress a moose. I've never done that before. I've dressed deer, squirrels, rabbits, birds and fish, but never something as big as a moose.

I don't even care if she wins the election or not, except that it would keep that weenie, Obama from being elected. Obama doesn't like guns. Girlie man. He's one of those "ban 'em so only the gangsters will have them" kinds of guys. Of course, no one ought to be surprised since they've been singing that song in Chicago since Al Capone. Washington doesn't

deserve Sarah. She's too good for those creeps. Washington deserves Rosie O'Donnell. Now that would be justice. Sarah can just continue to reign as queen of my dreams and let the Bolsheviks in Washington stew in their own juices.

Just imagine the exquisite splendor of waking up in a tent on a frosty Alaska morning with Sarah in the sleeping bag next to you, fresh snow outside under a perfect blue sky, the faint scent of gun powder and moose blood still on your clothes. Oh, man.

Now, I know that what I'm contemplating represents some serious sinning, but we could have a "come to Jesus" moment and repent when we got back to town. It would be worth it.



## Heaven Bends Close

6:30 Sunday evening – We had just come in from walking the dogs. It was 29 degrees in the park and I was cold. I poured a cup of coffee and the phone rang.

“Syd Weedon.”

“Syd, this is Becky.” My mind raced through the catalog of Beckies I’ve known.

“Brian is in the hospital.” My mind narrowed it down to one, my friend Brian with whom I had worked at the printing company downtown. His wife’s name was Becky. Why was she calling me?

“Hi, how are you?”

The printing company was a significant player in the industry in those days. They counted among their clients Cummins Engine, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Electronic Arts and Fidelity. Some serious jobs flowed through our keyboards and monitors. The printing company had hired me because I was a PC wonk. I could do high-end four-color prepress on a PC. I could make Pagemaker dance a jig. I not only understood CorelDraw, but I loved it. But most of our jobs, and especially most of the big ones were not PC; they were Macintosh in Quark, Photoshop, Illustrator and Freehand. I had never laid a glove on a Macintosh, and that’s where Brian comes in. He was the lead guy on second shift pre-press when I hired on. He patiently taught me the Mac and the vagaries of the Linotronic image setter. He taught me how to trap color in Quark and Illustrator. I showed him my tricks on the PC and we’d go out to restaurants together on “lunch break.” We had fun.

“Brian is really sick,” Becky said.

“What’s the matter?”

“He has pancreatic cancer. He’s not doing well at all.”

The last time I talked to Brian was about six months

ago. He had called. He was between jobs. The printing company had laid us both off after the technology caught up to what we used to do manually. They no longer needed \$20/hr operators to do jobs that could be done now by an \$8/hr college student. I had moved on to an art director job with another company, but Brian had a rougher time of it. He told me then that he was thinking about selling his house because he was having trouble with the payments. I told him that I wanted to have him and Becky over for dinner, but we never set a date. Now, Becky was on the phone and Brian was dying.

We hadn’t really pal-ed around after we left the printing company. Different worlds, I guess. Brian was a hard luck case in many ways. He had a disfiguring skin condition that caused large moles on his skin. When I first hired on at the printing company, the HR guy had taken me aside to brief me on Brian’s condition, to not be afraid of it, that “it isn’t contagious.” Three years into our time at the printing company, Brian was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Then, about a year after we left the printing company, he had a bout of stomach cancer. I visited him in the hospital then. They thought they got it all and life was good. Now, Becky was on the phone, and things weren’t good.

They were calling me now, not because I was an old friend from bygone days, but because I am a Presbyterian minister. I’m the guy who has looked death in the face a thousand times and not flinched. No, I don’t like death. It doesn’t turn me on, but it doesn’t paralyze me either. I have the capacity to look through the horror, the tubes, wires and machines, the pain and loss, and still see an old friend who needs me right this minute. I have faith. I believe there is something wonderful

*“Heaven” continued on page 12*

*Syd's Journal*

# Syd's Journal

*"Heaven" continued*

beyond this vale of tears, but I don't know what. I can say that I have felt it, that I trust there is something other than annihilation waiting for us. To trust – all is not lost. I believe that, and I'm willing to say it into these extreme moments. That's why they called me.

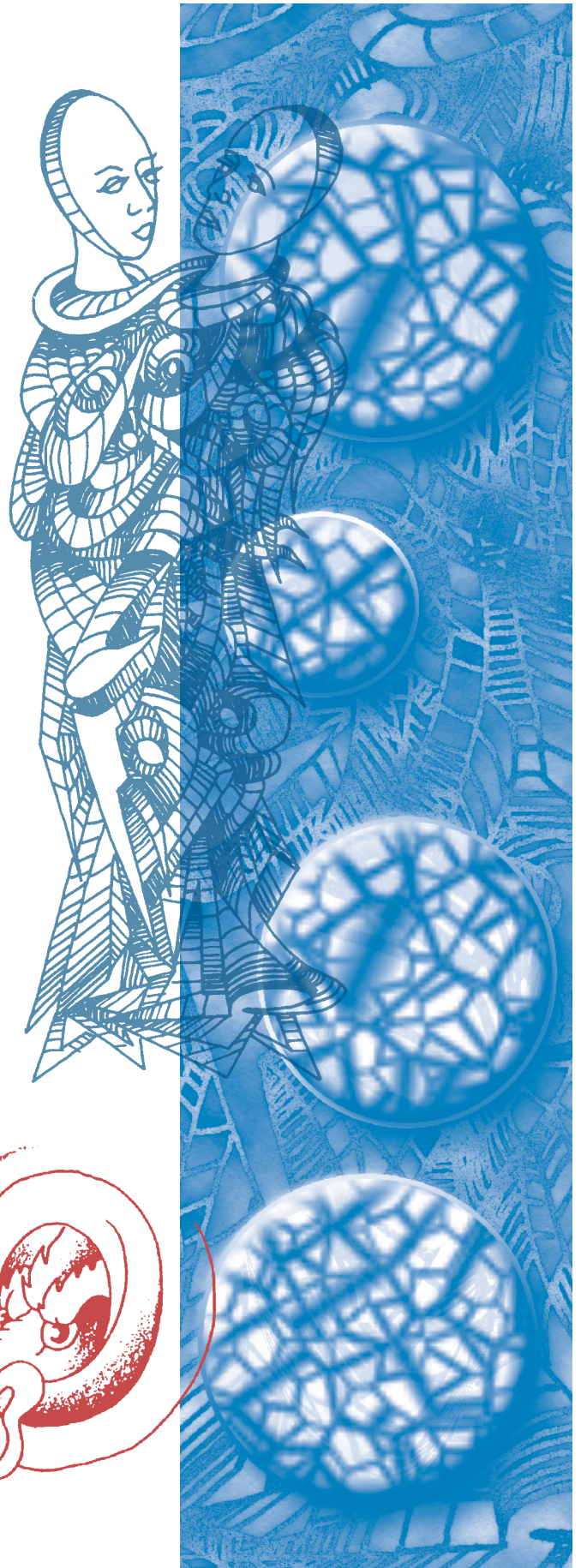
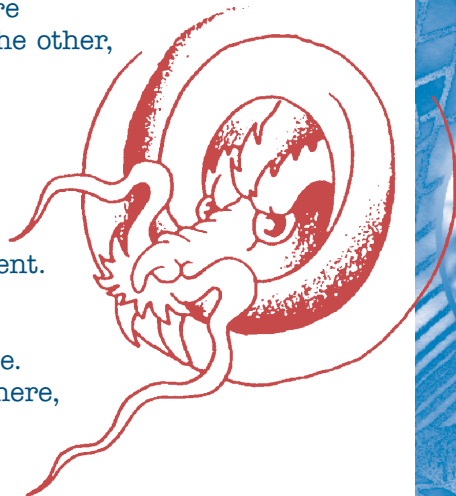
I ask Becky how she is doing. She is struggling. She has built her life around Brian. Their eighteen-year-old son is not dealing with it well, not supporting her the way she needs him to. I tell her that's pretty normal. At that age, they're not emotionally mature and they withdraw to protect themselves from the reality. It doesn't mean he doesn't love her; he just can't cope with it. My dad lasted until I was forty two. I can't imagine what I would have done had he died when I was eighteen. I asked Becky what room he was in and what time of day he was most alert. She said about 3 PM. I promised her I would be down there tomorrow at that time.

In my mind I steel myself. I visualize what he will look like so that I will be prepared. I want to walk into the room and look into the eyes of an old friend. I can't let the fear and horror get in the way. I will not react to that. That is my gift. You might call it courage, but it isn't really. It's just technique. I know that to be a help to my friend, I have to focus on him, not my own fear or revulsion at the condition. I need to look him in the eyes and give him hope.

And, I'm not alone. Heaven bends close.

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I have to go into a trance to deal with this. When I got off the elevator, I became aware of deliberately putting one foot ahead of the other, walking briskly to room 603, going into the room and seeing him. He was my friend, but it was hard to see. It's like an altered state. You feel for a brief time as if you are standing in two worlds. That's why the common things look different. You look at those ordinary things, but they're not ordinary. They're life, the stage set of your existence. The streets and buildings will always be there, but the way I see them and what they mean to me leaves with me, like it did with Brian. It's a whole world that goes away when someone dies, not just a body.



## Thinking about the Beats

William Burroughs. Allen Ginsberg. Jack Kerouac. Yes, they were self-indulgent, undisciplined, and sometimes down-right deconstructive. There were several Kerouac books that I started and never finished. Burroughs always struck me as grotesque and graceless in his prose. I loved Ginsberg.

I first read Ginsberg at the ripe old age of seventeen, and he was a revelation then. I understood “angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in the night.” It was like he was reading my mail. Whether the poetry was good or not, I wasn’t able to say. I had been schooled in all of the classic forms of poetry — iambic pentameter, blank verse, free verse, haiku, the sonnet, and all that jazz, and it didn’t communicate to me at all, except if you were writing a song lyric and I didn’t do much of that.

For me, the Beat literature provided an unfiltered channel to the “counter-culture.” What we got from the mainstream media was a highly sanitized view of what was going on, even in rock music. The Beat literature had no such filters. I guess the cultural statement was more important to me than the quality of the literature or the veracity of the reporting. This was a genuinely different point of view powerful enough that people banned the books and charged the publishers with obscenity. It was powerful enough that the authors were willing to endure the critical abuse and legal harassment to publish it. It got my attention.

That alternative point of view included illicit drugs and forbidden sex, and it lit me up. I had never read “literature” like that before. Also, it contained something that came near to a justification for their reckless experimentation. They were like psychic astronauts blasting into the hostile reaches of the

unconscious and the taboo. It was hedonistic, but the hedonism had a purpose – “Everything in excess.” It was as if some dark magical secret had been revealed.

In psychological time, that was a million years ago. I moved on to more grown-up tastes in poetry and literature, and eventually gave up poetry altogether because I became convinced that the only people reading poets were poets, and they did so begrudgingly, and I didn’t want to be limited to such a small audience that seemed to shrink every day.

In retrospect, the Beats do look careless, self-indulgent, dangerous to themselves and those around them, undisciplined and ultimately untenable. The same things that made them exciting wrecked their credibility. How do you take seriously a junkie queer who murdered his own wife playing “William Tell” with a handgun like Burroughs? Do you want to freeze to death counting railroad ties in Mexico, loaded up with booze and Secobarbital at the ripe old age of 46 like Neal Cassady? There can



be little doubt that the critical ridicule faced by Kerouac hastened the end of his life. Ginsberg weathered the storm better than the others, but he did it by replacing the drinking and drugging with his version of Buddhism. I did some exploration into Buddhism but realized early on that I

wasn’t cut out to be a Zen master. What do you do with the legacy of the Beats?

I know that for me, at a particular moment in time, they were vitally important. Their work was like a window on a strange and alien world that fascinated me. Maybe I’m secretly glad that they did what they did so that I didn’t have to do it. They showed us where the trapdoors were by falling through them. More importantly, they seduced us into launching our own psychic space probes. They had a real impact.

*Syd's Journal*

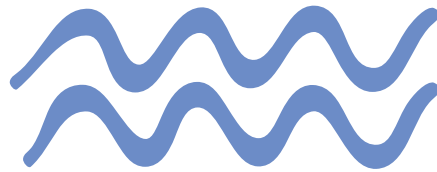
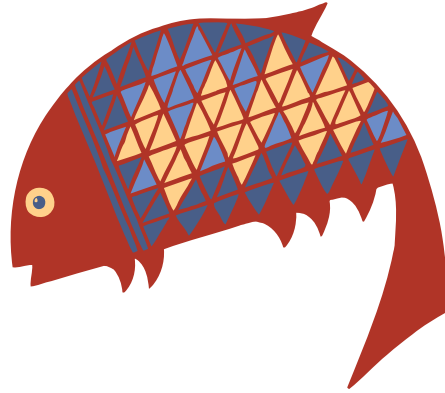
# Syd's Journal

"I HURT MYSELF TODAY  
TO SEE IF I STILL FEEL.  
I FOCUS ON THE PAIN  
THE ONLY THING THAT'S REAL.  
THE NEEDLE TEARS A HOLE,  
THE OLD FAMILIAR STING.  
TRY TO KILL IT ALL AWAY  
BUT I REMEMBER EVERYTHING.  
WHAT HAVE I BECOME?  
MY SWEETEST FRIEND,  
EVERYONE I KNOW  
GOES AWAY IN THE END,  
AND YOU COULD HAVE IT ALL,  
MY EMPIRE OF DIRT.

I WILL LET YOU DOWN;  
I WILL MAKE YOU HURT."

"I SAW THE BEST MINDS OF MY  
GENERATION DESTROYED BY  
MADNESS, STARVING  
HYSTERICAL NAKED,  
DRAGGING THEMSELVES  
THROUGH THE NEGRO STREETS  
AT DAWN  
LOOKING FOR AN ANGRY FIX,  
ANGELHEADED HIPSTERS BURNING  
FOR THE ANCIENT HEAVENLY  
CONNECTION TO THE STARRY  
DYNAMO IN THE MACHINERY  
OF NIGHT,"

"IT'S A CIRCLE OF DECEPTION  
IT'S A HALL OF STRANGERS  
IT'S A CAGE WITHOUT A KEY  
YOU CAN FEEL THE DANGER  
AND I'M THE ONE WHO  
OUGHT TO KNOW  
I'M THE ONE YOU COULDN'T TRUST  
YEAH I'M THE LONELY SILENT ONE  
I'M THE ONE LEFT IN THE DUST"



"DARKNESS AT THE BREAK OF NOON  
SHADOWS EVEN THE SILVER SPOON  
THE HANDMADE BLADE,  
THE CHILD'S BALLOON  
ECLIPSES BOTH THE SUN AND MOON  
TO UNDERSTAND  
YOU KNOW TOO SOON  
THERE IS NO SENSE IN TRYING.

POINTED THREATS,  
THEY BLUFF WITH SCORN  
SUICIDE REMARKS ARE TORN  
FROM THE FOOL'S  
GOLD MOUTHPIECE  
THE HOLLOW HORN  
PLAYS WASTED WORDS  
PROVES TO WARN  
THAT HE  
NOT BUSY BEING BORN  
IS BUSY DYING."

## WORDWORKS

[www.sydweedon.com/sight.htm](http://www.sydweedon.com/sight.htm)

502-451-4439

●  
GRAPHIC DESIGN  
WEB DEVELOPMENT  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
PRINTING  
●

"GOT TWO REASONS  
WHY I CRY AWAY EACH  
LONELY NIGHT,  
THE FIRST ONE'S NAMED  
SWEET ANNE MARIE,  
AND SHE'S MY  
HEARTS DELIGHT.  
THE SECOND ONE IS  
PRISON, BABY,  
THE SHERIFF'S ON MY TRAIL,  
AND IF HE CATCHES UP  
WITH ME,  
I'LL SPEND MY LIFE IN JAIL."

"LYING IN MY BED I HEAR  
THE CLOCK TICK,  
AND THINK OF YOU  
CAUGHT UP IN CIRCLES  
CONFUSION - IS NOTHING NEW  
FLASHBACK - WARM NIGHTS -  
ALMOST LEFT BEHIND  
SUITCASES OF MEMORIES,  
TIME AFTER TIME"