



**TALKING TRASH**  
**D PRESS ~ 1998 ~ SANTA ROSA**

# COVER ART BY GAELA MORRISON

## FLATLINE

*for Sito*

it has a pulse  
it has a smile

someday, we'll get down  
to the core

it's a short distance  
but a long way

## MANEATER

hard to conceive  
or praise  
what could be  
perfect content  
hard to be  
content  
with form only  
a sphere, a cube

or what is the Sphinx  
target practice for his nib's troops

## **FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS**

so wrong and so right  
crude and too perfect

whatever  
basically, what does  
"whatever" mean, anyhow?

tap gently and keep moving

## **HEAVY ARTILLERY**

I'll listen to your unhappiness  
I'll even hand you a towel  
but I'm not going to E.R.  
because of a broken heart

I had a love like that  
and one's enough  
I would just as soon forget  
the way she walked

## **ONCE I'M UP TO SPEED ON QUARK**

*for Sam*

after the first 10 to the minus 43rd second  
a new layout to the Universe  
a bouncing bubble, a ball of strings

a hundred things to delight  
fountains, flags  
a butterfly of gas in flight

## **BACK TO THE REAL WORLD**

the bills, the boss, the stress  
walk the line

walk the dog, wash the car  
push the cart, prune the bush

"hello, hello, something wrong?  
something on my face?"

## **MORNING**

what's before emptiness  
nothing  
I have words for

I pull back the curtain of the sky  
and enter  
the mirror that is

the World of Nun  
chaotic and watery, without sun  
pack your bags, Tinkerbell

## **NOON**

long afternoon in my rose garden  
long evening in the infinite shadows

long afternoons, longer evenings  
I listen, I listen, I listen

long-stemmed beauty  
we seem to get nowhere

## **AND NIGHT**

a summer night  
moonlight

we are in a very old garden  
dreamkisses free and easy

I love you, but what to do

this is a dream where I awake  
saying, "This is a dream"

## **DARK MATTER**

we drift in infinite space  
or no space

illusion of oneself in an obscure  
place  
a floating reflection

nothing holding us up

## **AND THE TREE OF LIFE ALSO**

I go to the shore and sit  
I become limpid blue sky

seaweed seaspray  
seagulls and sand

dry wet high low  
empty full fast slow

bored blissed

## **FIVE ABSTRACTS INSPIRED BY MARK ROTHKO**

i

"O, God, let me out of this world; I can't live  
like this, hurting the one I love."

ii

yellow

>>>>>red

>>>>>>>>>>and red

a gesture of friendship  
something



v

a wonderful moment  
transported from doubt to joy

m>i>r>a>c>l>e>m>a>g>i>c  
h>>>>>o>>>>>P>>>>>e  
e>>>c>>s>>>t>>a>>c>>>y

oblivion  
caught off balance  
>>>>>>>can you feel the  
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>impact?

## **VACUMEGENESIS**

out of nothing  
comes a spark

energy mind  
adam's apple

cheekbone and elbow  
light just happens

a gonsel outdraws

his shadow

## **TELECOSMOS**

the sunrise  
beyond the actual sun

is a song you sang  
along the San Juan

a canticle of water and air  
a riff of iridescence

## **NUTCRACKER**

*for Lulu*

everyone listen up  
this is a beautiful woman

this is a beautiful woman  
so I sing

there's something special  
about her toes

and she knows  
she has those toes

she points to a pair  
of point shoes

and I catch a reflection  
of her smile

and forget  
what I've got going

## **CUTTING A SWATH**

an old man pushes his wheelchair  
and a clothes basket down the hall

he is slowly advancing to the laundry  
with a plastic bag of soiled diapers

and with him the whole world comes

## **MORE LIGHT**

my father gulps air

jaw slack, hands astray  
in front of the TV  
sound on full blast

he can't make out the words  
but the music helps him sleep  
it's Ida Lupino Month on *TCM*  
May and December

his 75<sup>th</sup> Masonic Anniversary  
at the Luther Burbank Lodge tonight  
proud he can walk to the East  
worried he won't remember the Word

how to tie his tie is a real mystery  
his first car, a 1916 *Buick*  
I drive into the fire  
to help him

## **PICTURE FROM WILLIAMS**

*for Jane*

she did a painting, which in  
keeping with the spirit was to be  
a red wheelbarrow  
    rain-drenched  
    with chickens

no fuss, straight up

finally, tore the sky

into four pieces, each

had a line of verse

and framed the botched wheelbarrow

and too bright interpretation of

chickens with sewn on feathers

by thumbtacking it to a stretcherbar

so much depends upon

that first cup of coffee