

my love

yes i am afraid of growing old —
of unlied lives and lost chances;
of weary skin pulling away from bones,
the trials and vices of my life spelled out across my face
for all the world to see.
babies and newspapers and coffee and god!
high school children with their baby faces,
it's true, isn't it,
that we're all getting older,
even if we're not quite yet growing up.

save for you my darling, i suppose,
save for you.
a .22 pistol to your head and you're forever 25½
almost exactly.

i hoped, for just a minute,
when i heard that you were in the hospital...
but men with deep voices spoke my name
softly and told me there was never really a chance.
a suicide bullet, will says,
rips through the brain.

i picture you and the blood spattered scene,
your crescent shaped scar rising up
out of your thick black hair and
all i can think, over and over, is
my love, my love,
what have you done to your sweet head?

i kissed it as you lay with your hands folded
(and god were they always that little)
and even your hair is different and
it's not really you anymore now, is it?

yes you were inappropriate and infuriating and rarely
sober or healthy or sane,
but you once kept a baby squirrel in your pocket
and you could climb any tree i ever saw.
you drove through my neighbor's cornfield
drunk and one night, i hear,
peed on every car in the mcdonald's parking lot
while the people inside looked on horrified, and
my brother and his wife weren't sure whether to die
from embarrassment or laughter.
you could play any instrument and wrote such
beautiful and wicked things
with those hands, those hands
they were really always so small.

they are huge in my mind and your face is
over there in that tree
just like kate said it would be.
i thought she was being poetic
when she said she saw her dead mother's face
in the clouds but
there you are this morning
in the shadows and
the shape of leaves,
the shape of your skull and the crescent shaped scar and
my love, my love, what have you done
to your sweet head?

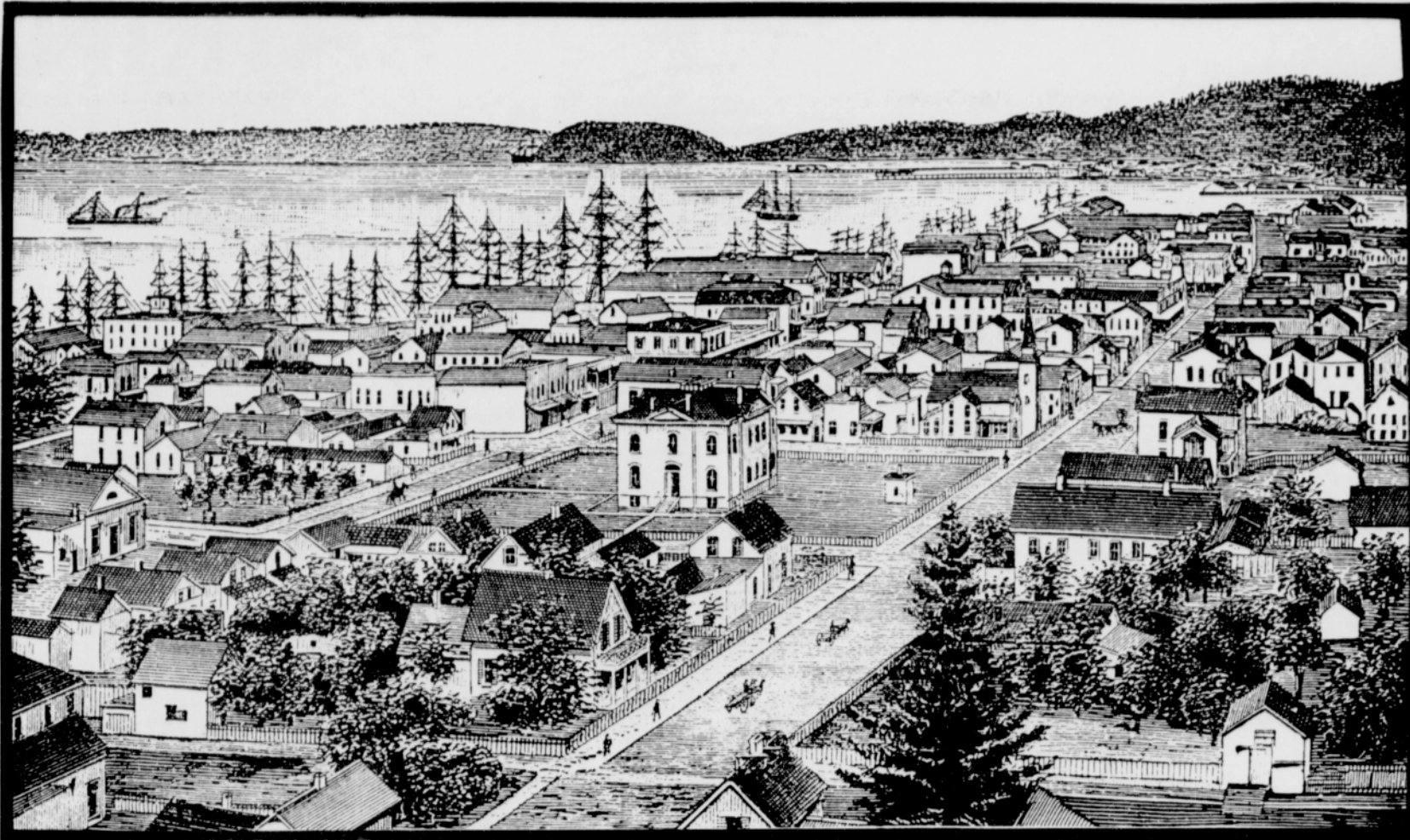
Astoria, oregon (12/18/05)

(this poem is for michael dubois, a dear friend and ex-fiancée
of mine who committed suicide on december 2, ten days after
i returned to astoria. he was an amazing and complex person,
a fact omitted from his funeral, so i decided to write a eulogy
for him myself. i hope you like it, mike, and i hope you've found
what you were looking for.)

walking past

walking past stonehenge in june
i'm in the desert now
and i have brought no water
only the storm of you still
beating neath my window under
only tracing yourself
on my back like when i
was so much younger
so send down rain and
let this golden valley
roar with thunder —
i'm in the desert now
and i have brought no water

walla walla, washington (6/13/05)



THE CITY OF ASTORIA, OREGON

siren

pay no attention
to the women in the glass.
the shapeless girl,
the love stoned whore
wait patiently at
the bottom of
the black and silvery lake.
their arms rise up to greet you
(or could it be they're pulling you in) —
the song of the wind,
of the water pleads
for one last midnight swim.
listen for the bells, my girl
but shut your ears before
the orchestra begins —
the empty bed, the endless night,
is what you have
to work with.

killdeer, north dakota (7/2/05)

half

the moon tonight while glimpsed
from through my windowsill,
is straight and broken
down the middle like a pill.

half seen on earth and
half left floating out in space,
the moon like me is showing
only half her face.

she knows when she should disappear
and when to wax and wane,
she knows to want what isn't there
is just to wait in vain.

i do not know my place like her
i do not know my heart,
and as for life with certainty
i've yet to learn the art.

if i were orbiting like her
i might know what to do,
but standing here i can' abide
with half a love for you.

crestview, florida (8/8/05)

asshole world

i don't believe that waking up tomorrow
i will know more than i do right now;
i don't believe that faeries dance
across the hills of ireland.
i don't believe in the magic
of babies or of balconies at dawn,
of letting go of something free
and finding something wiser.
i don't believe the playing card found on the streets of spain
will bring your heart to me nine times,
or time and time again through my nine lives.
i don't believe in unrequited love;
i don't believe in ghosts, my dear,
and i don't believe in you.
i don't believe in traveling fast
and i don't believe exercise;
but running from problems, i do believe,
is quite a lot faster than walking.

puerto de mazarron, spain (9/3/05)

SMALL THINGS

Each small thing a knot in the net sunlight passes through,
Each moment a jewel, a lens, our sight passes through.

In scale: each small thing large, each large thing small,
Each moment, whole in its own right, passes through.

The sky is lit with small-seeming suns, stars, galaxies,
In time, each one's fire, dim or bright, passes through.

Kingfisher, dragonfly, stream that rings its tumbled stones,
The I within, *the self*, each name ignites, passes through.

Over the river: a wing of geese beats west from dawn
their high honking, faint as their flight passes through.

At midday, on a gust of wind, a flock of chickadees,
with its incessant song to recite, passes through.

Nearing dark, a merganser dives, surfaces, swims on,
its wake an ever-widening vee twilight passes through.

"Into each life a little rain must fall," sometimes a deluge,
sometimes a river, darker than midnight, passes through.

A dead sunflower star rests in the rising tide, legs swaying
as each incoming wave, large, slight, passes through.

A torn strand of a late spider's web waves in the wind,
the maker's egg sac waits as winter's blight passes through.

My daughter plays with small things, builds worlds with
words, dolls, scraps of stories that delight passes through.

I praise small things: fern spores, redwood root hairs,
sea star tube feet, fly wings, all forms light passes through.

Find peace in small things, held for a moment, like water,
let go, to you, each word I write, passes through.

~JIM DOTT (December 2005)

HOPE L. HARRIS

LICENSED
MASSAGE
THERAPIST

503/325-2523



CD ONLY
\$9 USA
\$11 CANADA/MEXICO
\$13 WORLDWIDE
POSTPAID

SEND INQUIRY TO
SANDSHRIMP@EARTHLINK.NET