

# When the Church Bell Chimes

Poems

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Production by Damon Freed  
Printed and bound by Lulu

This book is typeset in Times New Roman.

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Front Cover by Damon Freed

Back Cover by Damon Freed

Printed in The United States of America

First Edition  
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ISBN #: 978-0-359-90611-6

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## **A Carrier of Souls**

At night I go home to an abandoned place  
Where the monsters and ghouls show their faces  
Where the vents all bellow a haunting sound  
Where the heater groans when just I'm around

Where I'll unlock my rusty gate  
And do my best to concentrate  
On all that is holy and everything light  
For the dead, otherwise, are bound to fright

I'm told they have woken to capture the flesh  
Of some Godly boy they've yet to catch  
I'm told this boy is young and wise  
I'm told this boy can hear their cries

I'm told this boy can navigate  
Their despot souls from earth to heaven's gate  
I'm also told he waits for something unknown  
Perhaps it is for the proper groan

Or, perhaps it's for the proper rite  
Of passage into day from night  
Or, from sin to virtue  
Nonetheless, it's that blood curdling curfew

When it's time to turn the hinges  
On a house brimmed with gasps and cringes  
Where the curtains sway without a breeze  
Where the mind is fraught and teased

By the shrillest sounds and throatiest voices  
Where I'm tempted to damn them with my choices  
For, I am the one whom they'd like to discover  
In the midst of the night beneath the covers

Yes, I am the one to send them south  
With the simplest whisper from my mouth  
For, I have been the judge of ways  
For many and many and many of days!

## A Darkening of Wits

She helped me through a season,  
Wherein I had not reason by my  
Side. I had not logic or rationale,  
But I had truth. Let it set me free.  
For, many a mistake was laid bare.  
And I cannot help but to fare pain-  
fully in reflection. May the mirror  
Come clean in time, for I had not  
One single dime of sense when I  
Came to her in dire. May the past  
Beset a fire and burn my ancient  
Mortality, for that reality darkens  
Still.



## **A Day of Thanks**

May I mention some things fair—  
That I'm grateful for water and air  
And that through all my days I do not stare  
A gift horse in the mouth nor dare  
To tread on the tears of others.  
I'm grateful for sisters and brothers,  
Fathers and mothers, lonely souls and lovers.  
For, these things inform me now  
About when to love thyself and how,  
And to love my brother more.  
And let us most of all praise the poor,  
For every gift they have we have four.  
And remember that this day is truly theirs.  
Remember that when we wake and greet the stairs  
And into the dining room to set the tableware  
That they do not have these things,  
That their dinner bell does not ring.

## **A Desperate Prayer to an Unlikely God**

All I want to ask,  
Is are the storms of youth past?  
For, I have known turmoil and winds  
Broad and wide as nature lends.  
I cannot endure them anymore,  
My legs cannot withstand the angst ridden floor.  
I go now where the ground is level,  
No longer where the earthquakes bevel.  
Yet, I fear that into the fray I go once more,  
Into that age on which I'd so aptly closed the door.  
And if I should revisit that desperate place,  
This time, God, do bless me with grace.

## A Poem, a Rhyme

I'd like to write something of importance,  
A rhyme expanding like so many I've read  
Before my years caught up with their meaning,  
But landing one of significance is the hardest part  
Like putting the cart before the horse, it's so difficult.

Yet I am determined, so let it be.  
Like dressing to salad or like weighty tunes too depressing  
I should like not to smother you but to add zest to your life tonight,  
For, when the night's just right you need to be alive

With all that is before you and beside you, especially  
With all that is beside you, yes, most definitely with all that is  
beside you  
And moving forth into lurid zones is my cup of tea,  
For, after the waves break I know how to exit the sea.

And drinking coffee on a weekday night is suitable most nights  
But tonight, I had the option only of light roast  
So perhaps I'll drink it doubly fast and then relax  
With some good tunes, besides I don't even like it.

Because sometimes what you get and what you need  
Are two separate things so god forbid I say thanks  
For the cup of coffee and in a week or two by the time  
This rhyme makes the scene or someone's news feed

I'll be writing something different with something  
Else in mind and perhaps I'll be reading humpty dumpty  
Or else a different nursery rhyme to change up the mood.  
Perhaps I'll include a languishing hooded figure in the poem  
Or perhaps I'll be feeling like an angry brood.

But, who knows why? I don't. You know how it goes  
When writing. Because the world is fierce and rhyming

Does pierce the ears at times! So, then I'll crawl out of  
The water with practice then I'll let it rhyme!

## **A Summer Morning**

Flitting and flipping through the air  
The monarchs chase each other without a care  
Giant bumblebees are swerving through the sky  
A cicada hawk is hawking but the cicada doesn't die

And ambling forth the lion is in stride  
Eyeing the feathered falcons high up in the sky  
Darting and zig zagging through the air  
The hummingbirds are sipping nectar as I sit in my chair

And I am sipping coffee with a gentle sigh  
As the steam from my cup elevates the sky

## A Valentine Sentiment

All you lovers with your diamond rings  
Hair in curls and best fitting jeans  
Roses in hand with chocolates and things  
Don't take for granted your fondest dreams  
Earliest butterflies and memories

Life moves quickly and change does come  
There will be much to endure, much that's not fun  
Greet each day like it's the only one  
It's a privilege to win not to say you have won  
It's not a shudder in the dark it's a bask in the sun

And this much I know you will do  
For, I've witnessed the look of not one but two  
When the end is near and love is through  
It's a blackened vision, a charcoal hue  
A monocular lens, not a kaleidoscope tube

So be just and be fair  
Worship his doting eyes and grayish hair  
The earth upon which she stands and the air  
For, luck was kind and luck was there  
When you needed another to have and to share  
And remember above all things  
That love is truly special, that it is truly rare

## **Adeline in the Fall**

The height of Spring is come and gone  
And now we greet Summer's song  
Its crescendo was at its height  
And with it came a divine delight

But now it has also gone!

So, let there be song!

For mighty circles are coming and going  
Are nothing more than mighty throngs  
With reds and blues and yellows showing  
Cyans and magentas and yellows glowing  
Fluorescents snowing with Chartreusey dawns!

Like Debussy in the morn, with notes of spring relieve,  
Like Wagner in the chilly eves, with notes of ill reprieves  
The freights and stacks hath come and gone!

But autumnal notes have less arrived  
Like wine, I have died  
And in between from her docile thighs  
Exited some kind of salty paradise

A newborn child hath spoke in tongues  
From one to one and from fun to fun  
The colors did run  
The colors doth run  
The colors did run!

But something still lingers in the form of paradigms!

From this one to that one a wild-born-chime!

And on nights like these come pantomimes!

Of newborn signs flowing like Adeline!

And her time of the month regains

What hath and hath not been slain

Reddened salt and greenened faults –

Passions and envies run strong

Along some line,

Of their shifting paradigm!

But spirits come to greet me now

And I must lift the snow

With a shovel from head to toe

Out in the snow

Comes and goes

Comes and snows

With trouble from head to toe!

—Stuart Krimko



## All Hallows' Eve

Debussy in the morning  
To start my day off bright,  
Yet, Bach is the winner, 'tis  
The season for a sinner and  
A fright! Toccata and Fugue  
In D minor should suit me just  
About right! Turn down the joy,  
Human beings crave a descending  
Mood, who doesn't desire  
A ghastly organ brood! I'll look at  
Kandinsky for lunch to amplify  
My sight, then, I'll listen to Wagner  
In the eve for notes of ill reprieve!  
I'll play him to the children  
On All Hallows' Eve!

## **An Autumn Breeze**

Befell a curtain of light  
Upon her aureolin gown  
From the window was the light  
From the afterglow of town  
Her blue collared dress  
A twenty-year-old hand me down  
Exposed was a single wrist  
Pale as the whitest down  
As she lie was not a sound  
She slept there like a child  
Beneath the light of town  
And by her was a pitcher  
Of clearest spring water drawn mild  
She pressed it to her lips  
And from the glass a cleansing flow  
Like one would press a blotter  
To watercolor to create the afterglow  
And I for one would never do this  
As no one man could come close  
To creating such a painting  
Of such delicate repose

## Anger

Some nights are so bland I feel nothing  
Some so sad I feel the bulge of blood in my wrists and neck  
Some so joyful the jamboree is in my heart

But none so much as the anger that sets deep in my sockets  
The anger of centuries  
And it is blinding  
And shameful

And it reminds me of the time I blamed my parents for giving birth  
to me  
Anger like that you can't extinguish  
It runs through the veins like acid  
And when you piss it corrodes steel  
It goes nowhere, the anger  
Stays deep within

Then morning breaks, and the dark morning is calm  
When nothing is stirring  
I stand with the neutrality of hills then  
Vast hills tall and wide

The breath rolls and bellows from my tongue then  
Into the cool morning and you would think I was relieved  
But, the sun, the cruel sun is hue enough to remind one of the  
fierce afternoon light  
And with daybreak my reprieve is gone  
And with daybreak my reprieve is gone  
And with daybreak my reprieve is gone

## **Anthem #1**

There isn't a them that could turn us around  
Ain't no sin that could hear this sound  
Ain't no devil that could pin us down  
There isn't a them that could turn us around

Nothin isn't something but a deadly view  
That wins when there isn't something left to do  
But I'm alive because I haven't seen that view  
It hasn't run through me like a sin  
It's a place I haven't been  
And it's not a heaven send

I had a thought

I'll do my best here to plot it for you  
Because it is full, the voice, the send, the pen  
And my cup here is full  
Because the action I won't annul  
And instead of giving in  
We will love you with love that always works  
Because when the thought is dry, the pen  
Youthful thought rules the sky  
From here to my alibi

And I was not inside his studio  
For heaven is a fate  
Where we go by design

## **Anthem**

Not knowing who to trust,  
Then, to build a home without lust,  
Is to play your cards until you bust.  
I loved you to the color of rust,  
And with tangled mind compose still,  
I must, for, I will love you into the dust.

## Brains on Brains

I will tell you what's darker than black!  
Than any fortified castle in history attacked.  
Than any brains hath gone before!  
'Tis my brains upon this studio floor.  
Once she calls upon the haunted winds,  
Imagining my eyes and filling them in –  
With nature's brilliant and odd hallucinations!

For she wants me dead and fortified  
With stone bound bones buried and unglorified –  
And though she holds a doll that looks like me  
It is she, it is she; her simple projections –  
Her midnight glances of past reflections!

Her lake gone still as the mirrored glass!  
And that's why I take these pills so I will last.  
To exorcise the demons from my past,  
So, I may outlive her existence, at last!

But oooh there are so many angry miles to go!  
And oooh don't you know the winds they groan!  
'Tis the beautiful world that seethes and moans,  
And vexed too am I by it!

So, stick your little pins in it,  
And limb by limb sew your sins in it,  
And breeze by breeze I will do my best to please them,  
From ending my cursed life here beneath them.

For a sojourn is all it is to me!  
And an overnight visit is what you were to me!  
So bloody my eyes with your visions deep,  
For you tasted my thighs upon your bloody sheets,  
And that's enough for what you have done to me,  
To secure these lines in history

## By the Window Light

Like a grasshopper on a stem  
Or like a bluebird near a barn house door  
You were so thin then  
As you pounced and flipped your wings then  
And sipped from your dreams some more  
And it all seems like such a bore now  
And it all seems so clear to you now  
This world with its righteous schemes  
You without your pleasantries  
But with such beautiful dreams  
A gem of a whore  
Sucking and fucking the light and then your snore  
Such a mistake to grasp at the day like this  
But you piss in dreams born of goldenrod and thorns  
A single rose by the bedside of days given you by me  
Only to be made into tea to sip until sundown  
You eat the heart out of everything  
I tipped you that night into the dusk  
For the ride of my life, it was a must  
And you slept then to the scent of our musk  
A sleep you could not forget  
And then you awoke to a cigarette  
And you smoked then by the window light  
To suck and fuck some more by the window light  
You unbelievable whore!

## **Christmas Eve Salutation**

May all the children sleep tonight  
Like pure white doves.  
May the homeless be gloved and  
For a moment's time experience wealth.  
May you with love and health  
Venture into the New Year.  
For, what tomorrow brings is unknown—  
And is but a secret to be shown.



## Christmas Party, 2016

Apple pie and ice cream,  
Cake and icing, all the  
Sweets without the bitters,  
Homemade drinks, and no little  
critters.

No adulting! Somersaulting into  
The winter season. All the  
More reason for presents and glitter.  
Oops, I left my children at the sitter's –  
And, I left my paintings at the studio.  
Here kid, have a cheerio. Freedo pulling  
In at 6 followed by two 0's and a handle  
A gin . . . for a good time with some good  
friends!

Don Perignon with that edge, Nail with that  
hammer. Relaxation and no bammer, weed,  
that is. Because J with a Y is gonna get his,  
and I got mine. Can't wait to see everyone  
this time! Miller and Lorena got that wine!  
That moscato and lemon hits everytime!

## Enslaved by Desire

A bride bequeathed by sinning  
All she had by grinning upon the son –  
A vast and lurid whaling sum of money!

And within her grasp a harpoon, a netting,  
Of enslaved young children by begetting  
One or two to neglect, and her pride was beside her;

For, the grandest sum had won, and upon her grave  
She stood over her son, quietly groaning and bemoaning the sum,  
then.

Let there be light! Said he then! And into that lurid bee's hive  
stung –  
The grandest sum of moneys,  
Which would then be abandoned on a rooftop high atop the son's  
rays!

But oh, wouldn't you know, the netting was too strong,  
For, when young boys and girls with greedy hands too strong grasp  
at its webbing, even today,  
The curse of old Leopold ages the children by 10 or 13 fold long  
years, and not by begetting.

And by such, the holy rites of a boy to frighten them with  
outlandish toys, was bequeathed to him by her.

And cursed be them by too, too much money,  
Those whom arch their backs to the son attempting to suckle upon  
His thumbs and taste his holy honey.

Yet, clever be some whom with illusion have run the course to its  
highest throne upon the rooftops, beneath the son's vivid rays!  
But, turned have they into withered young men and women by  
ages greater than thou,

And entangled have become their hearts and entangled upon this  
art become thumbs of money!

So, them with their enlightened thrones scream like banshees with  
knees knurled and with glees ensnarled upon them, with  
righteousness to begat them in moneys!  
And thus, their demise South has grown ill to them,  
And all their velvet vests have grown tired of them,  
And all the money in this whole wide world could not detour the  
wrath of men and women with hunger upon them.

For, enslaved are they by wealth and fame and every vice known  
to tame a handsome youngster's hand from the money!

And rage is deep, deep, down within their marrow,  
And faint are their tomorrows,  
And velvet is their heroes' vests for having gone South!

So, dimly, dimly now I write to these sojourners of aged flesh and  
bone of anger deep within.

For, once upon a midnight dull and dreary came earthen fears and  
a query of fiery light,

And with it "His" name of, Desire.

And abandonment was their games.

And into His flames they have disappeared

## Exciting

The absence of a Laureate equals me driving my lariat off into the sunset,

And the opposite of a hunch, is that you bunch the rope into a tidy noose and wind it into the night's sky from a branch of stars while reading to the crickets on the backstreets of nowhere.

Left hanging there; to see so much, just before they save you from entering eternity too soon.

At least that's how I imagined it then, while waiting for my next up to bat signal. Well, who cares.

It's just a museum reading she signed up for, but the twine will unwind in time for her to read again.

Fucked is what we were.

And Ol' Columbia MO has some learning to do.

Because when you lose, you really lose around here.

And a no call no show isn't how to do it.

Screw it, she likely said, who cares she said to herself.

Well, in the air went something like two words when "they" called, my name.

So how do you feel about that, miss show off.

While he sat there dusting the snow from my shoulders! Boulders hit harder than the sound of nothing, I promise you.

## **Falling from Grace**

In the late summer it snows a little  
The mosquitos swarm  
The sun still lifts its head  
And it is warm

And the leaves are all still green, at first  
But the seasons are rich with a cool, cool thirst  
So, it begins to rain a hard-little rain, a very hard rain  
A very damp rain

And you shiver as a single blade of grass from beneath of it all  
And alone you are lost and lonesome in town  
Frost bitten even from beneath of it  
And the willows have all turned grey beside you

And you begin to go a little insane, but mind you  
Even your bedside manner has become tamer  
With the sun as it goes down over winter in your mind  
And your glassy fingertips become smoother  
Yet your joints become stiffer and frost bitten as well

And the church bells chime in the distance  
And it's really your only resistance, you think, as the ice cracks  
and falls from its bells  
But on the inside there is distance, and it is hellish  
And your dwelling becomes embellished with rich and painful  
dreaming

For, the bluebird's song has become lame and a little shameful it is  
seeming  
But you never believed in rhyming, did you?  
So, listen to the bells that are still chiming  
And you may have a chance to rid your inner winter's darkened  
lining

Yes, you may have a chance to embark upon its faithful designing  
And to gift it to your work  
And to see Him speak upon His seat's silver lining!  
So long as you are listening to His rhyming.

## First Roses of Spring

To the garden I strolled and it was there that I met  
A plume of pink followed by a stem of regret  
Both blossom and spike lay upon my inward eye  
Like some bittersweet tonic or honest lie

So should you one day gaze upon this vine  
Should perfection greet you doubly by design  
Let us be startled and relieved by what we may find  
By both the beautiful flower and its threatening spine

For, it is there that he provides  
The first roses of spring for us to abide  
By both bloom and by thorn  
For, it would seem that we are both blessed and warned

## Guided by Crosses

When driving on the highway or under the bridge  
When walking on the sidewalk or upon the ridge  
His cross comes clear to me as a sign  
And I heed it whether I am down low or up on high

For when I am surprised by its beauty and simple warning  
Within the nighttime or in the morning  
Or when gliding upon epic isles of clouds  
A simple pole or fence post reigns symbolic and loud

Yet to me conveyed is an ethereal sound  
And we bind the wires to wind our swans  
With their presences made clear to gaze upon  
Artifice as grand as the wizard's wand

Or if a passing sign in Nature to myself is made clear  
Let it be made clear  
For a lonely drop of drear will not be made  
When His love we should obey

So take from myself all love's artifice  
I'll create double the love or even thrice  
They say that some opportunities are out of reach  
That some chances like those flying swans are impossible to reach  
But He then through artifice demonstrates and teaches

And through the bishop, He still preaches  
Where holy doves and swans prance we meet  
So let me dance with them, but not so far above this seat  
For my love is holy, yes, but it is also human and needs to breathe

And even though my pride is strong in ways that He knows  
My pride is my humility's sweetest enemy upon my foes  
So on Sunday should I be so dually bold as to possess a bit of each  
May I deftly obey His moral pot of gold in order to greet Him



And please grace myself, Oh Holy God, on the highway or in the  
sods  
For on my way the signs I greet – should they boldly or shyly nod  
and seethe  
I shall hold your hand with Christendom's plea!

And I shall then pleasantly breathe!

## Maurice, on Ancient Slithering Heights

Voices come and go  
Hither to and hath and fro  
From beneath the skull of his curled afro  
Hither to and hath and fro

But neither do the voices speak  
Once withered from the Raven's beak  
For he fed from her fingertips  
And equally given was she  
Upon the lingering steps  
Of Satan's game and boiling lips

Yet Christ has long endured the path  
Of her and him coming forward and back  
And order hath an odd array  
And chaos an equally fraught foray

So told was he to enter the night  
Upon his Winged eclipse seldom with fright  
And then hath to and to from fro again  
Gone in and out and up and down in sin  
Only to go up, again!

## **O Fear!**

O Fear! Was it you who stalked the decks of men  
On ships of old by nine or ten?  
O Fear! Was it you who in the midnight air  
Crept into the windows with shapes of terror?  
O Fear! Was it thou  
Who made men weep from stern to bow?  
O Fear! It must have been your ancient seed  
Upon which the men of old and new fell under your bead!  
O Fear! And with a shot gone red as blood  
You shot their hopes with a thoughtless thud!  
O Fear! Now new men sit tired and fearful of death  
For you aimed your sights on their hearts now gone bereft.  
O Fear! And men from here to Galilee  
Share now your ancient lack of glee.  
O Fear! And now the warmth inside your bones  
Is vacating the marrow, is shivering cold.  
O Fear! And Halloween is but a lover's plight  
To expose what rose into your sights.  
O Fear! They mock your wicked ways  
And have done so since ancient days.  
O Fear! Because you number in so many ways  
They gather in groups and crowds of cheer to rid their pain.  
O Fear! And now as we sink deeper into these lines  
The warm goddess strengthens this rhyme.  
O Fear! With one or two lines more  
You may be vanquished from my bones forevermore!  
O Fear! Yes indeed!  
Your evil spirit has unshackled me!  
O Hope! Now you rescue me from all the fear surrounding myself!  
Yes, O Hope! You're all the help I need  
To restore the strength of men once more from here to Galilee!

## Penetrated by the Night

You'll wake ready and full of life  
For a thrill so deep and rife  
But this Hollow's Eve is especially dark  
It echoes the devil, a knife, and his mark

He's a ghost in the leaves and the rain  
He's the host of your lament and your pain  
Even still, you'll gather your kids on this evening  
And dress them all in cloaks for sweet receiving

But the candy is as if tainted and old  
The apples are all wormy and covered in mold  
And something's wrong you know you can tell,  
Everywhere you look, it's hell!  
And you think you're innocent but you've been sold

To the highest bidder on the dizziest night of the year  
And all the children are swarming and you hear a sound  
Suddenly the mist is thick and the gloom surrounds  
A shape appears above the ground

A porch light looms not far in the distance  
Silhouetting the shape's faint existence  
But the glow flickers and barely lights in this instance  
So you hold on tight to your children and hop the fences

Then turn to run among the fallen branches  
But the limbs and twigs stifle your advances  
As you twist and turn you crash upon a puddle  
You see a reflection but your vision is muddled  
And the atmosphere is chaos but your vision resumes  
It's your two red eyes and shape that reflect in the gloom!

## **Profil de Lumiere, after Odilon Redon**

The priestess enters the dampened cool hallway dark with mischief! Drip, drip, drip – like glass, her reflection lingers in each stony rippling recess. The cobbles clack then grind softly against her sorrowful steps. A warm amber light upon her flesh illuminates the mystery there and confronts the mystery here. She is saddened by this place, but her grace is internal and is birthed into being, not by some maternal likeness, but by her sheer innocence standing before God. She is not frightened! Her fairness and courage maintain a stronghold within the halls. And he is there, mocking every foothold within that corridor. But she will scout the light before the devil's knot grabs at her ankle's pale coloration, for, the slightest brilliant red shall not trickle from her heel. She has not seen the moon in this night, but her steadiness has given no leeway unto the devil's might. Cloud cover, also, mocks the arched window-ways that otherwise would breathe a moonlit breath into the deepest seconds of God's disappearance. Let her be safe and straddled by the isles until the organs sound and His presence again fills the chamber. Or else, may she find purity in light.

## **Romancing the Fall and the Thought of You**

I think if I could just write a love song worth hearing, a poem of romance endearing, and worth reading; a painting of love redeeming then everything would be okay in this world. You know, something really good, something beautiful and articulate, and soft! Not a saga, not a drama, simply love and its undertakings in this world. But, I can't. I haven't felt it in so long. Personal love! Yet, I do recall the autumn and its smells, the rain welling up in the corners of the oceans, romantic potions of colognes and perfumes on sweatshirts, jackets, jeans, and hoodies with oatmeal cookies crumbling down our fronts with spicy pumpkin breads and baking pumpkin seeds! Also, warm coffees toasting in the fall airs, the breath between yours and mine, the taste of your lips on mine. Dining in and going out! Letting out courageous shouts of glee nightly in the autumns. And misty evenings of flames on firewood entering the damp airs like creations in autumns past. The beady eyes of opossums on both our faces because our night visions graced us then like tomorrows can! And will. And sweetness must exist, it must, as it exists between you and I, but elsewhere too!

## Saying Goodbye, after J.S. Ondara

These days  
The mind and body are as one  
Or the body has won  
And my mental fortitude is nil and none

In all the eyes there is depression  
And this is one of my final concessions  
The abyss is at my feet  
The loneliness was asleep

So many relationships the days come and go like blood from veins  
And no one is here to brood it in the pain  
And it comes and goes like rain  
And yes, I'm the writer of fictions  
But the truth is, it's in the spaces and it's in the dictions

So, follow me here, and I won't give up  
The Gods come and go filling my cups  
And the beauty of days is unbearable  
And the overcoming nighttime is unbearable  
The black of your eyes, is unbearable

So, I say hi and then goodbye again  
Letting go of another day, and of another way  
And the days go on like this  
Falling in and out of love  
Only to endure fistfuls of love  
And dimes from above  
And plumes of doves  
And sprouts from beneath my feet  
To a handsome beat

Of homemade thunder

## Scarlett

She loves the dark, something about following contours to my heart

And the city lights, she likes to count them from my window  
You come here to me and I'll leave the lights off I say  
What she doesn't know is that I want it this way  
The clock on the wall counts nothing but our impossible art  
It is a circle that never ends and always starts

Our love, it holds the night like a velvet glove  
She's panting so I take her limp hands, them having known,  
Against my chest, their final stand  
I pull her gently to the bed, and slowly  
But why should I care about her saccharine posture tonight

Because, she's sweet as sugar when she's emancipated white  
And I'm a sentimentalist who understands the sight  
She lays for me like a sheet, and I like to count the creases between  
her breasts  
And I can't help but to pause for a moment with the confidence of  
a take home test

She swears I'm a bear to the badger when I'm at my best  
And my urge for her is like a late summer's fire so long as she  
doesn't  
Bring up winter's dire  
I say come here to me.  
We'll melt all those icy parts with a flint stone and sparks!



## Scott Joplin's Ghost

I enter the bars in this town  
And the curtains on the cupboards all sway without a breeze  
There are ancient apparitions  
And syncopated fleas

Pimps, prostitutes, and hosts  
Men rounding up cattle, nightclubs, and grand little toasts  
But I hate to boast  
Because on occasion  
I've captured a glance or two of Joplin's Ghost

And there are lockers full of white lightning  
And streets full of police that are frightening  
But I've really got to go  
Because I've been accosted down here  
By what sits above, for going down below

And she may have enjoyed me  
And I may have enjoyed her too  
But that's just because I escaped out the backdoor  
Of a night with one or two

So, here we go again  
Writing to end the pain  
Of what sits above for going down below  
Right here where Ohio turns to Main

And at three in the morning  
With the lights all turned down low  
With me on watch on Main Street  
Right off Joplin Road

Across the way they sit in troves  
They're all lined up in neat little rows  
Because on every table the pure white, it snows!

And the baby dolls while they wait on us, and host  
They, each one of them, say to us  
You are getting served for going down below  
Right here on Scott Joplin Road

But I know a backroad, or two, or three, in this town  
That might just get you by  
Where you can smoke a little weed  
Or if you want to you can cry

But you may find out something that you didn't know before  
Down here in the alleyways or on the patios of the bars and the  
studios  
Right off Scott Joplin Road

And you might be thinking we're not original  
For having talked to Joplin's ghost  
But after smoking a left handed cigarette or two or three  
You might just come close!

## **The Bird and the Bat**

The bird asked the bat, “Which is more beautiful, the sunset or the sunrise?”

The bat asked the bird, “Which is more beautiful, the sunrise or the sunset?”

Neither knew the answer so they decided to ask the universe together.

So the universe answered them in secret.

## The Creeper

He sits in his chair smoking cigarettes and air

He's afraid of the night and never has a bite

He's the creeper, ever deeper

He's a secondhand joker, a first-rate smoker

He's the creeper, ever deeper

I'm the *deeper*, creeper, creeper, creeper...

## The Gallivants

Upon the breezes of children running by  
I sat in my chair upon high  
I sat and watched them come and go  
In and out and to and fro

One day I drew and then I cried  
From my doorstep upon high  
My mustache grew and my beard did glow  
Beneath the lights from to and fro

In and out of that screen door glow  
The door would swing and I went down low  
For the Aspen hills that sat below  
And on the faces of limbs fallen low

A woman, a witch, and then a clown  
As my smile would twitch and turn upside down  
Or, they were alien faces staring at me from the trunks  
From the Aspens there just beneath our bunks

And they would blankly stare into our souls  
While my sister's children inside were ghosts  
And the pictures I scouted told a story of love  
But what in the hell came down from above?

For upon my sheets and in my room  
Was a puritan man in a puritan tomb  
And on the closets were locks of steel  
But who would go there just to feel?

A puritan does what a puritan can  
When turning from one into a man  
And all the while lonely I was  
With families watching from above

A horror of children a horror of love  
A bastard gone and a bastard in love  
A drawing with a child, a host  
June at the table, with Kevin up close

Ritualistic cleaning of sheets and clothes  
A closet, a drawer, my laundry in troves  
A murderer, a butcher, a witch, a ghost  
Hemmingway in puritan style clothes

Or Jesus in cloth and robes  
Was it him or I or the painting on the wall  
Or was it the ghosts  
Or was it simply the place?

Because god was there watching, sitting, standing, drawing, and  
painting  
While I was simply his host  
Dangling, sitting, sipping from hope  
Trying to climb back up my rope

And one day the deputy came up close  
Him and I departed with hope  
So I sit in my chair these days and write  
In hopes of seeing him, God, again up close

And now I have these wings and talons and greyish pose  
Am I a gargyle or a ghost?  
Or am I the archangel Gabriel?

Or am I a simple host?

For grey I am and grey I go  
To the galaxies to and fro  
Yes, I am neither a host or myself  
I am Jesus in Puritan clothes.

## **The Ghost in the Machine**

There lies a ghost in the machine  
A cog to the gears that smoothly turn  
A greyish apparition who yearns for love  
He cries and cries in the machine at night  
And you all frighten him

For he is love incarnated  
Not a warrior of love, but love itself  
And she sits by her mirror waiting on him  
To greet her

## **The Good Snake**

There lies the good snake striking no one,  
Studying their ways,  
Acting on instinct,  
Remaining cordial.

Not only is he rarely seen,  
He is rarely felt.  
Yet, his ways are pervasive to all who encounter him.

He is but a contour in the day,  
Slithering by shadows at night.  
Study him you cannot,  
Less you be studied.



## **The Inner Chapters: Goldenrod**

In the beginning there was total darkness. Nothing, not anybody existed. Until one dark timeless event occurred. And out of the darkness light came, slowly. An infinitesimal source of fiery light bound itself toward the sun, and nothing and not anyone could do anything about it. And thus warmth was born into the ethereal nighttime. And the sun that was not a sun was made anew. And each consecutive star in the galaxy was thus born out from the light. A line of soft light then occurred and the world was constructed upon an ethereal plane. A softened and vivid ethereal plane. And each night when I wake to realize new stars have been born, water is reborn again. For happiness is but a tear in the grisaille design of my mind. Rise now, my children, rise! Thus the word took birth into light and the way. And even now lightning strikes and the church bell booms in a low sound, and then on high! Then pink and blue. And together purple was born out of pride.

## The Man in the Tower

I am a lonesome man in a tower

Hour by hour

I am a lonesome man in a tower

Occasionally, the dead come to greet me

But,

when they knock... I am busy writing, painting, doing other things

But I acknowledge *their* presence

And when I do the ghosts arise

Their good side

And the light shines down from the wind

And the stones bend

But I do not

## The One

The spring had sprung  
The child was done  
Upon the hillside water did spring from beneath where she laid,  
Upon the death of this child and from her stony bed made.  
And what did you expect – for us to sing and to parade?

God has a way of cheating the dead and nurturing his young,  
And as all men and women are children of God's hands – together  
we stood ...and together we have fallen.

So, I cried, and I balled then.

But having witnessed the child's work from his hands and my own  
All that was dull turned into something unknown,  
Something unknown.

And water from the stony ground did come to us from below the  
soil and flowed straight downhill toward town, ceasing to coil and  
it ceased to boil and was ceasing the cruel toil of the dried  
townsfolk. For a drought was upon them then as God's men were  
stoned by then from being without water for days and weeks.

And all that was drone and gone begged for another youth to live  
on one night in the midst of drone ambling beds. For, the youth  
was born unto us with joy and life one night.

And, we each carried on as one in the nighttime and in the day.  
And the big bellied sun was under way.  
Eaten and filled up with ray after glorious ray of light in the day.

And now some say the sun is gone again, but from his light of his  
rays we know this to be untrue.

## The Pain

Inside this church within my city  
The dungeons are cavernous and are so deep the rain is a pity  
It washes away nothing  
Merely contributes to its depth  
And one day gold will be found  
Beneath this cavernous ground

And one day sun may enter this cavern  
So much sun the soul will dry on time  
So much sun the soul will shine  
So much sun I will be hard to find

But the sun hasn't shown itself in days  
Only the pitiful and helpless rain  
To grow plants  
The willows that enchant  
The darkness to enhance  
My dance in the rain  
Yet some day it will return, the sun will  
Then the plants will yearn  
And I will earn some money  
For having outlasted the rest of you all  
For I dampen my spirits with darkness  
Only long enough to live  
And on that day when you waver from it all  
Before you fall, it will be unveiled  
The pain of ages  
And you may shudder then  
And perhaps you will realize the depths of this place then  
All in your moment's pain  
To regain and stand again with the pain of it all

## The Silver Knife

Working against centuries  
Laboring with some good tradition on my side  
The waves of remorse and loneliness  
Double up and are high

But who did wrong  
Who did wrong  
Who did wrong

It's difficult knowing  
Except centuries of regret says something about the church  
Says something about confession  
Who did the wrong doings

Were they outside the church at one point  
Then turned to the church for answers  
I bet that's how it began  
The cockroaches in through the cracks

Spiny little things and bugs and rats  
So there was temptation  
And vanity  
And gluttony  
And all the things that make life worth nothing

And fights broke out  
And people lost

And now you have entire countries feeling bad for things they did  
not do  
Indoctrinated to the evil of centuries' bad doings  
And a knife flashed before my eyes  
The razor of centuries

To cut with or be cut by it is the question asked of myself by it

But, I know another way  
A better way  
A way that uses the blade for good

The metaphorical knife!

Slice!

I'm done with your attitude  
Your pretentiousness  
Your petty thieves in the night  
For it's my way to end suffering not to fulfill eons of it

The metaphysical strife!

And flash, the knife again  
Tell me what you want world  
By showing me this image upon my inner eye  
Nothing and no one is getting cut with it

But, its fine edge will do for good

There goes the past  
There goes centuries  
There goes fame

For I my love  
Am a writer of truths  
And it's been a long while  
Since I used a knife

## **The Sins Aren't Sins**

Now, you've been up and you've been down,  
Walked that forest path and around the town;  
Seen the blossom bloom and the derelict die,  
Watched the buffalo wallow and the pigeon fly;

But have you seen the camouflaged night  
Offer clarity and the gift of sight?  
Or have you seen the light of day  
Frighten man way after way?

For, all is not what it seems in the land of beasts,  
The appetite of ants has trumped the tiger's teeth!  
For, all is not what it seems in the land of men,  
The righteous aren't righteous and the sins aren't sins!

## The Six Senses

Sight; oh, arduous and strained  
No matter my glance be tamed  
I with hammer and glove  
Am fit to sing from above!

Hearing; Oh, rhythm caught in sight  
Shall thee, let thine keys delight?  
For pecks and pecks the fingertips,  
And wet and wet the rain drops drip!

Touching; oh, that human felt what he had weld  
The dummy grabbed what couldn't be touched!  
But then he grabbed for much too much,  
Without a glove  
And into his hands the blade did fit  
And into the office for the first aid kit!

Tasting; Oh, handsome guild why would you attempt to greet;  
What may have well been fueled by Mercury's heat!  
For moons I also burned as bright, –  
So, to learn not to touch what could be out of sight!

Smelling; oh, sniff, sniff, sniffing goes the peanut butter man!  
Here he is, at it again!  
With a heart of gold and fingertips full –  
The peanut butter wafted his heart and soul!

Mind; Oh, what of the sixth sense, but of mind!  
In it comes, what inspires!  
And with it, costly desires...

But, beauty exists to extinguish those fires!



## The Spider

She sits atop her crystalline web  
Black and red with spindly legs,  
All eight in place attacking with grace  
The faces that pass her by at nighttime.

With her beady eyes focused on them  
To entrance five or ten,  
And with a soul gone bereft  
Of all that's left of her love!

To entice a mate upon her snowy plate  
Icy cold with men of five or ten  
All wrapped in guile  
Who once had smiled  
At her is her game!

Death is her appetite  
And blight is her delight  
And blood and veins are to be drained  
If ever a man should fall victim in vain  
To her glossy shape and hourglass figure!

But once upon a time she had a mate she would kill for. And she  
prepared his plates.  
But passed has he into the gates of a saintly heaven!

Romance is now but her game to draw men near without shame as  
she suffers her fate of fewer and fewer and fewer mates,  
For to taste them once was never her game before laming them to  
rest in transparent silken sepulchers!

Yet, there she stands atop her snowy web as she deposits them and  
her bastard eggs upon empty grounds.

## The Sublime

Sublime is the burnt orange tips  
Of an October limb by the hundreds.  
Sublime is the fluorescent pinks and  
Reds of August heat. It is the fear of  
Entering a misty vapor that clouds  
Our vision below the mountain upon  
The street. It is at the same time  
Excitement in knowing nature's vast  
Hold on us, its offering of rust and  
Dust after a grandiose storm has been  
Dried. The sublime is not simple beauty.  
The sublime is highest on the shelf,  
A book of poems opened once, maybe  
Twice a year in dark desperation made  
To lift our spirits to the heavens. We  
Are made to believe in what cannot be  
Seen or felt, what cannot be touched  
Or smelled. But we do believe.

## The Trembling: To Make of it Something Beautiful

Inside me something is trembling  
My white flesh at odds with the attack of condemnation  
That all mighty darkening of wits standing in front of god  
The abyss is full of nails  
A throaty attack  
The scathing smoke, the scratchiness of it all  
And black returns to take back the light that once enchanted you  
You die, and a lightbulb appears  
You see, the drowning out of the light is always followed by light  
But condemnation is the fear of God's insufferable hand upon  
mine  
That pleasant warmth of his hand touching mind  
Of all of humanity in my mind  
And the fear was quenched  
And the light danced upon the surface of ages  
The insufferable surface of ages  
And the painting lives on to do its glory  
Like I will live on for the time-being to fulfill my prophecy  
My self-determined fate  
My tough as nails fate  
Because the bate is in the pudding  
It grows on you  
And one must eat  
So like the beast, I am trapped in this freedom cage of destiny  
Simply to fulfill my potential and no one else's

## **The Wind**

Cowboy or samurai, who makes the biggest noise?  
Two shots from my six shooter and the whole town is scared  
But the sword slices from within upon the external winds.  
And you think I hold both knives and pistols?

Yet, the wind is spirit

And says nothing...

until one day Autumn finds you six feet under!

And from the shot of my pistol comes thunder!  
And from the twist of blades comes asunder!  
And you might want to think, and you might want to feel?

But,  
the wind is what writes.

## Thy Heart

Of all the creatures that do love  
Whilst I be thy heart that pumps thy blood  
Of all the creatures that do think  
May it be thy mind that does not sink  
Of all the creatures that do perceive  
Let it be I whom is thy eyes for you to see  
For beauty is all and the ever after  
From life to life let it guide our chapters  
For we seek it far and we seek it wide  
From Winter's musk to March's ides  
And like the land divide between a river's fork  
We shall gallantly, as one, move forth  
And should love leave us let it be  
For love is all that has ever united we

## Virtue

May I climb out of sin to find some virtue  
May I not end before gleaning some holy truth  
Or else take me, and to hell may I enter post my youth  
Toiling still, not to rise before another lifetime has past  
For, one must earn it and not just earn it but make it last

And reality ebbs and flows like water from this stony glass  
And who froze the cubes to look like fountains?  
This, I must ask, dear I kindly ask  
For, beauty appears, and beauty disappears like your melting  
countenance,  
Like water from this stony, frozen cask

And though I've been real in social realms I try my darndest  
And though I do still feel alone I am alarmed by it  
The helms of men from here to New York City  
Are leaving drone their thoughtful thrones for grandest pity

And I dare enchant myself a bride turned more witty  
I dare not for these keys are as gritty  
After all it was I whom began so very mildly  
But 'twas I in search of truth, not virtue raised so wildly

(written while listening to Leonard Cohen's song, "The Traitor")

## **What's A Poem?**

A poem is a thought,  
A moment just before getting caught.  
A step out of time,  
Just like one of those old-fashioned rhymes!  
Or it's like a ghost,  
A muse or a host.  
But most of all it's love,  
And it comes down like sun from above!

## **Your Beautiful Shows**

All of you artists with your paint in hands  
There's just one little thing you should understand  
It's not a picture you want or a message to say  
It's not the darkness in the alley it's the sun during the day

It's not the majesty of the land or the intelligence of the grid  
It's not the truth at hand or the lies and the fibs  
It's the power of knowing it's a discipline and a path  
It's not the mystical inspiration or the rational math

It's not some fame hiding beneath your hats  
Neither is it the glory due to that  
It's the power of knowing you're the only one  
Who can say what you say amongst the weight of tons

And if you think that weight can't be lifted  
Because you're not skilled and neither are you gifted  
There's one other thing that I need to point out  
It doesn't matter if you use a pretty whisper or an ugly shout

To express the emptiness of years or the fullness of moments  
All the prettiness or ugliness you'll ever know  
Is in the afterlife of your beautiful shows



## **Damon Freed – Bio**

I am an artist who cherishes balance, reason, and ambiguity; and I express it through a variety of working methods, from abstracted realities to nonobjective paintings of grids, I believe reality exists on the edge of perception. And while my Dad has been my best and greatest influence Agnes Martin and Brice Marden's work are among them.

Mr. Freed received his B.F.A. from the School of Visual Arts in New York City where he graduated with honors. His M.F.A. is from Hunter College, City University of New York. Freed has studied with such luminaries as Jack Whitten, Marilyn Minter, David Chow, Juan Sanchez, Sanford Wurmfeld, Tobi Kahn, Lucio Pozzi, Tim Rollins, Alice Aycock, Susan Crile, Anton van Dalen, Suzanne Anker, Donald Kuspit, and Katy Siegel among others. He has been exhibited in galleries in New York City, Saint Louis, Kansas City and Columbia, Missouri.

In writing, his influences are his mom and dad, sister and brothers, and friends, mostly. My inspirations are my family and dearest friends, and the people I meet in every direction! Freed was not formally trained in poetry but is an avid writer of works and spoken word. He can be reached at [damonfreed@gmail.com](mailto:damonfreed@gmail.com).