



**Road to War**

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cover photo by author

*Worship,  
Warship,  
Wordship—*

*one ship follows another;  
one word follows another;  
one war follows another—*

LUIS GARCIA

## **CONSTRUCTIVE REST**

This is magic.  
It's the technology  
that's real.

The burned, twisted bodies  
are real. The beauty— monstrous.

No, Pamela, you can't blow it up  
even if it is the damned home  
of the atom bomb.

Your feeling is a path,  
and when the path splits  
sit until the mountain crumbles.

Stay strong for the child of the world.

## **WINTER FOREST**

January 25th , Saturday, 5 p.m.  
Sun 05° Aquarius opposed the Moon

Winter transmutes Craig's Hill  
dense and gray— a dead forest

Ethan and Barb and Steve  
Tom and Sharon and Jill  
circle dance around a water tower

When you touch the Earth  
red rays rise through your body  
when you walk you bring  
purple rays down from Heaven

Meanwhile, I'm drinking *Jack Daniel's*  
with a little water  
while they dance and chant

Explaining how, if you'd let me  
I'd let you...  
when we go in for the hydrogen bomb  
and it's embarrassing  
standing there in a white shirt  
with debris falling

It's a long day with an extra sunrise  
and a long night  
with ultra-violet spring  
after a nuclear winter

## **THINKING WITH FEELINGS**

thinking with feelings  
my voice comes from far away  
from within a mirror  
where phantoms whir

friend, I see in you  
something in me  
I fear

a power in us  
the cruelty to kill

I have walked through Hell  
and eaten my bread  
soaked in tears

I am numb  
having seen the beautiful  
faces of the dead

## **METHOD IN THE MADNESS**

I write, then I type  
I retrieve, I retype  
I cut and paste  
images of real objects

a process of recovery  
and discovery  
a contemplation of silence  
in this maelstrom of violence

## **ONE SPIRIT, MANY FAITHS**

Acts of senseless terror directed against Satan  
after years of domination, manipulation, shame  
viciousness of attacks, the weak versus the strong  
hitting symbolic targets, money and might

Humanitarianism, we relieve our conscience  
while veiling our political motive  
can't leave the Gulf and live without oil  
or leave the Holy Land and lose control

Freedom rings, altruism tainted with self-interest  
hard not to have self-interest in survival  
there's self, and then there's enlightened self

## **PRAISE & BLAME, LOSS & GAIN**

To be peace, empty, clear, compassionate in this  
mad mix of good and evil and not escape through sleep  
through normalcy, through wrapping myself in the flag

A prayer tree flutters in our town square  
the prayer for war to disappear in this warm breeze  
the leaves are prayers blowing in the deadly winds

## **MY ESCAPE FORWARD**

What's up?  
What's down?  
What's there to do?  
What's done?

If I go up the Congo  
down the Mekong  
or follow Strawberry Creek  
I'll loose my mind, if I go far enough

Strawberry Creek runs down the hill  
past the Cyclotron through Faculty Glade  
I sit by the stream  
and my dreams are full of heavy metal

My freshman year at Cal  
Professor Parkinson says  
my essay "My Home"  
is the worst he's ever read

These squiggles are my class notes  
for Atomic Radiation and Life—  
must be the paths of neutrinos  
no mass, just spin

Frank Chin takes off his Rotcy uniform  
and sticks the barrel of his rifle in the ground  
Walking off the drill field in his shorts  
he's no chickencoop Chinaman

The Un-American Activities Committee  
is in town— Black Friday— the police

fearing they are losing control wash  
the protesters down the courthouse steps

At breakfast my dad chokes on his coffee  
I'm on the front page giving a *sieg heil*  
but what he can't see is the microphone  
I'm holding for KPFA

A war machine grinds towards Saigon  
I hear the litany of the dead  
A protest movement is born  
the formation of a hive

Released from the darkness  
my skull is measured by calipers  
Is my brain pan enlarged  
by Tibet? by Nicaragua? by Burma?

A child might wonder why  
the earth seems flat  
Note the lines  
Connect the lines

Kuwait— Somalia— Serbia— Bosnia  
Zaire— Liberia— Afghanistan— Iraq

Finally, they form a circle

## **LETTER TO SITO IN TIME OF WAR**

we find  
ourselves  
in a new  
world  
speaking  
an old  
language

we speak  
of beauty  
and feelings  
while the

machines  
blast  
the birds  
from our  
hearts

watch  
the words  
hear  
the howl  
come  
to the ear  
eye  
nose  
lip

scream  
at the  
dichotomy  
of the  
comma—  
a dream  
an illusion  
how time  
passes

dinosaurs  
dance off  
the map  
where you  
and I sit  
drinking  
coffee

we hold  
down  
this loose  
end  
of the  
universe  
feeling  
at home  
in the debris

**PAGE OF SWORDS**

black on black on black,  
black dress, black nails  
black eyeliner, blonde hair dyed black  
dog chains  
and combat boots with 2 inch soles

you want to learn Tarot  
but don't care about Ancient Egypt  
or what is hidden in the cards  
just how to read them

so gothic  
my mood, your costume  
no need for all this blather  
ok, I'll forget the traditional stuff  
take you to a coffee house  
look at the art

here, play with the cards  
go off in whatever direction  
from whatever vantage point

with whatever comes next

that guy's tattoo  
it says "broken" across his back  
in bold letters

the coal miners' strike in Harlem County  
Kentucky in the 70s

the war in Iraq  
the endless war on terror

war on the horizon  
war as far as I can see



no kidding, things get me down  
better now we're sitting in this café  
note my inflection and the emphasis  
put on precision, value, fun

coming at you sideways  
first a double mocha, then history  
then a balloon

inside, I write, "Poot was here!"  
and vanish into air

## **INTERCHANGE OF TINCTURES**

Plutonium has a half-life of 250,000 years  
and unless we can raise the tone arm  
and get ourselves individuated or differentiated  
or TOGETHER OR on top of it  
we won't have a millennium to stand on.

In Spring, bud out. Dovetails come later.

This is the later Kali Yuga  
The Fourth World  
The Iron Age  
The Fifth Sun  
The IXth Hell  
The Age of the Hunchback  
The Era of Disillusionment

## **PRESIDENT BUCHANAN SLEPT HERE**

Expanding Our Dominions  
With Might and Right  
With Axe, Rifle, and Plow  
With Computer and Hydrogen Bomb  
In the Course The Propagandists  
Mark on the Soil and in the Sky  
For the Stars of Empire

With the Policy of New Possessions  
Beyond the Seas and the Atmosphere  
According to the Logic of History  
And the Duty of Destiny

All for Power, Sex, Money, and Death

## **EVIDENCE**

whereas a fortress  
whereas a mosque  
whereas a river  
of diamonds, a river  
of blood

whereas the fortress  
is the mosque, whereas  
the river is blood, whereas  
men and women are diamonds  
I ask what is there  
where imagelessness prevails?

whereas some cosmoses are being  
transformed, whereas some are  
being transfigured, whereas  
some metamorphosis continues  
I ask how is this possible where  
there is no imagination?

## **TERROR WITHIN, TERROR WITHOUT**

*Carefully now will there be a grail or a bomb which tears the heart out of things?*

—BOOK OF MERLIN, Jack Spicer

### **I. From 'Infinite Justice' to 'Enduring Freedom'**

Cave dwellers plummet beyond what security can cinch  
turn sleepy innocence to rabid rancor

Images of violent thrust propel my grief past midnight

froth the tough hours into a flotsam of words

In the time it takes to drink a latté  
a rank mist curls over the earth

And so begins an epoch of enforced disillusionment  
where invisible fingers control the air

## **II. The Litany Continues**

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for Airforce Master Sergeant Evander Andrews

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for each Afghan killed in this campaign

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for each soul crushed in the World Trade Center

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for those dying from sanctions and bombs in Iraq

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for all the Israelis who have been blown to bits

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for each Palestinian shot in the streets

I release 10,000 doves and burn my best incense  
for Tony Blair & George Bush & Osama bin Laden

## **III. Praise and Blame, Loss and Gain**

To be peace— empty, clear, compassionate in this  
mad mix of good and evil and not escape through sleep  
through normalcy, through wrapping myself in the flag

A prayer tree flutters in our town square  
the prayer for war to disappear in this warm breeze  
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## **IV. Fame and Shame, Pleasure and Pain**

Everyone I see holds onto their face  
What is behind these masks? these headlines?  
America attacked  
A weekend without games  
US girds for war to 'Rid world of evil'  
US expands detention powers  
Spirits soar as Giants return to Pac Bell Park  
'Time is running out' for the Taliban  
71 Barry Bonds 72 Smashing!  
Uzbekistan opens bases for US troops  
US attacks Afghanistan

## **V. Cowboy Rhetoric**

"Slowly but surely we're smoking al-Qaida  
out of their caves so we can bring them to justice,"  
says the Commander-in-chief

Caves where Jelaluddin Rumi was born  
Rumi, who proclaimed, "No boundaries, no flags!"  
Caves where Vajrasattva transmitted Dzog Chen

Afghanistan is not a place  
but a space, a vacuum created by conflict

## **VI. A New Geography Lesson**

An *AK 47* by a bookcase in bin Laden's study  
What is right, what is wrong with this picture?

George Bush smirks at the camera during a briefing  
What is right, what is wrong with this attitude?

John Ashcroft says he needs more sweeping powers  
What is right, what is wrong with his claim?

An Afghan man holds up a fistful of prayer beads  
What is right, what is wrong with his demand?

From Cyrus II to Genghis Khan to Tamerlane to  
The New World Order, the Great Game continues

## **VII. Manic Heanism**

Opposition evolves so life can exist  
Opposition desires union

This is a barbarous age  
Mani is skinned alive

## **VIII. All the Universe Is Laughing at Us**

Overheard, "They don't believe in God; they believe in Allah."  
Maybe we can reassemble Jerusalem in the Nevada desert  
Pray for Buddha to pop a cap up Mars's ass

## **GENERAL MacTHUSELAH**

*Genesis V 27*, his days  
were nine hundred sixty and nine years.

Forlorn is foul  
weather— none

better or

brighter than his  
shield.

He returns and returns  
and returns again.

Landmines in the sand  
are not compassionate.

---

Lu, I would remake the whole universe for you if I could, but the ghosts are hostile. I'm afraid they're dug in and have lots of ammo. It's all the same war. The generals just fade in and out. Beware of the sharp explodings.

**GIVE ME FAG VOMIT**

Fucks US  
under the stars  
and stripes  
where the Axis  
(no, they don't ask us)

and the Allies  
(of course, it's all lies)  
create a suction,  
an enigma  
in the ice box.

You can see  
in the dawn's early light  
his dong is long  
past the pull date.

---

LBJ keeps poking the obvious member of the sleeping dragon of the Orient because, for the life of US, he doesn't know who he wants to invite to his barbecue. Old presidents don't die; they just bloat up.

## **WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

The Fookers were revved all night,  
grounded  
with their canisters of mustard gas.

EXHEXDEXODREAM  
SCREAMCREAM

Poor Apollinaire.

---

*Pour Apollinaire* was a face cream frantically sought in boutiques in Paris under the Vichy government in that war. These Fookers are Messerschmitts.

## **WAR SAW**

This is how it is, Sir—

Sack and burn,  
Rape and pillage,  
Every town and every village.

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Clausewitz was right— war should not be left to the politicians.

## **TRAINS THAT COULD**

I sing  
To cloud to tree to wind to T.V.

I sing  
*Watusi wa*  
*Watusi wa tu*

I see two  
Watusis in tutus.

---

Stopping the troop trains, it was a bad day in Berkeley. Some of it was subtle. Some of it was gross.  
All of it was ugly.

## **DR. JENKEL & MR. BROWN**

One man saw another man whisper into the ear  
of the president as he was leaving his hotel  
on his way to Booker School.  
Another man asked the president  
if he knew what was going on in New York,  
and he is said to have replied,  
"Yes, I'll do something about it."

From these reports, another man concluded  
the president knew something  
about the events of 9/11  
before the attack occurred, believes  
that the attacks  
were organized crimes underwritten by *Enron*

and Mayor Willie Brown,  
and that every official  
from *Enron* president Ken Lay  
down to San Francisco's dog catcher  
has been covering up the trail.

I slept while this man cringed in his tattered moccasins  
amid the clutter of his mind.  
I looked the other way when they came  
asking for an explanation.

I wrapped myself in the flag  
while angels had electrodes attached to their wings,  
were disemboweled,  
had their throats cut.

No wonder no one sings any more.