



# No Room

*... words and images from half a life spent colouring outside the lines*

by  
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For my parents  
and  
Jamie, Bryan, Katey and Toby

**false dawn**

i feel like a child  
sometimes  
who was thrust out  
into the dark of indefinite night  
after a time the fear passed  
and i learned to live my life well  
in darkness  
still  
i cannot stop the leap of my heart  
at the distant lights  
of every passing truck on the highway  
startled into the hope of dawn  
and as each glow fades  
into the black  
i berate myself for a fool  
who should know better  
  
'til another truck passes

**alien**

i cry out

in a moment of bitter alone  
and have not even  
the solace  
of an echo  
the space that expands around my soul  
has grown so vast  
in those few moments  
of reflection  
when the myriad images  
dreams and plans  
are still  
and the need to share  
or to lean  
drifts upper most  
the reflected utterings  
of my own solitude  
have not the time  
to return  
the inner distances  
have grown so vast  
by the time  
my cries return  
my attention  
has turned  
elsewhere  
and  
even i don't hear  
don't have find make the time  
for  
deferred comfort

**if**

if only  
there was one

someone  
with the capacity  
the desire  
to hold the other end  
of the string  
that anchors  
my soul  
there would be  
no need  
for constant attention  
no need  
for devoted interminable attendance on  
my every whim  
just  
the knowing  
that someone  
somewhere  
knew  
loved  
no judgement  
no regret  
no plans to renovate  
just content  
with the knowing  
absolute  
complete  
someone  
known  
loved  
absolutely  
completely  
where no distance  
could separate  
no time remove  
just  
to know  
that some one  
just  
to share  
that knowing  
and be content  
that's all  
**guest**

i received an invitation  
was called into the feast

i made my preparation  
my hair  
my dress  
my breath sweet  
but when the doors were opened  
when i entranced  
strong and calm  
there was no room at table  
no chair  
no place  
there was no arm  
nervous smiles  
furtive glances  
awkward shuffling  
muttered curse  
but  
no one moved  
to make a place  
no one uttered  
word of grace  
the tension of the awkward  
crowded in  
my shrinking space  
no room  
to sit at table  
no route  
of smooth escape  
trapped  
unwanted guest  
still clutched the invitation  
dates agreed place and time  
stretched through agony no release of  
easy exit  
i wrenched my soul around  
titters  
glances seared my back  
each step towards the door  
they cut deeper  
dance card in shreds upon the floor  
brittle laugh and toss  
but soul hunger  
eats deep  
**no interface**  
  
smiling nodding  
sounds exchanged

knee jerk response  
to overtures of warmth that have no substance  
lines  
that don't translate  
words  
that produce  
unintended images  
and fail  
like hands trying to touch  
through thick glass  
no warmth  
no texture is transferred  
just the teasing taunt  
of the want  
for contact  
an arcade hall of mirrors  
arms outstretched to embrace  
illusion  
tricks that run no deeper than  
the surface  
defy deny holding  
yet  
the images hold each other  
i touch only cold  
flat surfaces  
un-warmed  
the words  
at first familiar  
in tone and cadence  
upon inspection  
defy  
comprehension  
have no meaning  
yet  
my response brings nods and  
vacant smiles  
oblivious  
to any lack or misperception  
and  
the ritual  
moves on  
**the fun**

let's have some fun  
they said  
fun yes i said

good plan  
so off we went  
laughter and debate  
where and such  
we drifted  
a cloud of raucous expressions  
with no links  
but the worship of fun  
into dark and much used places  
smelling spaces with dead air  
loud and pounding  
this was fun  
and so  
we set about with clinking drinking  
and the laughter roared raged without humour  
anger drifted through  
beneath the surface  
like willow root  
but this was fun  
drinks quickly lost flavour  
but no one cared  
i watched and listened to the shrill and roar bore  
the chaos escalated  
to a throbbing menace  
dark corners spread to fill the fun  
i understand the cold of sober  
as the heat  
of unfettered inner torments  
torch and smoke the loud darkness  
of stale memories of fun  
and i wait  
like a swimmer crawled up  
shivering on a beach  
to escape a foetid, steaming tide in darkness  
turning to stagger home and comfort  
warmth  
silent good times  
far and fine  
away from fun

### **rejection dance**

i close the doors  
and draw the curtains  
to my soul

wrapping dreams and sorrows  
in a gentle cloud of childhood fancies  
and  
like a child  
part of me hopes that  
somewhere  
someone  
will feel the loss  
will seek and find me  
and we'll go home  
mostly though  
my departure has been  
unoted  
my absence unfelt  
and unlamented  
and like a child  
on a rainy day  
trapped within by tears  
the sounds and memories  
pull me  
to the window  
fancies and dreams  
dropped forgotten on the floor

### **how long**

how long  
so long  
too long

outside another strangers gate  
hungry and cold  
in darkness  
grateful for a moment of light  
warmth  
like whispered breath  
from lips that never touch  
heart stirs  
with the fluttering flight  
of promises  
like light escaping  
through the open door  
empty promises  
absorbed into the night  
after image seared into souls eye  
to fade away  
to throbbing black  
the slamming of the door  
as darkness thunders back  
hunger howls in the empty  
betrayed  
by the promise  
of a long deferred feast  
soul's delight  
a taunting moment of light  
false beacon  
anticipation  
of more  
a little more  
maybe  
trusting  
believing  
no more  
better to walk alone  
clear sighted in the dark  
past boarded up doors  
safe hidden  
in the comfort of shadows

### **children**

the bane boon of existence  
they pull you to new heights  
new perceptions  
like a butterfly

pulled from the cocoon of self absorption  
the exultation  
of participation  
in things pure and universal  
till euphoria is ground down,  
buried  
under mountains  
of demands  
the light of vision fades  
to the blur of exhaustion  
the short-sightedness  
of survival  
the object of  
transcendent joy becomes  
a black hole  
consuming your soul  
your dreams  
your sleep  
your hours  
still some iridescent moments  
light the odyssey  
wash away  
for a moment  
the million grabbing fingerprints  
on your body mind and soul  
still  
the whining  
demanding  
that runs on interminably eating and corroding with  
no end in sight  
like prometheus  
doomed  
to be perpetually consumed

### **why mummies can't be heroes**

hail the hero  
noble  
proud  
facing dangers  
braving challenge

unafraid  
battled  
beleaguered  
yet undaunted  
perhaps a touch  
just a trace  
of reluctance or  
secret sorrow  
prepared at every turn  
to die  
in glorious self sacrifice  
so  
moms make lousy heroes  
they can't show  
fear or frustration  
no sign  
of secret sorrows  
no sign  
of self  
at all  
just endless  
ceaseless  
selfless  
loving giving in heroic proportions  
never free  
to challenge life or death  
but obliged  
to survive  
no matter what  
unheralded  
unthanked  
forgotten  
until the next need  
or fear or failure  
sounds their name  
and they come  
to serve and save  
against all odds  
again  
**parental abuse**

a child  
a life  
a part of you  
exuded and extruded  
to stand distinct

but still connected  
to grow beyond  
and if  
what if  
it grows beyond reach  
or becomes  
foreign  
turns  
to hack at mother root  
what then  
you can do nothing  
no defence  
as they rip you  
break you  
feed  
on your pain  
leaving for a space  
but always back  
always you hope  
this time  
maybe  
but always you love  
and they take  
and they feed  
and you cannot  
ever  
stop

### **crumbling**

the veneer  
thin and fragile  
is all that's left  
where once  
there was deep true throbbing  
substance

pain strain and struggle  
corrode and  
desiccate  
'til all that floats within is gritty dust  
somewhere  
the soul lies waiting worn  
to near depletion  
still  
almost gone  
the waiting  
becomes all there is to living  
waiting  
biding  
someday  
the veneer crumbles and shudders to dust  
then vanishes  
defeated  
by the first inner breeze  
of the stirring  
waking  
spirit

### **emergence**

shoulders ache and swell  
taut and throbbing  
with the wings of thoughts  
not ready  
to take flight  
until the pressure builds to rupture  
there is no easy

peace  
no smug assurance  
no  
contentment  
instead  
the agony ecstasy of creative drive  
compulsion  
sometimes  
the images that press upon the senses  
have edges  
so sharp  
colours  
so hard  
that the soul bleeds from the assault  
the world is a puzzle  
to be translated  
rephrased  
exposed  
nothing is what it seems  
what it wants to seem  
dig deep  
excise  
analyse  
and pour  
back out through the lens of the soul  
not for gain  
nor adulation  
just because  
there is no choice  
breathing  
this soul bleeding  
inescapable  
perhaps explodes  
freed at last to soar aloft  
when the breathing  
finally  
stops  
**exfoliation**

a path pursued  
has been unfruitful  
a cherished dream  
defied fulfilment  
not spitefully  
unkindly  
just didn't

like clothes that cannot fit  
legs too long  
a back  
too broad  
like a thing evolving  
safe within a cocoon  
'til sanctuary shrinks  
becomes a trap  
demanding escape  
or termination  
not a fragile prison  
to dry split and fall away  
but  
a false skin  
grown fast  
to within  
to be peeled away  
ripped from the soul  
in an agony of release  
shrieking cold  
exposed  
naked and strange  
raw face turned resigned  
to an alien sun  
but free to be  
at last  
an honest proclamation  
of difference  
of soul distance  
impervious  
bleeding strong  
eyes to home  
accepting isolation  
jubilation  
in a defining desolation  
of freedom

### **the fading call**

once  
it seems so long from now  
there was a hope  
a faith  
a dogged determination  
that somewhere  
could would still be heard

an echo  
a promise of peace  
and contentment  
perhaps a touch  
just a drop  
of jubilation  
but now  
it all presses so hard  
on a soul life worn  
for so long  
ears roar with the  
never ending strain and striving  
waiting  
aching to hear the echo of the call  
clamour and resound  
loud and clear again  
maybe tomorrow  
today  
it escapes notice  
in the ringing silence  
instead  
a whisper  
a simple yearning  
for nothing  
for the peace of  
empty  
the contentment  
of dreamless sleep  
a sigh  
to simply  
let go  
to fade  
and drift  
deep  
safe  
forgotten  
into forever oblivion  
**homeward**

through the days and bright bright of  
struggle muddle  
through the throng  
the climb  
the stagger trip rip claw  
upright  
again and againandagain

but whisper wait  
the dream pulls calls  
not flight  
not fight  
not fear  
but the dark  
of wide open night  
unlimited arena  
arrival at the highest height  
where the gale of the universe  
roars  
in all consuming  
all embracing silence  
a dream  
to finally stand open wide  
toes aching  
fingers screaming  
face flushed and rushed  
lifted free  
speck by shred dissolving  
to raging  
puissant  
jubilation  
engorged and swallowed  
by all being being all  
and nothing  
beyond form fear  
all living  
dying  
home

### **day break**

lingering soft  
in the gentle indistinct place  
that floats soul essence  
unafraid  
before waking to full day  
breaking tendrils  
of times forgotten  
almost

but savouring flavouring  
as dreams, vague  
from lives long lost  
soul's chalice  
covered with fingerprints  
lip traces of one  
some one  
gone  
images flicker beyond eye's reach  
eluding sharp focus  
fond form  
slipping into the dark of then  
face faded  
voice drifted  
to gentle whispered murmurs  
heart to heart beating breathing soft  
beyond hearing straining  
willing the soul  
stay  
floating there  
don't move  
don't wake  
reach in ache of failed focus  
to clutch a shadow  
skin chilling  
with the return to here  
a whisper caress lifts with daybreak  
sucked back  
into the cave of indistinct dream  
fingers trace forgotten form  
still memory warm  
soft lips,  
tongue lingering on the taste  
of a hot mouth  
cool  
and honey salt consuming  
leaving a thirst  
deep soul hunger  
abiding,  
calling  
haunting memory of one  
some one

**roots**

there's a plant  
whose roots  
lie underneath my garden  
this place  
a space

i've tended for so long  
again and again i've cut it down  
without  
dignity  
no look or glance  
of recognition  
mowed under  
clipped back  
cut away  
and alien seeds  
selected  
planted  
protected  
to grow and prosper  
but  
no more  
now  
i'll make room  
will watch,  
water, wait and shelter  
until  
timid tendrils reach out  
free  
from dark wet soil  
to reach up  
embrace the heat light wet  
and whisper kiss  
of my living  
day  
growing  
being  
me

### **treasure**

defined  
by the spaces  
no traces  
no visceral substance  
reactive responsive  
formed

not forming  
shifting  
to meet match answer  
demands  
'til the empty within  
echoes  
bellows loud  
and souls eye  
pulls away turns in tunes out  
and probes  
gropes through the dark  
stumbling  
foot stayed betrayed  
by forgotten debris  
traces of treasure and lost dreams  
abandoned fragments  
so  
bar the door  
light first timid light  
in the inner night  
reclaim  
piece by shard  
one by one  
like scattered children  
embrace again  
the faint familiar passions  
spawned in innocence  
in dream remembered living  
from when and faded then  
now

### **Sunrise**

false light fades with a rumble  
into the dark  
and hope twists  
through bitter to bleak  
  
in the cold vacant black  
reluctant passion stirs

angry  
cold determination  
to defy  
deny  
fly  
beyond reach of false promise  
high, so high  
to the deepest dark  
that lies up off the way  
and draws weary soul feet  
to a path  
that grows sure safe  
steep and deep with remembered holds  
for hungry toes and fingers  
crawl climb reach  
and shake off clinging tendrils  
shredded webs  
of taunting dreams  
break free  
farther out  
farther in  
remote  
high and higher still  
high with the promise  
hidden in lingering dark  
of dawn breathing  
first edge  
of a searing lancing shaft  
clear glory  
to rip through the shrouded shreds and ashes  
sing dance  
the  
jubilation  
of the dawn

### **Post Script . . .**

#### **the jubilation song 2002**

the journey is begun at last  
bags unpacked  
bits and pieces

littering the freeway  
free to blow and roll away  
forgotten  
in the dust of the rushing press  
the few treasures  
tucked away  
safe  
in warm pockets  
a faint path  
traced through the grass of the hillside  
beckons  
time to slip off shoes  
to wiggle hot weary toes  
in soft cool earth and sweet grass  
to breath deep  
fresh breezes  
blowing from forest and shore  
heart and mind alive  
open  
sing the universe  
and dance and sway  
along the path  
oblivious to all  
but life