



It's  
not that  
We  
are sometimes  
Alone

EP Allan

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## The Empty Corridors of Dust

“Hey Look” your smile  
a white butterfly opening & closing  
its moon dappled August wings  
“I found the lemons  
in the onion bin”  
& matching word to deed  
you lifted two yellow  
sour bombs out from  
a box of jostling  
teary planetoids  
whose twitching paper  
ochre skins were genetically  
laced with frog spit  
bovine growth hormones  
& Dr Canine’s secret  
anti-athlete foot  
& hemorrhoid hair remover  
formula

Oh its such fun  
shopping for unknown  
would be edibles  
hidden in new  
marketable positions

Just the other day  
we found the strawberries  
swimming in the flounder tank  
their green star smooshed  
to one side  
                    their seeds  
ganged up in a racing  
stripe down their newly  
finned backs  
self-popping corn commingled with  
charcoal lighter fluid  
right next to cannibalistic  
piranha chocolates  
who eat themselves  
with white frosted  
teeth  
                    glowing potatoes  
which can be used  
as night lights  
to persuade new  
3 eyed babies

with cure pink  
lizard scales over  
8 fingered paws  
that all is normal  
down these empty  
corridors  
of dust



## A Solstice Obituary

The longest day slipped  
in a heavy blanket of haze  
rain

    & stale tennis shoe winds  
& now inside July's  
convection steam bath  
it is so difficult to imagine  
the longest night laden  
down with despairing ice  
& razor frost winds  
is already twining  
the 13 knots in summer's  
noose & is eagerly counting  
the drop

    with its broken  
hangman smile  
& calloused heart hands  
in only 10 more weeks  
autumn's brown moth wings  
will be scratching against  
the panes

    as the garden  
falls silent  
the spent leaves slagging wet  
the last hurrah of squash  
dangling green globes  
from the umber weave  
of slatted fence  
& the slickly dark basil  
stumps poking the ribs  
of summer salads  
into dead

    September air



can't you see Leroy the Eldest  
sitting in the oval office  
just like old Leroy Washington  
the founding father 'n toad  
and he has so many brothers  
to follow"

"No I can't see  
a 30 pound presidential toad  
as anything other than very well  
deserved road kill

It's disgusting  
the way he eats just yesterday  
he swallowed Leroy the Hamster  
whole

I'm glad he's your  
son & not mine"  
"I wouldn't be too sure about that  
Mr. Smug"

mother's shrill voice  
implodes violin strings at full  
screach

"he's got your eyes  
your small

little

mean

toad eyes"

"Oh I'm sick of this"  
ejaculated father

"When is  
this irritating conversation  
ever going to stop"

"I don't know"

screaled mother

"When is your irritating  
de-evolution ever going  
to stop"



In the postbox of Consciousness

Nightly in the dream world dark  
my REM cyclic brain invents  
never before constructs of unique  
possibilities

Air Skies

which hover n glide a foot  
above the heat shimmering cement  
walks hugging the contours  
of hills and vales of reputable  
middle class lawns with a particularly  
wild abandon

stale summer air

brushing though the curled  
tufts of angel hair winging out  
from the ink dark elastic  
hat band in one long  
screeeeeeeeel

of feral heart joy  
never before instruments  
with silver mallets tapping  
bronze strings

blown air

and damp parchment sound boxes  
singing out curious polychromed  
notes of oriental

inscrutability

antifungal dish deodorant  
aerosol

no more scrubbing

just simply spray and watch  
that little well the cup cradles  
within turn a bright copper  
oxide green as all those  
years of built up mold  
& garlic oil  
are effortlessly  
melted away  
but then morning breaks  
the eyes open  
& all is exactly  
as it was before  
the stale watery orts  
of last night's dinner still  
clogging the sink  
& all that is left  
are the still sleeping  
possibilities deposited  
in the post box of consciousness  
by the mad dream moon





turning autumn's corner  
a song sun bright whistled  
between tuneless teeth  
& bits of soil  
hieroglyphed with timeless  
shards of pottery  
arrow heads  
& plastic blue pen caps  
will rumple up in a hungry  
soil wave

                    & now the last  
finally sucking the fire out  
pulling me down  
with all the other joyless  
waiting  
dead

Mr. Conservative's Philosophical  
Radio Pontification

“Don't count your chickens  
until they're headless  
in you oven

    & even then  
you'd better wait  
until the steak knife of existence  
is serrating the hot saged  
meat from the bone  
can't be too safe  
to worry

    he who squeaks  
the loudest gets oiled  
rolled in anchovy paste  
& stewed

    never walk under  
a mattress

    a cat may land  
on its feet but a schnauzer  
always hits the deck  
with its ass

    never  
microwave a pineapple  
throbbing lip pink  
is not a good color  
for morning elephants  
& never kiss a porcupine  
goodbye”

    Bent before a carbon  
black mic of less than FCC  
restrictives Mr. AM/FM  
pokes one suet white finger  
into the squirming air  
his round lobster moon  
face flashing grey  
finned teeth  
grown cellulose on clichés  
& rancid sausage  
his 9 month preg  
beer gut swells his no longer  
white golf shirt

    & hugs his knees  
with such determinism  
that not even force 7 g  
could pry the redolent  
scabbed flesh into attention

then winking one small  
olive eye he will always  
conclude his late night  
dial in radio hour after Dr. Peppy's  
Viagra Shack Ads with one  
last pruned raspberry  
“and always remember  
this Milwaukee  
while a kiss is just  
the overture  
the whole 9 yards  
will get you arrested  
in Toledo”

The Homeless One  
Matsuyama City Train Station  
July 24, 2006

She lives in a stairwell  
during the rain filled days  
of grey  
somnambulant thought  
her one pleasure smoking  
the butts impatient  
starved and pressed bustling  
business suits have pressed  
out on their way into the no  
smoking interior  
                                  then crab quick  
sideways she scuttles  
away from her nest of slick  
plastic blue bags  
                                  & dull  
cardboard boxes to fish  
the still smoldering end  
from the ashen grate  
then pinched the squashed  
cylinder back into a wavy  
tube  
                                  she takes a draw  
her hard coal eyes  
watering with pleasure  
as she slinks back  
to her overflowing mound  
of street possessions  
it's amazing to think  
of her thin brittle body  
with the ragged scissor  
cropped hair  
                                  & spindly  
spider arms  
toting each bulging  
rounder than her bag  
down the would be grey  
marble steps  
                                  one  
                                  by one  
then stacking them into  
an igloo  
                                  to wait out  
these merciless days  
of mean

dark  
rain  
until the sun begins  
to dominate the sweltering  
sky blue  
then she will lug  
her remains a few yards  
at a time down the black  
oily street  
& into an unmarked  
indifference





## After the Rains

The sweaty sock sauna  
day sprawls  
    a fat man's  
wet paunch moon drooped  
over the sagging hear  
battered leaves  
    the sidewalks  
steam dog breath up from  
oily black rainbowed puddles  
while the rain drowned  
worms dehydrate into flat  
brown curls  
    limp laundry  
is quickly hung on the lines  
white laced braziers  
& middle aged boxers  
with throbbing red hearts  
and pink assed cupids  
dangle listless  
    from baby  
blue plastic clothes pins  
it's days like this when cats  
commit suicide  
birds laze on branches  
too hot to move  
    & even  
the throbbing  
    thrumming  
air conditioner fails to bring  
relief  
    inside the shuttered  
fastness of itchy  
tossing  
    sheeted insomnia

## Cantaloupe

Hidden by shade heart  
leaves  
    in the green dark  
a ponderous planet  
melon swells with the promise  
of soil  
    & a steady  
baptismal rain  
never seen  
    never noted they grow  
In the winter blasted dessert  
April earth  
    the seed was laid  
and a pale green shoop drilled  
a dirt encrusted finger  
up from the loam  
split into 2 ridiculous  
fat halves  
    & from that  
the vine slowly  
    agonizingly  
crept forth  
    & after a month  
of pulling the invading  
crabgrass  
    & inquisitory  
jenny from around the still  
shy stalk  
    finally eager  
Cortez eyes espied  
the first yellow bud  
& painted melon laden  
plates  
    with fructose wet  
crescents glazed with a heavy  
musk aroma  
    only to discover  
it was male as it shriveled  
into a brown  
    spent memory  
then others blooming splendor  
sun gold failing back to earth  
until finally one small nub  
began  
    then it was forgot  
work called the mind

down dismal cement  
corridors  
          until today  
while surveying the rioting  
carnage of weeds gone  
berserk unpulled free  
there it still was  
patiently swelling the breeze  
dappled shade with a steady  
unspoken expectation

## Alive in the Moment

The night frozen river  
a walkway of slick tumble  
down hills  
    & frosted vales  
as the snow curled thick  
angel wings down the pitchdark  
canopy nailed to the heavens  
by the ice black spears of trees  
stretching silent  
    Did not the unexpected  
pits slagged open  
    nitrate black water  
gurgling  
    rushing under its silver  
smooth lip ice  
    add the thrill  
of death  
    that the road would  
crack  
    & down in an unrepleted  
scream you would drop  
the rocks scrapping your boots  
hands failing ineffectual  
the ice pasting the bulging  
air choked eyes still  
maybe you would just disappear  
washed into forgot  
by the surging spring rush  
And this thought of death  
so personal  
    yet indifferent  
painted the world  
with a magical feral beauty  
each wintermint breath  
so preciously alive  
even awe could not  
imagine  
    while all around  
in the snow laden night  
the houses were curtained  
against the life  
pulsating down  
the unfathomable winter  
kissed globe  
lost in moribund  
TV dreams

## A Requiem for 1950 Dreams

Whatever happened  
to the atomic car  
with the micro-nuclear sub  
processor humming under its  
automatic gizmo encrusted  
hood  
    self steering  
                    self inflating  
complete with alpha-tubular  
video stations  
                    tanning booths  
for that ever so cheerful  
bronze microwave glow  
& a Mr. Mixit Cocktail  
Robot  
    guaranteed to make  
driving a real blast  
The future was to be  
oh so lazy that even the happy  
fish were to leap  
out of the lake & fall  
apart in pre-breaded  
Captain Jack Fish Fingers  
drive through hamburger joints  
orbiting Uranus where 3 eyes  
green soda hop girls  
glided on rocket powered  
solar skates  
                    a bright service  
smile etched on all 8  
chins  
    methane powered  
luna elevators from New  
York to the Sea of Galileo  
just under the time  
your jockies could screal  
Ger  
    on  
        IMOOOOO  
all the hospitals were to be  
closed for urban renewal  
& converted into Madam Retro's  
Jelly Centers  
                    outer space  
sex hotels for that 0  
G workout

the future  
as a self perpetuating  
hula-hoop heaven  
where each triple mooned  
day was even more  
perfect

## Certainty

Everyday we practice  
good-bye  
    standing before  
scientifically frosted mirrors  
counting each  
    crow's foot  
& sagging chin wrinkle  
pretending that yes  
we still have it  
that no we are not  
old  
    a useless goat  
not even suitable  
for soup  
    manufacturing  
hay-seed platitudes  
"We're not getting any older  
we're just getting meaner  
Youth is wasted  
on jellyfish  
& Life begins after  
you're dead"  
    but in the accounting  
houses of subconsciousness  
we know  
    with all the certitude  
of shovels  
    & lime  
with all the dated notation  
of cheap granite  
slabs starrng up from  
carefully nitrated lawns  
at an impossibly  
liquid blue heaven

## This Tired Stupidity

After hours pressed  
into cheap  
    plywooded hotel  
rooms listening to yakking  
neighbors  
    their raucous voices  
pealing through the twisted  
sheet night  
    their voracious  
animal laugh mocking  
sleep  
    the brain refuses  
to work  
    & so many simple  
tasks require Herculean  
effort  
    do the laces go  
right over left  
    or the reverse  
which day is it  
if you take 9  
from 8  
    add 3  
and divide by 2  
the result should not be  
a drool wet blob  
smeared around the bottom  
of yellow notepads  
nor is the result  
a pair of legs sheathed  
in blue jeans  
a plethora of hair  
& fashionable mauve  
tank top of less than  
Parisian design  
    but never-the-less  
filled with globalized  
twin popularities  
which calls the mute  
ape into a semblance  
of attention  
    but a singular  
digit representing  
the lack of  
confidence  
bodily hygiene  
& hungry dog eyes  
in its one  
pointing finger

## Listening Quiet

In the soul waking green  
light woods  
                  the buttery throb  
of leaves painting the floor  
with its secret alien  
globe ferns unrolling  
their frond tongues  
somewhere the surrationalous  
hush of water  
                  dripping off  
a moss dark rock lip  
filtered crystal rings  
tippolating over the smooth  
black night loam  
an errant breeze surging  
the spindled undergrowth  
trees vying up for  
a drink of blue air  
sun with the fat  
molted grey trunks  
smug with age  
& earth  
alone in the welcoming  
throng of columbine  
with its brilliant  
neon stars poking the  
shadows with untroubled  
fire woods  
                  the darting  
nervous thought squirrels  
scratching the leaves  
for acorns  
                  & bug hungry  
birds darting bullets  
through the sun stabbed  
shadowed air

Shat upon

Impatient sandals tapping  
down soot black  
oil black

London walks  
a throng of shapeless  
suet bags in global despair  
red polo shirts  
& denim ugly  
shorts milled

the six tiered  
facades of glass & old  
Victorian brick pressing  
down day

a slick warm  
splotch of vengeful  
pigeon curled brown  
over my fingers

& of course  
the handkerchief was in the same  
handed pocket  
& not wanting to  
smear my night ink trousers  
with pigeon shit

I reached  
across my butt and two fingered  
crabbed the blue cloth  
out

& began wiping  
each soiled finger off  
one by one

over &  
over dreaming of soap  
scrubbing the death  
away in a smeary  
white lather

## The Waste

Mr Podgy lives alone  
up Elm Street  
his fleshly fingers  
drooping suet  
his trimmed  
neat Dr Crippen mustache  
oiled with strawberry scented  
plug grease  
shines in a thin  
wet inverted V  
as each day  
he takes one clear plastic  
bag out from his kitchen's  
coffee can  
filled with pork  
chop bones  
potato skins  
& turnip peelings  
out to the stale  
soda rank plastic green  
bin  
then his morning  
exsertion fulfilled  
he collapses  
in a thread bare  
olive chair as the eternally  
on Golf Channel broadcasts  
faultlessly attired bores putting  
in action replays  
he knows them all  
each wobble  
each curve  
each miss  
or miraculous slow  
agonized drop  
& staring out  
from the peeling bluechip  
point of his soul  
he waits  
for the final  
gasp as the years  
of Jack Daniels  
potato chips  
& cola  
gang up in an unstaunchable  
roil of hard fat



Assholes World Wide Inc.

It doesn't matter  
which country you go  
they're there  
4 a.m. assholes yawping  
in stupid  
    shouting voices  
guffawing  
    hiccupping  
                    fart laughs  
screaling  
    "YEEYOODLEDO"  
at top volume  
maybe it makes them feel  
important  
    knowing that all  
the other thin cardboard  
boxed inmates  
                    of the cheap  
hotel variety are now thoroughly  
awake  
    pillows pressed  
inadequately over sleepless  
ears  
    dull eyes peeled  
open staring  
                    at beige painted  
nothing  
picturing  
    voodoo pins  
shotguns  
    & brains splattered  
in merciful silence  
of pounding the vile  
ape teeth  
    into hammered  
jelly  
    but nothing ever  
happens  
    & so they  
gab car alarm voices  
shitting  
    over every grit  
toothed insomniac praying  
for the hangman's  
final sleep  
drop

## And They Lost the War

The call of Patriotic drums filled  
their mind  
    & out to hack the sand  
castled enemy they marched  
green camouflage rubber boots stomping  
bayonets glinting  
    in the baking  
noon sun  
    silver spears refracting  
off black Hollywood glasses  
red cellophaned cigarette boxes  
ensconced in shirt pockets  
boys pretending men  
sweat ripping their dull olive  
shirts rank wet  
    silver  
name tags noosed around  
Seraphic throats  
    so the aftermath  
accountants would know which name  
could be adequately deleted  
from the payroll  
    & which body  
parts could be shipped  
where  
    with a 9.99 mass  
stamped flag  
    and a crisp white  
envelope containing  
“We can safely assume  
that this tongue is all that  
remains of your son  
bury it proudly  
he died screaming  
in duty  
    and may  
or not  
    have had your  
name upon this very  
self same item  
if not his memory  
Please note that the memorial  
discount coupon included  
is unfortunately already  
expired”



Terrorist Weapons  
(based upon the new list of items which cannot  
be carried upon all flights to the U.S.)

A starched tie knotted  
around pruned sagging  
throat

scant hair loped  
over the top in a futile  
attempt to hide Mt. Egg  
Mr. Papyrus sneers  
at the thrumming  
clicking cameras  
“Here’s the latest  
up to the hour  
list of terrorist  
weapons which cannot be  
carried without special  
permit from the house  
of homeland insecurity:

Books

Yes these obsquious  
items could be used to hit  
a public transport unit over  
the noggin resulting  
in a hijacked bus  
or as anyone who is someone  
knows the Koran is whispered  
at a distance of 50 miles  
will turn the most atheistic  
pilot

into a kamikaze  
holy warrior self destructive  
dive bomb

Item number 2

Pens

Pencils

Markers

not only could they be invected  
into passerby eyes  
& we all know give a teen  
a pen & the first they  
he does is to ram it  
into a perfect innocent’s  
sight hole

they could actually  
be used to  
write

And our final item  
Paper  
this incredible harbinger  
of doom can be  
folded into origamic  
boxes

air missiles which can  
carry a maximum  
load of one needle  
& which can be hurled  
yes hurled at law  
enforcement officers  
in the public civil  
call to stomp  
teargas

rubber bullet  
waterboard  
the suspicious  
pencil laden  
red commie  
pinko  
book toting  
terrorist

However no need  
to worry  
your god  
given holy land right  
to carry

automatic  
weaponry will in no  
way be denied  
besides you now have  
the patriotic duty  
to shoot anyone  
who isn't someone  
carrying a piece of folded  
airplane paper on sight  
Thank you

Good Night

Always remember  
you can't be too  
afraid

& keep on shopping  
but only with plastic  
America"

## Waiting for Light

On the banks of the dead  
we pitched out flaming blue  
tent

    the twisted remains  
of slag black grass  
undulating in hot  
dog breath winds  
the withered coal husks  
of leafless

        skeleton  
trees reaching bone  
twig arms

        into the pitch  
night canopy under which  
not one constellation  
of mapped intent

                                could be  
inscribed with childhood  
connect the dots  
imagination

Not one dream  
nor hope can be  
recalled

        here by this  
silent

        forgetful river  
& even the wind  
makes not a single  
susurration

                                as it blows  
out from the abysmal  
past

        it is here we lit  
our fire

        the yellow orange  
tongues of blue dancing  
flames

        curling up  
from dry popping bones  
and sitting back  
in olive

        & curd white  
checked lawn chairs  
our hushed voices  
murmur of themselves

as we wait  
for the dawn's  
singular green ray  
to pierce the darkness  
with the tumbling  
splintered  
light of sun

## Guitar Lessons

### Counting

sweat curled over  
his roman pink nose  
as he tapped  
the hollow  
body of his electric  
jazz guitar  
“One-E-And-A-Two-E-And-A”

And I would inevitably  
start one quarter note  
too late  
& he would stop  
strumming the silken sad  
A

“No No  
On 3  
You begin on 3  
Again”

And so the count would  
start  
& sometimes  
luck held on the 3 count  
& sometimes  
it missed the numbers  
& his whole face would screw  
up  
as his blue ice fire eyes  
drilled into the back  
of my 7 year old head  
his sandy mustache sneering  
“Don’t you ever  
Practice?”

I would always  
deny the impeachment  
no matter how true  
or not  
& we would begin  
as he spat the notes  
1 last time  
“Pa deda Pa deda da da”  
& finally our guitars merged  
resounding the room  
with magic notes  
then his face would fall  
into a better world  
far beyond the plywood  
box he eked his living  
within

Dancing on the Edge  
of the World

Each step  
    a bone knife  
edge  
    hemmed by serrated  
mountain ridges  
                    or the roaring  
night blue sea curling  
over the lip of the world  
tumbling iridescent  
rainbows  
    & spangles  
                    & crisp  
feather white foam  
into the infinite  
abyss  
    while the earth  
tethered sun paints  
the eternal hurling  
water  
    Caribbean blue  
each word  
    or thought  
deathly distraction  
for the pulminating  
fox-trot feet  
  
dancing  
mind tumbling fire  
alive  
    here at the world's  
impossible end



Ultimately  
We All Know How  
This Will End

Two grey back pressed  
rain days

                  have painted  
the cheap neon facades  
of department stores  
instant convenience  
centers

                  & the rancid smoke  
cement apartments

  an equal  
death drab

                                  the sun burned  
leaves

                          no longer surging  
sap bright

                          but an August  
battered brown

                                  droop  
still

                  the puddle muck  
of tire gutted gravel  
driveways

                          stink of dog shit  
& rotting weeds

it is this moment  
the future knocks  
holding dead summer  
in a brown lunch bag  
& the school bell tolls  
& teachers tighten their  
hideous blue ties  
around their sagging  
veined throats  
& grit their teeth  
as shrill screams  
echo up the shoe  
clattering hallway



cars per hour  
we learned to work  
for nothing  
        other than money  
we learned not to expect  
too much  
        clean underwear  
the thrill of 40 year old  
black & white reruns  
the taste of genetically  
altered coffee  
but we always knew  
we were saving  
the world for Roloids  
we knew doctors could  
cure us with plug 'n' go  
transistor parts  
we knew the bank  
owned us  
        & it was better  
not to speak too loudly  
we knew commies couldn't  
afford shoehorn tight  
blue jeans  
we knew  
        we knew  
we were so certain  
that we already made  
the down  
        payment on the key  
to heaven  
        that we could  
get up each day  
& stare out the old  
age window  
waiting for the final  
slice  
        to pop up  
tombstone toast

## Watching Mr. Dead Eat

Imagine death knocked  
lightly  
    but ever so  
persistent  
    upon your door  
& stood there smiling  
at the smug  
    shut wood  
& when you answered  
he politely bobbed  
his hollow cue-ball  
cranium  
    & entered  
the home of your mind  
then sitting up right  
elbows propped upon  
the toast crumbed  
table  
    he began to  
eat a can of baked  
beans  
    making little sucking  
farting sounds  
    as he slurped  
in the bloody sauce  
one bean at a time  
yellowed carried molars  
chewing  
    relishing the pulpy  
white seeds  
    and with each bite  
you could hear a scream  
of somebody dying  
horribly  
screeching through the stunned  
silent living room  
  
& as death masticates  
you realize that somewhere  
in that can with the black  
fly caked lumps crusted  
on the jagged  
    sawed open  
rim  
    was you  
that your bean was jumbled

with all the other  
uncountable  
                  infinite  
beans welling up through  
the menstrual thick  
sauce  
                  & maybe not today  
nor even tomorrow  
but soon  
                  those clattering  
yellow teeth  
                  would find  
your bean & smash it  
with complete  
indifference  
maybe belching  
or spitting the slick  
bloodied skin  
to the hungry  
cockroach floor  
& even then he wouldn't  
leave  
                  but sit  
                  his bone  
butt pressed in your  
chair  
                  smucking the smeary  
sauce one quavering  
fear torn bean  
at a time



# It's Not that We are sometimes Alone

EP Allan graduated from The University of Wisconsin — Milwaukee with an M.F.A. in Creative Mis-spelling and has won The American Poet's Prize and the Cole Younger Poet's Award. He has published in various literary magazines, both traditional print and modern E format. Besides writing he also records electronic trance music, sketches landscapes, and takes photographs. He is currently teaching English at Matsuyama University in Japan.

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