

Struggling with Words

Poetry and prose in what I hope is English



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(Title page: Reading a poem
at the Budapest Bardroom.)

Introduction

English is my second language, not my mother tongue. This means that I can never know if my use of the language is correct or not. To make my life even more difficult, I learned and practiced my elementary English not in England but in the US, so even my pronunciation has become different, which may make my rhymes rather clumsy. I may use English words but my ears have remained Hungarian.

On the other hand, being a foreigner may be an advantage: I can discover words and meanings native speakers rarely realize, since they learn the language in the real world, without thinking about the original meaning of the words used. I have a feeling that the multiple possible meanings of everyday words and phrases can be better discovered by foreigners.

Take my pieces as school papers, no matter how old I am. And be my teacher, correct what is wrong, and send me your suggestions. (My personal e-mail address is: mandygabor@yahoo.com.) Foreign adults always remain students, no matter how old they are.

My poems are often superficial, they play with words. But a few poems may go deeper. The selection is rather liberal. In the early 2000s there was a literary club in Hungary: the Budapest Bardroom. I participated and even had some success, since most of the audience were Hungarians, and they understood my limited vocabulary more than the really good poems of native English

speakers from the US, the UK or Australia. My advice to you is: skip what is low quality. This is mainly student stuff. Even when the student is old.

During the years I had an opportunity to write lyrics to my own melodies. This literary genre is peculiar: the melody helps to endure the bumps in the text. (This is especially true with my bad rhymes. I hope the reader and listener will be more forgiving.) On the other hand, the melody may highlight the point and make the jokes more obvious. I have tried to publish these songs on free music sites and on YouTube but it is not easy. Since I do not perform, only could sing with the accompaniment of a cheap keyboard, the listener should have a great imagination to enjoy what he or she should really hear. (Some of these melodies can be found on YouTube.)

I have also written a few pieces of prose. It is even more difficult for a foreigner. To do that you must feel the *soul* of the language. A few superficial jokes are not enough. Some of these are shorter variants of well known fairy tales. My wisecracks (more solemnly put: aphorisms) are translations of the Hungarian originals. I hope some of them may make you smile.

So, have a taste of all this. Carefully, bit by bit. And forgive what needs to be forgiven.

Poetry

The Words

The birds. The clouds. The sky.
A disappointment. A sigh.
Two lovers. An argument.
"That's not what I meant."
The loneliness. A divorce case.
A bottle of wine. A sad face.
A pocket without money.
A broken mirror. Me.
And whatever happens.
Questions, answers, questions.

(This is not a poem, just words to use.
You write the poem
with the ones you choose.)

Like

What are you like?
The type you like.
Well, I guess.

What kind of guy?
A kind kind of guy.
More or less.

Date

(from a female archeologist)

I've got enough men to date.
More than 300 to this date.
O Lord,
this guy is 50,000 years old!
I hate
that I'm always late.

Broke

I've lost my money at poker.
I almost had a stroke!
I used to be a broker,
but now I'm simply broke.

In Search of

You want Mr. Right, I see.
Well, that's not me.
I don't like excesses,
and already have three exes.
They are enough.
I'm in search of
a woman who is average
but doesn't want a marriage,
a woman whose will is strong
but who doesn't want a fight.
To you I'm Mr. Wrong.
Right?

Lady Pumpkin

Her head is a pumpkin, big and smiley,
her eyes are plums, her hair: macaroni,
her lips are strawberries, red and sweet,
and she has sugar-cookie feet.
Her fingers are brown like French fries,
she has two big sausage-arms.
Her breasts are big loaves of bread,
her navel is an orange, my mouth is wet.
She has aroused my appetite,
I want to have a taste, a bite.
I'm falling in love with her,
but she does not seem to care.
(Well, what would you expect of a poster
for the Agricultural Fair?)

The Philosopher

I think therefore I am.
I am therefore I stink.
I don't give it a damn.
People tolerate everything.
Just don't bother.
Buy me a beer or two,
and I'll make a philosopher
out of you.

Gang Rape

Four friends, a poet each,
were hanging out on a street.

A beautiful lady walked by,
and there came a fourfold sigh.

The same night, in a jerky rhythm,
four love-poems were written.

For the lady there was no escape.
This was, *literally*, a gang rape.

But no one is hurt, nobody knows.
Nobody reads those poems.

The Dream

A businessman, greedy and mean,
once had a beautiful dream
about angels and fairies.
"I should try to sell this,"
he realized with a surprise.
"I will sell it for a good price."
I pass my dreams on to you without thinking.
Of course, my profit is next to nothing.

Freakish

Sometimes I write a little poem
in what I think is English.
I must admit, and that's the truth,
these little poems are rather freakish.

It's the poems who write themselves,
who pick a verb or a noun.
The words discuss freakish ideas
which, of course, are not my own.

And it's me who reads these poems first,
they make me sick, they make me weak.
I realize: these freakish poems
are turning me into a freak!

Spacewreck

Coming from outer space
I crash landed on this planet.
I'm trying to hide my face,
but I don't have the right gadget.
It's difficult to disguise
someone with three eyes,
and a nose like a carrot!

Fatal

My illness turned out fatal.
I feel now alright,
but when he stitched me together,
the poor doctor died.
When he started, he did not know
that one of us had to go.
The operation became
a zero-sum game.

On Dying

Everybody dies.
That's true. However,
I am a nobody.
The one who lives forever!

Halloween Visitor

The doorbell! Did you hear?
A strange visitor is here.
He looks like the Devil.
My God – he is real!
But what scares you to death
is that he is faceless.
He has a mirror in place
of his face.
And the mirror shows *you*.
A frightening view!
It is hard
to see your devilish part.

No kidding,
it is the scariest thing
you've ever seen.
Happy Halloween!

The Club of Masochists

In the club of masochists
you can drink coffee with cream,
but not the cream – you are whipped,
until you begin to scream.
And when you become a full member,
you get a beating you'll remember.
When you give him a tip
the waiter grabs the whip
and beats you until your skin turns blue:
"This is our way to say thank you."
And you can get free lashes –
membership has its privileges.

The Reward

"I have a plan that guarantees
that the world can live in peace.
I also know the answer:
how to cure cancer.
I'm working on a book," he says,
"about eternal happiness.
I have ideas, plenty!"
"Good," the doctor says gently.
"You will receive your reward
at the psychiatric ward."

Diets

If you take up the Hindu belief,
stop eating beef.

If you want to be a good Jew,
stop eating pork stew.

If you fast like an idiot,
stop eating – period.

The best choice is that of a cannibal.
For a cannibal even a cannibal is edible.

Hungry Fish

A hungry fish eats a lot,
catches the bait and gets caught,
wants more food and becomes food.
By desire we are fooled.
It depends on us, too, not only on fate
who can have dinner and who is on the plate.

Hospital

My new home is this hospital,
as much as a hospital a home is.
The hospital and I are inseparable,
I know all the doctors and nurses.
I've been in this room for a year,
the food is good, the treatment's fine,
I'm actually living here.
Living and dying at the same time.

Still Life

Confined to bed,
I'm looking at a painting
above my head:
an apple and a peach.
I no longer can eat.
I'm fainting.
Tomorrow I might be dead.
But to me that still life
is still life.

Man of the Year

You broke with me on New Year's Eve.
You have a new guy, I have to leave.
Let's drink champagne – or at least beer.
Hey, I was your Man of the Year!

Eve

My girlfriend just said good-bye.
Gone is the year of us together.
She did not tell me why.
I hope her next guy will be better.

I've lost a year and lost Marylou.
But life goes on, I believe.
Let's have a drink. Here's to you,
my new girlfriend, New Year's Eve!

Anniversary

Our marriage is history,
you are free and I am free.
But I don't want this day
to silently go away.
This is our wedding anniversary.
And I'm not your adversary.
You're gone but I still
love you, and I always will.
Parts of you and parts of me
are intermingled. Can't you see?
No use of discussing whose guilt.
We're behind the wall we've built.
But let's wave over the wall.
This is our day, after all.

Valentine's Day Note

To write a poem is hard.
I haven't bought a card.
I'll greet you anyway:
Happy Valentine's Day.
(Next year I'll buy a rose
and write a note in prose.)

Playing Poetry

I've found a word in the street.
It must have been dropped
from a manuscript of a real poet,
in a hurry to Parnassus.
What can I do with the poor guy?
I don't know.
I'm just playing, playing,
playing poetry with it,
trying to find a context
where it would feel happy,
so it may say to me in the end,
"thank you, I'm in my place now."

Others play doctor.
Others play house.
Others play soldiers.
I'm playing poetry
with words I find,
with words I can please.

Easter Eggs

Easter eggs are laid by hens,
but bunnies get the bigger profit.
Their paint-and-sell business now ends,
hens are to eliminate it.

They will paint and sell just fine,
and reduce the price. They can!
By taking over the production line
and cutting out the middleman.

St. Patrick's Day

It's St. Patrick's Day, my dear!
The fields are all green,
Today do not be mean.
Come, and let's have a beer.

Today have fun, do not be bored.
I drink but I'm a good Catholic,
so in the name of Saint Patrick,
let's make a baby – for the Lord.

Cogito

Reason is alien to man,
this is already shown.
I think therefore I am
alone.

Shrinking

I'm dreaming and in my dream
I'm losing my strength.
I call a doctor, he tries to help me,
but he is losing his strength, too.
Now my dream starts shrinking,
faster and faster,
until it disappears into nothing.
The trouble is, I'm still inside.

Don't Give Me

Don't give me words.
Words can lie.

Don't give me things.
Things can tie.

Don't give me money.
What is valuable for me
I can't buy.

Let us just sit down
and be quiet for a while.
And smile.

Memory

Houses can collapse,
the money can be gone,
your friends leave you
one by one.

Books can burn,
pictures fade,
every object meets
its own fate.

Even your body falls,
and you walk on all fours.

You have nothing left
but memory. It's yours.

And when it becomes impossible
to speak, to hear, to see,
in your head you can still play back
your favorite memory.

The Perfect Tense

I am young
and strong.
My job's not bad,
I'm moving ahead.
My house is good,
in a good neighborhood.
My wife is loving,
I need nothing.
My life is perfect.

Is this true? Yes.
Only in Past Tense.
Or in Past Perfect.

Options

What's going to destroy the Earth?
Nuclear war? A flood? An asteroid
we'll be unable to avoid?
A gigantic cosmic burst?

The question is tough.
My answer: all the above.
Whichever comes first.

Holidays

Most people's life is boring,
so they keep longing
for holidays,
for a change.
I enjoy what I do,
but I need holidays, too,
days of boredom and annoyance,
to keep my balance.

Complete Happiness

I have no unfulfilled desire.
Whatever was missed is forgotten.
I loved and was loved many times,
I keep all the good I've gotten.

I'm happy and I will be, forever,
no matter how shallow, no matter how thin.
The building has been completed,
and even its breakdown is built in.

My life is perfect, well balanced.
I am happier than most millionaires.
I keep writing poems. They amuse me.
And if no one reads them – who cares?

Memory Loss

Obviously, I ran up the stairs.
I was downstairs and now upstairs.
Everything's fine, except for one thing:
I cannot recall the *running*.
Those little movements, those leaps
are lost forever, it seems.

I hope I did not hurt anybody
in the moments missing from my memory.

The Visitor

An old man visits me every once in a while,
he would bring small gifts, look at me and smile.

He brought me eyeglasses the first time,
so that my eyesight should remain fine.

Then he came again, many years later,
his present was a beautiful denture.

Then I fell and had an excruciating pain,
he visited me with a handy-dandy cane.

Then he brought me a hearing aid and a walker,
our relationship became stronger and stronger.

There will be a time when he will grin and say,
"Look, I've got your ticket, one-way."

Varietas Delectat

I have found another job. You say
every place is bad in the same way.
I don't agree with this statement.
Every misery is different.
Let it be even worse than this,
I still appreciate the nuances.
Even if Hell, it's a different type.
And variety is a delight.

Like Clay Soldiers

I'm organizing the family pictures.
There are more and more faces looking at me
that I cannot identify
and I have no one to ask.
I feel like a frightened museum attendant,
it is now for me to decide
how long I stretch their existence.
But what's worth the face without the name,
without the context which in this album
somehow made them come together?
They are like the clay soldiers
of the Chinese Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi.
All we know about them is that once they lived,
had their own stories and destinies
but since then they have frozen
into the only real dimension:
time,
and with their never again changing
facial expressions

tell us
that they don't really care
what we are going to do with them.

On the Way to Moscow

In my dream I had a wife.

Yes, and we were about to fly to America. We had boarded the airplane, found our seats and settled down.

We'll go to Moscow first, my wife said. This is my surprise for our wedding anniversary.

The airplane was full of passengers, of all nations, ages, sexes and denominations.

We took off, had our first drinks and everything was great.

After a while I got up to stretch my legs, worked my way through the many rows, and got into a very large hall, in which an orchestra was playing.

Just like on Titanic, I thought. This must be a really big airplane.

On my left I noticed a door, I opened it, went through a long corridor, which was noisy, the walls trembling. The corridor led to a shabby staircase. I followed it, down and down, and ended up in a street.

I'm a tourist, on my way to Moscow, I said to the passers-by. Is it very far yet?

The people were staring at me and did not answer.

I turned around and hurried back, through the stairs, the corridor and the hall, looking for my seat.

Everything was gone, the orchestra, the passengers and the carry-on luggage, only the walls were there and some litter on the floor. What the hell is going on, I asked myself in a shock.

Then I realized that somehow
I had been left out of my own story
and got into another one that nobody was dreaming.

A Sheet of Paper

A blank sheet of paper.
Clean as I've never been.
From the day of my birth
I've been making stains –
words of desire, joy,
disappointment and protest.
They were the wrong words, I know now,
but I'm unable to correct them.
I cannot get rid of this mess.
My only hope is:
one day all these words
might make sense.

Virgin

A sheet of blank paper.
It's pure like a virgin.
I put my pen down.
It deserves a better writer.

Inspiration

Inspiration is like
sitting on the toilet
with your first coffee,
waiting and waiting.

If nothing comes out,
stand up,
do not waste the paper.

Short Ars Poetica

I think therefore I am.
I am therefore I think.
I think therefore I write.

I write short so that you may spend
more time thinking than reading.

Read my thoughts and think your own.

Quotations

Write your hearts out, my friends,
I keep quiet – no poetry.
Trees and hills and seas and lands
won't quote your words; their silence
is all quoted from me!

Randomly

Take words from a dictionary,
take words which are ordinary,
mix them well, with your eyes shut,
and read the sentence they make up.
It will tell you things you never thought,
and you might understand a lot.
Put together the pieces randomly,
and see what the words want you to see.

Cycle

The beginning is nothing.
It gives birth to desire.
The desire leads to action.
It calls for some reaction.
Everything burns in a fire.
The end, again, is nothing.

The Suicidal Fly

I've killed a fly. I'm sorry.
But you don't need to worry.
He had a suicidal instinct,
his wish was clear and distinct.
He flew into my mouth and eyes.
Anyone who does so, dies.
I believe in reincarnation,
and realized: this was his notion.
I struck, and he didn't defend.
His flyness came to an end.
He might have wanted to advance.
I helped him to have a chance.

Reincarnation

I am a devoted Hindu,
and don't care what your God will do.
But maybe through reincarnation
I'll become a born-again Christian.

Different Ways

A well-dressed man and I,
he with, I without a tie,
sat down in a buffet.

He had a ring of jade,
ate venison with marmalade,
in a very elegant way.

I ate strawberry,
I hate snobbery,
and I eat everything anyway.

My Father

My father, I was told,
was 27 years old
when he was killed in a war,
three weeks before
I was born, an orphan.
I think of him often.
As years fly and my life goes on and on,
I mourn my father as if he were my son.

Fatherland

My father defended the fatherland.
But where is the fatherland to defend?
From Hungary to Russia he went,
and was buried in a field at the end.
Now there are battle cries as before,
but I don't want another war.
It's quite simple to comprehend:
I miss the father, not the land.

Choices

If I had to choose between a man and a dog,
I would choose the dog.

If I had to choose between a man and a flower,
I would choose the flower.

If I had to choose between a man and a woman,
I would choose neither of them.

I believe that I would need nobody –
with a dog's loyalty and a flower's beauty.

Misunderstanding

For a long time I felt
that nobody understood me,
and didn't even try to understand.
Then I found somebody
who said nobody understood him.
I knew what he meant,
I might become his friend,
although our chances are slim.
We are two people understanding
misunderstanding.

Alter Ego

I know I have an alter ego,
I figured this out years ago.

He could be my twin brother –
we would complement each other.

When I'm sick, he is healthy,
when I'm broke, he makes money.

When I'm in trouble, he escapes.
Whatever I lose he takes.

I am poor, while he is rich.
We would make a good average.

I have a suspicion, and it hurts:
we may have been switched at birth!

Escher

You see birds becoming fish,
you see fish becoming frogs,
nothing is what it seems,
ups are downs and downs are ups.
You see a building, you enter,
you look around and have some doubt,
you are part of the picture,
but when you are in – you are out.

Modernism

Michelangelo saw the statue in the marble
and worked to remove the rest of the slab.
A modern sculptor works on the same principle,
but he discards the statue instead.
Although the statue is now invisible,
you can recreate it in your head.

Easter Horror

The Easter Bunny robbed the chicken.
Then a man devoured both of them.

There's no hallelujah. Tears of pain are shed.
All the Easter eggs are painted bloody red.

Heaven Restricted

If there is a Heaven and I get there,
I will still think it's not fair
that only humans are admitted.
Why is this place restricted,
like a bar or a hotel?
I won't go, I will tell
the doorkeeper
(Saint Peter),
"Thanks for the honor, but I'm not ready yet.
Can't leave my dog on the doorstep."

Soap Opera

1

This seems an interesting story
about a well-off family,
but, but
something is fishy,
and you don't know what.

2

The daughter is precious,
but the boyfriend suspicious.
What can he be up to?
He has strange features
and looks familiar to you.

3

A cowboy on horseback.
The husband has come back.
The episode ends. Not fair!
There is a secret somewhere.

11

The good man is dying,
and his wedding ring
is missing. What's the matter?
The wife is reading.
What can be in the letter?

12

The food – the grape!
Was it poison he ate?
What if the doctor is late?

27

Another man comes. Who is he?
How come he has the key?
Is this key the key?

43

God, this guy is a monster!
It is a lie that he loves her.
He already has a wife!
And why is he carrying a knife?

214

After a long vacation
I have a lot of confusion.
Something has changed in the show,
and I want to know.

225

These are different skies,
I don't remember these guys.
The story will get clear, I hope.
Oh no! This is another soap!

On the First of January

After the long party,
the exhausted guests are riding home
on the first subway train.
Their existence is on pilot flame.
Mouths shut, eyes shut.
The least possible energy consumed –
only enough to sneak through the back door
into a happy new year.

Connections

If you look at a puddle very closely,
you can see the sea in it.
In a randomly chosen moment of time
you will find eternity.
There is death in birth,
and there is birth in death.
I'm happy that I can be part
of the Universe.
Without my existence
even the world would be smaller
a tiny bit.

The China Fly

If Darwin were completely right
about the survival of the fittest,
sooner or later we would find
a very clever insect,
who would stay in a place
which is fly-swatter safe,
good for egg and for larva:
the most expensive china.

Wasted Years

I saw this on the cover of a book:
a mature woman, holding the hand of a boy,
he may be three or four years old.
A mother and her child. Walking.
She has a nice, round behind.

I would love to be that boy
so that I can be near this well-shaped thing.
But if I were the boy, I wouldn't even think of this.
How cruel life is!
Fifteen years of a man's life
is being wasted,
while the best pleasures are
within arm's reach.
Time flies,
and when he can fully grasp what he has lost,
he is already too old,
and he can only see such fine buttocks
on book covers.

Spiderman

I'm sitting in my web,
waiting for a sign of someone coming,
hoping that it will be *you*,
and you will become part of me
and us, part of the whole.
The web is not quivering.
Time is wearing on
and I'm sitting in this web,
becoming a prisoner
of my own unfulfilled desires.

Out-of-Body Experience

This body eats good food,
this body drinks good wine,

this body is in good mood,
but this body is not mine.

That body has a playmate,
and is voracious like a tiger.
That body is in good shape,
but it is not mine, either.

I thought you would let me in,
and we would unite in the best sense,
yet, what I got from you was nothin'
but this out-of-*your*-body experience.

Safe Sex

I bed a woman every night.
It's not consensual, I admit.
But they never fight,
they don't even resist.
I spot them on the street,
invite them, they come with me.
I give them good food as a treat,
to satisfy them orally.
Some of them are my colleagues.
All female coworkers, in fact.
I would give each what she needs.
They come and come, and don't regret.
This is going on and on,
and I hope it won't end ever.
I love women. They turn me on.
My bed is a source of pleasure.
My life is a sexual Odyssey,
I'm always ready and eager.

Of course, all this is fantasy.
But it is safe sex. Cheap. And legal.

Balance

I had been waiting long for your call,
but the telephone remained silent.
Then suddenly a bird started singing beautifully.
Somehow everything regains balance.

To Become

As links become the chain,
as drops become the rain,
as flames become the fire,
as voices become the choir,
as steps become a dance,
so can we,
you and me,
have our chance.

Come, baby, come.
It's time to become!

Hands

Hands can feel,
hands can heal,
hands can reach,

hands can teach,
hands can hold,
hands are bold,
hands can hug,
hands make love.

My hands are ready and willing
to do for you anything!

Drops

Drops of rain,
flakes of snow.
A million colors
of the rainbow.

Drop your skirt,
I'll give you a kiss.
A million flavors
on your lips.

Drops of sweat,
drops of honey.
A million synonyms
of ecstasy.

Ecstasy

I don't believe in the future.
I don't remember the past.
And the present is a no man's land,
fading away pretty fast.

I don't feel that I am here –
pain is the only evidence.
Hurt me, don't let me miss
the ecstasy of existence.

Old And Ugly

"I'm getting old and ugly,"
complained my wife.
I said, "Don't worry,
this is life.
Everything is balanced and right.
As you are losing your beauty,
so am I losing my eyesight."

Old Man, Old Wife

I look at my wife and see
how old I must be.
The muscles are loose, the skin is dry.
It won't be a surprise when I die.
Of the causes of death you have a variety
by the time you reach sixty.
But the eyes, yes, our eyes
flare up like sparking stars.
We still make love. Our minds, that is.
My memories with *her* memories.

Jealousy

There was a jealous guy,
who hired a private eye
to find out about his wife.
But there are surprises in life.
One day he came home early
and asked his wife, "Shirley,
who is this man in your bed?"
"Ask yourself," she said.
"You know him better than I.
He is your private eye.
To find out everything about me,
he had to look at me privately."

Valentine's Day Options

If we were living apart
Now I would send you a card.

If you felt me close enough
Now I would give you a hug.

But we're fighting, that's the truth.
How about a one-day truce?

Ice

Ice on the road,
ice in your heart.
I want to melt it,
but it is hard.

To the road I'll spray
salt from a can.
To you I will be
as sweet as I can.

The spring brings heat,
it makes me fade.
But in your heart still:
zero centigrade.

Holidays

Our marriage has given me a lot of pleasure,
which I want to commemorate in some way.
So what used to be our anniversary
has become my Thanksgiving Day.

Then there came the cracks,
we worked on the problem night and day.
Every day was rather hard,
we deserve a Labor Day.

During a dozen years
we survived a whole array
of fights, so we need
a break on Veterans Day.

But when fights turned into hostility
we had to divorce right away.
And the day of our divorce
has become Independence Day.

The problem is, you don't cooperate –
of which you have a history.
So I celebrate these holidays
independently.

Chapter

Sometimes I miss the East Coast,
the metal color of the Atlantic.
Now I live much more to the east,
and about America I'm not frantic.

I hated the cult of youth and success.
I was too old, I was a loser.
I tried and failed to become American.
My ties became looser and looser.

But I liked the city where we lived,
the neighbors, who smiled and said hi,
the squirrels jumping about in the park,
when the dog and I went by.

I loved the mountains in the fall,
I loved the rusty leaves the most.
And those Amish buggies on the road.
Boy, do I miss the East Coast!

It was an interesting chapter,
which I can re-read but not re-write.
The book is going to close soon,
as I'm getting ready for the night.

God's Jokes

Someone comes and someone goes,
life is a lottery game.
Someone gives and someone takes,
and there's no one to blame.
Once I win and once I lose,
once I'm totally broke.
What I've lost I might yet find –
all this is God's joke.

We fell in love when we lived apart,
but when we had a chance,
we got married – to consummate
our deeply rooted romance.
Alas, the marriage didn't work out,
and we shook off the yoke.
Now we are falling back in love!
That's just another joke.

When you think the road is smooth,
bang! – there's a pothole,
and it happens that your body
doesn't survive as a whole.
Reincarnation makes no sense
(I say this not to provoke).
Do we die just to be born again?
Must be another joke.

The Twilight Zone

The park was not dark yet,
but the light was already gone.
We were a little bit scared
in a land abandoned by the Sun.
The park was desolate –
just you and I alone.
And we loved each other there,
in the twilight zone.

It was not really sex,
but it was more than affection.
It was thirst and it was hunger,
it was desire without action.
We were in no man's land,
without flesh and without bone.
We kind of loved each other
in the twilight zone.

All this happened long ago,
I am not quite sure when.
This sort of thing also happens
to other women and men.
I vaguely remember the park,
its location is unknown.
But I see it. And I am happy –
in the twilight zone.

Orphans

I've lost my father and my mother.
You've lost your father and your mother.
We could stick together, two orphans,
against the rest of the world.
But I've lost you too.
I would visit your grave if you were dead.
But you are still alive.
So I visit all the places where you and I
were happy together
and leave there my flowers of respect,
to the memory of our dead love.

The Statue

She says I have hurt her.
She says I made her very sad.
She says everything is over.
She says I'm bad, bad, bad!

I'm standing with open arms:
a statue in the park.
I don't move when the morning comes,
I don't move when it gets dark.

I'm growing older and older,
with no movement and no word.
A bird's building a nest on my shoulder.
I wish *she* were that bird.

The Lay

By the time she agreed
and said maybe and said yes,
I was half-drunk and half-asleep,
and half-conscious at best.
There was a room and a bed too,
we did what we had to,
and after so much delay
I finally had a lay.
But who was it who had her
if I don't remember?

One Night, One Poem

I fell in love with you
and you let me in your bed.
It went fast, I thought,
and it might get better yet!

In the morning (my habit),
I wrote a poem of joy.
I felt happy and excited
like an adolescent boy.

You said, it was nice, but
nothing to talk about.
You gave me breakfast and a kiss
and you said, "Get out!"

One night and one poem,
now I understand,
all I had was nothing
but this one-poem stand.

I Don't Want to

I don't want to take you on a date,
I don't want to say you are great,
I don't want to buy you a drink,
I don't want to do anything,
I don't want to take you to bed,
I don't want to kiss your leg,
I don't want to lick your skin,
without and within,
I don't want to burry my head
I don't want to pull you aside,
I don't want to eat you alive,
I don't... but I must admit,
I quite often think of it.

Looking at Young Girls

I like to look at young girls.
Oh, don't worry, I know I'm an old man,
but while I'm looking at you
I believe I'm young myself.
Two innocent souls
playing,
enjoying the limitlessness of imagination...

When I'm back from my dream
it is as if I had heard all this
from my grandson.
And I'm happy for him.

Over Coffee

Over coffee you casually mentioned
that you had thrown out all my letters.
You've killed the innocent victims of our love
spreading forty years.
By abandoning your past you abandon
yourself, vanishing into the desert of non-
existence.
I won't go along.
One of us must survive.
I keep my memories.
In this sad way
I can still love you,
without which I would be
someone else.

Fashion Show

Girls walking on the runway
same height, same hairstyle, same poses
same emotionless look:
right
foot
left
foot
right
foot
left
foot
one after the other.

They don't think of their utility bills
they don't think of their lovers
they don't think of the music
they don't think,
they just walk, walk, walk
swinging their hips
in a premeditated way.

Women in the audience
dressed in last year's collection,
eager to spend,
eager to look updated.

I'm bored by the mechanics of it.
I think of oral sex with you.
No way – too many people around.
And it would be not fair
to steal the show.

On Flowers

I look at you and see a flower,
a sweet-smelling cup, slippery dewdrops.
I get excited, my heart goes bump bump.
We have an intelligent discourse
but even that time
I hear a beautiful music in the background. To
be a woman is an extraordinary thing – every
day is a holiday, the presence of a woman
makes my life an ongoing feast.

If you are female, it's enough,
everything else is an extra.
But it may not be pleasant to live in a vase
all the time,
and tolerate that anyone can sniff at you.
There may be flowers that are jealous
and don't want to share their beauty
with those whom they don't like.
If I were a flower,
I would give myself to all.
I would only try to avoid being abused,
crushed, or put into someone's ass
as a sick joke.
If I were planted on a grave, I would be sad,
but I would bloom in the braid of a bridesmaid.
I would like to be in the meadow the most.
We would play ménage à trois with bees.
Being a flower would only have one disadvantage:
I would not be able to jot down my poems
which would be born in my head,
no matter what.

Letting You Go

Now, when I'm making a commitment
to a woman who fits all my dreams,
I'm reviewing my sweet memories of you,
boxing them up, the little things
that made my life with you exciting,
your cute remarks, the misunderstandings,
the fights which
in retrospective only look nuisances,
child's remarks of naive lovers,
and which were all settled by a phrase,

"give me a number."
And on a scale of ten we never went below seven.
Or six – when we were extremely angry.
Oh, the private language of love!
The movements which only you and I knew
(some of these were plagiarized in X rated movies).
I'm boxing everything up,
boxing *you* up,
turning our life into museum pieces.
Look, don't touch.
Keep silent.
I let you go.
Hoping that in a next life
we will bounce into each other again.

A Dream Like That

I had crammed all my stuff
into a suitcase,
ready to go,
to move in with you.
But then I realized,
I'm too old to start a new life,
too sick to support you,
too poor to invest into the future.
So I decided to stay.
To live with you would have been an extra,
a beautiful dream.
It's all right.
We can only live once.
But everyone is eligible
to have a dream like that.

At the Crossroads

My life is ending.
I'm ready to start a new one.
Who shall I be?
A man?
A woman?
An inmate in a zoo?
A tree in the woods?
A pebble on the shore?
I don't care,
I'm at a crossroads,
I can move in any direction
at the moment.
Every single thing in the Universe
has equal right to exist.
Just give me a hint.
And make sure
that, whatever the place, whatever the time,
you and I co-exist.
I need you. That's why.

Fetishism

You are gone but your slippers are still here.
I see them every day, while putting on or taking off
my shoes. They are in front of my eyes.
They remind me of you.
As if I were a fetishist.
As if I bowed down just to worship those slippers.
But what I really do is wait
for those slippers to continue one day

in your ankles, feet, thighs and hips.
So that, when I look up, I see you
rising out of your slippers, full size,
and say:
Hi, I'm back.

God, how many times do I have to bow my head
for that?

The Last Kiss

Saliva is being mixed with tears.
The last kiss tastes so strange.
The last hug...
As if seen from the outside.
As if in a showcase.
As if in a museum.
The invisible bondage of love is helpless
against the powerful engines of a Boeing.

What is left is correspondence.
Then you stop writing –
too many things to write about!

And it also happens
that the airplane's destination is not a far-away country
but the past.
And you can only look at the old letters
with the sender's name
worn off from the envelope.

Related by Blood

A mosquito bit me.
The same mosquito bit you.
Within its body our blood is now mixed,
thus creating some intimate relationship.
How about doing the same
without the mosquito?

My Body, Your Body

I was sitting on the nudist beach,
among naked people.
Our body is what it is,
man and woman are for the most part
neuter in gender
on the nudist beach.

But now I'm sitting on my bed,
naked in the heat,
and I'm thinking of you
who will arrive and kindle my body,
will set me on fire,
and our love is going to be burning like a torch.
The fire will consume our bodies,
only leaving ashes behind.

And then we will get dressed decently.

In My Dream

In my dream I was in our old home,
I just visited you from where I live now.
You grew a little older but the house looked the same.
Suddenly the bell rang and you blushed and told me
you had to rent out a room upstairs, the rentors
were coming back from the city.
You couldn't make ends meet, you said,
it is hard to live alone.
You let the rentors in and left somewhere.
They were from Finland.
I have been to Finland before, I said to them,
and said Lahti, Helsinki and other cities' name.
They were friendly but for some reason they left, too.
And then our dog came up to me, extremely happy
to see me again. We started playing.
Do you still remember me? I said to the dog,
and he did the usual things when someone returned
after being away for a long time.
Do you remember me? Do you still love me?
Then slowly I fell back to here and now,
and I had to cry.
It was then that I finally realized
that different times don't mingle
and you'll never be able to make peace with me.

Like Broken Dolls

I have to pack again.
This time I'm not fleeing
from a bad marriage
or from a bad boss,

I'm simply emptying shelves and drawers
relocating stuff
from one room to another
on the eve of changing the floor.
Still, I cannot escape
from reliving the past.
I squeeze letters, books, old-time gifts
into carton boxes and heavy-duty plastic bags.
Now a love-letter, now a payroll document,
now a wrinkled photo of a happy moment.
They are parts of the same story.
Like broken dolls – arms, heads, feet
all over the place, mingled with one another.
My life. In pieces.
Will all this ever come together
to create a new, a better identity?

A Smile

A smile can make your day glow,
make your heart blossom,
it's so good to feel that you
are not alone, that someone cares about you,
and also that there is someone for you
to smile at.

And it is also good just to imagine all this.

Goldfish

You were angling for me for months,
and you are happy to have caught me.

But wait:

I caught you.

I wanted to be your secret goldfish.

Look:

I didn't even touch the bait.

Crossing Roads

We are walking on separate roads,
but they cross each other
in the beautiful eternity
of the moment.

If this is the price,
I'm willing to give up
my three-dimensional existence
to remain captured with you
on a snapshot,
frozen in happiness
forever.

Getting Closer

I checked New Jersey on the map
and decided to sell my flat
and buy one over the corner,
to move a little bit closer.
How many years will it take
to get to you at this rate?

A Fly on the Wall

I wanted to be a fly on the wall
when she is taking off all,
revealing her beauty to the mirror.
I wanted to be near.

And I was. I saw everything!
Alas, she thought I was bothering,
and reached for the fly-swatter.
I was unable to stop her.

Yes, there was a fly on the wall,
who died but had seen it all.

Fire

If you are the fire,
I want to be the firewood.
To be burnt by desire,
if I could burn, I would.
To jump into the flame,
to be consumed, I would go.
But it would be in vain,
I burned out long ago,
by other loves and marriages.
I am reduced to ashes.
Although I can't make it higher,
I like to watch, I do admire
your ever burning fire.

The Bee

If you were
a carnivorous flower,
I'd like to be
the bee.
Love makes me blind,
I want to get closer,
I want to be inside.
And would not mind
if you ate me
when everything's over.

The Day Is Ending

The day is ending. I'm going to sleep.
It's always risky, since you never know
what kind of nightmare's gonna make you weep
and when they deliver the final blow.

I have been on the hit list for some time,
waiting for the hitmen to show up.
(I'm not saying this only for the rhyme,
I know my life is going to be rough.)

I'm getting sleepy. No need for the pill.
I know I will survive the night, I will.
It doesn't matter what is there ahead.

But it would help if you were by my side,
then this would not be such a lonely ride,
and it would be *us* who would go to bed.

Wait

Wait,
don't leave yet.
For Heaven's sake,
don't do that.
You are right,
my fault, I know.
I regret.
But the night
is for fun.
Let me show.
Please!
All I want is to please.
to love you from head to toe.
Let's try another one.
Don't say no.
I want you to *come*,
not to go.

Forever

We will find each other
and live forever.
As the years go by,
we'll never say good-bye.
Let me sit on your bed,
holding your hand.
With all the fears gone,
we deserve some fun.
It's good to be happy
(I am already).
I'm sure this will be so.
But when and where and
how? I don't know.

The Dream Lover

I often dream about her,
my sweet dream lover,
who visits me and does things
about which only a man
dreams, a lonely man, that is –
she fulfils all wishes,
so that in the morning
my heart is recuperating.

When I die, oh sweet lady,
are you coming with me?

Jigsaw Puzzle

This woman has the eyes,
the other one has the lips,
a third one has the smiles,
another has the hips.

I'll put the pieces together,
I like to play with the set.
But wouldn't it be much better if
you just came back?

The Poetess

My friend is a poetess,
whose often makes me sleepless,
whose sensual poems arouse me.
I'm addicted to her poetry.
Her images and metaphores
go into my skin, my pores.
We make love almost every night.
All, of course, is in my mind.
I try to fight her spell – in vain,
my blood is rushing in the vein,
I feel whatever she writes about.

My friend, you're fucking my brain,
you're fucking my brain out!

Valentine's Day on the Internet

Valentine's Day is for lovers
and a day to be happy.
I'm happy to write you letters,
to me it really matters,
although you don't get the hard copy,
all this is electrony,
but to me you *all* are dear,
and on days when I don't hear
from you, I screeeam!
Please, stay with me, don't disappear
from my screen.

A Girlfriend on the Net

I have a girlfriend on the Net,
all is fine and good.
We talk freely about sex,
she makes me hard, I make her wet,
when we are in the mood.
But there are times when I regret
that ours is a virtual affair.
She's here in word, image and sound,
virtually we are bound,
but it is not fair
that on the Internet
touch, smell and flavor don't fare.

The Machine's Message

Don't use a mouse, use my joystick,
play games on me, I love every bit.
Put me closer to you, I am hot!
Didn't you know I am a *laptop*?
Don't write poems – write an epic.
I want to be part of it.
I put four bytes into every file:
76-79-86-69.
(I cannot write a poem, an ode –
these are *love* in ASCII code.)

My chip is aching for a date,
I'm willing to give you more affection.
When you turn me off, I can't wait
until the next session.

Upside Down

(to a lady in Australia)

You live as if in a mirror,
where right is left and left is right,
the clocks run counterclockwise.
When we have noon, you have midnight.

You live in an opposite world,
when we have autumn, you have spring.
When we have snow, you go to the beach.
You have the opposite of everything.

I visualize you upside down.
(People living there must like this.)
Oh, your thighs are strong to hug,
and your lips are wet to kiss!

A Couple

A married couple had a fight
about money – or whatever.
I saw them and thought, all right,
I won't get married ever.

My status is now unclear.
I have this woman I date,
but no rush, I will wait.
Why bother?
I'd rather
remain her
insignificant other.

Double Life
(a wife speaking)

When my husband died,
I realized
I did not know him at all.
He had lived behind a wall.
He had a double life,
with a son and another wife.
All this was irrelevant.
He was a loving husband
and a caring father
to our daughter.
He was the perfect match.
In bed he was not bad.
Always made me come.
Now I have become
one of the two widows.
My fellow-widow knows
what a fine man he was.
We should share our thoughts
and perhaps even our homes.
We are related to each other
by husband or by father.
Maybe this common loss,
against all odds,
will bring us together.

Busyguy

My husband was on a long trip,
I was alone, ready to cry.
But a friend of mine dropped a hint,
and then I met Busyguy.

My husband gave me a divorce,
he didn't even tell me why.
I was upset but, of course,
I already had Busyguy.

Then I dated other men,
who made love and left, good-bye.
I wasn't upset because, again,
I had good old Busyguy.

Never cheats and never fights,
I'm so happy I could fly.
I had pleasure many nights.
"My pleasure," says Busyguy.

Big Bang

It was this blast that started the Universe.
And matter then started to disperse.
If there are intelligent beings in any part,
we are getting more and more apart.
As if a big balloon were blown,
the diameter of the world has grown.
The stars were formed from the debris,
and they made up each galaxy.
And right in the epicentre,
in dark dark matter,
where you cannot see a thing,
God is sitting there –
alone and shivering.

Celestial Message

A line appeared in my dream.
It could be a message from God
for me to write a poem.
I'm afraid a better poet
should have dreamed it.

The Bethlehem Star

The three wise men looked up at the sky.
The star was moving quickly.
It has just broken the sound barrier.
Let's hurry, the wise men said
and quickened their pace,
with the gifts bumping in their hands.
Mary was about to nurse the baby.
She looked through the window and saw
the three tottering figures on the road.
Joseph rushed in nervously,
holding a gas mask.
The wise men were already on the threshold.
Suddenly they threw themselves to the ground.
The Scud missile hit with a huge detonation.
Then the child glanced up and said,
"Have no fear."

The Second Coming

Don't wait for the second coming of Jesus Christ.
Since ascending to Heaven,
He has been here several times.
Coming and going, unnoticed.
Looking.
If an unknown person asks you for shelter,
if a beggar reaches his hand for alms,
if a stray dog joins you,
He might be it.
Watch out how you talk.
Jesus will forgive your sins,
but you might not be able to forgive yourself.

Bugs

Did you know
that computer bugs were named after real bugs
messing around inside the wiring
of the first computer?
What if
there are bugs in the middle of the world
run by God?
Something went wrong, we all know,
but there's no one
who could debug the master code.
And through a careless security gap
a lethal virus might have easily got in.
It's called
The End.

Christmas Lights

I'm walking, taking delight
of the Christmas street lights,
enjoying the tiny girlands of lamps
of star, candle or reindeer shape
which signal – if not the birth of the Messiah
but that here is the time of joy.
All over the world
millions of colorful little lamps
are turned on, they consume
the output of several electric power stations.
Lamps flickering, dynamos rustling...

Such little lamps are lit up in humans as well,
and we can only hope
that in our hearts there will be no
blackout.

On Christianity

I'm not religious, only Christian.
Whatever I have I share with others –
first of all my wisdom
and my investment tips.
I try not to cause trouble to anyone
but if you look for trouble,
well, let it be your trouble.
I just can't comprehend that if
I must love my neighbour,
why I mustn't love my neighbour's wife.
I don't believe in the original sin,
and if Jesus taught us to be merciful,

God also could have shown mercy to Adam and Eve,
who only wanted to know
what the hell was going on
and what they had been born into.
Oh Lord, our life on earth is so short,
at least let us enjoy it a little.

The Right Train

At a train station the loudspeaker warned us,
"make sure that you get on the right train."
The destination of a train can be known for sure,
but whether or not it is the right train –
this you can determine only afterwards.
Did you arrive to your sweetheart,
to your friends,
to a place which is good for your development?
Or, on the contrary,
did you run into a crowded bus,
into the arms of a conman,
did a thief take your belongings?
And who knows what good is not going to happen
because you got to this train, to this very train?
Who is able to recognize
the right train,
the right partner,
the right life?
We make our decisions under suggestions from above.
Whether my life is going to be an example
or God is going to set an example with it –
this is none of my business after all.

Weather Skits

Now it's a blizzard, now a hail,
now the sky can't be bluer.
God must be bored. But, definitely,
He has a good sense of humor.

I Will Not Pray

Oh Lord, I will not pray.
If you want to, you help me anyway.
Besides, you know exactly
what I would say.

Oh Lord, everyone complains,
but in the world your wisdom reigns.
What's the use of words? Oh Lord,
let's not play games.

I'm a sinner, I admit.
But I sin just a little bit.
Others sin more and are better off.
This isn't fair, is it?

You go your way, I go my way,
I'll do my best every day.
You hear me? You hear me.
I will not pray.

Between Two Dates

Between two dates,
running after buses
and down on the escalator,
working myself through the wall of people,
or hopping between lines,
just to squeeze more pleasure out of my life,
I could be killed easily in an accident.
I don't know God's plans
but I must admit
that this would be a reasonable,
if not happy,
ending.

God

I don't believe in God,
but I believe in his absence.
God should exist but doesn't,
the world lacks its essence.
Nothing can be whole.
God's is a missing role.
God is a black hole.

Smoke

We were sitting in a café at the airport.
My nose was irritated by the smoke
coming from other tables.
But then I realized that cigarette smoke
is the younger brother of the clouds,

and the clouds are the doorsteps to Heaven.
So by breathing in this smoke
I'm already in my way.
Everything is arranged, just wait,
you will be taken care of.

Resurrection

We'll die but we'll resurrect.
Those who have been the best
will end up in God's lap.
But I was always bad,
I'm not going to make it.
Meet me at the other exit.

Boredom

In the beginning God was bored.
He created a world to play with.
But because he knows everything
what was, is and will be,
He is getting bored again.

I am not bored.
I am fed up.

It may be God, under my skin,
wanting to pick a fight,
making me to write an angry poem
just to punish.

Just out of boredom.

On God and Creation

Look at an insect. How intricate!
A rock. It's hard like cement.
Look at a sperm. How frisky!
It may become a president!

Look at a mountain. It's really big!
Look at the sea. It's wet!
The sky. It goes through the ceiling.
This is the tallest thing you can get.

All this came from God's workshop.
Everything is well designed.
But what I really appreciate
it's a woman's round behind.

Round objects feel good to touch,
they are perfect, they are blessed.
Come, baby, turn, and I'll say to God,
"This piece of creation is your best."

A Bearded Old Man

I saw a bearded old man, rather odd...
"It's Him," I said. "Oh my God!"

"Raise, my child," said the man.
"I'm not who you think I am."

Do good deeds, love your neighbour,
fear the Lord, it's a lifesaver.

But don't praise me, it's not right.
(You can buy me a beer, if you like.)
I'm just a God lookalike."

Man and Nature

In the beginning there was the forest.
Man came, cut down trees
and built a marvellous palace
to his own glory.
Then wars came, fires broke out,
the people died,
the palace collapsed.
Nature slowly took courage,
peeked in through the doors and windows,
grasses and trees sowed their seeds,
tendrils and creepers wriggled in,
they got a foothold in the ruins.

Man builds fast and destroys fast.
Nature progresses slowly,
but whatever she builds will stay long.
The palace crumbles to dust
in the embrace of the forest.
Life repossesses what was taken away,
and prevails.

Until man comes again,
cuts down the trees
to build factories,
shopping centres,
military barracks.

For a short while.

Signals from Space

Huge telescopes and antenna systems
are scanning the sky,
eager to pick up intelligent signals
from space,
from other intelligent species.
Meanwhile right here
there are six billion radio stations
broadcasting.
And nobody listens.

On Globalization

I'm treated like an object
in a government project.
Or putting it more properly:
as the World Bank's property.
The objectives are all noble –
but it's poverty
which becomes global.

The Bridge

Watch the bridge.
Cars are rushing from left to right.
Cars are rushing from right to left.
How many people miss something
which is on the other side!
Wouldn't it be better for them
to stay home
and swap lives?

TV Logic

If there is no marketing strategy,
there are no TV commercials.

If there are no TV commercials,
there is no TV.

If there is no TV,
there is no life.

Ask God
to create a better world.

Flower Children

The kids of the kids of the kids of our kids
will probably be half flower, half human.
They will breath out oxygen,
while walking in the fields
of chemical plants.
Their farm animals will be
genetically engineered carbon-dioxide eaters.
And the dolphins,
well, the dolphins will develop gills
and will never come to the surface.

Don't blame them.

Spaceship

I wake up in the middle of the night,
but the green and red lights
of the TV, the VCR, the CD player
and the surge protector
calm me down.
Everything is normal
and according to the plan.
My dark room, this little spaceship,
is silently moving
closer and closer
to its unknown destination.
Back to sleep,
let me dream about the beautiful planets
I will never see.

21st Century

The Earth has become a global village.
What matters is not you but your image.
You can die, just leave your money in the bank,
they will take care of it until the next Big Bang.

Companies are merged, assets are concentrated.
Your heart and brain have become outdated.
Humans are replaced by hardware and software.
You wouldn't find love anymore, anywhere.

The money machine is working just fine.
The clock is ticking, but there is no time.
Are we heading for a big collapse? Yes.
We have reached the critical mass of mess.

Observations

I observe Nature
and publish my observations
in scholarly books.

Nature also observes me.
But she does not publish anything,
just watches, listens
... and remembers.

Easter in Eastern Europe

In the former Yugoslavia
and the former Soviet Union
(and Hungary is no less "Christian")
the Passion-play is still going on,
killing new Christs in feasts of crucifixion.
We have more and more sins,
and less and less redemption.

Airplanes

And the airplanes started taking off.
What is this strange noise?
Civilization is back.
What civilization?
And how far back?

Lost and Found

In a train station, on a bench,
I found a stray plastic bag,
with a beach towel and a toy car in it –
a piece of the life of an unknown family.
This bag now connects two realities,
and it may very well be
that it remained there on purpose,
to get to know new people.
At this moment it is jailed:
I submitted it to the stationmaster.
If no one comes to claim it,
it is going to be transferred
to a central prison facility,
and after doing time there,
perhaps it will be given to the homeless.
As for the toy car, I wouldn't be surprised
if the stationmaster took it home
to his child –
which is against the rules,
but it might please
the little car.

That Moment

The day was flowing slowly,
things were happening as usual.
But suddenly I had to stop.
There and then,
at that privileged moment,
everything came together –
the sky,

the clouds,
the birds,
the trees,
the houses,
the breeze,
the memory of a good lunch
and a pretty girl smiling...

This was years ago.

Since then Earth has moved away,
in its predetermined path.

But I'm still there.

Welcome Home

When you are back from a trip,
your adventures get blurred.
After a while you don't even know
if it was you
or you have just seen it in a movie.
You page through your notes
as if you were looking into the secrets
of someone else.
Pictures, letters, hotel stickers,
a familiar smell.
You try to put together the pieces of the puzzle,
but something is always missing.
Never mind. It's amazing.
It's amazing how a decades' long relationship
can fit into one simple sentence.

And there is enough room
for all your happy moments
in a few cubic inches in the brain.

Now it's over.
Lay down, in the fetal position.
Welcome back from the big journey.
Welcome back into the world of memories.
Welcome home.

Half Asleep

At twilight, half asleep yet,
I was talking with someone about something.
I clearly remember saying, "And I'm sure that..."
But then I went totally blank.
I don't even remember what we were talking about.
So I'm not so sure anymore.

Neighbors

It is easy to love humankind as a whole,
but to love your next door neighbors is difficult.
Probably this is why I'm becoming
more and more of a misanthrope.

Unluckily
all my neighbors are human.
Or at least humanoid.

Happiness 101

(an introductory course)

Appreciate your good night's sleep.
Appreciate your new shiny day.
Appreciate your mind working.
Appreciate your body working.
Appreciate your opportunity of working.
Appreciate your companions.
Appreciate the food, the water, the air,
which make you ready
for another day of appreciation.

Instead of just being around,
live, and make yourself happy.
Make your friends happy.
And make your enemies happy
(for extra credits).

Happiness is not given.
Happiness is created.
And believe me,
to create your happiness is more fun
than it was for God
to create the world.

Recycling

This poem is recycled.
We should not throw out rhymes.
They will come to our aid
in poetically deprived times.

What's new is being created
in forms old, tried and proven,
the reader and the text to read
are getting interwoven.

God's written the Book of Life.
The story will be ended
when the book and you are finished.
(No pun is intended.)

December the 31st

No more procrastination!
Don't you realize
that you have just a few hours
to realize
last year's
new year's
resolution?

Words in a Book

Letters, words and sentences
are raining upon me –
questions, exclamations,
but most of the time just letters,
punctuation marks without any meaning.
It would be nice to page through all this.
But it is frustrating to live inside a book
knowing
that the neighboring words
will never change.

The Hobo

I'm running away from destiny,
jumping trains from town to town.
I'm looking for a decent place
I could call a home of my own.

I know I saw you long ago,
while clattering through a train station.
I went on, I just couldn't believe
that you were my true destination.

Baby, you're a flash in the sky,
I haven't seen such ever since.
I'm running away from happiness,
which is one of the greatest sins.

If and when I find a home,
I know I will look for you,
and I'll look for that old train station –
of which there are only a few.

The train is running day and night,
the railway ties make my rhythm.
The sun rises, the sun goes down,
and the meaning of life is still hidden.

Somebody's Crying

I hear a cry, somebody's crying,
I hear a cry, somebody's hurt.
What shall I do to tell the victim
that this cry has been heard?

I hear, I hear somebody's crying,
I've called the cops, they should come soon.
No one is here, just the three of us.
And the woods. And the Moon.

It may be a child, may be a woman.
Someone is crying in despair.
What can I do? I can do nothing
from my house, from my wheelchair.

Now the cry stops, the woods are silent,
I hope the victim will survive somehow.
Where are the cops? I hope they are coming,
they should be here by now.

Harmony

Harmony –
between the world and me,
between light and shadow,
between fast and slow,
between sunshine and rain,
between pleasure and pain,
between good and bad,
between merry and sad,
between hopes and fears,
between smiles and tears,
between past and present,
between received and sent.

Harmony –
when there's no need to worry,

when faith makes peace with science,
when words turn into silence.
When the moment is splendid,
and time is suspended.

Jenny

Jenny was the brightest and the most beautiful,
but most of the time she was bored in school.
Her mama and papa were rather wise,
but Jenny was more attracted to guys.
She wanted to become independent,
and left the college for a boyfriend.
Well, Jenny was bright and the boyfriend dumb,
she picked another one, and another one.
And now she has two fatherless babies.
I don't envy her life, poor old Jenny's.
She could teach at a college and receive a raise,
had she not been born with the most beautiful face.

Naturalization

My friend came from happy America
and for some obscure reason
she decided to become a Hungarian citizen.
She applied,
she was questioned,
she was ridiculed,
she was told, are you crazy,
she was told to come back tomorrow
with more documents
to prove that you are who you say you are

and that you were born in the first place,
she was told can't you read the sign,
today we are not open,
and the desk officer is on vacation anyway,
she was told to keep silent,
buy more government stamps
at an office closed at the moment.
She was frustrated,
she was humiliated,
she was pushed,
she was crying,
she felt like the scum of the earth,
she wanted to go back.
I said, what's the matter, friend,
this was just the naturalization process,
to make you a real Hungarian.
Congratulations, you passed.

The Memory Game

I live in the present, I think.
But it takes a fragment of a second for my brain
to comprehend what comes through my eyes.
So what I see now must have happened before.
Just like the light of a remote star – by the time
it reaches us, everything is outdated and it is possible
that the star is already gone.
We live in the past, then, we can only know
what happened before.
But we know a lot. I remember what happened
yesterday, a week ago or when I was ten.
And more than that. I can recall other people's stories,
some of them so vivid that I feel
they may have happened to me.

I can go back as far as Babylon or the great pyramids.
Was it I who watched the charriot race
between Ben Hur and Massala
or did I see it in a movie?
Was it I who was hiding from the Nazis
or fighting in Vietnam
or jumping about on the Moon?
These bits of memory are stored in the same place
in my head
and as I get older
they can be more and more mixed up.
And more than that. In my dreams
I experience things which happen
I don't know where and don't know when.
When I dream about my dead mother,
is it my extended life or is it hers?
And more than that. If everything is information
I cannot be sure
that it is anybody's life and not just data transferred
from directory to directory,
from brain to brain,
within a supercomputer
run by a mad God.

Multiplying

The other day I had an idea.
I went to a cathedral in Budapest,
which is a popular place for tourists.
I was standing in front of the gate,
at the top of the steps.
People came with cameras in their hands,
taking photos of the cathedral
and, naturally, of me.

In this way I multiplied myself.
When these people go home
and show their friends where they have been,
I will get to Germany, to the U.S., China, Japan,
and to other countries of the world,
in hundreds and hundreds of copies.
The friends will see the cathedral,
but they might not see me,
as they would not notice
a crack in the wall.

You Kill

You kill all the cattle to get rid of mad cow disease.
You kill all the birds to be safe from bird flu.
You kill, obviously, all the ticks who are dangerous –
and all the rats and all the mosquitos
and whatever makes your life uncomfortable.
But why don't you just kill yourself
and leave the world alone?

When I Retire

When I retire
all my dreams will come true.
I will read a lot, think a lot
and will write a book about my discoveries.

But before anything else,
I will turn the time off;
it always frustrated me.

Day in and day out
I will sit at the playground,
and roll the ball back to the kids.
In the zoo I imagine
how it feels to be
a chimpanzee, a rhinoceros or a bear.
I will have a cheap bus ticket
and will ride all around the city,
I will find out why each street is called so.
I will help the tourists who got lost.
I will go with them, and when they say
thank you very much, I will say,
that's okay, I had things to do here anyway.

From the corner of my eye
I will glance at the girls,
and will buy flowers for the old ladies.
I will help out at a soup kitchen,
and at times I will do a little begging myself.
When I retire,
I will live not out of duty
but for the fun of it.
I will live, live, live!

And in all this happiness
I might not even notice
that I'm already dead.

At the Bottom of the Sea

The animals at the bottom of the sea
are not interested in the weather forecast.

Their peace is not disturbed
by the disturbances of the surface.

Every once in a while
a battleship sunk or an airplane shot down
spirals down to their place.

But even they become silent
and feel ashamed.

Darkness

The room is so dark
that I don't even know if I'm in.
I remember the light
and remember me,
but I don't remember
how I lost them.
I'm locked up in the darkness
of my blind
mind.

The Question and the Answer

The other day I remembered my mother.
I thought of a street where, in my childhood,
a big house was being built.
I wanted to know what had been there before.
How sad – she isn't around anymore,
she would know for sure.
But then I realized
that there is no one I could share
this information with, no one interested.
The answer was buried with my mother,
and with me
the question is going to be buried, too.

Old Books

Don't throw out old books.
They are not dead, just sleeping.
Like the bacterial organism
that was left incidentally on the Moon
by American astronauts.
The next crew found it alive,
waiting for a nurturing environment.
Old books are waiting, too,
they are waiting patiently
so that they can live again
in someone's mind.
Don't throw out old books.
They are not dead, just sleeping
and dreaming about readers.

Unexpectedly

I was looking at a beautiful woman,
and started writing this poem of her
when I got a text message from a friend
saying there was a bank robbery
in the street I live, the tv showed our building.
Life affects poetry in unexpected ways.
These bank robbers unexpectedly got into my poem
where they don't belong.
And this poem now will end unexpectedly,
with the words of
money, blood, yelling and terror.
Meanwhile
the beautiful woman is slowly fading away.

Maximum Security

They will take away all your books and notes.
They will take your cloths and all your possessions.
They will put you onto a tray and run you through
a brain-screening machine.
They just can't afford to let in
any uncleanliness
and any subversive idea
to Heaven.

The Friends Saying Good-bye

First the words said good-bye.
They came to my mind without any reason,
and I don't even remember
when I used them the last time.
It happens more and more often
that I consult the dictionaries
and, just like people in a museum or in a zoo,
I take delight in the unknown words.

Then the names began to go,
the names and faces
of fellow students and fellow workers,
the names of tools very often used in the past.
(I try to put them to every imaginable situations
and it happens that other words might help me out.)

Now my friends are saying good-bye.
They still drop in to see me in my dreams,
paying respect. Almost every night I dream
about one or another.
There must be some explanation
for this big crowd in my dreams.
I used to think that they were inviting me,
reminding me that we would reunite soon.
Socrates said that in death
our bodies are to be washed away
and the clean souls go on to Hades
to meet other souls.
I used to believe that but
now I'm afraid. What if
we are not going to recognize each other?

The Gates

Visiting my mother's grave
I bow my head.
She is not there,
I know. I'm not looking for her.
I'm looking for my memories.
I'm looking for the gate
to the reality
where she and I used to exist together,
where we would go to places,
to houses
which now can be found also
on the other side
of those gates.

Black Hole

People radiate love.
Swarming words, swarming thoughts.
But there are less and less responses from outside.
The system is doing fine by itself.
The experiences and impressions are absorbed,
no words come out.
There are no words,
just a great balance.
And I become silent.
I become invisible.
I am everything already – the earth, the air,
light and darkness.

But if I am everything, is there any need for *me*?

Blog Entry

Nothing particular, the flow of my life
went on by one day. I ran into a friend
with whom I had shared a few years
and we told each other that
nothing particular happened,
the flow of life went on,
and neither of us knew
that one day we would run into each other
and we would recall those years and this,
by itself insignificant, event
would be worth writing about,
for it happens less and less often
that one runs into an old friend.
And there are no new friends any more.

Journeys Half Asleep

Half asleep I get to unknown places,
I meet unknown people,
have long conversations with them.
But I never know ahead of time
where I would go.
My brain may give me these surprise trips
to compensate me for the fact
that I can only have one life.

Expiration

They are willing to sell you more.
Supergoods from the superstore!
More malls today than yesterday.
They want your money every way.
This is the consumers' paradise.
Make sure you buy the merchandise.
When there's a break, it's commercial.
When there's advice, it's financial.
You think it's music? A theme song!
Mozart, Bach? They all were wrong!
The money comes, the money goes.
Dump the old ones, buy new clothes.
Trade in your old car and buy
the latest model, don't be shy.

But before you buy, you'd better wait.
Look at the expiration date.
You will see: despite the boom,
the whole world is to expire soon.

Last Chance

(Parajd, salt mine, 150 feet below)

If, after a nuclear disaster,
you were the last woman on Earth
and I were the last man,
then still, from our mating
humankind could be re-born.
But I doubt I would waste my seed
on that.

Salt Crystals

Bacteria dead for 250 million years
have been found in salt crystals.
They used to splash about
in the primordial ocean,
not even dreaming of
flying dragons,
dinosaurs
or the Loch Ness Monster.
Then life on Earth was
completely wiped out by a disaster.
These guys survived
by pretending they were dead.
They locked themselves up in these salt crystals,
at the bottom of the Dead Sea.
And now, when put into culture medium,
they came back to life,
began to multiply happily,
as if these 250 million years
had been just a bad dream.

Find for me a salt crystal like that.

The Pile

There was a pile of carton boxes in my room
(leftover from a redecoration project).
I didn't think of them, and they were fine,
sitting on top of one another in silence,
waiting for something to happen.
And today, quite suddenly,
the whole pile collapsed.

Who knows what's going on inside ignored objects?
There must be internal tensions,
working slowly, unnoticeably.
And there comes a point of no more.
How long may I be sitting
on my own personal pile
of conflicts,
frustrations
and never finished projects
before it all comes down?

Going Blind

I know I'll go blind some day,
so I began to memorize
what I see, to remember
what colour and what size,
whatever is a delight
to my eyes.

I take a walk and look around
and check out every tree,
every bird in the sky,
the roads, the mountains, the sea,
the smoke, the clouds, the rainbow,
the woods, the creeks, the snow,
and last but not least,
your body, my greatest feast,
so that I can see
during the big eclipse
with my hands and lips.

Test Drive

I've been testing this life kind of thing
for sixty-one years today.
It runs smoothly in cruise mode
but at sharp turns it makes me pray.
I survived every accident,
with a few scratches here and there.
This thing is reliable
and is worth every penny, I swear.
I've got used to its feel.
Yeah, I think I will have it,
only ... I'm running out
of credit.

Day In, Day Out

Day in, day out
I discover some abnormality on me –
now a new wart,
now a folliculitis
or arthralgia.
Day in, day out I witness
life's silent evacuation.
This is normal.
Death is already on its way,
and my body is also making preparations.
It would be embarrassing
to go away in good health.
Everything is being coordinated with precision.
Like a space rendezvous.

This is just to comfort myself.
If something is unavoidable,
it had better be perfect.

The average life expectancy
of Hungarian males is 67 years.
If I manage to hold out until then,
I'm not going to make statistics worse.

The Last Day

My last day at work...
Like in an embassy building under siege,
I'm getting rid of documents in a hurry.
Out go the slips of paper with scribbled notes,
the memory aids,
the plastic penholder,
the old newspapers I preserved for some reason,
everything that said
this place belonged to me.

What will be left?
A desk depersonalized,
a computer without the e-mail messages
which used to connect it to other computers,
a line crossed out in the office phone directory,
a nametag without the name.
Some kind of emptiness.
And a password
never to be issued again.

Enough

My girlfriend broke with me.
I hurt someone who won't forgive me.
On top of that, my wallet has been stolen.
I grab the remote
and turn myself off.
No more bad news today.

Dreams

When asleep, we are defenseless.
But we are willing to take this risk.
Our arms are intertwined,
our legs are intertwined,
and under the blanket of a shared consciousness,
we continue each other's dreams.

Broken

One day you have a friend,
the next day the relationship is broken.
And your computer breaks,
and your telephone line breaks,
on the same day,
all by coincidence.
Your life falls apart.
Don't worry.
Don't be the whole.
Be the parts.
And make up a stronger you.

The Secret of Happiness

The secret of happiness is good timing.
You must wait for the right moment,
when you have just buried the dead,
stopped digging and now enjoy
the relief in your arms.

This moment of satisfaction
should be frozen as long as possible,
before the machine guns start again,
and you will be the one
to be buried.

Remote Control

With the remote control in hand
you hop from movie to movie.
The stories are messed up,
but they did not make any sense
to begin with.

Life is like television.

Except, *you* are on,
and God keeps switching the channels.

A Vocabulary of Life

out, doubt, hunger, anger,
scare, care, toy, joy,
raised, praised, curious, furious,
teacher, preacher, knowledge, college,
ambition, frustration, wage, rage,
sex, mess, merry, marry,
more, bore, run, bum,
old, cold, hope, nope,
sick, shit, cry, die,
why

Lyrics

Lesson One

Mr. Brown is an Englishman
in London, in a big city.

Mr. Fekete lives in Budapest,
which is also big and pretty.

Mr. Fekete goes to London,
where he has something to do.

Mr. Brown meets him at the airport,
and says, "How do you do."

The Browns like to have guests,
they are happy and friendly.

Mr. Fekete gives them gifts:
salami and brandy.

In the morning Mr. Brown goes to work,
but his wife stays all day at home.

Mrs. Brown and Mr. Fekete
are in the house alone.

Mrs. Brown drinks the brandy,
and says to the guest, "I like you."

See the end of the story
next week, in Lesson Two.

Beautiful City

We have a beautiful city,
we have beautiful hills,
we have beautiful buildings
and beautiful other things.

Our city is Budapest,
in Europe we are the best.
The tourists are well dressed –
and never mind the rest.

We have a beautiful city,
we have a beautiful river.
Go up to the top of a hill,
and you won't see the litter.

Our city is Budapest,
in Europe we are the best.
The nicest sites are shown to the guest –
and never mind the rest.

Our leaders are wealthy,
our leaders are good.
I'm sure they would share their wealth
with us if they could.

Our city is Budapest,
in Europe we are the best.
Okay, what I mean is the East –
and never mind the West.

The Time Machine

Once a guy made a time machine,
jumped in and said, "Go."

He wanted to see how people lived
a thousand years ago.

Now it was no longer a dream,
he did travel back in time,
He set the date on the dial,
and everything went just fine.

He lands in the year 1,000 –
inside the Viking war.
He gets scared, looks at the machine,
but doesn't know what it's for.

What if someone jumps ahead
1,000 years? It could be done.
The time machine would get there,
but the Earth could be gone.

So, if you have a time machine,
think twice before you roam.
You can travel either way –
but you might not come home.

To Make a Difference

As a child I was good,
I always did what I could,
but goodness did not make any difference.

At school I studied hard,
read the books day and night,
but my studies did not make any difference.

At work I did my best,
but, as you probably guessed,
my work did not make any difference.

Now I give up finally.
What could be wrong with me?
My whole life did not make any difference!

I sat down to write these lines
on failure – just to realize:
even this poem will not make any difference.

Junkyard Blues

My car is a lemon.
My computer is junk.
My assets are garbage.
My life stinks like a skunk.
My food is leftover
(and you would consider it trash).
I don't qualify for a loan,
and I have less and less cash.
I am a total failure

in every regard.
But baby, you are a queen!
I mean,
in my junkyard.

To Make a Long Story Short

At school I was a bad boy,
the baddest of them all.
The principal called in my parents,
they were not happy at all.

They tried to teach me manners,
they tried to teach me reason.
To make a long story short,
I ended up in prison.

After I got out I met a girl.
She was nice but was a whore.
I started drinkin' and she left me,
and I just drank even more.

There was this guy whom I tried to kill,
he beat me up beyond repair.
To make a long story short,
I ended up in a wheelchair.

And I talked bad and swore a lot,
and of God I often made fun.
The minister came and said, "Calm down,
your day will soon come,
don't enrage the only being

who could help you and treat you well."
To make a long story short,
I ended up in Hell.

To Make a Short Story Long

To make a long story short:
Jane, I'm in love. O Lord!
You know I always liked you,
and you liked me, too.

When I asked, you said, "all right."
It turned out to be the perfect night.
When we went to bed with nothing on,
you noticed that I was turned on.

And when we had oral sex,
I had a fantastic climax.
When we were back on the street,
I still had a faster heart beat.

I am not just one of those men.
When we parted, I said, "see you again."
Because this is love, you know,
and I'm not gonna let you go.

My feelings are so strong –
let's make a short story long.
Don't let me just long, long.
Let's make our story long, long.

Here We Go Again

There was a little girl,
she lived over the sea,
but her family brought her
to my town, and she met me.

The two of us were done,
it was love at first sight.
A week later she was gone,
I cried day and night.

I had loved girls before,
I had lost all of them.
So I felt more and more
like "here we go again,
here we go again, my god,
here we go again."

A few years later –
already at college –,
I met another girl,
of the same image.

We started dating,
and ended up in bed.
But love was fading,
and finally it was dead.

Yes, this girl ran away,
ran away with other men,
and I said, "hey,
here we go again,
here we go again, I see,
here we go again."

A couple of years went by,
the first girl and I re-met.
She had another guy,
but still loved me, she said.

We had a nice rendezvous.
She said, "now that you're found,
I have a new interest in you.
How about a second round?"

I didn't give a quick answer,
I counted slowly to ten,
but I wanted to have her,
I said, "here we go again,
here we go again, my dear,
here we go again."

We got married, but the marriage
did not last very long.
We just could not manage
our differences, which were strong.

I divorced and remarried,
and I had other lovers,
my true feelings remained buried,
as I chose others and others.

I was damned to lose my head,
every now and then,
so it was often that I said,
"here we go again,
here we go again, o Lord,
here we go again."

Last E-mail

This is the last e-mail you will get.
To keep in touch we will have better ways.
I can't wait until we go to bed
and stay there, stay there for days.

This is the last e-mail you will get,
I can't wait until you open the door.
Can't wait until I have you back.
I can't wait, can't wait anymore.

This is the last e-mail you will get.
This was long enough to be alone.
I'll teach you a lesson you'll never forget:
there's no place, no place like home.

One Hug

When our guests had gone
I said, let's have some fun.
May I give you a hug?
She said, "A hug? All right,
but just one.
All right, but just one."

So I started hugging her

. . . and forty minutes later
she said, "This was a good one.
This was a good one! "

One Body

In the course of intercourse
two bodies merge into one.
Pleasure travels back and forth,
this one body has lots of fun.

An octopus: four arms, for legs,
which hugs itself to feel more,
in the deep sea of sex
hugs and kisses galore.

This one body has no gender
or, rather, it has two,
part of him and part of her,
and part of Heaven, too.

Homeless

When you lose your home,
you also lose a homeland.
You are everywhere at home,
but you can't invite any friend.

Your grocery store is the garbage bin,
your office is the street.
You live on ice, which is thin,
and you don't have anyone to meet.

You don't have a job, you don't have a place,
you don't have anything.
What would you say to the polite phrase:
"What do you do for a living?"

Well, I try
not to die,
that's what I do for a living.
I try, I try
not to die,
and that's what I do for a living.

I'm still better off than a jackal.
He finds dead meat, but doesn't find bread.
Sometimes I find some food, but that's all,
and newspapers are my bed.

To ask people is no longer a bother,
and I do, from time to time.
Hi, how'ya doin', brother,
can you spare a dime?

I don't have a job, I don't have a place,
I don't have anything.
But my face is a happy face,
and the morning finds me grinning.

I try, I try
not to die,
that's what I do for a living.
I try, I try
not to die,
and that's all I can do for a living.

I Love You

I tell you you are not perfect,
you don't resemble a star.
Your measurements are not quite right,
from a beauty queen you are far.

But I love you, I love you
just the way you are.
I love you, I love you
just the way you are.

When a week ago I picked you up
in a bar, in a bar,
you drank too much and we made love
in the car, in the car.

You got ashamed but I love you
just the way you are.
I love you, I love you
just the way you are.

It would be nice to get together
before I die, before I die.
I want a marriage - and you are married,
but not to the right guy.

Still I love you, I love you
just the way you are.
I love you, I love you
just the way you are.

Irene

I must admit,
I can't stand it
that you are so far away, Irene.
I don't know what this is,
but I miss your kisses
and I miss your food, Irene.

Irene, Irene,
I haven't seen,
I haven't seen you for so long.
Without any warning,
you left me in a morning,
you didn't even say, "so long."

I was your lover,
you've found another,
and now you are satisfied, Irene.
It's okay, I say,
have it your way,
have it with anyone, Irene.

Irene, Irene,
I miss you, darlin',
I am a total wreck.
I live alone,
but call me on the phone
before you wanna move back.

Don't Worry

She said I was likeable
but she had no energy.
To fool around was impossible,
so she would not fool with me.

She took care of her mother,
she took care of her cat.
She couldn't tolerate any other
being in her flat.

That's all right, baby,
that's all right.
I feel fine, baby,
day and night.
I will find, baby,
another nice lady.
Don't worry
about me,
that's all right.

She said I was a nice guy
from head to toe,
she wanted to say good-bye,
but just could not do so.

She said she would be
so sorry, so sorry,
but she did not want to love me
just out of sympathy.

That's all right, baby,
that's all right.
I feel fine, baby,

day and night.
I will find, baby,
another nice lady.
Don't worry
about me,
that's all right.

Don't feel sorry, baby,
I let you go.
Never say "maybe,"
when you really mean "no."

We get hurts and sores,
life isn't always nice,
and our greatest hopes
just won't materialize.

That's all right, baby,
that's all right.
I feel fine, baby,
day and night.
I will find, baby,
another nice lady.
Don't worry
about me,
that's all right.

When God Created Woman

When God created woman,
He must have been in a very good mood.
He took a rib from the man –
a spare part, which wasn't used.
The rib was thin like a bone,

He added fat – and beauty was born,
and man had fun, as much as he could!
When God created woman,
He must have been in a very good mood.

When God created woman,
it must have been Creation's best.
There was joy in Heaven,
everybody admired the newest guest.
Because she had a double breast,
a nice behind, and all the rest
that was needed for womanhood.
When God created woman,
He must have been in a very good mood.

Baby, think of this for a minute.
I'm so lucky that you are mine.
We have a nice body, and you're in it.
And see? All was God's design.
And that's why men – young and old –
say "Hallelujah" and "Praise the Lord."
We think of Him with gratitude.
When God created woman,
He must have been in a very good mood.

(Feminist say it's not polite
to imply that women are only beauties.
I agree, most of them are bright,
but even the dumb ones have the goodies.
Most women are smart and neat,
some are bitchy, some are sweet.
But women make our world so good –
because when God created woman,
He *was* in a very good mood!)

I'd Like to Find Someone

I'd like to find someone
before I die,
who would tell me nice things,
but never a lie.
I would like to find
an honest person.
Is there one?
Of that I'm not certain.

I want to find someone
who wants to find me.
It's not important
whether it's she or he.
Be it a good woman
or a good guy.
I'd like to find someone
before I die.

I'd like to find someone
who knows my heart,
who knows that I'm good –
if not very smart.
People say it's Jesus
and that He would care.
The thing is, I don't see Him
anywhere.

Let Them Have a Chance

Don't kill a cow
with an unborn calf in the womb.
Don't kill a bird
with unhatched eggs in the nest.
Don't kill a poet
with unwritten words in the head.
Let them do
what they do best.

Let'em have a chance,
let'em have a chance
for a future you don't destroy.
Let'em have a chance,
let'em have a chance,
to enrich our life with joy.

Don't kill a tree,
which might give you shadow.
Don't kill a river
abounding in fish.
Don't kill a baby,
who might become your doctor.
Let them live
as they wish.

Let'em have a chance,
let'em have a chance
for a future you don't destroy.
Let'em have a chance,
let'em have a chance,
to enrich our life with joy.

Blessings

My wife does not like
the poems I write.
She says they are too sad.
"Count your blessings instead."

All right. There are things that are good.
I have eyes. At the moment. Knock on wood.

I have a mouth – but
I'd better keep it shut.

I have a brain – second rate,
but it has ideas to contemplate.

I have a nose to smell
things that already smell.

I have a good enough stomach,
but there are things I can't stomach.

I'm not addicted to nicotine,
stopped smoking at thirteen.

My attitude is positive.
I'm not H.I.V. positive.

I don't have cancer, not a bit -
at least I don't know of it.

My boss is perfect (he believes).
Plus, I have a relief when he leaves.

So my life is better than I thought.
I do have blessings. A lot.

And... I have a wife. She's never wrong.
(But I'll sing about her in another song.)

Cherchez la Femme

When I was a little baby,
it all started with my mom.
I instinctively knew the rule:
Cherchez la femme.

When I was an adolescent boy,
girls made up my Universe.
I was in and out of love,
and it could have been worse.

When I first had sex,
it came like a Big Bang!
I kept running and running,
like a wild mustang.

Then I got married and divorced
and married again.
From one woman I ran
to another woman.

And now I'm old and tired,
nothing but a bum.
What I need is a good-hearted nurse:
Cherchez la femme.

Cherchez la femme,
cherchez la femme.
Without them
nothing is done
under the Sun.

Cherchez la femme,
S'il vous plait, madame.
Without you I am done,
forever gone.

Letter to Dara

O Dara, little Dara-ling,
I'm writing this when you are not even two.
Your Irish daddy and American mommy
do for you everything they can do.

I cannot do for you anything
from Hungary, a continent away,
but I hope you'll fish this letter out
from the ocean of the Internet one day.

And little Dara, sweet Dara-ling,
by hearing my voice you will understand
that there's an old man who loves you, too,
and you can grab his virtual hand.

I loved your grandmother but we divorced,
and now I feel lonely, very lonely,
because I lost with this divorce
a lot of people, a whole family.

I lost her brothers, I lost her son,
I lost her daughter (who is your mommy),
and I'm going to lose you, little Dara,
unless you find this letter and find me.

I hope I will be still around
when you find a nice guy to marry,
and I might be invited to your wedding
as your Hungarian ex-step-grand-daddy.

Heaven and Earth

I know, I know what a fine young lady
you are, you are, still improving greatly.
You are, aren't you, an angel, my goodness?
Too proud, perhaps, but practic'ly spotless.

I know I'm not similarly worthy.
You are divine, and I'm rather earthly.
But Heaven and Earth are complete together.
Come live with me for good – and for better!

Bank-Bank-Bank

There was a lot of money in the
bank-bank-bank.
The robbers rushed in and shouted and went
bang-bang-bang!
The police came and blocked the block,
but the bad guys all fled in a truck,
and suddenly there was less money in the
bank-bank-bank.

There was a man-hunt in the mountains:
bang-bang-bang!
Finally the police captured the whole
band-band-band.
The trial went on for a decade,
and after the lawyers' bills were paid,
there was even less money in the
bank-bank-bank.

The Chemistry of Sudden Changes

Who knows when, who knows why?
Perhaps an unexpected smile,
perhaps a meeting of the eyes?
You suddenly realize
that this is love and you are chosen.

Who knows when, who knows why?
Perhaps an unwanted smile,
perhaps an ill-worded compliment,
easy to misunderstand,
and the air around you is frozen.

Who knows, who understands all this:
the chemistry of sudden changes?

My Only Chance

I am poor – this is certain.
But this is how life is.
My only chance to have a fortune
is to eat fortune cookies.

I will never become richer,
no matter how much I wish.
My only chance to deal with silver
is to breed silverfish.

I'm getting really old,
and losing all my power.
My only chance to purchase gold
is to pay for golden shower.

I'm not a capitalist. I'm a rebel.
It was the wrong road I went.
My only chance to own capital
is capital punishment.

I will get the Earth at the end,
the Earth and I will have a date.
I'll be buried in the sand –
my only real estate.

The Sex Life of Zombies

We both have important jobs,
and get tired by the end of the day.
A few words are exchanged over supper,
but that's all we can manage to say.

We may be drinking coffee or tea,
but our eyes are already half-shut.
We may be watching TV,
but don't know exactly what.

I am a complete zombie,
and you are also a zombie, I bet.
We are just walking around,
until we fall into bed.

But our bodies have their own needs,
they have desires, no doubt.
They wake up when we fall asleep,
when the lights go out.

I'd like to install a secret camera,
in our bed, on the wall or in a chair.
I'd just love to see our bodies
have fun when we are not there.

I Know

I know who you are and I know who you will be.
I know what is waiting for you and me.
I know the future as I know the past.
I know we'll be happy, but it won't last.
Life is heading for a mess.
This is my best guess.

I know who I am and I know who I can't be.
I know, someone's out to get me.
I know you will go, you will say good-bye.
I know what will happen, but I don't know why.
Life is heading for a mess.
This is my best guess.

I lost the game long ago,
I have nothing to know.

Lost the game long ago.
I'm a loser, I know.

Free Will

I am convinced, oh Lord,
that we don't have free will.
We are on your chessboard,
and what you want us to do, we will.

I'm an actor in the play you direct.
I was born, I live and will die.
I commit the crimes you suggest,
I sin and I don't know why.

I help others, and I'm the most surprised,
as if someone lived inside my chest.
You plan all my actions, disguised,
and you know what I will do next.

You give me the words I write,
I find other words which would fit.
I hold the lamp, but I don't see the light.
I write a poem, but I don't understand it.

You know who will rise, who will descend.
You know all the jokes and all the punchlines.
You know how each story will end.
Don't you find this boring sometimes?

Why Would I Read the Newspapers?

Why would I read the newspapers?
They are full of lies.
Why would I read the business news?
On who is on the rise?
Why would I read the culture page?
On the latest stars?
Do I need this knowledge? No.
I don't want to know.

Why would I want to see people?
They don't want to see me.
Why would I want to hear their jokes?
They are not so funny.
Why would I want to dress up?
I don't have company.
Why can't I just stay at home?
Please leave me alone.

I feel I am from somewhere,
from outer space.
My spaceship was shipwrecked.
Here I don't find my place.
I don't find my true friends,
my real soul-mates.
I've been here just for too long,
where I don't belong.

There is another civilization
you might want to see.
People there are intelligent,
and learn how to be happy.
There is a better world somewhere.
One must be.

There is a world like that somewhere –
somewhere inside *me*.

The Story

The Big Bang was the introduction –
good enough to grab attention.
Our story began with the birth
of a life-nurturing Earth.

Every chapter introduced a new thing,
as life was slowly developing –
from bacteria to flowers,
from reptiles to tigers,
from dinosaurs to birds,
from howls to words.
Man appeared – and soon enough
the plot got screwed up.
Even God did not expect what man did,
and the story unhappily ended.

The song you have just heard
was the afterworld.

Who Understands?

Monkeys are smart, but who understands
why man is also, and even more?
Man emerged through the use of his hands,
but he has just two and monkeys have four!

With four hands monkeys haven't worked ever,
just played, and anything could be a toy.
Man builds bombs, because he is clever,
and builds cathedrals that bombs destroy.

Monkeys eat bananas from the tree,
they live in a bush and call it a home.
They don't say, "to be or not to be,"
but they leave other animals alone.

Man makes a mess out of everything,
he kills when he is not even hungry.
He wastes the resources of being.
Who is smart then – man or monkey?

There are great minds but we ignore them,
and follow dictators who tell us lies.
We just sing the national anthem
and go to war till everyone dies.

When all is said and done –
man feels sad but remains dumb.

Way of Life

At seven in the morning I jump out of bed,
run downstairs to the kitchen to toast my bread.
I gobble down the food and run through the paper,
then run upstairs and jump into the shower.

I wash and shave and dry my hair,
and try to find some clean underwear.
I jump into my shoes and my business suit,
and give my wife a kiss en route.

I drive to work, still not fully awake,
work like a zombie until my coffee break.
I fulfill all my duties to perfection,
carrying out my job description.

I collect the kids at the end of the day,
"How was school?" I ask. "Okay," they say.
On our way home we stop to rent a movie,
which, I'm sure, I don't want to see.

My darling wife has made supper,
the kids make faces but I think it's super.
I help with the dishes at the end, and...
I watch the news with a beer in my hand.

In bed we have arguments, a few,
then make love like decent people do.
We are not very passionate – that's all right.
But I wake up in the middle of the night.

I get up and look in the mirror.
Ask myself a question which is sincere:
What am I doing here?
What the hell am I doing here?

What a Waste

What a waste you are,
what a waste, what a waste,
drinking liquor in a bar,
ruinin' you taste.

You waste your intelligence
by watching TV,
listening to nonsense
and not listening to me.

I could teach you a lot
about human dignity,
you have never-never thought
of things you could learn from me.

I could teach you how to love
and how to handle a guy,
I could teach you how to be tough
and how to say good-bye.

What a waste it is
to watch the Jerry Springer Show
and read women's magazines,
not knowing "why," only "how."

What a waste of money
was to go to college
and on to university
if you don't use your knowledge.

It was not all waste, of course,
but it's not enough, you will see.
You just need an extra course,
you need to listen to me.

What a waste, what a waste
what a waste it will be,
what a waste, what a waste,
if you don't listen to me!

To Share

Would you want to share a chat with me
about everything in life,
about literature or history –
wouldn't it be nice?

Would you want to share a meal with me
in a cosy little place?
We could order all the fruits of the sea
and pile them up on our plates.

Would you want to share a drink with me,
from the best bottle of wine?
We could both feel happy and free,
and the rest would be smooth and fine.

Would you want to share a night with me,
just the two of us alone?
We would make a good company –
and you would never go home.

Perhaps you want this but you don't dare,
you might have a different plan, too.
But still, I would just love to share
a chat, a meal, a drink, and a night with you.
Yes, I would love to share
a chat, a meal, a drink, and a life with you.

In Deep Trouble

At six in the morning
I feel like yawning,
but I have to get up to start the day.

Coffee's on the table
to make me able
to go to work and earn my pay.

I think I am ready,
but my head is heavy,
and around ten I need a rest.

I'm drowsy a little bit
and I can't help it,
I'm falling asleep at my desk.

The boss comes and says, "Hey,
in the middle of the day,
you're not working, I can tell.

I know it's not easy,
but make yourself busy,
this is an office, not a hotel.

I don't argue, the boss is right.
He's not firing me, but he might.
I'm in trouble – deep, deep, deep,
but all I want is: sleep, sleep, sleep.

I Know

I know who you are,
and I know who you will be.
I know what is waiting
for you and me.

I know the future,
as I know the past.
I know we'll be happy,
but it won't last.

Life is heading for a mess, anyway.
This is a bad day.

I know who I am,
and I know who I can't be.
I know who is out
to get me.

I know you will go,
you will say good-bye.
I know what will happen,
but I don't know why.

Life is heading for a mess, anyway.
This is a bad day.

I lost the game long ago,
I have nothing to know.
Lost the game long ago,
I'm a loser, I know.

The End of the World

Our world, I must say,
has come to an end.
It doesn't seem that way,
but it's true, my friend.

It seems to work, it looks alive,
as if nothing were bad,
but if you look, you realize
it's dead, all dead.

You drive on the turnpike
for miles and miles,
there are no humans to find,
but cars and cars.

You go to the store
to do some shopping.
You can walk through the door
but you can touch nothing.

The government is busy as always,
there are new taxes,
but no one pays, no one obeys,
people don't exist.

Look at the world. Something is missing.
Look at the world, which is lost.
There comes a blow, a gust of wind,
and everything falls apart.

Nobody else seems to know,
or nobody wants to say:
there will be no tomorrow,
the world ended today.

Lies Don't Solve the Problem

When the situation becomes touchy,
everybody tells a little lie.

It's not a crime, just a sin for which
God doesn't make you die.

You feel you get away with it,
but this is not quite true.
The truth is gonna be found out,
and it will strike back at you.

Lies don't solve the problem,
and that's the problem, you see.
So please, please, darling,
never lie to me.

I know I cheated on you once,
but what is the big deal?
We know this kind of wound would
easily heal.

When you asked me about it,
I said it was just a flirt,
and indeed it soon ended.
This sort of thing shouldn't hurt.

Lies don't solve the problem,
and that's the problem, you see.
So please, please, darling,
never lie to me.

You stayed home because you were sick,
you said it was real bad.

I brought you fruit as a little surprise.
What a big surprise I had!

You were in bed, lying,
with a guy I didn't know,
and it did not help that his name was
Doctor So-and-So.

Lies don't solve the problem,
and that's the problem, you see.
So please, please, darling,
never lie to me.

Don't Screw It Up, Baby

We have been a problem couple,
we have had a lot of trouble,
but the relationship has improved somehow.
Don't screw it up, baby,
don't screw it up now.

You were unfaithful a bit,
and I was unfaithful, I admit,
but we matched like a bull and a cow.
Don't screw it up, baby,
don't screw it up now.

You smile a lot, it's a good sign.,
we're gonna have a child (I hope it's mine).
and I will be a good daddy anyhow.
Don't screw it up, baby,
don't screw it up now.

Julia Psycho

Julia, Julia Psycho,
she is my girlfriend.
I thought this love affair
would never end.
But now she broke with me.
What can I say?
Julia, Julia Psycho,
thank you anyway.

Julia, for Heaven's sake,
Julia, give me a break.

Julia is a drama queen,
maybe the best.
Playing, always playing,
never having a rest.
I love her and she knows that,
this is part of the game.
Julia, Julia Psycho –
remember the name.

Julia, for Heaven's sake,
Julia, give me a break.

Julia, Julia Psycho –
she doesn't mean it.
Julia changes her mind
every minute.
I must take tranquilizers
for each date.
Julia should see a doctor
before it's too late.

Julia, for Heaven's sake,
Julia, give me a break.

Just A Story

My father often beat me up.
I thought I had a lack of luck.
But although it hurt me,
now it is just a story,
it is just a story.

Once I got lost in a forest,
and I was scared to death.
The wind was wild and stormy.
Now it is just a story,
it's just another story.

I had a girl to take to bed.
"Not before marriage," she said.
I was painfully horny.
Now it is just a story,
it's just another story.

I had a fight with my wife,
in which she pulled the knife,
and I had reasons to worry.
Now it is just a story,
it's just another story.

I had a mean boss at work.
He was a real real jerk.
When I suffered he was in his glory.

Now it is just a story,
it's just another story.

When I finally die,
my friends say good-bye.
They will be sad and sorry...
and I'll become a story,
just another story.

Open Your Eyes

Open your eyes, what a nice morning!
Open your ears, hear the birds.
Open your eyes, look at the people,
smile at them, it works.

Open your life, have the right partner.
Open your door. Hey, it's me.
Open yourself, you can't be hiding
from your destiny.

Love is a special thing,
Love is a beautiful thing.
Love is a special thing,
Love is a beautiful thing.

Open your mind, enjoy these wonders.
Everything is yours and mine.
Don't hesitate, don't be discouraged,
the future will be fine.

Give me your time, let's live together.
Give me your heart, mine is yours.

Let's start a life, let us start living,
Let's end this discourse.

Love is a special thing,
Love is a beautiful thing.
Love is a special thing,
Love is a beautiful thing.

The President and Me

The guy who wants to get elected
has a difficult job to do.
While he shakes a lot of hands,
I'd rather shake the bed with you.

Suppose he ends up in the White House,
his every step the media'll cover.
But no one knows, at least we hope,
what's going on under our cover.

The President would discuss issues,
like the increasing numbers of crime.
We are interested in numbers –
but our number is sixty-nine.

When there is a worldwide crisis,
the President goes to the Oval Office,
And I go to you, my sweetheart
to check out your oval orifice.

If a nuclear war breaks out,
the President will fight to win it.

While he makes the big decisions,
we make love to our last minute.

Instinct

I love you still, no matter what,
whether you love me back or not.
It's like an instinct of a dog,
who believes his owner is a god.

I love you still, or even more,
no matter what happened before.
It's like an instinct, or is fate:
I was born to be your mate.

You are the sunshine, you are the breeze,
you are the oxygen I breath,
you are the fountain of love,
you're everything good I can think of.

I love you still, but you are far,
you've run away with a younger guy.
It's like an instinct to hold on
and to do what still can be done.

I love you today, I will tomorrow,
at times of happiness and of sorrow,
It's like an instinct. What can I do?
I cannot help loving you.

You are the sunshine, you are the breeze,
you are the oxygen I breath,

you are the fountain of love,
you're everything good I can think of.

Tough One

I saw a guy in a back alley.
In his hand there was a gun.
I wanted to ask him a question,
but instead, I decided to run.
Oh yeah, he was a tough one, a tough one.
He was a tough one, a tough one.

I had a romance with a woman,
the loveliest under the Sun.
We got married but later divorced.
Now our relationship is gone.
Oh, no, it was a tough one, a tough one.
It was a tough one, a tough one.

There was an opening at a firm.
The job was good, the pay handsome.
But my boss fired me and now
it's a jobless person that I've become.
My God, it is a tough one, a tough one.
It is a tough one, a tough one.

Why do you live, someone asked me,
give me a reason, just one.
I couldn't give him a good answer,
because there is none.
Yeah, yeah, this is a tough one, a tough one.
It is a tough one, a tough one.

The Worst

I saw a woman in a sexy dress.
I said something, and she said “yes.”
I thought, “Hey, this is gonna be fun.”
But the worst was yet to come.

She lived nearby, and took me home.
“Here,” she said, “we’ll be alone.”
She said, “I’ve made pacal*, have some.”
But the worst was yet to come.

She made the bed and looked at me.
“That’s my favorite place to be.”
The die was cast, the game had begun.
But the worst was yet to come.

I thought, “Okay, what the hell.
All is well that ends well”.
She said, “Young man, you are handsome.”
But the worst was yet to come.

We made love. And in the middle
I got tired. Just a little.
She said, “Don’t stop, I’m halfway done!”
But the worst was yet to come.

When it was over, I fell asleep,
and woke up to my watch’s beep.
The flat was empty. She was gone.
But the worst was yet to come.

* (Pacal is a disgusting Hungarian delicacy.)

The husband came and caught me there.
He was my boss. What a nightmare!
I couldn't speak. My tongue was numb.
And the worst *is* yet to come.

O When the Rivers
(on the pattern of When the Saints Go Marchin' In)

O when the rivers stopped running!
O when the rivers turned back!
That was the day, that was the day
when the world got off track.
There were the rivers
making the news,
and everyone was watching.
We were afraid it wasn't for nothing
that the rivers stopped running.

Where were you, baby,
when the news reached you?
Where were you, baby,
when you heard?
I was in the bathroom,
you know, you know,
and I thought it was so weird.

All right, you guys,
go on running
All right you guys,
it's over.
Let everyone do
what's expected,
and restore the order.

And so the rivers
went on running,
and this incident
was deleted
from the books
and from the papers,
so you won't find any word of it.

Just Playin'
(Introduction to my improvisation)

Life is a serious business,
everybody knows this.
You can be poor, you can be rich,
you can feel fine, you can get sick.
You can work hard and become tired,
you can get hired and get fired.
Like a bird you can fly
high in the sky,
and yes – you can die.

But life is also a game,
and I am always game,
I don't take everything seriously.
Who knows the real reality?
I don't even want to win.
But day out and day in
I feel like playin' –
just playin'...

You can listen to some of my songs on YouTube.
The link of the playlist is

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2p5Dppwg0q21lHXpLRapH7Jin37EhuCV>

Or you could read in the QR:



Haiku

A Haiku Exercise

1

Standing by a creek,
I'm watching a little bird,
thirsty for a kiss.

2

Nothing is moving.
The bird and I are silent –
tamed by each other.

3

Your clothing all dropped.
The flames of your body burn.
Tears in my eyes.

4

The bird is now gone.
Her song is here for a while.
But fading away.

5

The wind is chilly.
The sky is crowded with stars.
Of them you are one.

6

The snow is falling.
There are glitters in the ice
on my frozen heart.

7

The rose in the field.
Trotten down so many times!
It's growing downwards.

The Years Go By

The years go by.
People in the picture fade.
(The viewer fades, too.)

(Irregular haikus)

Have Haiku

Been robbed, gotten sick,
grown old and lost everything:
these are all I have.

Dirty Words Haiku

Dirty words? Oh no!
Baby, you are so fucking
sophisticated!

Che Haiku

Imperialists
do not exist in Heaven,
nor are there cigars.

I am bored to death.
Reading a book of martyrs,
of which I am one.

The revolution?
Somehow it did not work out.
You are on your own.

Limericks

Riding

I said, "Do you ride a horse?"
The lady replied, "Of course!"
"Do it then," I begged,
and she did – bare backed.
Well, that was a tour de force!

Wife

"Do you have a wife, Joe?"
He says, "How would I know?"
She left me for a Papua chief,
may be eaten by now with beef –
and the mail from there is so slow!"

Lizzy

I said to a woman named Lizzy,
"Every night you are so busy.
You act like a Trevi fountain,
with cash piling up like a mountain."
"Yes, but I feel a bit dizzy."

Limerick Pick

In the genre of limerick
this is what I would pick:
A naked girl was lying in bed
with ice cream, and she said,
"Hey, do you care for a lick?"

Sunbathing

I was sunbathing on a rock,
and a woman saw me. What a shock!
"My God, you're totally nude!"
"Yes, Ma'am. I'm in the mood.
Sit down and enjoy this limerock."

Four-liners

William

There was a poet named William.
He loved a lady named Juliet.
He wrote her a beautiful sonnet.
And now it sells for a million.

Dave

There is a mountain climber, Dave.
And there is a turn he missed.
And now he's sitting in the mist,
in the bottom of a cave.

Airport Security

Airport security was tight,
they took my scissors away.
They didn't know, I may say,
that I don't stab. I bite.

Under Cover

I asked a woman to be my lover.
She willingly went to bed with me,
then she gave me the third degree.
She was a cop under cover!

Jean

There was an ugly person, Jean.
(To call her a woman would be blasphemy.)
She had a perfect plastic surgery.
And never again was she seen.

The Rabbi

Said Rabinovich, the rabbi:
"I have to follow God, always.
But He has mysterious ways,
and I just can't find them, can I?"

Adam

And there was good old Adam,
he was the only man in Paradise.
One day he had a big surprise:
he found *something* he had to call "Madam."

Joan

There was a woman named Joan.
She spoke with her friends worldwide.
Years went by, and she died –
but she is still on the phone.

Arthur

There was an old poet, Arthur.
His young wife had a baby, Mark.
The father made a sad remark:
"I am the publisher, not the author."

Ingrid and Hermann

There was a couple: Ingrid and Hermann.
He ate garlic to perform better.
She loved sex and smell didn't matter.
So she was *his* girl and he was *her* man.

Suzy

There was a lonely girl, Suzy.
She didn't find any lover.
When she got hotter and hotter,
she went to, and came in, a jacuzzi.

Philip

There was a guy named Philip.
A woman said to him, "Look,
I heard you're a wonderful cock.
Oops! – that was a Freudian slip."

Worried

I am worried, worried indeed.
My daughter is in bed with three guys!
"What are you doing?!" I say. She replies:
"Making my memoirs more fun to read."

Prose

Wisecracks

* What did I have for dinner? E-450, E-451, E-452 and E-160. It's funny but it tasted like pizza.

* Life is a short road from the silliness of childhood to the stupidity of old age.

* When the voice of your conscience starts speaking, do not turn up the television.

* Your entire life is going to fit in the hyphen between your years of birth and death.

* Everyone may own a tiny piece of eternity.

* He who does not flap his arms will never have wings..

* The secret of long life is regularity. Take some time every day to live. And do not stop! (Another secret of long life is boredom.)

* Only useless things are worth dealing with. The useful things distract you too much and will distort you in the end.

* Life is like a cannon shot. It takes a few seconds to get to the top, we have a moment to enjoy the view, and from then on we are just falling.

* The elderly are more aware of the passing of time. They not only know that they may die any minute but also that you may die any minute.

* People first try every imaginable stupid thing and only then, when forced by the circumstances, do they become somewhat normal.

* "I think therefore I am," said Descartes in the 17th century. "I think therefore I am here," said a Soviet scientist in the Gulag in the 1950s. "I think therefore I am a weirdo," I say at the beginning of the 21st century.

* As you get older you spend on doctors more and more. There must be a point when life simply becomes a financial suicide.

* My doctor is very rich. There is a lot of money on his bank account. There is a lot of *my* money on his bank account!

* To steal is a sin. But you feel it more of a sin when someone steals from you than when you steal.

* In order to be good, we have to defeat ourselves. Although I do not always win, most of the time I bring it up to a tie.

* It is hard to get rid of a guest who happens to have a diarrhea.

* I do not stink. I just smell real.

* When I became homeless the home itself was not lost. We just do not reside in the same place anymore. What I have lost is this "my."

* When you have lost your home, a friend still could help you. But one often loses the two at the same time.

* We are never disappointed in friends. Those we are disappointed in are the former friends.

* For him who wants to sleep on it, yesterday's newspaper is just as good.

* It is not a happy thing to be happy among unhappy people.

* I have a good pedagogical sense. I did not raise any child – and that's the best I could do for their development.

* When it's me who is to die, I would not call it a natural death.

* The fish on the sand is still better off than the one in the water of the fisherman's bucket.

* Never be too good to the people who think you are bad. Changing their image of you would give them more pain than the pleasure you could give them by your goodness.

* Is the politician who denies the charges of corruption a liar? Not necessarily. On this level they steal without even noticing it.

* Classical warfare is the continuation of politics. Modern warfare is the continuation of weapon tests on real people.

* Up in Heaven they sit down and watch us all day. This is their reality TV.

* According to liberal economists, there is an invisible hand which makes the economy run. Fine. But what has this invisible hand to do in *my* pocket?

* Hell is where your wicked ideas are applied on you.

* God and I are'nt in good terms. I do not help Him, He does not help me.

* Adam's apple is a warning: no matter who bit into the apple of knowledge first, it was the man who could not swallow it.

* Adultery is a sin, even in thinking. But if so, why should we stop there?

* After fifteen years of marriage, my best memory is still the wedding cake.

* I've just found my wedding picture taken 25 years ago. Then I had plenty of hair, my beard was black and my skin smooth. Now I'm bald, my beard is gray and my skin is wrinkled. This is what marriage does to you!

* Marriage is a never ending conversation. But they who speak less may have more children.

* You are unhappy because you haven't yet found the meaning of life? I tell you: there is none. Happy now?

* When are the military commanders going to be as smart as their smart bombs?

* How about building 100-storey deep bunkers instead of skyscrapers?

* If you knew where and when you are to die, you would not go there. Death would still get you, but he would have to work harder.

* What if I had not been born? Then at this minute someone else would be pondering on this question. But rather let me do the pondering.

(Finally, with a blush:)

* The test of the pudding is in the eating. And so is the test of the pussy.

Tales for Adults

Snow White

Snow White walked and walked through the woods until she came upon an empty cottage. There were seven tiny sets of everything. She was hungry, so she ate a little food from one of the tiny plates. She was thirsty, so she drank from one of the tiny mugs. And she was very tired, so she slept on those tiny beds. Then the prince came and took Snow White with him.

And the dwarfs came home and were asking: "Who has been sitting on my chair?" "Who has been eating from my plate?" "Who has taken a piece of my bread?" "Who has taken some of my vegetables?" "Who has been using my fork?" "Who has been cutting with my knife?" "Who has been drinking out of my mug?" and finally, "Who has slept all over on our beds?"

But they never found out.

Sleeping Beauty

"Just what the hell are you doooooing?!" said Sleeping Beauty, opening her eyes and buttoning up her dress. The prince panicked, and ran away.

Little Red Riding Hood

Little Red Riding Hood went to see grandma, carrying a basket full of food. The big bad wolf followed her, and when the girl unlocked the door, he jumped in and ate both. Then he took the food basket, for the next day there would be no one to eat.

Meanwhile the hunter attended the annual conference of hunters and about these sad events he did not know a thing.

The Frog

A lady in her fifties was reading a book in a park. All of a sudden she noticed a frog in the grass. The frog was not afraid of her, kept hopping, closer and closer. It even jumped into the lady's lap and looked up.

The lady liked the frog, put the book down, took the frog and put it close to her face. She felt an irresistible urge to kiss the animal. It was soooo cute!

And what happened? The frog turned into a handsome young man, smiling encouragingly at the lady.

"Oh, you are just another of those dumb pricks!" said the woman in disgust and walked away.

De gustibus non est disputandum.

Other Stories

Recycling, or Saving the Earth

It so happened that I had bought something in the local supermarket and I was about to throw out the sales slip into the garbage bin in the store. But then I realized that paper should be recycled to save the Earth, so I changed my mind and started looking for a recycling collector but I did not find any. Finally I put the slip into my pocket. When I unloaded my pocket at home I, again, almost threw the slip away but when I realized what I was doing, my movement stopped mid-air. A day went by and I still couldn't get rid of the slip. In the meantime I did some more shopping and the slips and the wrapping papers continued to pile up on my desk. It took me four days to get to the district recycling center. I felt proud. I did not add to the undistinguished garbage piles. I felt I was a nice guy, somebody who cared and did something to save the Earth.

And, once I started it, my project went on and on. I started picking up the used newspapers even in the bus and in the subway. I took the promotional fliers from the people handing them out but did not throw them away at the next corner, I carried them all home. I even felt an urge to pick up a slightly soiled Kleenex somebody just had dropped in the subway station.

I talked about this to a therapist. She said this must stop, I cannot do these nice things instead of other people. So I finally gave up.

And look what happened. The other day I read that the Antarctic ice walls were melting, and this process is now beyond the point of no return.

I felt bad. Did this happen because of me? I don't know. I definitely was part of it. And the only thing I could do now is taking ice from my freezer and send it to Antarctica.

I bet my therapist is going to say no.

Waking Up

I woke up and checked my watch to see if I was in time for the morning train. I saw that it was too early yet, still too dark. So I went back, to sleep, hugging my wife.

Wait a minute. I do *not* have a wife!

I realized that I was still dreaming. I got extremely agitated, and *this* finally woke me up.

I checked my watch. The train left a few minutes ago.

Dr. Lieberstein's Bad Luck

Samuel Lieberstein was a genius. As a young child, he won all the existing prizes in mathematics, physics, biology and even literary history. He obtained his doctoral degree when he was in high school yet, and had a sky-rocketing career in front of him. Several famous universities offered big money and good positions to have him.

But when he started his professorship at M.I.T., Dr. Lieberstein had Legionnaires disease. After months of intensive treatment, he was cured.

One year later he had a stroke. He was treated in the best hospital of the East Coast, and he survived. The Department of Defense asked him to manage a top secret research project.

Then Dr. Lieberstein developed renal cancer – carcinoma of the kidneys. People who did not even know him personally offered their own kidneys to save the national hero. And he was lucky again.

But just after he got home from the hospital, an army training helicopter fell on the roof of his house, killing Dr. Lieberstein for good.

Nobody can outsmart God.

Nobody.

The Day I Became A Jew

All right, I realize this title may sound misleading.

You might expect a long sentimental story of solidarity or something of this sort. But no, my story is simple and short. You may think it is an anecdote, although it did happen. It happened exactly the way I'm telling it.

One summer morning I had business in the Balaton area. I was going to take a train at the Budapest South Railway Station, which is also the end of a subway line, where the subway cars go in and come out underground, on another track, heading to the opposite direction.

I was getting off, with all the other passengers, except one. This unfortunate fellow, a dark-skinned, chubby guy, obviously did not know that this was the end of the line and passengers were supposed to get off, and when he tried to get out, the doors were already shut. He was yelling and banging on the closed door.

I was hesitating – part of me wanted to help him by waving to the driver, but another part of me was in a hurry, so I decided that the subway car was coming back in a

minute anyway, so my intervention would not have made a lot of difference.

I bought my ticket, found the train for Lake Balaton, got on and sat down. We still had a few more minutes before leaving. I had a novel in English and started reading it. When the train slowly started moving out, the door of our compartment opened and in came a man with a big suitcase in one hand and a violin case in the other. It was the dark-skinned gentleman from the subway – who else? I felt guilty and apologized to him for not being more helpful. "Those bastards," he commented. "They shut the door so quickly I could hardly grab my belongings, and by the time I reached the door it was closed."

I helped him put the heavy suitcase on the overhead shelf. He glanced at my book and started a conversation.

"I'm coming from Toronto," he said. "To visit relatives in Szekesfehervar."

"Oh, you live in Canada?" I said. "I thought you play the violin in a good restaurant in Budapest," I added, pointing to his violin case.

"Gipsy music is popular all over the world," he said. "They like it in Canada too. I make a lot of money there."

And so on, he told me his life story, including a few girlfriends, the peculiarities of the life style of new immigrants, how one can survive without goulash, and things like that. We talked partly in English and partly in Hungarian.

All of a sudden he looked into my eyes and said, "Are you Jewish, by any chance?"

I was surprised. "Well, I don't know of any family tradition of this kind, but," and here I tried to make a joke, "I am smart, smarter than most Hungarians. So how can you be smart without being Jewish?"

"Exactly!" he laughed, and our conversation went on along this line for a while.

When the train pulled in to Szekesfehervar, I gave him a hand again, pulling the heavy suitcase from the shelf and dragging it down, to the ground.

"I am glad that you too are Jewish," said the Gypsy musician from Toronto. "We Jewish people must stick together."

I jumped back to the train, perplexed. The man was gone.

The funny part is coming only now. After this strange episode I began to discover my Jewish identity, step by step. I began to go to concerts, to programs where the majority looked Jewish, I started going to Jewish restaurants, began to eat Jewish food, unleavened bread, matzo balls, noodle kugel, bagels and so on. And I felt I was really becoming smarter. Of course, I did not make a lot of money and was not involved in the banking business but hey, most penniless daydreamers were also Jewish.

A few months later I met a Jewish woman, who was intelligent, energetic and also a very good cook. I told her about the Gypsy musician. "You *are* Jewish, honey," she said. "Just look in the mirror."

Well, my nose did not begin to grow longer, but when I looked harder, I could spot in me some resemblance with the Jewish prophets on old paintings.

I really liked this woman, and enjoyed living with her. It felt really good to belong to the chosen people.

Unfortunately, this relationship did not last long. She left me. And slowly, day by day, I started losing my Jewishness, up to the point that I became one of the Goyim again.

You know what? It sucks.

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Everybody dies.
That's true. However,
I am a nobody.
The one who lives forever!



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