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from One boy to One girl

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from One boy

S. Eric Ketzer

to One girl

from One boy to One girl

An exploration and analysis of love and relationship with a writer

S. Eric Ketzer

Culminating Project

M.A. in Communications with an Emphasis in Writing

Lindenwood University

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Advisor:

Dr. Michael Castro

Readers:

Dr. Alan Meyers & Professor Peter Carlos

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Vita Auctores

Collective Association
Collective Association

Collective Associations

As a writer, my progression does not follow the traditional path. I wrote and performed poetry long before I read poetry (outside of the shit I was instructed to read throughout my adolescence, never read because I'd rather skateboard, chase girls, or [and I am not proud of this] smoke pot). For me it is *in the genes*. My father, Steve Ketzner Jr. is an amazing writer (I say that objectively). He has been internationally published in a plethora of literary journals, anthologies, magazines, and newspapers.

Realistically, this book is more a work of Social Psychology than it is a work of "literature"; therefore, I will go ahead and answer the *Nature vs Nurture* question. I was not raised by my father. He did not teach me to write (actually, he may have been trying through letters and summer visits, but I wasn't listening. I was skateboarding, chasing girls, and....); rather, I am impelled to write because the combination of my mother's genes and my father's created a temperament that is conducive to neurosis and language production.

Hans Eysenck, who I will thoroughly address in the "Postface" and "Appendix," would say I am *stimulus shy*, meaning I have an extremely active Ascending Reticular Activating System, as well as an overproductive Limbic

Region. The combination causes me to be continually cognizant of internal and external stimuli. At the same time, the majority of stimuli will elicit an emotional response. To relieve the positive and negative tensions created by my emotions, I write. And, I always have.

That is not to say I have always written well because I haven't. I wouldn't say I began writing well until I started hanging out with various San Diego poets (Some would say, it wasn't until much later than that, and still others would say, I've never written well). Chris Vannoy, Lizzie Wann, Rayn Roberts, Michael Klam, and others served as my source of encouragement and reassurance. They reinforced my experiments with poetic devices such as meter and diction; as well, they provided practical examples of a poet's lifestyle. Outside of the occasional tip jug at a featured reading or the above cost sale of a chapbook, there is no money in poetry. They all know it. They all accept it. And, they still write and perform poetry because they, too, are impelled.

Although I'd like to claim that all of this--this, that is, the way I write and perform poetry and music--came naturally, I am sure my association with poets and singer/songwriters has shaped the way I create and read poetry. However, I don't recall making any conscious

changes in my voice or style based upon their influence. The only calculated alterations came while listening to music.

On my 16th birthday, my father gave me his 1963 Ford Ranchero. It was sky blue two-toned metallic blue racing stripes-immaculate. Across the Cochella Valley, it was known as "The Wave" and recognizable from four blocks away. Because The Wave was a classic, I did not want to taint its image by playing *pop* music in it. So, I scoured my mom's record collection and made tapes of artists such as Leon Russell, Joe Cocker, James Taylor, and Tom Waits. After listening to *Nighthawks at the Diner* by Waits, my perception of writing was forever altered.

Tom Waits is renown for using common items as descriptors. Phrases such as "tobacco brunette," "scrambled yellow hair," and "coffee eyes" lace his lyrics painting blue collar images that are extremely accessible. There is a particular Wait's line that is always with me when I write: "And the sky turned the color of pepto bismal." Hearing, writing, or thinking about that line evokes the image of thickly pink pepto rolling across a dusk sky. It is a powerful regional image that cannot be denied. Wait's influence caused me to re-think my use of words and objects as descriptors.

In the past, I made fledgling attempts to reproduce the
Waitsian voice. A not so subtle example would be
"Tribute to Tom."

Tribute to Tom

Panther black hair streaks across a bismuth sky,
while sky blue eyes thrash at nocturnal souls,
and earth brown skin drops jaws of onlookers.

Mind plagued with Holiday and Kerouac vocally
erects an innocent bystander. Conversation flows,
Rio Grande, rapid, and feelings rush expressions like *Bob*.

A Swiss cheese moon controls image forming stars,
car lights are laser beams to Green Martians landing on
Broccoli trees. Nothing ventured nothing gained.

Talk refrains, bodies press hard like pistons in
straight six. Lips pucker lemon and lime,
as they kiss for that first time.

Stop...
Step...
Stare....

Eventually, I realized his voice could not be
duplicated. However, I could use his inspiration. As
opposed to using common objects, I often find myself
relying on high aesthetics to paint my word pictures. I
have used the phrases "Transfiguration Clouds" and "Van
Gogh sky" and the line "And waking you pirouette through
my mind like so many Degas I have seen" to elicit
images of Rapheal's *Transfiguration*, Van Gogh's *Starry
Night*, and Degas' many ballerinas. When I enlisted in
the United States Navy, I sold the *Ranchero*, but my pen

carries the impression of Tom Waits.

The Navy was a period of maturation and development. As I saw more, I experienced more. As I experienced more, I wrote more. As I wrote more, I became better. My "Romantic" period began the first time I saw angel waves break off the bow of my ship, the USS Tarawa. I was so overwhelmed by the sea that it found its way into several of my writings and caused me to contemplate nature. The entire military experience was surreal, a continual conflict of serenity and chaos - the beauty of a R.A.M. missile launch juxtaposed against the reality of its destructive nature. For the writer, the madness was inspiration.

The boat, as is any military installation, is a microcosm of America and her colonies. The mess decks were littered with Spanish, Southern Twang, and Ghetto Slang (Black English Vernacular, if you prefer). Lunch filled more than my belly. It filled my eyes, my ears, my mind with diversity and cultural experiences. It gave me questions and answers and forced me to write. And when my city docked, I stepped onto foreign ground. I communed with Arabs in Bahrain and Dubai. I soared with Australian angels in Perth and Freemantle. And I drank with old friends on Guam and Hawaii. I opened my sensory organs to everything, and when they were filled

I placed pen on paper to preserve.

A month after returning from West Pac '92 (a 6 month tour of the Western Pacific) I had so much material that I was driven to take it further. So, I began doing readings at various San Diego open-mics. After one of my early readings at a place called the Alley Cat in downtown San Diego, someone compared my style to Jack Kerouac. At this point, I had no idea who Kerouac was, and I did not like being associated with someone of whom I was ignorant. So, I began to read.

I borrowed a copy of *Subterraneans* from a buddy and started to grow. I wasn't long before I had read *On the Road*, *Dharma Bums*, *Lonesome Traveler*, and *Desolation Angels*. I began to crave reading and I read everything (well almost) about the beatniks. From Ginsberg to Corso and back to Burroughs, I felt as though I had found a piece of me. Through my readings, the association with Kerouac was revealed. Tom Waits was extremely influenced by Kerouac. Waits envisioned himself the carrier of the beatnik spirit (Humphries 1990). I suppose the torch was inadvertently passed to me.

Still, I would not say I was a beatnik poet. Moments in literature are determined by collective associations. The beats had similar experiences and

continual relationships that created their collective associations, something Waits and I could never have. Knowing there had to be commonality amongst members writing within a genre, I sought out other poets, other X poets. I found the San Diego Coffeehouse Poets, great poets like Lizzie Wann and Chris Vannoy. Together we created a voice that is X.

In his book *Soft Fists of Rage*, Chris Vannoy wrote one of the purest Generation X poems:

Decaff

DECAFF!?
I don't drink decaff!

Give me Caffeine
Make me scream as the brown beans bake
in rotating metal drums
Cappuccino is nice
Latte' on ice
Espresso my heart
Squeeze it through steam
Let me sip Caffeine

Dripping down
Thick and strong
Dripping down
Creamed and choc-o-lated
Sprinkled with nutmeg spice
Vanilla would be nice
More Vanilla....Please!
Squeeze it out of my napkin cold
But oh so dull of caffeine

Give me a coffee bar in my car
I'll put an order in
Fill my two liter cup to the brim

Top with a plop of whipped cream
What a dream!
Oh Caffeine!

DECAFF!?

I don't drink
DECAFF!!!

And, I can still hear the audience, in unison, shouting "DECAFF!? I don't drink DECAFF!!!" It is not subject matter, such as the road and travel, that links Gen-X poets but performance. I'll be the second to say it (my father being the first), X poetry is much better performed than in print. Our poems don't, necessarily, work in print. They were written to be heard, not read. They are fast like the world we live in. They don't beg to be dissected. They beg to be experienced. There are poets that bend to the harder faster poetry and there are poets that write softer poetry, but both write it to read it. The best example of a soft soulful Gen-X poet would be Lizzie Wann.

Now

I look at you differently, now
 that we've shared cheap wine chilled with homemade ice, now
 that I've serenaded you, now
 that your fingers have been in my mouth, now
 that I've met the artist in you, now
 that a midnight room draped in burnt orange nicotine
 & herbal incense has surrounded us
 now, the 2 dollar daffodils have wilted
 now I realize you don't think of me
 now that the moon is full again
 refreshment is short-lived

now, your lips were against mine
I felt them
moist with wild authority

now, my arms were around you
I felt cotton seams of your shirt
struggling against heat of your skin

now it's over not having begun in waking hours
now the truth is, some of this did not happen

but we have kissed in a dream

so

now I look at you differently

Wann's voice is unmistakable and her rhythm her diction
her structure is just as vital to Generation X poetry as
is the speed and communality of "Caffeine" by Vannoy.

As a X-poet, I'd say I oscillate towards the softer
more thoughtful side of the genre, but I do have several
pieces that are more aggressive. In the '90's my
generation received some bad press for being
indifferent. So, I lashed back in several articles,
research papers, and poems.

THE CRY OF GEN-X

I am a result of *Clique Maintenance* born in '74
and raised by the "True Horror of Whiteness."
Vital organs removed and replaced by
materialism and the glorification of physical minimalism.

My life has been pre-determined as indifferent
and apathetic by the *Boomer Envy* media.
Limply and bloodily nailed to the cross at the age of eighteen,
being sacrificed for the sins of my parents.

I am Generation X,
but I am not indifferent.

I will no longer pay for the sins of an evil generation I do not understand.

I am Generation X, and, now, I will enact my revenge.

I am a member of Generation X, and, though my style is ever evolving, I have tried to remain true to my generation through out my writings.

The material you are about to read is more mature than my previously displayed and published poetry, but they still carry the Gen-X signature--written to be performed. They may look better on the page and may be more palatable in print than my early work, but they were written for ME to read and perform (I emphasize the ME because with X poetry the distinct voice of the author is often found in his/her performance).

As an overview of what you are about to read, "Moments in Time" are poems written and recorded chronologically for my girl friend-then fiance-now wife. They were, as Neal Cassidy would say, written in the now. "Cardstock" is comprised of excerpts from cards and letters I have given her. The next chapter "Songs for My Lover" features the lyrics from the CD that accompanies *from One boy to One girl*. The last creative chapter, "Journal Salvation," is a collection of prose, also written in the moment and recorded chronologically

in an effort to get through the shit of a relationship or expand on the beauty of love. "songs for my lover" is the musical contribution to *From One Boy To One Girl*. It has 10 song that were written for...my lover (formally my girl friend-then my fiance-now [also] my wife). To mix a little academia with my creativity, I have included a "Postface" which is an essay on Psychology's perspective of the artist and an "Appendix" which serves as a psychological explanation of all that came before it.

With that said, enjoy.

Moments in Time



Moments in Time

July 8, 1999

With tired grimace,
I ascend sad stairs,
descend into my dungeon,
allow sparks of cognition to release hormone and neural transmitter

Tore down the walls last night
with one shy utterance
even prefaced it with *I think*
as if I don't know

and now I reverse
terrified

I enact my brick-layer's union membership
build walls so high I cannot breathe
and the sting of tears
is washed away by the rain threatening to reveal my naked soul

bow head
release to father
give to him what is his

July 10, 1999

tonight
as the moon mocked the clouds
and lightning electrified the sky
I stood in the rain
and watched it fall until my vision blurred
--flashback--
childhood puddles displaced by soaked shoes
--sprung forward--
visions of you smiling at midnight
as july held you

August 14, 1999

Silver stars across black canvas
and eternity glistens like fireflies waiting for july
waiting to illuminate sultry night air
waiting to create a moment so moving it erases
memories and realities
waiting until the relevance of time dissipates in
the understanding of Brahma

and Tao
and Great Spirit
and God
and Self

and the goose bumps across spine are the finger of Jesus
waiting until forever is found in the smile of an angel
and acceptance of self allows that smile to penetrate

I looked into the sky,
with its bright smile of stars,
and found rebirth.

August 20, 1999

Leaves communicate at dawn,
loud rustling in my confused head,
and I cannot hear their words.

I cannot comprehend their language.
but I know they call me.

Emerging naked from my tent,
rough winds attack my body,
raise my skin and satiate my naturalistic intentions.

Forest shadows gyrate interpretive poses.
creating images of their IDs
repressed by midnight sky,
all opaque and incomprehensible
like heavy hammer of super ego laid upon
desires of first soul.

Above,
purple clouds are home to tears
waiting to be shed,
to be released,
to fall as man fell
as gods fell
as Nietzsche fell,
to be elevated as all life,
cyclical and everchanging.

August 22, 1999

Your hair, gentle through my fingers
like summer fog.
Each stroke, placing you close
to the gates of your subconscious,
and I guide you with adoration of your serene eyes
and placid expression.

Drifting, myself, into places long forgotten,
into emotional memories attached to sunsets and divergent waves,
placing you in the created work of art
like an interactive impressionistic painting
filled with yellows and blues
and a faded rainbow horizon.

In subconscious dreams,
I am conscious of your head in my lap,
your soft breath rising in early morning air,
your chest descending as you exhale,
and your child like twitches
caused by those who seek to oppress you.

I woke up to you playfully skirting
in and out of my dreams.
Eyes open, I see you above me
but barely in view.
Then, on knees, I stare at you
and watch you dream.

October 17, 1999

You have become my life,
unpacked your suitcase
established residency in my heart

You have become my life,
created a new man
who greets shadowed moon with honey smile

You have become my life,
my thoughts dance sensual yet silly
running like a child's curiosity

You have become my life,
I ride rollercoasters of emotion
fear and excitement in same deep breath

You have become my life,
in your absence my tears burn
like the juice from a ripe jalepeno

You have become my life,
separation between you and I
metaphysically nihilistic

October 25, 1999

Confusion wrapped around me
like octopus arms holding me underneath water
I desperately desire to break through.

All I can do is love her, but it is not enough

My shining vision,
my perfect dream
a torture chamber of shackles and chains, to her.

Now mimicking the sea above,
my stomach turns and pitches
unaccustomed to this pain.

And the "Whys?" abound like Mt. Everest

I did not kiss her lips to hurt her.
I spoke with hesitancy and fear
trying to prevent this.

And, this is far stronger than I,
but I know our us can defeat this,
but she doubts us,
turning our bicycle into a unicycle,
swaying on a dizzying pendulum.

With so much to say,
I wait,
praying she'll realize what I already know,
fearing my understanding will turn her frightened shoulder,
running to the safety of "I" apart from "we".

As the sun falls,
I question God,
allowing me to love and punishing me with the same gift.
I've yet to hear his response.

With every ring of the phone,
I pray it is an alarm clock
waking me from this nightmare.

October 29, 1999

visual spectrum

veiled by tired shutters

travel deep into cornucopia of emotions

past rotten fruit made toxic by fermentation

past wax apple too perfect to be real

past acidic limes resplendent with green health

to core where sour plum waits impatiently

its bitter nectar a forgotten flavor

now all too present on tip of tongue

while its juices stain creases of lip and cheek

a tattoo to the world

announcing child's journey

October 30, 2000

slurped down french onion soup in remembrance of you
peanut butter and jelly was too easy
I like it
but french onion soup
slimy onions down my sore throat
hot salty broth loosening my vocal chords
that was a truer test
how far would I go to plant you in my memory

(Late) October 30, 1999

Tired, I wait reeking of smoke and sauce and sweat
tired fingers gripping wood
tired skull weighty on wrist
tired auditory hallucinations of tires on gravel
tired visions of your expression
tired thoughts leaving me upside down with worry
tired questions created by doubt
tired ideas about delay
tired poetry spilling poorly on this page
tired forehead damp and throbbing
tired prayers for your safe return
tired negativity stealing my breath
tired crickets singing against an absent breeze
tired calculations on time and travel and distance
tired of waiting.
but too worried to sleep.

I watch the door
like a thief casing houses at dusk.

November 1, 2000

and I paint pictures daily
triangular theory
you are the center the focus
the completion of perfect vision

and now visions regress
nightmare as you walk away
your confusion a profound dementia

and I saw through your smile
questioned you when I should have been silent
open to a fault

and now I wonder
whether I can live with out you
don't want to
don't want to alter dreams

and I pray intense prayers
raising voice to el Olam
attempting to know your heart

and now I inhale my refuge
hoping you'll run to me with epiphanistic arms
knowing you won't

and I cry
because that is all I have left
my weakened mental capacity offers no clarity

and I remember sitting in this same coffee house
watching the door
hoping for your arrival

and I was elated
when you lit the room
but tonight the room remains dank

and I spill fourth poetry
bad poetry in many eyes
but it is my soul
on this page

and I cannot take it back

November 2, 1999

The walls shatter around me
panes of glass
offering a new world of noise and chaos
unfamiliar screams of negativity
regression
confusion
disbelief
remorse
echo through this desperate vision
bordering reality
I go to sleep with tears
you
a bedroom away
chasm stretching between
impenetrable barriers
so many walls built to separate
divide
I want to tear them down
you build them larger
fortify them with fear

November 5, 1999

I fell asleep under the smile of your eyes,
bowed my head to serenity of joy,
inhaled a deep Taoist breath,
rich with tranquility,
and exhaled it into the door of your dream.

I placed myself in an unfamiliar oil painting,
filled with faces and flowers,
pungent scents expanding lungs,
released as kisses into the visionary breeze of your thought.

naked breasts
still olive from summer's fig leaf
and bronze from summer's sun

November 6, 1999

They came in waves,
sparing my heart from explosion.

Released into the night air
my cyclical wails of horror.

the inward the horror

Choking on my emotions
that lurched out of their acidic bed of innocence.

Free flowing radicals
terrorizing my internals, leaving me without humanity.

Skin and flab on bones
directed by evening air as Ezra guides.

November 7, 1999

I fell asleep to porcelain visions of you shattering under my embrace.

My future,

a tearful loop in rewind.

every blissful moment

a still framed by love and longing.

Helpless and hopeless,

I close the door and surround myself with you,

ring the last drop of life from my heart,

lie empty and naked,

exposed to the brutality of this moment.

I can swim no longer.

My eyes,
blue like North Pacific ice crystals,
burn with tears of confusion.

November 8, 1999

Morning
stretched its arm
through mechanistic veils
to caress your sleeping grin
exposed from the womb of sun and flowers that surrounds you.

I could live a light year in this moment.

Your peaceful position,
releasing tension from my tired heart,
allowing deep autumn breaths to negate negativity
and return a misplaced smile to my cheeks.

November 10, 1999

You told me your head burned with indecision,
and I remember that feeling,
remember the head-ache whose life was longer
than any vacation I have taken,
remember watching the Buskers with head throbbing,
waking with head throbbing,
thinking with head throbbing,
eating-drinking-smoking-sleeping with head throbbing,
remember a surreal portrait of you and I sharing some conversation
for breakfast.

Head throbbled then.

I suppose that moment was the start of it all.

All being the pages of words before this one and the ones to follow.

All being the months of thought and feeling spent cradling you close
to my chest, attempting to know you, understand you.

All being my glassy eyes expressing a myriad of emotions
which you learned to read like poetry,
beautiful and confusing within the same phrase.

Today, my eyes burn too,
not with indecision but with inability.

For the first time, in an unrecorded amount of time,
my eyes will not touch yours.
My fingers will not touch your silk.
My back will not feel your arms pulling mine closer.
My lips will not burn under the pressure of yours.

November 12, 1999

These days,
filled with scattered dreams and tired feet,
leave visions of you to replace your warm body.
Your cashmere skin,
an orgasm of feeling
for fingers navigating the curves of your womanhood.
Your hair,
morning mist from this gentle November,
glides across my cheek.
Your kisses,
monumental blessings of reassurance,
lay on me like falling feathers,
disappear into the night.
Your words,
swing from my hammer directly to my heart,
by-pass my brain and wrap me in love.

Even in the exhaustion of this moment,
you are remembered.

November 16, 1999

The sun came out today.

Waved its starfire hand at me.

Let me know it would be okay.

Its warmth,

like your warmth against my body--soft and steamy,

held me in a closed-hand cradle,

rocked me with the breeze of your breath,

announced the existence of our love to dormant trees.

Brittle limbs break into applause.

December 7, 1999

Frost blankets grass
as dead leaves dance in nature's spiral.
Their father taps my window.

Sun's rays,
trapped in a vortex of white energy,
try to escape clouds coating the sky.

And I,
with my cold limbs, am warm inside,
filled with spirit of Saturday night and emotions undeniable.

And I,
laugh at the awkward beast that I am,
forcing eye-lids open at 5:30 am just to be with you.

I hope
I never
change

your breast
 inside my hand
 is perfect

December 8, 1999

went to the frosty banks of the river
watched glass flow and trees reflect
waited for morning to break the horizon

exhaled smoke into brisk air
ensconced myself in visions of you
encoded feelings into words

accepted the grace of unconditional love
allowed myself to become this magical moment
asked for its eternality

touched frozen grass that became your hair
tailored this emotion into blanket of warmth
told you the secret of my heart on the rays of sun

January 6, 2000

the sky
all mystic blue and lavender
rolled out before me like an eternal rainbow of passion
dripped flowers on the floor where you stood
half naked breast greeting this magnificent dusk

my breath
short and rapid
lost in respiratory contractions
found itself in the pressure of your lips
rested gently in the palm of your embrace

your breath
soft and moist
fell silently
tangoed across my chest
slept in the solace of my kiss

I woke
with your scent on my breath
like honey
only stickier
like sorghum

**January 7, 2000
(Wedding Poem)**

Our love...

dances lyrically across lavender skies
sleeps with the clouds of midnight
sings with the morning breeze
lives in the eternality of forever

Our family...

breathes life through lungs of love
nurtures like summer's silver rains
cradle us in arms of compassion
lives in our child eyes

Our friends...

play jovially shadowing the nocturne
smile in the presence of our unity
laugh sweetly with comedic action
live in the spirit of community

Our marriage...

made possible by all three--our friends, our family, our love.

January 11, 2000

Ape ring fireball dances across sky,
yet my eyes grow tired and I turn to thoughts of you.

Sensations of you,
under nocturnal light,
kissing your cheek,
the feel of your hot flesh against mine,
the passion of your mouth,
the softness of your whisper,
the beauty of your smile.

I swim with you in pools of forever
allowing us to preserve
these days,
these months,
our youthful passion.

January 19, 2000

Went to the movies last night,
wore my jacket the entire flick.

I was almost able to see my breath dissipate into air.

Held your hand
as people positioned themselves against dilapidated deco walls.

The four before us draped in cannabis
delivered inane giggles into intoxicated air.

Thought about you,
your tired eyes and pouty expression,
resting sweetly on my shoulder.

Allowed myself to be filled with you,
satiated with your essence.

I took long silent breaths,
expanded my chest,
closed my eyes,
renewed my devotion,
and prayed to the spirit of our collective entity.

I will not be broken
by the tides of missed reciprocation

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January 27, 2000

So much confusion

dancing between the planes of my understanding.

Your nightmare,

a facade of masked musicians breaking your drum.

My nightmare,

contemplations on reality.

I stand on the table of life,

beg for release,

pray to let it go,

close my eyes.

It reappears,

a dark enigma.

January 31, 2000

morning
my mind more active
paints nightmares in water colors
what dreams may come
shrouded in intense thought
questions
unanswered
create belated bitterness
now dealt with under sunshine of forever

Pinned to mattress

thick quilt

barefeet

midnight witches

childhood dreams

barefeet

freshly dewed grass

its tickle breaks subconscious thought

June 11, 2000

You,
in peaceful dreams,
lay

silken hair,
dark,
across my bear chest.

Ezra stares at me, wanting to be with you, as I want to be your pillow, your blanket, your comfort, but the tired night loses to your tired eyes, and I am too in-love to disturb you.

Lay on sleeping bag,
stroke paper.
pen these observations.

Ezra watches and understands.

July 19, 2000

The scent of apples on your navel
an orchard of passion
held in the heat of your skin
My face
resting in dreams of your belly
large with child
her heart beat
his kick
years away
but real in this moment
when rain taps windows rhythmically
thunder sings of furious release
light connects Heaven and Earth
and I am with you

cacooned by lavender
your morning face denies 7 o'clock
braced by feathers
your neurotic strands form dream catchers

August 15, 2000

I thought about your face
and eyes of forgiveness,
arms of welcome
and words of understanding,
thought about last night.
its apparent futility
and how time's miracle would offer progression,
thought a million thoughts
inside the four mile drive
from school to home.

August 16, 2000

Words inside this nightmare

desperate

fighting

mad

My breath

short

My smile

left on a piece of pie whose sweetness I had forgotten

My wrongs

revealed

Exhaustion

my sad companion

offers insight

lost to a missed moment

Cardstock

July 18, 1999

Yeah! You said I love you on my answering machine. Thank you. I only wish I would have been home. After I got off the phone with you this morning I became disoriented, so I laid down and intended to listen to music. I fell asleep, but I got up at 10:00, called Rob, shaved, showered and headed to Cafe Danielle to see Mark and Chuck play. As usual, they invited me to do a couple songs. So I played: "Railroad Affair" (which Rob loves by the way), "We're in Love," "2000 Miles," and "Silenced" (minus the resolution ending). Sundays at Danielle are fairly low key, and that ending is a little too aggressive. Afterwards we went to Guitar Center and then to Mark's. After putzing around for a few hours Mark decided he wanted me to do harmonies on one of his songs for the compilation cd everybody is talking about. Rob needed to get home to Rachel, so I stayed with Mark. We began recording around 6:00 and finished at 11:00. The song is really interesting. Mark does the guitar and the lead vocal track. Then I do two harmony tracks and record a constant "hmmmm" line, a continual "Ah" line, and then I freestyled a tenor part above everything else. It still needs work, but it is in Rob's hands now. I think I'll end up finishing it tomorrow. Actually, today, as the clock ticks midnight.

I experienced a full range of emotions concerning us today. There was jovial recounting of my birthday celebration (to Rob and then Mark), indepth discussion with Rob concerning the effort we have put into the relationship and intend to contribute, and internal emptiness as a result of missing you. Needless to say (So, why say it? Because it is a good transition line), you were not forgotten. During the car ride home I was creating an analogy of a snow flake and its symbolic representation of us, but I am too tired to recall it. I know it involved the word "amalgamic" which is really not a word, rather a hybrid I created but, never the less, irrelevant without the rest of the metaphor. I hope the Arkansas moon finds you in good spirits and having a great time with your family. I love you.

Love, Eric

July 19, 1999

I'm at lunch right now. Normally, I would be calling you, but since that is impossible, I decided to write instead.--Man this is some juicy-ass gum. That lemon stuff from Love Light. That was a good night--I spent the majority of my morning catching up on work I missed from the bucking incidents. They tried to get me to buck today, but I escaped. I met with Marsha Parker

this morning to get pictures for a new slide presentation to be used at Freshman Orientation. The old one is extremely dated. Flipping through pictures, and, then, ba-bam pictures of my girl. You were with the dance company and President Spellmann, wearing a red top and black pants. Your smile is captivating. No wonder why you won the photogenic contest.

Well, I suppose I should make myself something to eat, then head back to work. So, I guess I will end this here, but, not before I tell you, that Diane loves your name. Diane is the teacher I worked for in Cali. We email about once a week. She says, I deserve you and that you sound superb. If we are able to make it to the west coast, you will certainly meet her. I'll write more creatively tonight. Love, Eric.

Same day a little later.

Smooth sounds

Bass sounds

Jazz sounds

Ol' fat cheeked Loui callin' me to the cabaret
 taste my trumpet and keep *Georgia on My Mind*
 as blind Ray sprinkles soul around my room
still in peaceful dreams I see the road leads back to you
 wandering what moon smiles down
 the thud of kick drum initiates
 quick paced Parker givin' dat Bop blast
 Kerouacian style movin' wit da beat da beat
 da beat of da city Jack
 and American identity is a bunch of negroes
 wit freed fingers slapin' nylon strings
 as sticks tap feet and asses shake in glorious
 smoke fill'd bars martini in hand
 now Prima dropin' Latin rhythms like

feathers from da beat sky
 soft movements in tune wit mother nature
 but Bob James new to the street brings me
 down wit 'lil tree piece action
 allowing clarity in dis confused collage
 of textured sounds
 lost I seek my angel
 find her distant awake and wanting as I
 leavin' trails of choreographed movements
 on my soul
 and dis bass player is mongrel

bright Sounds
 piano Sounds
 jazz Sounds

Not that it matters, but I just wrote that in this
 moment, in this now, in this existential existence. I
 seek authenticity. I will love myself, so I may love
 you better.

So, how are you? I promised creativity. Here is
 something I wrote with my pen (if I ever refer to "my"
 pen it means the pen that you gave me).

Metaphysic Breaths

stoplight red and red heat invades my cab
 forehead glistens and emotions swell in pit
 waiting wanting release
 open orifice to scream
 words true and pure and real
 moon outside
 smiles upon me like daisy with midnight petals

it finds you
under some Arkansas tree
clear breeze inhaled
and relaxation sets in
conversations existing
on astral plain between here and eternity
breathe metaphysic breaths and exhale

I was very unhappy with my lunch-time informative ramble. To avoid another one of those episodes, I'll end here. As Willie says, "You are always on my mind." I love you, and I can't wait to hold you in my arms.

Heaven's bells ring and angel says hi. It was wonderful to hear your voice. How odd this feeling inside of me, as if something was wrong. Probably fear that you have uncovered the piece of me I cannot accept, yet I am ignorant to its existence. Does this make sense? I just have this weird feeling that something has gone sour. It has got to be something that I told you. One of those bones must cause me to hate myself, and, naturally, I assume the worst. Ah, sweet pessimism. This sucks. The subconscious sucks. Oh, to be a Huxlian *Alpha*. I think I'll turn it over to a higher power because I am not dealing well with this emotion. I miss you. Love, Eric

July 20, 1999

I am back to a 6:00 wake up. Our late nights had me risin' at 6:30 which rushed me. 6:00 gives me time to do my ab-roller and still get there by 7:00. I woke up melancholic and missing you. Maybe I had a bad dream. At any rate, I am okay right now. I have a healthy feeling of emptiness inside. This is good pain, pain that makes me remember I am alive. This pain reminds me that I am in love. It is healthy, natural. I embrace it like a lost child. Wrap my arms around it. Kiss its cheek, and thank it for making me me. Some people do not feel loss. You thought I was one of those people, like I would just pick up and move on, but I am not. I am an introvert, a dweller--Da jazz is back wit suicide highs reachin' out to a white boy down stairs from da cotton club. If the Buddhists are right I may be a reincarnated black man--I think it has helped to make me tender. I like being tender. I wouldn't want to be cold. People with cold eyes scare me, like there is nothing there. Your's are very warm but guarded, like whatever is behind your walls is so precious that its illumination shines through the wall itself. They are very intriguing. Well, I suppose I should get back to work. I love you.

Still the 20th

I just got off the phone with you, and now Ray Charles is singin' straight soul. I love soul and jazz and blues. I think it is because these musicians aren't hiding behind fluffy words and metaphoric pain. Dey juss lettin' it all hang out dere. Earlier, I was thinking that, although it sucks, this little separation has probably been good for us. In your absence, I may have become more conscious of you. You were always in my thoughts, but they were bright airy thoughts like a quilt of cotton ball clouds across a lemon sky. Now, they are more specific. I see your smile. I contemplate your classroom silence. I wonder what you think when you wake up. I plan ways to glorify our union. I prepare myself to love you better. I allow myself to experience the fear of losing you and determine ways to negate my fear. Princess, I have said this before, but, honestly--and with much analysis of past, present, and future--you posses everything I have been looking for. It is like your were gift wrapped by God. I think I'll end on that. I LUV U! Love, Eric

July 21, 1999

Yeah! One more day until you are home. The candyman came today with 200 watts of chocolate fully

equipped with two 15" speakers, two microphones, and all the cables I need to rock this mothah. I am so excited about this P.A. The majority of things I did last year were music related, and everyone was a struggle to find a sound system. One Stoplight almost failed because the band whose P.A. we were going to use flaked me. Thank God Beth's youngest brother (not the one you met) was in a band, so I borrowed his. Things as simplistic as Organization's Week are enhanced by music. Speaking of which, that is September 6-10 everyday from 12-3. I expect all groups to be out there at least one day. So, be thinking of what kind of information you could distribute, or fundraisers, you could do to get new members. Wait, what the f@%k was that? Talkin' business with this amazing, intelligent, goofy (in the most loving way possible), beautiful, breath stealing woman; when I should be elevating you in poem, in song, in dance (Hey, if I could I would). I apologize. I'd write more on that, but I am studio bound. I'll finish this when I get home.

I LOVE YOU (I scream it because it is just that freakin' intense)!

Post Recording; Post Phone Call

I emerge dazed and light-headed from my

conversation with you. You are like a drug. A gentle drug, a soft drug...Oh shit, I almost forgot. You are a drug. I am in love with you; therefore, I am releasing various neurotransmitters that produce these lustrous feelings, namely dopamine, serotonin, gaba, norepinephrine, and T(something). Yeah, that has got to be it. Or, maybe you are an angel and these feelings are from God. Or, maybe, I think too much, and I should just relax and feel these wondrous physiological reactions caused by your presence in my life....

07/23/99

I have no idea when Friendship Day is.

I found this card in a magazine. It made me think that as we build our love we must build our friendship,
as well.

Together we can forge a relationship that is
impenetrable.

Together we can become one but seperate
(like the Trinity only less holy).

These intensities are high and distant
like Pluto on a sensual summer night.

Last night was too intense to describe with mere words.

It is very odd, but I haven't plateaued yet.
My feelings for you are constantly expanding.

Cardstock 10

It is frightening in a good way.

I am fully embracing this love, this intensity of
physiological electricity, yet I am constantly fighting
fear that one day this will dissipate, and, like
butterfly on wings of wind, you'll float
cerebrospinally into the mind of another.

Damn Fear!

Damn Newton and his 3rd Law!

Why does every action have to have a reaction?

Can't we just be blissful?

We can!

We can "Defy" Newton.

08/02/99

Everyday I spend with you is more magnificent
than the previous one. Hopefully, the perfection
of the lion and horse has shallowed your fears.
Thank you for being inspiration.

08/07/99

One month ago, I expressed to you an emotion
that elicits fears, evokes flames, envelopes freedom,
and evolves into forever.

One month ago, with bowed head and shy nervous eyes,
I told you I loved you, and the roller coaster it

Cardstock 11

unleashed
is the most joyous ride I have ever been on,
each peak more magnificent than the previous
and each gravity altering descent forces me to realize
that I am alive
and this is not a dream

Thank you for making life extraordinary

--/--/--

I want you to know you remain my angel not because you are an angel. I know that is impossible. I've read Billy Graham's *Angel*, and I know humans cannot be or become angels. You are my angel because I want you to be my angel. You are so special that I have segregated you from the rest of society. I have placed you on a plane so high and far removed from the muck of reality that you look as though you have wings.

I know you are not perfect, just as I am not perfect, and we are not perfect, but I don't want to see your faults. Let the rest of the world see your tarnished side. I want to see you sparkle brilliantly like a diamond on black felt, like the sun above some snow peaked mountain, like my eyes when you are present. So,

I choose to see you as an angel, glowing with the illumination of purity and innocence.

I am sorry if that is bad, and if it is, I will work on it, but that is where I am. I have washed my negative thought with the soap of our love, combined our strengths and our weaknesses to make a compound so solid it could cut steel. Together we are stronger than separate.

I love you more every minute of every day, and I thank you for loving and bearing with me.

--/--/--

This card spoke to me in the language of you.
Its varying flowers symbolic of the many shades of you:

frail and gentle like a pansy,
tough and independent like a Venus fly trap,
sensuality and passion hot and fiery like the red
blossom,
earthy and strong like the sun flower,
quirky and humorous like the multicolored petals
of the final flower.

You are all of the these things and many more.
Each aspect of your personality is distinctly you,
causing you to be magnificently unique.

Each day I spend with you,
I learn more about you, and my love intensifies.
I thanks *El Olahm* for bringing us together.
Conscious decision or destiny--either way I am happy!

--/--/--

At this stage, I am aware flowers are "non-essential";
however, I wanted you to have something that would make you smile, something that was 1/4 as beautiful as you, tried to be as sweet as you, and could sit on your dresser to remind you that you are extraordinary.

Thank you for all that you do. My thoughts are with you, and I am eternally here for you.

--/--/--

As the sun disappears behind grey clouds,
I imagine your image;
I feel your presence;
I dream your essence;
and you become my *Day's Eye*.

--/--/--

I felt this card's art work was indicative of my emotions towards you. Me, a harmless teddy bear,

gaining my strength from the warmth of your arms wrapped around me, wishing into the wind, like I have done so many times, wishing that I was with you.

But, they are not sad wishes but wishes from a man (or bear) who is content within himself yet knows he'd rather be with you.

It is good to give love and be loved.

--/--/--

Last night, as I closed my eyes, I dreamed of you
allowing your being
to permeate the boundaries of my soul.
Opened eyes and found myself alone needing your warmth,
your silky skin,
your scent,
your soft breath,
your peaceful eyes,
your splendor.
I slept on your pillow, inhaled the scent of your hair,
stroked it as if it were you.
It is you who completes my fantasies
and leaves me fulfilled
knowing that in the great mystery of this existence
I was meant to find...you.
In times of uncertainty,

know that I have exactly what I want,
and it is you.
For all the glorious reasons that make you you,
I thank you for giving yourself to me.

10/04/99

On our anniversary,
I want you to remember the excitement we found in our
first kiss, the first time wind blew our hair as we cut
the humidity on our swings, the first time I looked at
you and sang your song,
the way we grew together each day strengthening bonds,
the fears that have subsided and the new ones that
arise.

On our anniversary, close your eyes and feel my
love for you. It is real and unwavering.

--/--/--

HEALING TO-DO-LIST

Take a bubble bath

Light a candle

Listen to slow jazz, Duncan Sheik, Sara McLachlan

Breathe deep

Kiss Eric Deeply

Smile at birds outside

Cardstock 16

Smell fresh baked bread

Feel dew under your toes

--/--/--

and you soft eyes fired by rage
and i helpless unable to help you
and us growing stronger together

and you humanize me
and i am you
and us perfect together

and you my fantasy
and i am your dream
and us reality together

and you and i and us forever

Find peace in the purity of our love, for it is
true. I just want you to know my thoughts are
constantly with you. When I think of you I realize how
lucky I am.

11/04/99

Under the bright diamond smile of your eyes,

I am silenced.

--/--/--

I think of you

and the sky opens before me
like Monet's pastels across a blank canvas....
And, I know you are the one.

11/16/99

and your fingers
like messengers of emotion
found their way through my hair
down my spine
across my soul
into my heart
and I kiss your sweat flesh knowing that this moment is real

"What matters is that we've made it through together"

I bought this card on my darkest day
because I knew, somehow, that everything would even out.
I had faith, and I will always have faith
in you and I and us because we are two separate people
that form one brilliant union.

--/--/--

And I, one on knee, offer to you the purity of my
love
like snowflakes falling on a desolate island...
silent mysterious beauty.

And you, with expressions of beauty, offer to me
forever coated in the embrace of your love.

I missed you tonight,

as every night in your absence.

12/04/99

Your smile, like the wings of an angel,
glistens in the morning light,
brings me reassurance,
reassurance that my heart has not been given in vain.

I wanted to start the night on an upbeat note.
I want you to know we will always be a fun couple.
Just because we are seriously committed to each other
does not mean we have to be serious.
You have given me the best 6 months of my life
at a time when I should be depressed.
Waking with the knowledge that I may hold you,
kiss you, caress you, laugh with you,
and converse with you restores the smile on my face.

01/04/00

It is your eyes
that reach deep within.

It is your smile
that warms my heart.

It is your words
that stirs my soul.

It is your touch

that excites me.

It is you that I want forever.

03/26/00

Today, my pondering focused on you.

the thought of your lips on mine trembled me
the image of your curves silhouetted by shadow excited me
the echo of your words soft and feminine enthralled me
the sweetness of your nectar pure and fresh engorged me
the sensation of your we touch elevated by longing released me

I am forever yours,
forever loving you,
forever wanting you,
forever needing you.

05/04/00

11 months you danced throughout my dreams
awoke into my reality
kiss me deep and leave me fulfilled

The desires found a home in you
in your essence

in your sweet smile and soft words

05/08/00

By now, you have grown accustomed to my flowery words
painting pictures of love and forever and passion
and into-me-see and all things I cherish.

Today, I want to be direct.

Nobody has ever supported my music like you do.

I think you saw that my music is me.

I can say nothing more than
my love for you will never die.

--/--/--

I know I am not the perfect vision of happiness,
but I don't want you to feel like you do not
make me smile with child eyes filled by innocence
and the essence of eternal love.

The reality is, you are my best friend, but you
are also my lover and my soulmate and my inspiration
and my...everything.

I am so glad I get to spend eternity with you.

--/--/--

I MISS YOU!

I miss the warmth of your breath

Cardstock 21

the satin of your skin
the comfort of your body
the fullness of your lips
the gentleness of your cuddle
the recap of your days events
the intrigue of your thoughts
the exhaustion of your eyes
the way I feel when I am with you.

07/04/00

This anniversary, although it is 1 year and 1 month, is made more special by the fireworks in the sky. Seeing you, touching you, hearing you, smelling you, feeling you, and tasting you produces sensation more brilliant than the illuminous fireworks that will light up the night.

you make me quiver with ecstasy and explode with passion.

--/--/--

I am sorry...

I am sorry for pushing your buttons.

I am sorry for escalating rather than comforting.

I am sorry for not supporting you more.

I am sorry for not understanding your needs.

I am sorry for being weak.

I am sorry for raising my voice.

I am sorry, and I know that is not enough.

You are so special to me,
and it tears me apart when we fight.

Please forgive me.

09/18/00

Now that the cake waits patiently,
your white dress hangs in an empty room,
Delline looks at desert mountains,
the to-do list has disappeared,
and my finger is bright with gold,
I still give my soul completely to you.

**Songs
FOR
My
LOVER**

Impressions of Dance

on point I see you reaching to the heavens
arm extended you touch Seraphim
the embrace of Cherubs purified your heart
in dreams your wings are revealed to me

waking you pirouette through my mind
like so many Degas I've seen
and resting you bow your innocent head
like Mary Cassatt's child

you create abstract worlds with perfect lines
movements of grace dissect dimensions
bridged together by omnipresent spirit
and I try to deconstruct your mystery

waking you pirouette through my mind
like so many Degas I've seen
and resting you bow your innocent head
like Mary Cassatt's child

impressionist vision
formed by my thoughts
and I clutch you like Pyle's mermaid

modern motion usurps reality
hypnotized by your fluid performance
as the curtain falls I remain entranced
your essence gives me wind

and waking you pirouette through my mind
like so many Degas I've seen
and resting you bow your innocent head
like Mary Cassatt's child

and waking you pirouette through my mind
like so many Degas I've seen
and resting you bow your innocent head
like Mary Cassatt's child

Defy

These barren streets, cold and frightening,
 In your absence my eyes have no life,
 but in your arms Newton has no laws,
 and I am permitted to fly.

The sad moon glows with longing.
 It looks down on you. It looks down on me.
 And, your smile is painted on my face.
 Yes, your smile remains on my face.

The unbalanced arabesque of a barefooted child
 allows me to dream again,
 and I am found radiant in your potential.

The sad moon glows with longing.
 It looks down on you. It looks down on me.
 And, your smile is painted on my face.
 Yes, your smile remains on my face.

Lost in tenor tones and bright strings,
 I bow my head and create your image.
 Now, under a silver moon, I am no longer alone.

I want to hold you as the rains fall.
 I want to swim in your eyes as the rains fall on us,
 wash away impurities,
 free our souls to fly,
 dance child like,
 defy grass under foot,
 defy moon and stars,
 defy Newton,
 defy gravity,
 defy you and I,
 defy (7x).

Railroad Affair

Three hundred nights I sleep alone
in this broken down bed.
These tracks are long and winding,
but they end in you.

I hear the whistle blowin',
but this stops not mine.
I peer through my cabin window,
and I envision you.

So many days,
I feel I'm losin' time,
seduced by the land
and this railroad affair.

Mile high in Denver
and on to the San Diego Coast,
I see the lights rollin' by,
and I'm callin' out to you.

Next stop the Frisco Bay,
I wander the streets beside myself.
I look in every store front
in search of you.

So many days,
I feel I'm losin' time,
seduced by the land
and this railroad affair.

Across the empty plains,
I see the buffalo roamin'.
I watch the clouds
form pictures of you.

And as the midnight sun
descend upon River City,
I step from my train,
and I hold onto you.
Yes, I hold onto you.

Feel the Sun

These Autumn winds
wrestle my clothes,
blow your hair,
chill our skin.

And I know, there's gonna be another.
And I know, day when we can swing again.
And I know, there's gonna be a day when we can feel the sun.

We're makin' snow angels,
as the flakes cover our eyes,
retreat within',
to childhood smiles.

And I know, there's gonna be another.
And I know, day when we can swing again.
And I know, there's gonna be a day when we can feel the sun.

We're playin' puddles,
like we did at twelve,
my arms wrapped around you,
and the rain is pourin' down.

And I know, there's gonna be another.
And I know, day when we can swing again.
And I know, there's gonna be a day when we can feel the sun.

These summer winds,
wrestle my clothes,
blow your hair,
burn our skin.

And I know, there's gonna be another.
And I know, day when we can swing again.
And I know, there's gonna be a day when we can feel the sun.

And I know, there's gonna be another.
And I know, day when we can swing again.
And I know, there's gonna be a day when we can feel the sun.

Dreams Come

Soft light. falls on your tired eyes.
As they close, you escape into dream land,
where your vision are reality,
and everything you feel is pure.

I wouldn't trade this moment for anything,
not all the silver that lines the clouds.
I wouldn't trade my soul to anyone,
only give it completely to you.

And I wonder where you are.
Are you riding clouds up in the sky,
or do I find you tired underneath a tree,
listening to the language of the leaves.

I wouldn't trade this moment for anything,
not all the silver that lines the clouds.
I wouldn't trade my soul to anyone,
only give it completely to you.

And as I close my content eyes,
I wonder what dreams may come,
will I find you, will I hold you,
or will I simply seek your grace.

I wouldn't trade this moment for anything,
not all the silver that lines the clouds.
I wouldn't trade my soul to anyone,
only give it completely to you.

And I feel my heart stop,
the sensation of short breath.
I see you standing in purity.
I kiss your lips and say I do.

These are the dreams that come to me (3x).
Dreams come (2x).

We are in Love

Family in the aisle
and friends to my right.
They came to celebrate our union.
 'Cause we are in love;
 yes, we are in love.

With a round of I-Do's
and sealed with a kiss.
I'm your forever.
 'Cause you are in love;
 yes, I you are in love.

White dove in the air
and cake on my face.
I see you dancin' in the autumn rain.
 'Cause I am in love;
 yes, I am in love.

And, I don't want to forget
this feeling inside.
Let me remember this day
for the rest of my life.

Now we're old and wise
with grandkids around.
Our porch swing barely moves.
 But, we are in love;
 yes, we are in love.

And, I still remember you in that wedding gown.
You still miss me when I'm gone.
And, we still hold each other tight.
 'Cause we are in love;
 yes, we are in love.

Sacrifice

The feel of fresh sands melting under my toes
and the surfers their riding purity
and electrical storm across the desert sky,
oh, the energy of California.

I would give up this.
I would sacrifice.
Yes, I would give up this.
I would sacrifice for you.

Sure I'll miss the San Diego sages.
They made me think they gave me eternal life.
They gave me words when I could not find my voice.
and now my voice speaks soulfully of you.

I would give up this.
I would sacrifice.
Yes, I would give up this.
I would sacrifice for you.

And the question arises, what about my family.
Oh yeah, I miss my mother my sister and my niece.
I miss my brother Gerry I miss them all.
But, you-you fill me up. You're my family now.

I would give up this.
I would sacrifice.
Yes, I would give up this.
I would sacrifice for you.

Sacrifice Improvisation

Modern Cowboy

Desolation, like a violet across silent snow,
purple streaks in purity, witch finger through the clouds above.
Desolation don't know me 'cause I chose a secret road.
Desolation won't smile on me because I found you.

This tale of a Modern Cowboy,
ridin' planes of insecurity.
I emerge pacified.
I've been softened by your smile.

Solitude a naked tree under green canvas,
bare branches reaching up to the moon in a midnight sky.
Solitude tried to hold me, but i have too much fight inside.
Solitude cannot control me 'cause I have you.

This tale of a Modern Cowboy,
ridin' planes of insecurity.
I emerge pacified.
I've been softened by your smile.

Went to sleep inside this dream you were the main character.
I woke up next to you, realized my destiny.
Inside you is where I live, where I find my solace.
This cowboy road is filled with pain,
it's filled with your presence.

This road once barren, dust swirled around one tumble weed,
and the heat it took advantage of the rays falling down on me.
This road now beautiful it bares flowers of every kind,
white roses of purity made possible by you.

Sometimes

When the walls came crashing down on me,
you opened up my skies,
and the rain drops were freely falling.
They washed away my misery.

The smell of lilacs in the morning breeze,
the scent of candles while we lay here.
I woke up to your illuminated smile.
I feel asleep to your dreams.

Sometimes, I feel the rain,
and sometimes its my tears.
Sometimes, I look into your eyes,
and I recognize my destiny.

And the leaves are paper airplanes.
They're dancin' with the wind.
I close my eyes again. I hear the melody,
the music of our creation.

The slow strum of my soft emotions,
the harmony of our passion,
dance and music, united
to paint a perfect picture.

Sometimes, I feel the rain,
and sometimes its my tears.
Sometimes, I look into your eyes,
and I recognize my destiny.

Sometimes, I feel the rain,
and sometimes its my tears.
Sometimes, I stare into your eyes,
and I find my forever.

Lost Angel

She had tucked in tie die and a big smile.
Wore them both like a shield from humanity (2x).

Lost Angel where have you been.
Your sleepin' in an empty bed.
But, do you still dance
when they turn the lights off (2x).
Will they turn the lights off again.

She waded innocent, ignorant of the iridescent sea,
released the potion from her passion,
angel dust across Winter's black sky,
and her wings they flutter like the sow in December.

Sometimes, I feel the rain,
and sometimes its my tears.
Sometimes, I look into your eyes,
and I recognize my destiny.

away.
watchin'.
watchin'.
Closed eyes, bare feet, unaware and your movin'.
Fluid lines, angel wings, tomorrow you will fly
But, tonight, you'll dance, dance like no one is
But, tonight, we'll dance, dance like no one is

Sometimes, I feel the rain,
and sometimes its my tears.
Sometimes, I look into your eyes,
and I recognize my destiny.

Lost Angel your visit was shrouded in secrecy.
Did you come to save my soul, take me from humanity.
Or, did you come to dance, dance like we use to.
Or, did you come to dance, close your eyes and dance again....

Journal Salvation

October 29, 1999

This need to write is real. I have a myriad of fears that need to be released, dropped lightly on paper, freed from the downward spiral of my thoughts.

Initially, I was disappointed that she did not want me to come over after rehearsal, but silence was my response because airing my concerns could only worsen the rocks which crumble under my fat toes. I pray she remains strong, that she does not relapse into doubt and fear, that she does not turn to her past to rationalize her NOW. I am her now. I want to be her forever, but feeling that she does not want me tears my heart.

Currently, I am in a state of panic. I just responded to an e-mail, and I am not sure what I wrote--if it was appropriate or not. I don't want to do anything to damage our relationship, but I do want to help, and this line is grey. What would help me has the potential to worsen the situation. This is a frustrating position to be in.

I suppose what is most confusing is her reassurance of love for me attached to a doubt of knowing. Can one

exist in chorus with the other?

October 29, 1999

Pick up the phone!

Okay, I need to talk. I need to express myself. I am not sure how I got to this position where I am hanging by the tassel of a burgundy theater cord, but I have lost all power. I get 1 phone call 2 1/2 hour after she gets out of class, and I suppose I am to be excited. I mean, how long does it take to call someone? Less than a minute obviously because that is all we stayed on the phone. Why is it so much for her to call me before she leaves and when she has free time? Why am I an inconvenience? Better yet, why doesn't she want to call me? And, why do I accept that? I deserve to be loved like I love.

But, how could I give up on someone I love SO much? This free time does nothing for my sanity. Actually, it is dragging me down. I'll be glad when this weekend is over.

(later)

The question burns like tapatio on a cut. Could she

spare five minutes of her night to let me know I am loved, to let me know I am thought about, to let me know my passion is not in vain.

Did she call?

Was she wandering how I spent my night--alone. Was she wanting to hear the smile in my voice, the love in my words, the longing evident in my quiver.

Did she call?

To talk, to recap daily events and nightly performances, just to talk to me, to hear me.

It is not a matter of availability. It is a matter of desire.

October 30, 2000

I have got to get these thoughts out fast before I screw up and air them in this fragile night. I set myself up for a fall, and I fell. I knew she wasn't going to show up at Sally's, but I kept hoping. I kept hoping she'd get to the bar, have a drink, realize she'd rather be

with me, get up and go to Sally's, but she didn't. I'll bet she never thought it. I'll bet she never even wished I was there. I, on the other hand, spend a large portion of every outing in her absence wishing she was there. Damn it! Why am I doing this? Why do I have to have everything perfect.

November 1, 1999

I want to go back to the soft summer suns that ignited fires which warmed my inside and illuminated your face. I want to go back to the days when I was the most important thing in your life, when my talent evoked new passion that was welcomed as we decided we were ready for the magnitude of love that ensued. I want to go back to moments when your confusion was stifled by your love for me, when your readiness--questionable--was determined one day at a time, when your future included me. I want to go back to days when going home was not an option, when the thought of me leaving brought tears to your eyes. I want to go back, NO I want to move forward and I want her to come with me.

November 11, 1999

This is no way to live. Dodging the blade of an inevitable wound to the heart, bowing under the words that come with razor consonants and dagger vowels.

So confused by all this. Honestly, how can she love me, but not want to be with me, this made more difficult by my weakness. I hurt her, prevented her from doing what she needs, and, now, it is I who is being selfish, concerned with the emptiness in my heart, not the dissonance in her's.

I would do anything to go back and re-direct her feelings. Maybe if I told her I didn't want her to dance, she wouldn't have, and she wouldn't be re-romanticizing solitude.

Yet, these are just words and do nothing but reinforce my pain.

November 6, 1999

I thought of suicide.

I felt the blade warm against my skin and the barrel

cold against my head, thought I'd smear I love you on my windshield with the blood from my vein, wondered what my cortex would look like splattered against my window, wondered if I'd have the courage to pull the trigger, attempted to understand the ramifications of eternal damnation, wondered what it would be like to feel life leave my body, wondered who'd care, thought it would be easier than drowning in this pain.

Why did this fuckin' happen?

November 9, 1999

The mystery grows more profound with the flip of each calendar page. Three days ago, we were a breath away from being over. Now, with nothing said, her smile has given me new life, made my smile return. I have advice coming at me from a myriad of directions, peers telling me to just have fun, stop being so serious; my mom instructing me to *shut up*. All sound advice, so I attempt to integrate all of it into my daily routine and subdue my need for answers and reassurance of permanence

In her smile, lives the beat of my heart. I sleep while meditating on that thought.

January 01, 2000

I had negative thoughts today.

Dealing with the chaos of October and November, I suppose. Chaos is like a non-cyclical bi-polar disorder. One cannot track chaos or understand chaos. One must only accept chaos. And, my thoughts are unjustifiable because I have past baggage, as well. Apparently she can deal with *Eric*story, while I choke on *her*story. So, it is my problem--my prophetic cross to bear.

Accepting that I may never understand is made all the more difficult by the Raphealian sky, all powder blue and painter with clouds as the sun's rays dissect the morning.

The water washes me, but I still feel dirty.

(later)

I can't stop missing you, missing your smile, missing your laugh, missing the gleam in your eyes, missing your embrace, missing your community, missing the way you make faces when I compliment you--your shy eyes bowed

and unaccepting but glad you are not taken for granted.

I fight these negative waves and focus on our positive horizon--within reach. Swimming in this sea I inhale huge gulps of you, allow you to fill my lungs and take you down with me, allow you to sustain me, trade independence for interdependence and hope you have done the same.

February 6, 2000

I went to sleep with disappointment in my head, and, now awake, the same recurring theme torments me. Looking deep, I wonder if this is some form of internal sabotage preventing happiness because, for reasons unclear, I do not feel I deserve happiness. Or, are my issues justified. Maybe I am merely attempting to fulfil my desires. Should I let them go? Should I walk this world with unfulfilled desires and be satisfied with what I have? I feel love and it tickles my spine, turns my stomach, and raises my hair, but there is more to eternity--there is want. I want to feel wanted. I want to be the priority. Somedays I feel both, and the emotion with-in is an inferno. Other days, my emotions are housed in an igloo. I hate the cold.

into-me-see

(Intimacy)

into-me-see

Overview

The intention of this essay is to produce a thorough self-analysis. To do this, I'll primarily utilize Hans Eysenck's *Biological Typology*. Being consumed with the functions of the brain, it is Eysenck's research into the Ascending Reticular Activating System (ARAS) and Limbic System which provides me with my greatest understanding of self. However, as Eysenck's theory is an amalgamation of other theories, so will this essay draw from other theorists, most notably Carl Jung and Alfred Adler.

Eysenck's *Biological Typology*

Eysenck provides a four dimension personality theory. The dimensions are created by the four quadrants which contain the poles: Introvert vs. Extrovert and Normal vs. Neurotic (Monte, 1986). In itself, this does not appear to be unique, but Eysenck's explanation of the poles separated him from other theorists. According to Eysenck, Introvert vs. Extrovert is determined by the level of activation in the reticular formation (low being introverted and high being extroverted), whereas, Normal vs. Neurotic results from the activation levels in the hypothalamus and hippocampus (low being normal and high being neurotic). Although his explanation is unique, his characteristics

coinciding with the poles are similar to Galen's, and later, Jung's, introverts being quiet and withdrawn, extroverts being outgoing and social, neurotics displaying a breakdown of personality, and normals being, well, balanced.

Introvert vs. Extrovert

In 1991, while reading a book entitled *Please Understand Me*, I realized I was an introvert. This has never changed and has been evident throughout my poetry. For example, "(Late) October 30, 1999" was written at 2 am when I was unable to sleep as remnants of fear and insecurity invaded my thoughts. Having a high level of excitation in the ARAS and a weak nervous system, it is difficult for the brain activation to be inhibited. Even though I was physically exhausted from a late gig my neurons continued to fire.

Even while examining everyday functions it is apparent that I have a strong disposition toward introversion--I often eat alone; I make few attempts to meet new people; I may brood for hours at a time; and I have a strong distaste for crowds. Having a clearer understanding of Eysenck, I can better understand why I am so uncomfortable during the Mardi Gras parade. Previously, I had thought I was overshadowed and wasn't receiving the attention I needed. Now, I realize my

constant ARAS excitation was causing me to overload on all the external stimuli, once again, characteristic of an introvert--elevated reticular activation and low inhibitory ability.

Normal vs. Neurotic

The distinction between normal and neurotic is less clear. Freud might say it is less clear because I am employing the defense mechanism, "Denial." Admittedly, the thought of labeling myself a neurotic is unattractive, but I am not denying my neurotic tendencies; rather, I am insisting that I am a conglomerate of the two. This position is more akin to Jung's Personality Psychetypes.

Jung viewed people as having a "fundamental attitude" (introvert vs. extrovert) and a dominant function (thinking, feeling, sensation, or intuition). However, Jung didn't limit people to these dimensions, asserting that we draw from all four functions and are "primarily", not always, oriented to our fundamental attitude (Cloninger, 1996). Albeit Eysenck doesn't appear to support amalgamative personalities, I don't believe he is in total opposition to them. Surely, Eysenck wouldn't say a person's limbic arousal is "always" high or "always" low.

At any rate, I can see in my own life the

characteristic of both a neurotic and a normal. The differentiating factor, however, does appear to be emotions which happen to be controlled by the hypothalamus. If I am faced with a stressful stimulus that is tied to my emotions, let's say an argument with my wife, it increases the activation in my limbic system which produces neurotic behaviors, such as, anxiety and worrying. Going back to the poem, this is another contributing factor to why I couldn't sleep. As the breakdown theory goes, you can think and not feel, but you can't feel and not think (Monte, 1986). My emotions were being pulled, my limbic system was activated which caused my ARAS to respond, and if the brain is up, Eric is up. Another scenario: this time the stimulus does not affect my emotions, maybe my truck breaking down, I am able to respond normally: calm, controlled, and diligent in my efforts to fix it. But, if I can't, I certainly won't lose any sleep over it. The truck has no link to my emotions. It doesn't prevent me from feeling. It doesn't show me love. It is an inanimate object which doesn't activate my visceral brain; coincidentally, I only have to shut down my reticular formation to sleep. As an introvert with a high level of ARAS activation, I do this every night. This proves I am both a neurotic and a normal depending on what

stimulus I am responding to.

Psychoticism

Another aspect of Eysenck's theory is "Psychoticism." Eysenck declared that neuroticism and psychoticism are different. As previously stated, neuroticism deals with the activation in the limbic system, whereas, psychoticism is polygenic. Meaning, it is the combination and number of psychotic genes that people inherit from their parents which determines their degree of psychoticism (Monte, 1986). As of yet, I haven't displayed any psychotic behavior. In the chapter "Journal Salvation," one might access the entry on November 6, 1999, as being psychotic, but they would be incorrect. Psychotic behavior is void of thought and rationalization. It is completely egocentric and can rarely be prevented by one's self. In the scenario presented in the journal, I am fully conscious of the consequences, stating, "Wondered what it would be like to feel life leave my body. Wondered who'd care." I may have been romanticizing suicide, and in that romance was clear, although dark and jaded, poetic thought. Thought is the antithesis of psychotic behavior.

Besides, I recognize right from wrong, and, even in the midst of an argument, I can control myself enough to remain non-violent. Also, I don't fit the definition of

someone with a high "P" score (psychotic) on Eysenck's personality questionnaire. I am the antithesis of aggressive. Cold people disturb me. As a thinker, I am rarely impulsive, and I am neither impersonal nor unempathetic.

Fictional Finalism

Eysenck's *Biological Typology* has been instrumental in helping me understand "why" I respond the way I do to various stimuli, but it doesn't attempt to explain the existence of goals. And, personally, I don't think the level of my ARAS or limbic activation can tell me why I want to be a poet. For better insight into my motivation I turned to Alfred Adler's *Individual Psychology*.

Within Adler's theory is the concept of "fictional finalism" which is an individual's image of the goal they are striving for (Cloninger, 1996). I believe my primary goal, or desirable future state, is to surpass my father. My fictional finalism is a simple statement that manifests itself in almost every aspect of my life. My dedication to higher education, my ability to play guitar and sing, my spoken word performances, even my desire to be married and have children, are all partly attempts to surpass my father. Granted, it is not the reason I exhibit these behaviors, but it definitely is a

factor.

Summary

Without a doubt, I am introverted--I look inward. I show all the external signs of introversions, and my behaviors in response to various stimuli are indicative of an Eysenckian Introvert. On

the other hand, I am neither neurotic nor normal; I am balanced.

Situationally, I can display both neuroticism and normalcy, and I have correlated the difference to the involvement of emotions. Fortunately, I am not a psychotic. Were I to take the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, I would have a low "P" score. Finally, while Eysenck can assist me in understanding why I respond the way I do to various stimuli, he couldn't help me figure out my motivation. For that, I turned to Adler's concept of fictional finalism. Through his concept I was able to determine the image of my ultimate goal--to surpass my father as a poet, an intellectual, and most importantly, by becoming a husband and father.

Images of Their

Is

Images of Their ID's

All artists have talent but not all people with talent are artists.

To understand this statement a working definition of "artist" is needed. Carl Jung defines the artist as, "A collective man, a vehicle and moulder of sometimes so heavy a burden that he is fated to sacrifice happiness and everything worth living for the ordinary man" (Jung, 1941). The charge of this literature review is to determine what that burden is. As most things psychological begin with Freud, so will this review.

According to Freud, "The major psychoanalytic concept for understanding artists is the concept of sublimation [Sublimation occurs when libidinal drives are transformed into socially desirable outlets]" (Cloninger, 1996). An example of this concept is accessible through the painting of Georgia O'Keefe. Having never had children, she was fraught with penis envy, as Freud would say, and subconsciously, her unfulfilled sexual motives may be manifested in portraits of flowers that many say resemble female genitalia (Cloninger, 1996). As far as the relation to artists, the Freudian perspective would say artists are created by unresolved libidinal urges that emerge as art through sublimation. In a letter to actress Yvette Guilbert Freud said, "[Art results] from faculties undeveloped, and suppressed desires" (Werman, 1998).

Thus, the burden of artists are their unconscious desires.

Other theorists, such as Dollard and Miller, have similar perspectives believing artists were burdened by internal conflicts manifested as art (Cloninger, 1996). As the psychoanalytic view declined and trait theory became more prevalent, the burden was misplaced and focus was centered on artistic or creative traits. Raymond Cattell was the main contributor to this ideology (Cloninger, 1996). Then the work of Hans Eysenck turned the focus back toward the suffering of artists.

The Eysenckian Personality initially consisted of two dimensions--Extroversion vs. Introversion and Neurotic vs. Normal (Monte, 1987). However, as his theory matured Eysenck recognized a third dimension which he termed Psychoticism (P) (Eysenck, 1995). According to Eysenck, P is correlated to creativity, but it is not a direct positive correlation. Low levels of P foster creativity, but extremely high levels often appear as functional psychosis (schizophrenia; bipolar disorder) (Eysenck, 1995).

I am inclined to support the Eysenckian model. Artists often sacrifice basic necessities for their art. The vision of Kerouac on a benzedrine binge with a mile

long scroll of taped paper slithering through his mad typewriter comes to mind. According to most accounts, Kerouac stayed up for three consecutive days writing on the road. To me, that represents a low level of P, drug induced or not. Personally, I have forsaken physical needs to acquire better equipment, equipment that would improve my art.

Several researchers such as Jamison (1989) and Ludwig (1992, 1995) have produced work similar to Eysenck's, revealing a reliable empirical link between eminent creators and psychopathology (Cassandro, 1998). Jamison (1989) and Brod (1997) have progressed the theory by relating specific disorders to the arts--most commonly bipolar affective disorder (Cassandro, 1998). According to these theorists, the burden of the artist is abnormal behavior. Besides schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder, schizotypal personality disorder has been linked to creativity (Brod, 1997).

It is important to note that the title "artist" cannot be applied to a person who has not produced art. Therefore, "artist" should not be seen as an unconditional personality type. A person may have the ability, the genes, and the influences yet never actualize the artist within them. Eysenck was cognizant of the conditionality of artistic emergence stating,

Possesing this trait [creativity] does not guarantee *creative achievement*. Trait creativity may be a necessary component of such achievement, but many other conditions must be fulfilled, many other traits added (e.g. ego-strength), many abilities and behaviours added (e.g. IQ, persistence), and many socio-cultural variables present, before high creative achievement becomes probable (Eysenck, 1995).

However, it was Miller who attempted to understand the reason underlying the birth of the artist from within.

Miller (1998) studied patients who made life altering decision towards the arts after developing Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD). According to the journal article, "Emergence of Artistic Talent in Frontotemporal Dementia," "All patients we have seen who developed or maintained artistic talents carried a diagnosis of FTD" (Miller et al, 1998). They continued by saying, "Talent in one area, such as art, may be accompanied by dysfunction in other spheres, such as social skills. The loss of social skills and inhibition may have facilitated the art of our patients" (Miller et al, 1998). Once again the burden of the artist is related

to social indifference, but, according to Miller, the indifference is caused by Frontotemporal dementia.

This appears to be an analogy of the greatest philosophical question, "Which came first the chicken or the egg?" In response to their social indifference, do artists retreat into their work, or are artists indifferent to social interaction because they are preoccupied with their art? In my experience it is the latter. I am not socially inept, but I am indifferent to the construction of a huge social network. I don't seek out people because the few close friends and family members that I surround myself with fulfill my need for interaction and affords me more time to create.

To address this Jungian concept of burdened artists from opposition, one might say that it is not the burden that drives artists but the invitation to more creative freedom. According to Cassandro (1998), "The arts not only are found to be inviting, but may hold the promise of increased creative potential to those individuals prone to mental illness." This concept has its roots in a study by Ludwig (1995) in which he says, "Fields that tolerate more ambiguity and less structure and proof in the permissible forms of expression and creative products appear to tolerate people with mental disturbances more and allow these people to capitalize

on their highly personal visions." Maybe it is not that artists are burdened; therefore, they are abnormal. Maybe it is that artists are not normal; therefore, their promise is creative potential actualized in a highly personal vision.

From the evidence provided, it is apparent that there is a link between madness and artistic achievement. Whether the madness is a burden or a blessing is yet to be determined, but, according to some recent research by Vincent J. Cassandro, there is an exorbitant price to pay for being an "artist."

In relation to other academic fields, artists have the shortest life span (Cassandro, 1998). In his study concerning the premature mortality across fields of creative endeavors, Cassandro determined the mean age for artists deaths was 65.43, whereas people in other fields had a mean age of 67.88 (Cassandro, 1998). Comparatively speaking, artists lose 2 and 1/2 years of their lives.

At first the data appears to be purely correlational, but Cassandro provided several possible causal explanations. The first, career-landmarks, relates the disparity of lifespans to the age at which people become eminent. Many great scientists and philosophers may have died before they produced

significant work. Artists, on the other hand, often produce their most profound pieces at a young age (Cassandro, 1998). Another explanation, stimulation-deprivation, correlates the lack of stimulation (more or less defined as social-interaction) with early mortality. Thus, careers, such as painting and writing, which are largely solitary activities result in premature mortality (Cassandro, 1998). This theory readdresses and reinforces the previous definition of "burden"--burden being some form of abnormal behavior such as schizotypal personality disorder. The last explanation introduces a different burden that artists suffer from. Differential-resources, concludes that artists die at a younger age because they lack the resources that many other academic professions have (Cassandro, 1998). Most scientists, philosophers, and inventors receive funding, but artists, usually, are not profitable until they are dead. Many suffer in poverty with no health care and poor nutrition. It is this minimalistic existence that Cassandro blames for their short lifespans (1998). Still, the question of burden or blessing remains unanswered. Do they live in destitution because they have to or because they want to or, more profoundly because they need to, because the need to create is so powerful that they must satiate

that hunger first.

Having attempted to look into the eyes of an artist through the gaze of a psychologist, this study now turns to the understanding of an artist. Rainer Maria Rilke, an eminent German writer of the early 20th century said, "Artistic experience lies so incredibly close to that of sex, to its pain and its ecstasy, that the two manifestations are indeed but different forms of one and the same yearning and delight" (1954). Rilke's insight into the experience of an artist, with its embrace of pain and ecstasy, lends a unique credence to the previously mentioned work of Jamison (1989) and Brod (1997) in which creativity was correlated to bipolar affective disorder. In letters to a young poet whom Rilke was mentoring he wrote, "Dear sir, love your solitude and bear with sweet-sounding lamentation the suffering it causes you" and "It is good to be solitary, for solitude is difficult; that something is difficult must be a reason the more for us to do it" (Rilke 1954). This caress of solitude correlates to just about every other theory presented by this review, including stimulation-deprivation.

Although links were made, associations revealed, and correlations apparent, the "burden" may never be fully understood because it is subjective (as is Jung's

definition). What is certain is that, in both their eyes and the eyes of their observers, artists are a unique populace with consistent individuality that merits further research from psychologists.

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