

To My Old Buddy Pink



**To The Fellowship Of Men And Woman
That Made All Things Possible.**

To My Old Buddy Pink
And Other Poems

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BACK POCKET PRESS 2006

NEW YORK. NEW YORK

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To My Old Buddy Pink

Swings the rasping soul
On ruptured waters,
awaiting hearts of heather
and hamlet,
murmuring woefully
of ancient matters,
matters ancient even then.

But ancient then with sprinkles
all of luster,
nourishing
what was
and still might be.

Now Big Sandy's reach
no longer spreads its comfort,
our pound of earth we have ate for sure.
And so tomorrow's past
meets yesterday's tomorrow
fear, sadness mourn away today.
No scriptures overawe the twilight,
only sun, stars, an angel's hand,
for barefoot boy, an ample creek.
Drying hay
a lamenting cow
a tree all scrub
a twinkling voice
and beckoning soft fingers
yet ask for notice.

Old Pink is gone away in darkness.
Let's let him have his jug.
It's all he'll ever get,
and just enough for one.

Let's reach out for the angel's hand
that's somewhere
all gleaming in the sunlight,
or the moonlight,
and slake our thirst
in patient waters.

A chew of grass
a spit downwind
and all is clear,
a waking day.

The Why Of It

She turns toward me
Startling
She asks
Her voice a tired whisper
"What the hell are we doing here?"

I shut my eyes
Against the glimmer of light
That entered between the shutters.
I must have pulled away
"No, damn it!
Don't go running
Running off
Into that insecure macho isolation.
The sex was fine.

"What I'm asking is really important!
What in the hell are we doing here?"
Was I supposed to reply?
Reply to what?
"How the hell should I know!"
I fought back
Because I was frightened
"If you don't know
What should I?"

I felt the movement of the mattress
Behind my turned back
I could feel her turn
From her side facing me
And flop heavily on her back

She was silent
Only harsh breathing.

"What do you want?
Ice cream and candy
Toys and songs
And Mistletoe
Year round?"

No response
Only the same harsh breathing
Scratching at me.
"You want sighs and cries
of joy and pain
all the time?"

Why did I add pain?
The word gave the question an answer
I heard her sigh
I felt the inner sighs
And cries
As the glowing want
Probed.

I knew the pain
The sighs
The cries

They were mine
But must she remind me?

The scratch, scratch
Of her breathing

Terror opened its eyes
And howled

A spasm jerked my body
Turned it
To touch a body
Searching for mine

We clutched
We knew the answer

Me and Huck

Hey look at that side-paddle
crowd-gawking express
going nowhere
skirting lands long forgot
but for pictures
and daydreams.

Often do I whistle
for a love
of fascination
with an ample brood
of wishers
and an autumn summer's breeze.

Lady with your stockings
shoes carelessly adrift
shades of silver
barring where I search
answer to the whisper
of an unknown courage
a heart longing
for repair
from a romance yet to be.

An inviting smile
a simple nod
or worlds will pass
between us.

Or is it better
not to know?

Sharing

The sadness of her soul
alone
unfulfilled
Cries out to hear my blessing.
But I am helpless.
What I offer is unwanted.

What is wanted is
of stars
candy canes
ribbons
braids.

I don't know where to find them.
So I say goodnight.
She says goodnight.
But sleep is forgotten
in the silence
of our room.

Thoughts On A Busy Day

Hard on the core of a suffering sea
an otter floated and considered
the turbulence of the amount.

Bored
he was not,
disturbed
he was,
but not certain
whether he should be.

Under and over
the swells
made him ponder
and he questioned
the sky
moving too quickly
for him to make out
the answer.

But it must have an answer.
Isn't there
always an answer?
to everything
with a question?

Enough
enough
for one day.

He blinked at the sky
showed it was all okay
he'd figure it out
when he had more time
some rainy day.

A roll around
and stirred his coat
he cuddled up
warmed
to be afloat.

Lost in Space

Hum a tone
of haunted vision.

Whistle.
Moan
a hymn to twilight.

Moonlight
shuttles
the cold spirit
no make believe
can soften.

Whimper.
But it seems
a weak retort.

Still
savor
the reply.

Dharma

Timeless measurements disintegrate
In the severances of today
As flutter of yesterday's visions
Batter at hopes of tomorrow
Sinking merchants of eloquent tales Reality for
you Make believe for me.
Forever is the message
With breath of but a second
And on to the next lifetime.
Qualities of sand
Stabilize my moments
Crammed with goodness
Of a dream
If not from youth
Then from a world of Ages
Not lost
But sheltered
Within a whistling cave.

Accept its suffering exhortations
While searching for its exaltations
To lift another foot
With expectations
Of a wing
To float to somewhere
With its endless
Mission of glory.

So listen to the whistle.

Break Time

Life will skim the salt
of human comfort
and offer hard springs
of care and open books
of nonsense knowledge
as peak of broth
with crater cells
offers no retort.

Those craters speak
in silent depths
of long-lost courtships
with melodious giants
hauling praises
of chrysanthemums
spectrums burning bright.

Curl up to harshness
spin the amber coils
of mellow
and part the cordon
of malevolent blight
with sprinkled cones
and lollypops.

Sing crystal myths
of purple blossoms
for a world of grain
summons endless
seeping calls
of there must be
to rest.

Up the pack.
Back on the trail.

The Gift

What do you say
mother
to a son alone?

What is your message
father?

What say you both
from your perch
beyond
all commands
entreaties
and debates?

I've taken care of all
There are no more.
Now
what is the lesson
what is the law?
What is the reward?

"Reward
is in the doing"
you say?

Alone?

The Flood

The town awaits the river cresting.
Record weights of heaven's wares
Have poured upon the hills up yonder.
Red currents invade the peaceful bottom
As a steady rising of the waters
Makes all the locals
Anxious tourists
rolling to the river's edge
Carrying children on their shoulders
Pointing to the leeward shore
Already withdrawing
Seeking safety.

Grownups pointing
And explaining
so their souls will once more live
In future tellings of
"The Famous Flood of Yesteryear."

I, too, a tourist
Standing upon the bank
Firm now
But sensing the sweep
Of nothingness
Soon on the way.

Sadness flows in
With the murky water
Dampening hope
For a whirl of passion
To swamp the heavy sands
And heat the slumbering coals
Nestled in a not-forgotten tomb.

I watch the romping dogs.
See them tussle
In a war that's only play.
I hear the chirp of infant's wonder
And the laughter
Of love's innocent foreplay.

But an old woman's tears
A young man's bottle
Become the message
For veiled eyes
And dulled ears.

The Glory of it All

Why do you speak
of stars
moonlight
wisps of wind?

Skies move
with darkness
sharp winds
invade
the calm
with scents of soot.

To look towards
moonlight
stars
calls for
lids lined
with petals
delicate
fragile
dissolved with a blink.

It calls for
a dream
a dream worth preserving.

Stairway to the Stars

A blanket of cotton
A sea of ice
Sights and sounds
One ideograph
Misguided or distorted
Corralled together
Stomping
Bellowing
In different voices
Kicking their heels
Pounding tracks
In the never-ending turf
As the throaty regent
Barks
The awesome
Unthinkable
Command
All are one!

Heaven Sent, Heathen Bent, A Rap Beat

I hustle through the heather
to the edge of town
To sneak up on my loved one
in her Highland gown
She waits with the utmost patience
enticing but discreet
Pleased to meet in Edinburgh
Hong Kong even Basin Street
My pockets noisily jingle
as I raise the pace
With the necessary coinage
earned to keep my place

Let Me Call You Sweetheart

I slumped against the wall
watched her scratch
through the ashes into the
grapefruit rind

Triumphant
her splitting lips
turned back
in her almost smile

Clutched between sticky
blackened fingers
two stubs
curled and specked
moist spots glistening

She had done what she called
her job.

I reached for one
from the extended hand
separated with care
the flimsy paper attaching
to her fingers.

Then I concentrated on the task
of the other

It seemed more difficult
but my trained fingers
not shaking at the moment
accomplished the first step
of what is my job.

A deep breath
pushed onto my knees
then slip upward
never leaving the backrest

With slanted eyes
and careful movements
I made my way to the stove

touching walls that reached out to greet me
turned on the gas
leaned
stumbled
righted myself
holding a cold burner

I lit one butt
then the other
That's my job.

The trip back always was
more difficult
with hands occupied
elbows were alerted to guide my path
if necessary
it was necessary

I slid back onto the floor to my resting place
against the wall
and gently placed one of the butts
into her waiting mouth

She gave me a heavy half-smile
inhaled into her mouth
inhaled the curling smoke into her nostrils
sighed with relief
then closed her eyes

I reached toward her
very quiet
retrieved the butt
and stubbed it out
against the wall

I listened
for her breath
it was there

I was all alone

call me Lucky

my name is Lucky
short for Luckless
if i go one way
go the other
i warned you

i got the idea
that heaven was blest
with noodles and curlicues
and bright-eyed sunsets
by sunsets I mean Sunsets
that's a name

i was alone
lonely I mean
so i decided to
go up that mountain
really that hill
but a real high hill
and try to catch Sunsets

not a bad idea
right

i climbed
and i climbed
i looked in front
of e
and then back behind
every few minutes

i was afraid someone
caught my idea
and might try
to catch my sunsets

such a good idea
right
finally

really finally
i got to the top
i put my handkerchief
on the ground
like i'd been taught
and sat myself down

yes
to wait for my Sunsets

but i sat there
sat there for a long
long time
waiting

and after that long
long time
i just couldn't help it
i fell asleep

my sunsets must have come by
and saw me
and didn't want
to disturb me
in my sleep

so tomorrow
i'll go up that hill
the really high hill
at a later time

when it's safe
for Sunsets
to come out
after dark

Our Lady of liberty

I will write you a love poem
As I sit on my bench
Eyes on the water
There in the near distance
Hand held high
Sun on her brow
A carpet of silver
Sparkling toward her

I will write you a love poem

May Be Okay

The winds whirl
dragging oceans
humbling sturdy trees.

A rumble
and deep canyons
appear in solid ground
like magic.

Houses tumble
erasing solid citizens
but a moment before.

Across the world
a rumble ripples
through more solid citizens
doing their duty
filling empty graves
all in one.

Once more
across the world
dry hot earth exposes
swollen bellies
and empty cries.

I sit here
under sheltering trees
sun creeping through
softened by shade
and moments of breeze.

My company
birds with their songs
harmony added by the sounds
of the Swedish baritone
through my earphones.

When I raise my eyes
a rumpled man
a knowing smile on his face
blesses hid find
of a variety of empty soda cans
headed for the deposits.

I sit here
overseeing it all
engulfed by my fear of the week.

Cakewalk

My soul screams
of hurried years
up the hill
of metered highways
and shuttered alleyways.

Chains of fearful
sobs smother cries
for Hallelujah
to halt the saw-toothed
mover's onward surge.

Turning corners hint
at silence
Deafening rumbles
roar it a lie.

The dimming beacon
so often hiding
a wink enough
to stumble onward.

Sonnet

The regal turn of her damp head
Bared to emancipate a dream
Dipped toward me with raw gleaming
Incitement of rubies, pearls and sweet oranges
A diatribe of mixed anger, passion
My cheeks grow pinker, unknowing
Hoping it but a bit of floss
Not the harsh scrape of emery board
For no strong oak stiffens me
A dream spangled, braided
Ribbons of a world relived
But crushed year after year
Only a pleasantry would save
 Too long a fixture to be depraved.

Compassion

Oh
how all-knowing
is the voice
of the ignorant

Moriarty's Picnic

Moriarty had a dream
Of igloos with Irish
to melt all the nights,
of sidekicks all singing,
of two-fisted swinging,
and moonbeams.

Mash up the parsnips,
soda the bread,
envision the woman so rare,
and harness the harmony
of starlight.

Sweeten the pasture
with herbs and birds
and jelly rolls.

Offer all the hands of Jesus,
may they soften
as they struggle
to find bread
on any water.

Who can know the secret
of misguided and misplaced?

Can it be the hummingbirds?

Passage

I eased myself uneasily
onto a lotus pad
touching the shore.
Slowly and peacefully

it moved from its mooring.
I watched my breathing
and went with the flow.

I waited
for all the spheres
of love
or madness
to find me
through the air
or soak my spirits
with the waters.

All there is was out there.
And so I waited.

Finally
a chortling sea thing
docked and stared.

My time had come.

I nodded
smiled
smiled my best smile.

The sea thing
blinked its eyes
and in a wisp was gone

I turned my ear
to my heart
listening for the thunder.

I opened my eyes
wide
looking for the lightening.

I wait on my lotus pad
for the glory
for freedom

I can't swim.

Ode To A Seagull

Rasp and squeal
Flutter and flap
At fog-bound shore.

That is not the life I envy.

How dare you?

Smoke

fine Lines
at moonlight
stretch the sorrows
offering harmony
unseen
 unfelt
not believed
a wish
no more
but wish
I do

A Hearty Welcome

Big George vacates
his vacuum
sorts through the stars

One winks back

Golden glare oozes toward
him
he cowers
then sprints to meet
the beckon
of the glowing coals

Burned once more
he retreats
homeward
to find a home
without a door.

The Bell Is Broken

The world of unknowing nights
rattle
with deafening gloom
leaded curtains descend
on swelling waters
the cries for help
the certain doom.

Bloods
and blacks
and blues

No purples

Sea and stone
speak to me
of purples

My eyes lined with violets
to shade me
from the light
another assault
written
in the twilights.

Arching sobs
sputter
a plea
for a reaching hand
a gentle belly
touching feet

To Thread A Needle

This is no how-to
But a who.

There is one instruction:

"A lazy seamstress
threads for more
than one use."

A teaching learned
way before you were born
Because it was given
way before I was born.

I have thread a needle
And it pricked my heart.

More should be said I know
But that must be for some other day.

The worn, warm hand
or tired lips
are not here now
to brush the tears away.

One Truth

Sacred is the firmament
of a scalding kettle.
Trust its impregnability
and start an avalanche
that suffocates self-doubt.

Happy Home

A hurried hug
Painful smile
The rented pickup
Fully loaded
Bed headboard
Gleaming in the sun
Backs out
Onto the sandy road.
Waves out the side windows.
So quickly they disappear
Beyond the mounting dust.

I stand alone
Drop my hand
I almost forgot.

The sun was warm
The birds sang
Loud and shrilly
A mailbox clapped across the way.

It was oh so quiet.

Just a rockin' and a rollin'

Block the Sun
with boom
and bluster
chortle at refrains
of sadness.

A world of conscience
cages dreams
releases fears
and veiled-eyed beauties
seek delight
in sauce and blow
and even smack.

While cloistered cousins
bing and bang
with upraised voices
and pounding hands.

Nightmares all about!

War Is Hell

The dog
and the squirrel
and the tree

The chase

Away
screams the squirrel
Play
laughs the dog

The squirrel
scratches up the tree
The dog
lifts his leg on the tree

The tree moans
to both
Unfair
Up In Arms

What happens to the one
who sings the song
of Warsaw's pain
and Ivan's scorn?

Where in Dublin
plays the tune
of moon in June
in Northern halls of doom?

Meanwhile Capetown Capers
trips the stage
and vocals harmonize
a call with sounds so fair.

All in the repertoire
of the beggarly girl
with floating hair
and raging cries
on Bleecker Streets.

What a lovely afternoon.

Scorn Not the Beggar

Temper the roving pain
with acid
Ease the rampage
through the tendrils
by interrupting
with slashing wounds

Oh, luscious lady
no grace
can suffice

No understanding
clears
the wall
of destruction

What touches a mind
to cloud a heart
from what had been
sunshine

Fear whips its lance
in all directions
but my heart and mind
are its domain

Avoid its onslaught
ignore its message
let it fly to the rafters
Not score the sky

Scorn not the beggar.

Wisdom

A timid smile
Assertions almost whispers
Edges smoothed
Cut so much deeper
And longer lasting
Soft sounds of laughter
The smile should be a warning.

A Day At The Beach

She squirmed on her sheet
spread on the warm sand.
Sounds of Spanish, Italian,
and one she decided was Greek.
Mostly it was Russian
That invaded the English
still in command.

She decided the one was Greek
because they looked Greek to her.
What beautiful black onyx hair
long, straight, shining in the sun
moving with the breeze
that mad the heat a pleasure.

And there was what must be
her boyfriend.
Young, strong, grinning.
A little too much around the middle.
Healthy.
Such laughter.

She drew back behind her sunglasses
listening past the voices
across the slap of incoming living waves
far, far out
to where the sky joined the water
straining to find her way
beyond the curtain.

Her eyes tired.
Her chest tightened
from pleading breath.
A deep sigh for relief.
No use.
Not now.

She returned to her search.
But close by to this world.
Noting with care each man
that came within her sight.

That, too, would not work.
They all looked the same.
No matter the size,
the shape
of the body
the chin
the nose.
No matter the color of hair
the eyes, when she could tell.
Even the color of skin.

No other door
would open today.

The aloneness.
The hopelessness.
They wrapped themselves around her.

She wanted to jump to her feet.
To cry out in her loudest voice.
Scream.

"Look at me.
Notice me.
My man is dead."

Instead
tears dripped
wetting the dark glasses.
She turned onto her stomach
to protect her grief
her isolation
to search for safety.

A Thought On A Dry Day

The drinking drunk
Sauntered on the plain
Soaked up the sun
Outwrestled tigers
Roared away lions
Defended the damsel
 Cried
 Died
Shouted at shadows
 Grace

Thanksgiving Day

The snow sparkles as it flutters
 down on unexpected
 quiet streets

Too early for feigned joy

Shivers announce the desolation
 of a day alone
 for solitary strollers

All There Is To Know

Aging eyes fondle dreams
caress the magic
of a world that came
and the one to come.

Burgeoning hosts of forever
temper hallways of despair
with odes to turtledoves
and remembered cries
of love and laughter
amidst the sadness
of what could not be.

Breeding circuits
whisper sage reminders
of a builder's court
and all that's holy.

As the Chinese lady
all the fashion
feeds the pigeons.

Swinging Single

The lollypop froze
to his puckered lips
as he muscled his way
toward his fair love's frame.

May You Live to 120

That blond-haired boy
on blond-haired shoulders
his blond-haired brother
holding
daddy's hand
while blond-haired mother
walks beside
smiling.

What a picture book array!

Football heroes
drunken bums
one a preacher
one a con
accountants
lawyers
salesmen??

Father, mother
holding hands
together
--with another--
as grandchild chortles
--or all alone.
Memories of
jumps for joy
sorrowful falls
--but just how far?

I wish you love
happiness
long life.

But
what meaning
have my wishes?

It happened one day

In all her loveliness
she looks into my eyes
smiling
pushing aside her flashing blond hair
from a wistful wind
that swells her full skirt
and rests gently at her side.

I touch her face
in response to the tale of
the cares of the day.

She presses my hand
to her warm cheek
chuckles
to show
the cares have flown away
and because of me.

It had been an unexpected meeting
in a later summer sun
my tattoo lion
soaking up courage
for the assault
on another day.

A gift she called it
this encounter
"Let's not be strangers."

A long past day
it might have been.

But on this summer day
better "strangers."

Too late to be a father.
Too old to be a daughter.

Bronx Dharma

Spindles pop
furrows curve
caps rust in heavy streets.

Wild-hearted
martian screams
of woes
and make-believe
sprint
endlessly.

Glory be to who knows what
where yet to come
will recompense.

While lovers' nods
and sturdy hands
still save the day.

Alien Ground

I dropped to my knees
and scooped up my piece of earth.
It would have meant something
to my old man.
He would rub it
through his fingers.
It would bring a smile
a scowl
or a questioning eye.

To me
it meant nothing
but pain
loneliness.

A gray day
while the sun shines.

The sweet fresh air
sweet with
the smell of cow dung.

Lost in a foreign world
one I wish I owned
it seemed so simple.

Quiet
but for the winds
an occasional bird.
Solitude
to the initiated.

Thoughts On A Busy Day

Hard on the core of a suffering sea
an otter floated and considered
the turbulence of the moment.

Bored
he was not,
disturbed
he was,
but not certain
whether he should be.

Under and over
the swells
made him ponder
and he questioned
the sky
moving too quickly
for him to make out
the answer.

But it must have an answer.

Isn't there
always an answer?
to everything
with a question?

Enough
enough
for one day.

He blinked at the sky
showed it was all okay
he'd figure it out
when he had more time
some rainy day.

A roll around
and stirred his coat
he cuddled up
warmed
to be afloat.

Up, Up and Away

mumblings

moving feet

bags slapping against thighs

strident chattering

nondescript musical sounds

sneaking into the background

this waiting room

in this busy airport

is so very silent

Right On!

That Giant of a Woman

Can't possibly run

With men Her size.

God meant Her

As a playground

For little guys like me.

Thanks to all the people who worked to make
this publication a reality.



Art Direction
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