

Morning Mourning

a collection of poems
by t. kilgore splake

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terms of endearment

quiet sunday early

garrett nicholson

aurora maclaine

deep morning slumber

“house beautiful” estate

corvette topdown driveway

mall mart strip

loud pink flourescence

SALE SALE SALE

cheap furniture

beds living room suites

factory assembled junk

slow workingman's shuffle

tired wrinkled femme

wedding ring “sparkle”

two vulnerable souls

hungry for something

warmth another loving

hard life lacking promise

yet wondering “if”

hoping

dreaming

praying

THIS TIME!

something funny as hell

two old man early morning coffe counter
stools, laughing loudly, tears running down
rich malt complexions, soaking gray stubble,
chin damp grizzled mat.

rumors of spring

early morning thunder exploding across the
keweenaw, flashing lightning piercing pewter
gray drizz, poet awake, thinking “the cliffs,”
soon snowbanks receding from old stone smelter
smokestack, mountain wildflower buds bursting
through hardscrabble crust softened by april
runoff, black trout lazily lulling, waiting
“ice out,” mayfly hatches, bloody orange roe
dancing in fertile silvery clouds on sparkling
stream tides.

bardic dusk redux

dark shadows falling, final curtain finishing
“doing contest,” elusive dame muse hours,

ravel, BOLERO quiet beginning whispers, warm
lowenbrau, black rye, sharp cheddar repast,

graying poet racing toward old age writing
well, fresh energy, “spritzy,”

brain-skull still alive, deep rich hmmm
rev-rev-revving,

like old bugatti coming through the s’s,
final lap at nurburgring.

initmacy

leftover breakfast croissants, early gray’s black
tea, reading, doing crosswords, checking weather,
evening stroll with “jen dancing,” visiting italian
hall memorial arch, listening for sad weeping children
lost in christmas “fire,” hiking over to laurium,
checking dark manses, boom copper mining era past,
maybe meet blind miner ghosts, going home from old
quincy broom factory, telling jen, honey, february
already, soon “ice out,” and spring coming into the
keweenaw far north lands, season of “long white”
finis, almost time to pick wildflowers, decorate
our kitchen, bardic loft, knowing wisdom in life
and love, little things count.

living in shadows

gray skinned men, gray spring mornings, gray suits, very gray brains, providing gray thoughts, speaking gray listless tones, gray souls going to gray deadend jobs, driving gray cars listening to gray sound system noise, under gray underpasses, passing gray cement strip malls, gray parking lots, earning gray dollars, buying more gray store things, stored in gray garages, gray basements for next gray neighborhood yard sale, floating along on say gray memories, gray mothers, gray fathers, gray children, gray uneventful existence, never enjoying white hot sperm boiling, swimming amid fertile ovum, warm blood “near death” ecstasies, silver and black void before sudden coming into nothingness.

mfa nazi

grown up adults

TRADING

scouting dens

uniforms merit patches

special “magic”

handshake password

adolescent “mumble-jumble”

now wearing

tweedy underwear regalia

secure ivy sanctuary

style manual rules

workshop orthodoxies

toadies curtsying

before literary elders

hoping touch

secret “decoder rings”

twenty-five cents

KELLOGG’s box top

battle creek delivery

to those

“chosen.”

spring coming into montana

(ode to “bro” brautigan)

snow melting absaroka summit

wild violets lower passes

eight pages

good writing morning

richard angling for

mill creek “bows”

“digger dollar” billfold cache

flask cool watermelon sugar

meadow sea of daisies

orange monarchs flit-fluttering

dill pickle sardine snack

streamside nap

afternoon tides shadows

later meeting “ianthe”

coffee ice cream

VIDA cafe

picking wild blackberries

trout onions potatoes

sweet dinner dessert.

marriage

uncomfortable at first

leash collar

walking walking

chilly early mornings

dark late nights

yanking me along

other noses

smelling my balls

licking my asshole

hurry up tugs

leg raised to piss

squatting to poop

movin' on movin' on

but winter time

warm mat inside door

delicious table scraps

no dry kibbles

dinner table whispers

“fix him”

“fix him”

“fix him.”

sequel

saradon

surprise ATLANTIC CITY call

“i’m back” “truly truly sorry”

“still have the money”

“hoping you’ll forgive me”

jetting to france

final chapter

joie de vivre provence holiday

andalusion gypsy mates

may-september trystings

small town sidewalk bistros

leg of lamb

icy brut

taste of paté

baquette

basil

rosemary

garlic

garlic

GARLIC

wild strawberries fresh melons

sticky sweet pasty tortes

old mg convert rag top down

etienne nims arles beziers

graybeard “mo” young lover

wildass grand hol

endless “canto jondo”

1928 leica

wild-angle lens

pocket full

slow

black and white

film.

full moon traveler

john's cafe

6:30 am early opener

leathery "boho beat"

old time roader

ghost of "jack" maybe

rucksack blanket roll

shaking out chill

loosening tired bones

late pale dog rider

early first hitch lift

loneliness deeply buried

serenely accepting going solo

beyond demon rum thirsts

passing nicotine "hit" FIX

later finding

overnight camping hideaway

small brush fire

econo pork & beans

tarp if it rains

sleeping under STARS

owls hooting

distant coyote howl

taking in “straights”

private backwater theater

beautiful people perpetural youths

MOUNTAIN DEW ah-hype

“been there” “done that”

one big joke.

untitled

appliance store window

16 television screens

splashing same picture

victory bar and grill

fading b-17 photo

“flying fortress”

soft balloon wings

fragile willow floss

hurrying back

tibenham sanctuary

no place to hide

grinning devil

laughing

laughing

laughing

too young souls

teetering

hell’s abyss

beyond

peanuts lowery

striking out

bottom of ninth

bases loaded

eight ball

side pocket

falling

too

soon.

renaissance pilgrimage

“ice out”

warm spring tides

sweeping across peninsula

bardic pilgrim

pursuing “beatitude”

back to the cliffs

mountaintop holy place

graybeard poet rising

like poem crawling upward

through deep black interiors

bursting fresh flower bud

pushing beyond hardscrabble

hungrily feasting

like sustaining light

daytime moon

ghostly pale halo

hawks lazily soaring

riding distant warm thermals

“eyes of god”

tiny specks far horizon

flying toward “dancing stars”

beyond dark clouds

far below

dostoyevsky's "grand inquisitor"

men at war

hearts full of hate

mountain summit

aging versemaker

closer to jesus

sacred place where

love is stronger.

sad, the mountain always wins

“mad man” poet wrote

sadder still others

choosing to stay below

not chance challenge

rare altitudes summits heights

grabbing pack pitons alpine axe

wrapping ankles achy throbbings

wild ass run up cordillera peaks

grant tetons

mckinley

karakarum

matterhorn

el capitan

carstenz

racing past japhy ryder

old “beat” jack

everest ghosts hillary tenzing norgay

mysterious yeti prints

soon cool k 2 slope

hair windblown streaming

icy beaujolais chardonnay sustenance

risking unknowns conquering fears

tall aerie roost surveying

stink of despair mediocrity BELOW

lottery ticket loser dreams
tv soaps professional wrestling realities
politically correct officially virtuous
power ties corporate-capitalist greeds
pious high church superstitions
refrigerator magnet cliches personas

past the tree line

beyond low lying clouds

stopping edge of nirvana

waiting welcoming angels

heavenly singing dancing feasting

bardic

final

au revoir.

culture civilization

state

of the arts

technologies

“smart”

instant messages

immediate communications

wireless phone

handheld p c

home t v

video voice text

while

lone poet

deep forest

trout streams melodies

nuthatch trilling

leaves whispering

light breezes

bedding down

nighttime

wilderness retreat lair

owls hoot-hooting

coyotes baying

growing closer

shadows covering moon

distant

rolling thunder

advancing

explosive shocks

light petals rain

early morning

licking

wet tiny beads

fresh

green

leaves.

intimacy becoming

“she talks of jesus, i speak of trees.”
— kenneth gurney

late night near midnight shadows
pillow whisperings warm candle glow
lovers sharing dreams together
distancing past terrors
seasons in hell
bodies curled embrace breaths in unison
gentle kisses caressing
hot passions rising
beautiful
getting better better better
waking early morning
sleepy memories lingering
sweaty odors magnificent sweet perfume
last night’s poetry simple sacred grace
something still singing inside
hair mussed sheets rumped
“good morning” purrrr optimistic sighs
mate lover leaving bed
tiptoeing down the hall
listening to bathroom tinkles toilet flush

“darling” “sweetheart” distant kitchen murmur

coffee tobacco fragrances wafting

burnt toast aromas pungent lingering

hungers thirsts vanquished

knowing tonight tomorrow days ahead

moving toward her again

waiting lover in the light

warm safe feelings

it’s all right

you

are

home.

art gallery opening eve

curbside pricey “big boss”

blazers

astros

tahoes

rugged-tough 4x4 “suv’s”

paintings

photographs

sculptures

stained glass

macrame’

“exhibits”

ersatz artists masquerading

lives continuous university

grad seminar earnestness

npr smugness intellectual coolness

glam togs latest stylish uniforms

elle

vogue

banana republic

l.l. bean

eddie baurer

pay bills on time severity

underwear NEVER brown stained bloody

art a commodity purchased for price

gallery full glitzy smoke shadows

camouflage hiding

sharp stink mediocrity

lacking genuine muse

gallery showing small celebrity praise

ART without raw panache

elan energies clothesline

“day glo” tapestries

elvis and jesus

hanging out side-by-side

no weekend artists

running wildass

toward mountain heights

chasing ghosts jack japhy

past the tree line through mists

wind blowing hair streaming

sweet sauturne boasts

cheers echoing distant granite walls

summit moon dancing

affirming celebration

life

is

sacred.

sacred thy firm

and jesus said

“treat the least of men

as you treat me”

deaf girl

holiness

soft eyes

ruined smile

scar tissue healing

vulnerable heart

mute

deep desperate

questing elusive

person to love

rescuing

graybeard poet

lost subterranean darkness

creating passions

romantic verse

glittering stalagmite glow

blind trout companions

swimming

black cavern pools

rising from depths

escaping

no longer alone

abandoning

nada nada

pas de deux death

living loving

light on sun moon shadows

no words necessary

sacred union

naked music

dancing candle flame

sweet soft

pillow whispers

gentle embrace

drifting off

long quiet

river

of

dreams.

poet

when i was a child, i spake as a child, i understood as a child, i thought
as a child: but when i became a man, i put away childish things.”
— 1st corinthian’s

growing up past

adolescent “it is cool”

self-destructive will to power id maschismo

black hatreds evolution not erased

serious graybeard poet distancing

ersatz “we are artists” officially virturous

sunday weekend painter-poet-sculptor

patched “snot jacket” parka raggedy jeans

early morning ghost town voyeur

bonhomie alkies searching bottle deposits

scared old men checking forgotten coins

pay phone slots cola machines laundromats

discovery changing new attitude better

not giving in giving up

living beyond agony of youth

unafraid gentleness feeling vulnerable

writing poetry knowing difference

“soft pencil-hard dick” “hard pencil-soft dick”

creating crafting blood guts viscera

poems with heartbreak loving music

realizing accepting

life no dress rehearsal second act waiting

RAT BASTARD TIME demanding adversary pressing

rejecting role frightened old man

lone recluse accumulating money

bank deposit total growing

risking mountain climb ascent

life beyond land's sight

familiar and ordinary

loving young woman near teen daughter

quiet nights soft moist sedge

licking pussy GIVING orgasm satisfaction

praying small island

floating warm amnionic seas

growing
growing
growing.

love makings

aging graybeard poet

young rascally polish girl

late evening dinner

quiet moments intimate catchings up

bardic “philly steak melt”

sourdough mozzarella onions peppers

garlic pizza salad my lady’s carte

dangerous black olives jalapeno bite

garlic-lentil “soup of the day”

plain vanilla ice

his espresso hers cappuccino

dessert finishings

momentary peaceful respite

tortured other lives

world without tenderness

nighttime stroll cooling breeze

mining ghost town shadows

relishing old world architecture

gothic victorian romanesque craftsmanship

huge red superior sandstone blocks

seemingly blasted from hell

gazing up toward spire nooks crannies

st. anne's st. peter's cathedrals
hiking to seventh street
past boarded up depot-station
second story porthole window
old masonic hall union building
third story dance floor empty
stage quiet wrinkled fading curtains
chuckling over memories
winter walk to laurium
hoping to spy ghosts
blind C&H broom factory hands
back home again home
art gallery loft
bardic sanctuary literary aerie
naked nipple to nipple
lips tongues soul kissings
salty hoany juices memories
briny kelp ocean tides eons long past
cock cunt bloods madly throbbing
riding insane fugue crescendos
groaning ooooohs gasping aaaaahs

whispering “come come
yes come my sweet darling”
fiery eruptions together
surging torrents blood semen nectars
fighting tears weeping “near death” bliss
wet spot growing pond wrinkled sheet folds
dark public hairs silver swimming sperm
surprised no dark rorschack splotch
drifting edges of consciousness
waking dozing whispering light caressing
half asleep waiting morpheus
rich deep slumbering
“we are in love dreams”
waking morning musky sleepy odors
inhaling feminine pillow aromas
perking coffee stovetop “gurglings”
watching naked lover
shy girl on the toilet
breast drooping over basin
washing sleepy face eyes
combing rumped blond tress
back to bed cups of espresso cooling

talking talking talking
precious shared moments making poetry
building strength for taming
later desperate black doubts
learning more about ourselves
developing new language habits of loving
knowing her “splake” voice from distance
means “oh oh oh noooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo”
flat humming “tom” says
“honey lets do something about it”
two poet souls perfect expatriate existence
parisian bistro provencal countryside
GRAY BEARD BARD POLISH MATE
loving like it all matters
knowing less risks
losing all.

dream flight

“a man has to add up to something, ben.”
— willie lowman

moving beyond

loud banal superficial

television
computer games
cinematic simulations

beer ad self empowerments

empty lives quiet desperate reality

relentless psycho-babble analysis

masses wallowing drowning

“poor me” self-pitying

loser sum-bitches

loving mediocrity

ugly cities
money-material madness
clock-calendar tgifs

instead

on odyssey searching

“this is a good place”

paris left bank brasserie lipp
loire valley provence
dublin fitzwilliam’s pub
venice canals “harry’s”
rio copacabana impanema beaches
vienna anton karas zither humming
cuernavaca “dia los muertos”
calumet evergreen cafe

glowing glorius happy

“moving feast”

raw oysters icy brut
blood sausage sweetbreads
back bar boiled eggs
canibal sandwiches of youth
sugar skulls
expensive fine havana leaf
creme brulee vin blanc
onion soup escargot appetizer
braised duck orange sauce

absolute pure like

golden byzantium
ahab’s great whale
any poem with alabaster

celebrating poet gurney’s

“live a good poem”

gray dancer splake eulogy

“i have done my dance”

“made this song”

blood
beauty
pain
passion
love
madness

vanishing

old bard’s shadow

growing smaller

soon dark specter

distant mountain shadows.

Biograph — t. kilgore splake



T. Kilgore Splake (“gray dancer”) lives above the omphale art gallery in the ghost copper mining town of calumet in michigan’s upper peninsula keweenaw area. His most recent chapbook titles include, *the murderous clown, light -- lightness, being -- becoming*, and the *kerouac upper peninsula diary*. Splake’s *available light* contains a selection of black-and-white photographs.

Alpha Beat Press has produced seven splake broadsides. *Earspank Productions* has recorded four splake book-manuscripts on cassette tapes. Splake has several web pages on line with poems and photographs, his most recent being *ghosts of calumet*. His poetry has appeared in a wide variety of small press magazines, including, *The New York Quarterly*, *Mojo Risin’*, *Bouillabaisise*, *The*

TMP Irregular and *Graffiti Rag*.

Recently splake has done cover photographs for *Spelunker Flophouse*, *Now Her Nowhere*, and *Snowbound*.

Gravity Presses is publishing his manuscript, *a celebration of samantha* in the fall. During the coming yooper season in the “long white.” Splake plans on returning to work on the *slouching toward calvary*.