

A Collection of Poems
By Nathanael Reed

Alliteration

By Nathanael Reed

There's a pantheon of pleasure
in a palace in Peru,
There's a hungry hippo hiding
in the Holiday Inn Zoo,
There's a purple pigeon perched
upon the porch outside my place,
There are gulps and gasps and groans and grunts,
While Grandpa says the grace.

Back Home

By Nathanael Reed

I hear the harp of Dirk McLean,
Sad and soulful it's refrain,
From round a campfire on the plain,
It beckons me back home.

The Chisolm Trail and Wounded Knee,
Tombstone, Deadwood, Dodge City,
Their haunting spirits call to me,
And speak to me of home.

My heart was stilled in sixty-three,
At Gettysburg with Robert Lee,
Yet still the west does call to me,
Calling me back home.

Still often times I think it best,
To quell this aching in my breast,
And give this lonesome soul some rest,
And carry me back home.

Blackbeard's Barber.

By Nathanael Reed

Blackbeard was a mean old crank,
He made my pappy walk the plank,
But in the world of ole Ed Teach,
Blood and guts is what they preach.

My Paps was hired from Jackson's Pier,
By Blackbeard and them buccaneers,
They needed a barber and he was one,
So they signed him on for a princely sum.

For a month or two things really rocked,
Paps coiffed their hair and trimmed their locks,
But then one fateful Sunday morn,
The Captain's look was most forlorn.

The crew was real concerned you see,
For a sad Blackbeard was mad-dog mean,
Yet someone had to cheer him up,
So names they drew from an old tin cup.

When they pulled Pap's name he racked his brain,
Then set to work without complain,
Then somewhere north of the Straits of Dover,
He gave the Cap a complete make-over.

So he sat the Cap in his barber's chair,
Trimmed his beard and tinted his hair,
Whitened his teeth and clipped his nails,
He didn't o'er-look the least detail.

When finally all the fuss was done,
The Captain said, 'Well this was fun,
Bring me here that looking glass,
I wanna see if your work will pass.

Well he took one look at his braided hair,
With a howl of rage leapt from his chair.
Said, "Grab that barber and skin his hide,
An effeminate pirate I can't abide."

That was how Paps met his doom,
'Twas off the coast of old Cancún.
Now a barber's life ain't an easy one,
And on a pirate's ship it's never fun!

The Blue Baboon

By Nathanael Reed

There's a blue baboon by the bathroom door.
It roars and growls and stamps on the floor,
It wants to get in to brush its teeth,
But my sister's been there since late last week.

Blueberries

By Nathanael Reed

Blueberries is blue
Bananas ain't
and oranges ain't - that's for sure
Sometimes blueberries is red
or yellow
or green
or white
or even purple
But mostly they taste yucky unless they're blue

Calling the Play-By-Play

By Nathanael Reed

I met Don Cherry at a hockey game,
The Leafs were playing the Hurricanes,
So I said, "Hey, Grapes, you're a stand-up guy,
But I wish you'd give me just one try,
At calling the play-by-play.

I know each team in the NHL,
Each coach and player - their numbers as well,
The next Foster Hewitt, I bet I'll be,
Give me just one opportunity,
At calling the play-by-play."

He gave me a look that told it all,
Said, "Answer me this and you'll make the calls,
In the NHL, now and forever,
Who was the greatest player ever?"

Well I thought of Gretzky, Sundin and Howe,
Ovechkin and Crosby - Holy Cow!
Who could he possibly have in mind?
Jerome Iginla? He's one-of-a-kind!

And then in a flash it occurred to me,
Why I saw Grapes kissing him on TV,
It's Number Four from Parry Sound!
He played for the Bruins when Blue was around.

I stepped up to Grapes and said with a grin,
"My broadcasting career is about to begin,
Mr. Cherry, you know I could not agree more,
The best player ever was Bobby Orr."

So later that week, the Leafs signed me up,
To call every game 'till they won The Cup,
So when they're at home at the A.C.C.,
Tune in on your telly and listen to me,
I'll be calling the play-by-play.

Canterbury

By Nathanael Reed

Canterbury
Canterbury
Canterbury
Zoo,
Gonna feed the monkeys,
The walrus and the gnu.

Studebaker

Studebaker

Studebaker

Car,

Drive me to the circus.

I hope it isn't far.

Thumbelina

Thumbelina

Thumbelina

Jane,

Going shopping at the mall,

'Cause it's gonna rain.

Captured by Sepia

By Nathanael Reed

Captured in time

Sepia-tinted

Stern and reposed

Great grandmother's face.

All that's remembered

Sits there before us

Framed and entitled

Silent and still.

Married in Cavan

Near Bailieboro

Sailed the Atlantic

With her new man.

Built a log cabin

Near Enniskillen

Raised seven children

Outlived them all.

Changing a light bulb

By Nathanael Reed

They sent me in a pick-up truck,

With Jason, Pete and Lee,

To a tower on the edge of town,

A burned-out bulb to see.

It was nestled high above our heads,

Been there since *who knows when*,

But now its dead and I must go,

And put a new one in!

'Tis my first day, oh ain't it grand?

This climb will be my test,

With my three comrades looking on -

I doubt they'll be impressed.

I guess I should have told the boss,
Before he sent us out,
I have this mortal dread of heights,
Of that I had no doubt.

So up the tower I slowly climbed,
One hand above another,
Sweating most profusely now,
And thinking of my mother.

When half-way to the top I froze,
I couldn't go no more,
My body was all wracked with fears,
I'd never felt before.

And thus that tower proved to me,
What nothing else could do,
That fear is quite a scary thing,
What e'er your point of view.

Death Match

By Nathanael Reed

He swept across the frozen lake,
And stumbled up the shore,
He'd run for miles before his foe,
But he could run no more.

*He quivered as he caught his breath,
And on the wind he scented death.*

The antlers of that giant beast
Spanned seven craggy feet,
He pawed the ground and took his stand,
And turned to his prey to meet.

*The timber wolves crept closer still.
He drew a breath and steeled his will.*

They ranged across the lake behind,
And drew themselves abreast,
Then slinking through the snow they crept,
Once more his will to test.

*A savage light their eyes reveal,
The rhythm of death begin to feel.*

With a flash of teeth the first wolf leapt,
And caught the great elk's thigh,
Then darting past the lunging head,
Up to its throat did fly.

*Three more wolves now joined the fray,
And to the ground they dragged their prey.*

A stouter heart no beasts possess,
Then that great elk that day,
He fought with every breath he took,
And made his killers pay.

*The crescent moon did cast her spell,
And lighted on the deer that fell.*

Destiny

By Nathanael Reed

Destiny calls us
One day at a time,
The moon in its phases
Whispers in rhyme.
Not oft does it beckon,
Not oft does it speak,
It picks whom it chooses,
The strong and the weak.

Different Shapes

By Nathanael Reed

Triangles have three sides I'm told,
A square, one more than that,
A rectangle looks like a tissue box,
A circle like Pedro's hat.
Pente, I'm told, is Greek for *five*,
Like the DC Pentagon,
But what has *hex* to do with *six*,
Somehow it just seems wrong.
Sept means *seven*, that's a fact,
It's French - or so I think,
And *eight*'s just like an octopus,
That loves to squirt black ink.

*So you see, it's oh so vital,
Each shape has a geometric title.*

A Dollop of Gollop

By Nathanael Reed

A dollop of gollop
A gallon of Allan
A sprinkle of wrinkle
A dash of good sense.

A pump in my pumpkin,
An ape in my apron,
A punch in the punchbowl,
A knock on the head.

Dyin'

By Nathanael Reed

T'would be an awful thing to die alone,
Wouldn't it?
Without a loved-one nearby.
Specially if you could feel it coming,
And it weren't no shock.
T'would be a good thing
To hold the hand of your kin at such a time,
And feel the warmth of them being there.
Make you feel one last time
that your life was good,
That people you'd loved, loved you back.

And there you are,
Drifting closer to the edge
Ain't no stopping it now.
Still it is so hard to believe.
You don't feel so old,
Certainly not old enough to die.
But here it is,
Like it or not.
And you ain't alone.
That's good.
After such a fine life with such wonderful friends,
It'd be a shame to die alone.

Entomology

By Nathanael Reed

Have you ever stopped to think
what lies beneath a stone?
Like the one you pass each week,
out back behind your home.

Covered up with mud and slime
And sunk a good way down.
What would you find if you did pry
it up and check around?

A tiny snake
a centipede
earthworm
ants
or weevil?
A mantid
newt
(disgusting brute)
silverfish
or beetle?

Isopod
caddisfly
scorpion
or grub?
Onion thrip
walking stick
cockroach
or a bug?

So next time you pass a rock,
A board or piece of brick.
Turn it over - there you'll find,
A treasure - if you're quick!

Farmlife

By Nathanael Reed

There's an open field,
A great stone wall,
A warren, briar,
And a waterfall.
There's a tumble-down cottage
By the sheering shed,
There's a barn out back
Where I make my bed.

There's a trusted mule
In the barn's lone stall,
Two pigs in the sty
Where I learned to crawl,
A farmer's wife
Who brings me treats,
And a lone coyote
That I'd like to meet.

There's a great pine tree
On a craggy hill,
A sunset red
And a whip-o-will,
A vegetable patch
Where the rabbits play,
And a basset hound
Who sleeps all day.

What am I?

Fifty Degrees Below Zero

By Nathanael Reed

We were up in the north, far, far from home,
'Neath a dark cloudless sky, where the Inuit roam,
It was 50 below and winter's stark chill,

Kept us indoors, contraire to our wills.

Old Charlie exclaimed that the coal bin was low,
And the trail to the woods was covered with snow,
But he needed two men to make the long trek,
To cut us some wood and haul it on back.

So Pete looked at me and he says, "Jake, let's go,
It can't be this bad in four feet of snow."
So wearing each item of clothing we owned,
We stumbled out into the night with a moan.

The moon was still low on the far eastern sky,
And away to the north came a lonely wolf's cry,
From where we were standing, we barely could see,
A mile to the westward, a faint rim of trees.

So Peter and me, we began the long walk,
Through the freezing December - too cold to talk,
Each step that we made - 'twas a tortuous pace,
Took nearly two hours to arrive at that place.

Pete says to me, "Well, let's get this job done,
We'll chop two or three trees, and drag them on
home."

So I swung the broadaxe on the first jack pine there,
But it bounced back as quick as a tic on a bear.

I took a few whacks afore Pete says to me,
"Give me that axe, Jake, I'm starting to freeze."
But the bark was so froze, we scarce made a dent,
'Twas like we were chopping a hole through
cement.

Finally I says, "Pete we'd better head back,
I think over yonder I seen a wolf track."
We then left those dark woods, crossed the lonely
terrain,
To the shack on the hill, with our strength on the
wane.

To keep us from freezing that dark lonely night,
We pried up each board, and to them we gave light,
'Till all we had left of the rickety shack,
Was a stove pipe, a lantern, and an empty packsack.

So there we expired on that winter night,
In a lonely snow bank 'neath them cold northern
lights,
T'was a grizzly end for Pete, Charlie and me,
Froze stiffer than boards by the cold Bering Sea.

Fish Head

Nathanael Reed

My little brother, William Fred,
Came upon a fish's head,
Walking on the beach one day,
He picked it up and then did say,
"Where's your tail, your fins, your scales,
Just two eyes, but otherwise,
They've skinned you to the bone!
*I'm quite whelmed-over; that I am,
To find you lying in the sand.*"

Fly On My Wall

By Nathanael Reed

There's a fly on my wall,
And he hears what I say,
He sits there and listens
He joins me each day,
I did not invite him
And wish he was gone,
But still he remains
And he sings me this song.

*Pleazzzzzze
Leave me your donut,
I want to enjoy,
Your sugary treat,
(I love to annoy).
But I promizzze you this,
If you hear what I say,
Just leave me your donut,
I'll be on my way.*

So I left him
my crueller,
my jelly,
my powdered,
my danish,
my glazed,
and my cinnamon bun.
My fritter,
my dutchie,
my frosted,
my churros,
Bavarian creme,
That will rot in the sun.

So from that day,
He eats what I bring,
He keeps to himself,

He laughs and he sings.
But he's no longer tiny,
From eating my treats,
He's as large as my cat,
And now snacks on red meats.

Hero

By Nathanael Reed

He placed the steak on the bar-b-q,
Lathered his arms with sun screen goo,
He was winter-bronzed from a tanning booth,
And he looked real good, to tell the truth.

He'd a cock-eyed grin on his handsome face,
A sense of his worth to the human race,
The keenest wit and impeccable taste,
Fifty inch chest and twenty inch waist.

The talent scouts from MGM,
Quite nat-u-rall-y are courting him,
With Pitt and Clooney he'll soon contend,
And drive all women around the bend.

So he stands in his shorts and hairy chest
Quite certain that he is heaven-blest,
With charm and looks – the litmus test,
The plastic surgeon will handle the rest.

I Ain't Been Blessed

By Nathanael Reed

Now I ain't been blessed with a great big brain,
And they say I smell like poo,
And I know it took me a good long while,
To pass into grade two.
And my acne's worse than the Mummy's Curse,
And my hair's like mouldy hay,
And I got this thing called *Wormwood Ring*,
That plagues me night and day.

I picked up scurvy at summer camp,
And my teeth they all fell out,
And my breath's so bad
They're afraid I have
A disease called *hoof and mouth*.
And my face got scarred when the doctor carved
My nose four sizes down,
And my ears are filled with wax but still,
I hear each blessed sound.

My Momma say, "Son, don't you stew,

It's true you're not so bright,
And sure your looks would stop a clock,
Or down a bird in flight.
But take my word one day you'll find,
A girlfriend tried and true,
She may be plain, but sure as rain,
She'll look good next to you.

I Baked a Cake

By Nathanael Reed

I baked a cake,
For Uncle Jake.

Dished a fish,
For Lillian Gish.

Forked a pork,
For Mork from Ork.

Begged an egg,
From Cousin Meg.

Filled my gill,
At the local grill.

Passed some gas,
In English class.

I Can't Help

By Nathanael Reed

I can't help think
I can't help try
I can't help live
I can't help die

I Must Go

Nathanael Reed

I must go down to the docks today,
I must go out in my boat,
While the waves are high,
And the tide is out,
And the chill north wind leaves little doubt,
I'll sail to the east, then come about,
I think I'll go today.

I must go visit a friend today,
I must go bring him a smile,
For he's older than some,
And wiser than most,

He'll serve me tea and cinnamon toast,
Though crippled and grey, he's the perfect host,
I think I'll go today.

I must go into the woods today,
I must go while it is light.
Where there's trails to walk,
And things to see,
And Mother Nature don't charge a fee,
And most of the critters are used to me,
I think I'll go today.

I Passed a House
By Nathanael Reed

I passed a house outside of town,
Shuttered-up, and worn-down,
In such a state
Of sad repair,
I stepped aside and tarried there.

The Custer clan from New South Wales,
In and out of the county jail,
Bought that house
In twenty-four,
The house still stands, but they're no more.

The old folks say in the Second War,
The house was sold to Donald Moore,
Who disappeared
Without a trace,
They say his ghost still haunts the place.

So now this house stands all alone,
Outside of town, mid creaks and groans,
Waiting for
the coming day,
When the wrecking ball takes it away.

I Wish I Could Find
By Nathanael Reed

I wish I could find
My set of false teeth,
I wish I could find my wig,
It's hard to go out
In public like this,
When my nose is so runny and big.

I wish I could find
My bottle of Scope,
I wish I could find my comb,

It's a pain to go out
In public like this,
When I'd much rather spend time alone.

If you can't be the best - be the best dressed.
By Nathanael Reed

Us northern lads, we loved to spend,
Time at the hockey rink,
Slapping pucks around the ice
'Twas the best of lives - I think.

But then as we got older still
And our shinny skills did grow,
We joined the Midget team in town,
And put on quite a show.

But it wasn't long before the coach
He drew me to one side,
Said, "Son, I know you're really game,
But the bench you're gonna ride."

"You're just not skating fast enough
Nor can you pass the puck,
So 'til you have improved your skills,
I fear you're out of luck."

I went home, my heart so low,
- t'was way beyond depressed,
And told my mom what Coach had said
- she didn't seem impressed.

"Son, let me give you some advice
You needn't be so stressed,
If you can't be best at what you do,
Than trying to be best-dressed."

To heart I took her sage reply,
Determined from that day.
For though my hockey skills are poor,
I think it's safe to say,

I may not skate like Sid the Kid,
Or score like Eric Staal,
But when it comes to dressing sharp,
I know I beat them all.

I'm Obnoxious
By Nathanael Reed

I'm obnoxious
that I am,

I do it very well.
I'm selfish,
Mean,
Unkind,
Unclean,
Anyone can tell.
I got mean eyes,
A dirty mouth,
A cutting sense of wit.
There ain't one person
that I know,
Who likes me just one bit.

In My Neighbourhood

By Nathanael Reed

There's a walkin' man in my neighbourhood.
With cane and hat and calico cat.
He shuffles by at quarter past ten,

Goes round the block and back again.

There's a grocery store in my neighbourhood.
With cans of peas and Colby cheese.
It opens its doors at nine-oh-two,
And shuts them tight when the day is through.

There's a bunch of kids in my neighbourhood.
With freckles and toes and runny nose.
They oft' drop by for a cup of tea,
And sit in the parlour and visit with me.

Jimmy The Greek

By Nathanael Reed

Jimmy the Greek lives down the street,
He's sordid, disgusting, he's got smelly feet,
The house that he lives in,
The truck that he drives,
The woman he married is barely alive.

Martha McSweet, is really neat,
She's gifted and pleasant, she cannot be beat,
Her meals are to die for,
Her parties – the best,
Her manicured garden is perfect, no less!

Jingle Me

By Nathanael Reed

Jingle me change in me front pants pocket,
Jingle me bell as well.

Jingle me coins, me chains and me locket.
Jingle me under your spell.

More Great Men

By Nathanael Reed

More great men?
Who needs the
Four star generals...
Two term presidents...
Leaders of industry?
Who needs the
Misplaced priorities...
Or bowing before
The Almighty Dollar?

Give me a good man.
Who loves his wife,
Guards his heart,
Cherishes family.
Give me a good man
That the world
Will not remember...
Will not be eulogized
beyond the faithful friends.
His mark, indelible
And eternal
Will be blazed upon the hearts
Of those he loved
And who loved him.

Give me a good man.
Give me more good men.

My Belly Button

By Nathanael Reed

My belly button's free of lint,
I cleaned it out this morning,
And though that ain't its normal state,
I'm giving you this warning.

On Friday when I checked it
I admit that it was clogged,
With many sorts of different things,
From frying pans to frogs,
In fact I found an apple core,
As near as I recall,
... an old chapstick, a lemon drop,
a dog-eared tennis ball.
A pebble that I kept for luck,
A thumb tack and a nail,

A Hubba-Bubba gum that's stuck,
To the inside of a pail.
But rest assured, dear Mother,
My cleaning got it all,
The contents now are in the barn,
Piled in the horse's stall.

My Rio

By Nathanael Reed

Imported from Korea last July about this time,
A fire-breathing piece of junk, that wasn't worth a
dime.

But when I saw the lines and curves, the juice
beneath its hood,
I had to own that Rio, and my banker said I could.

So I laid my hard-earned cash, down at old Sleazy
Joe's,
And took possession of the car and homeward I did
go,
But when I'd driven half-way home, then much to
my chagrin,
I heard a loud, soul-wrenching noise, erupt from the
engine.

With heart in mouth I quickly pulled the Rio off the
road,
And panic-stricken, dialed the auto club upon my
phone.
"Get over here," I screamed, "My car she is on
fire!"
"Be patient, Sir," they calmly said, "We'll come
within the hour."

And by the road in pain I stood and watched the
consummation,
Of my voyage into the world of high tech
automation,
So by the time the tow truck came all that could be
seen,
Was a blackened corpse, a vale of smoke and one
man's shattered dream.

On the Trapline

By Nathanael Reed

The night was ice, the sky was black,
The wind at our face when we started back,
It chilled us through, to the marrow and bone,
On a trail of death ten miles from home.

No strength to speak, our breath we save,
The snow is deep as is the grave,
Yet on we trek, into the night,
Each snowshoe step prolongs the fight.

Our traps were bare, our snares were dry,
Our guns unused, and now we die,
Still on we plunge, through gathering snow,
Our strength we catch, then onward go.

Pappy and Mammy.

By Nathanael Reed

Pappy sailed to New Orleans
Upon a leaky dingy.
It took four years
And fifteen days,
Because it wasn't windy.

Mammy was a washer girl,
She laundered for a penny,
The rich folk sent
Their shirts to her,
And now they haven't any.

Peculiar Things

By Nathanael Reed

Why I ride a billy goat
to town I can't explain,
Or wear my slicker to the beach
When I know that it won't rain.

And why I always says, "God bless",
When peoples say "Ah-choo",
Surely most peculiar
Is the many things I do.

People I Meet

By Nathanael Reed

I guess I've been most fortunate,
Since I was one or two,
'Cause I meet a lot of famous folk,
You won't believe just who.

They seem to come across my path,
More oftener than most,
Perhaps the reason this is so,
I am the perfect host.

Honest Abe,

*And Rin Tin Tin,
Stopped by,
So I asked them in.
Ringo Starr,
And Elvis P.,
Dropped by for a cup of tea.
Alexander
Graham Bell,
Called me up and talked a spell.
Larry, Moe and Curly Joe,
Asked me to the picture show.
Adam, Eve,
and Pinch Me too,
Just to name another few.
Genghis Khan
and Mao Tse Tung,
Stayed so long, I called my mom.
Many faces, many names,
But never two
Are quite the same!*

Places in My Heart

By Nathanael Reed

There are places in the north I call
my home, though I'm not there.
And sometimes they must wonder,
Why did I leave, and where?
Did I move without a thought?
And do I sometimes think,
Of peaceful streams and birchbark trees,
Any Grandpa's backyard rink?

There are places in each person's heart,
That we all hold most dear.
And even when our lives move on,
Remain from year to year.
And when the sands of time are spent,
And we see the end draw near,
Is it these places in our heart,
That calm the rising fear?

Places

By Nathanael Reed

Calabash,
Kalamazoo,
Horse Head Pass,
Turkey Stew.

Elephant's Breath,
Wounded Knee,

Some of the places
I'd like to see.

Prince Will

By Nathanael Reed

Sassafras and mustard,
Is what I serve for tea,
Porridge in the morning,
Soup when I'm at sea,
Mixed green peas for Great Aunt Ruth,
Swill for Uncle Lance,
And what I set before Prince Will,
I get from Paris, France.

The Prize

By Nathanael Reed

It came rusted
and worn,
and wrinkled
and old,
Tired and hungry,
moth-eaten
and cold,
Sordid,
Neglected,
and hard on the eyes,
Still loved by its maker,
Cherished
and *Prized.*

Revenge

By Nathanael Reed

My neighbour's dog bit my ankle,
So I held him down, gave his teeth a yankle,
I don't think he will bite no more,
'Cause he's got no teeth and his gums are sore.

The stupid kid across the street,
Told my girl that she was neat,
So I waited 'till he wasn't lookin',
And his brand new bike I be a' tookin'.

Our new maid spanked my baby sister,
So I asked real nice if I could kiss her,
When Maidey turned her cheek to me,
I stuck a fork into her knee.

Sad

By Nathanael Reed

A look of scorn,
A hint of fear,
A snarl,
A growl,
A sigh,
A tear
- *some of the things I saw today,*
no wonder that I feel this way.

Sherwood

By Nathanael Reed

*Forest green, Sherwood sky,
We lie in ambush, you and I.
Before the mist of morning breaks,
The town of Nottingham we take.*

Will Scarlet be me *nom de guerre*,
Suits of green me comrades wear,
And justice be our battle cry,
That for which to fight and die.

Prince John – today, we seal his fate,
By Nottingham we lie in wait,
The Merry Men of Robin Hood,
We lose, we die – ‘tis understood.

The town at dawn begins to stir,
Robin doth we me confer,
“Attack at once and slay Prince John,
Raze the town, and then be gone.”

So down we sweep at rooster’s call,
Forty men – we scale the wall,
And storm the sentry where they stand,
Sword to sword, man to man.

Awakened by the panicked shouts,
The prince in bedclothes scurries out,
With dirk in hand and furrowed frown,
Unbowed he stands to face us down.

We notch our bows, and catch our breath,
Two fingers grip the cords of death,
One heartbeat’s pause, one startled call,
Upon the ground Prince John doth fall.

*Of Robin and his Merry Men,
Their tales pass on from now ‘til then,
And so it speaks as legends should,*

Of all that’s noble, all that’s good.

Soldier of Fortune

By Nathanael Reed

He flies through space
He sails the sea,
He opens new worlds
For you and me,
He buries his treasure
On faraway isles,
*The fodder of legends
Soul without mercy
Heart without pity,
Captain and lord
And surveyor of all.*

Someday

By Nathanael Reed

Someday I’m gonna
Ride with wild horses,
Someday I’m gonna
Dance on the sun.
Some day I’m gonna
Tell Momma I love her,
One day my someday will come.

Give me a patch
Of green meadow to lie on,
Give me the wings
Of a sparrow to fly,
Give me a love
To last more than one lifetime,
A purpose for living,
A reason to die.

Sounds of Life

By Nathanael Reed

A lion roars

A cheetah screams

A dog barks

A cat meows

A mouse squeaks

A mosquito buzzes

A child cries.

A Sudden Call

By Nathanael Reed

A sudden call to breakfast,
A sudden call to school.
A call to work,
A call to play,
A sudden thought of you.

Telephone

By Nathanael Reed

The telephone
she rings and rings,
I'd like to smash
that cursed thing.
It wakes me up,
disturbs my rest,
interrupts me while I dress.
It jangles once,
it jangles twice,
when I reply
I isn't nice.
The calls I get
is mostly for,
My sister
or the guy next door.
Telemarket
survey-ors,
bill collectors by the score.
How I wish
that Graham Bell,
had thought of something else to sell.

The Hockey Sweater

By Nathanael Reed

Today I took my hockey sweater
To the Jiffy Dry Clean store
I'd a spot of mustard on the sleeve,
And a stain from my last *Eat More*.
"I need it back by Tuesday night,
'Cause I got a playoff game,
I'm *Number Three*, I wear the *C*,
And I'm called *The Hurricane*.

Come Tuesday after school I went
To pick my sweater up,
But the place was closed, the door was locked,
And I was out of luck.
My game's at six o'clock tonight,
The fellows need me there!

I'm *Number Three*, oh deary me,
What am I going to wear?

I checked the house from stem to stern,
But found no other jersey,
'Twas then my sister sashayed in,
And I was at her mercy.
"A sweater I can make for you,
Just like the one you lost,
For I'm the queen, of the sewing machine,
But first let's count the cost!"

I knew I had no choice, so then,
I gave her all my cash,
My bike, my dog, my DVD's,
- for I had quite a stash.
"Just sit right down," she sweetly said,
"I won't be long at all,
My fresh design, will work just fine,
When finished I will call."

So I sat there in our living room,
As nervous as could be,
'Till finally sister marched back in,
And a sweater gave to me.
But the colours she had got all wrong,
It was pink instead of red,
And I wasn't impressed, with the sweater's crest,
T'was a cute little kitten's head.

I could hardly believe what I did see,
I was way past mortified,
But I'd never missed a hockey game,
I'd play or I would die.
So I trudged on down to the local rink,
How strange would I appear?
But I'd face the guys, in my pink disguise,
And play the game of my career.

The Wake of Sarah Henley

By Nathanael Reed

Bishop James flew into town,
People came from all around,
All folks young and old were found,
At the wake of Sarah Henley.

Her obit in the *Prairie Sage*,
Covered more than half a page,
On Thursday she'll be center stage,
At the wake of Sarah Henley.

She came to town before the war,
And opened up a general store,
Tomorrow they'll come – the rich and poor –
To the wake of Sarah Henley.

The bishop in his eulogy,
Will share each precious memory,
Tears and laughter will agree.
At the wake of Sarah Henley.

As church bells in the steeple chime,
Who can calm this fear that's mine?
Who can still the hands of time?
At the wake of Sarah Henley.

Through the Ice
By Nathanael Reed

The maiden fair in buckskin gown,
Beside the fire kneeling down.
Her heart is cast, her features worn.
They're overdue, it's going to storm.

Her man has gone with Chee-sha-bo,
To the trading post on the Wendigo.
Lade with furs, to trade the whites,
Gone five days, and four long nights.

Her next of kin left with the dawn,
To search the trails, to find what's wrong.
They know that breakup time has come,
The ice is soft, the currents strong.

Throughout the day, throughout the night,
She waits alone until the light.
Her kin returns, and on his sled,
Her man and Chee-sha-bo, both dead.

What was found upon the trail
By Lac Ste. Rue, the ice did fail,
And though escaped they to the shore,
Without a fire, they'd go no more.

That's where they found them, huddled there.
Clutched in death, no warmth to share,
And so the maid, in silent grief,
Cannot quench her disbelief.

*How can it be? She does implore.
Can he be gone for evermore?
What will I do from now till then?
When I shall see his face again.*

Tom Thompson
By Nathanael Reed

Tom Thompson
- he can surely paint,
But a real good swimmer
- *that he ain't.*

The Wendigo
By Nathanael Reed

*We were going out to cut a tree,
My dad and me,
When from the east a storm blew in,
T'was looking grim.*
 'Cause I knew that in the great northeast,
 The creature understood the least,
 A hairy beast and not so shy,
 With horrible breath and one bad eye,
 The 'Jibway call him *Wendigo*,
 Dumb as a post and terribly slow.

*So Pap says, "Son, I fear we're done.
Ain't this been fun?
'Fraid that horrible Wendigo's,
About to show."*

And sure as shucks on that same night,
'Neath the stars we saw a sight,
T'was the hairy beast, called Wendigo,
He screamed his name - that's how I know.

*My dad and me were stuck that night,
Without a light,
In a trapper's shack we hunkered down,
Then looked around.*

Just when the full moon made its rise,
Far to the east, 'neath darkened skies,
We heard a sound that gave us chills,
And sent us packing for the hills,
far from the Wendigo!

Whenever I Go Home
By Nathanael Reed

A bale of hay beside the road,
A scarecrow, barn,
My father's farm.
These are the sights that welcome me,

Whenever I go home.

A littered street outside my house,
The hydrants, shops,
Apartment blocks.
These are the sights that welcome me,
Whenever I go home.

The cardboard box that holds my bed,
Beneath the bridge,
Beside the hedge.
These are the sights that welcome me,
Whenever I go home.

The nursing home outside of town,
The landscaped lawn,
My friends all gone.
These are the sights that welcome me,
Whenever I go home.

Where Things Are
By Nathanael Reed

Pepper in my shaker,
Cinnamon in my stew,
Leaves are in the raker,
And my heart belongs to you.

With Brock
By Nathanael Reed

He rode with the wind that blew in from the lake,
On a stallion as black as the night,
He'd a sword and two pistols that hung by his side,
And a lantern that gave the trail light.

He'd come from the town of Niagara that morn,
And had left before dawn's early light,
For he'd learned that the blue-coats had crossed the
wide river,
And had camped at the foot of the Heights.

To Queenston they rode, the horse and his general,
For Brock was not one to ignore,
The fact that his soldiers were badly outnumbered,
Or the Yanks who'd come to make war

So he rode till the mist of the morning had parted,
And saw in the distance, the foe,
Camped on the shores of the mighty Niagara,
Then up to The Heights he did go.

The battle for Canada raged through the morning,
At times he thought all might be lost,
But the passion that burned in the eyes of the
general,
Said, "Forward and don't count the cost!"

When out from behind a small tree stepped a sniper,
Levelled his gun and took aim,
And the crash of the musket - it silenced the
redcoats,
For their leader the Yankee had slain.

Even in death the brave general did lead them
As they charged up the hill as one man,
Screaming Brock's name to the God of the heavens,
'Til the blue-coats turned-tail and then ran.

Two hundred years have now passed since that
morning,
Near Queenston where General Brock died,
Yet his spirit still lives and it goes on before us,
Tecumseh the Brave by his side.