

friday afternoon

POEMS BY RON ANDROLA (C)

***SOME OF THESE POEMS HAVE APPEARED ONLINE AT
THE-HOLD.COM, THUNDERSANDWICH.COM, & OTHER
CYBERSPACE PLACES.***

RON ANDROLA

2407 RASPBERRY ST.

ERIE, PA 16502

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

it's me, this self
recognizing this
self in this body
so strangely so
old. i never felt
so strangely so
young. my mind
fit my skin,
whereas now my brain
is a bowling ball
dipped fully in a bucket of
oil. that's the best way
i can describe the current
time. remember
something,
anything,
anyone
from the depths of this
scarred self tunnel,
this battered boat
of being
swaying amidst
toothpicks on
black choppy water.

the past is axed
as if half of
us is
gone,
we're
section'd,
split down

the center,

in the middle
of a word.

a description of air

tongue won't lift
from the mucky suction
of my pond-like mouth,

my mud-puddle rut
worn round as
my big belly pressing

on foam
all squishy
i am inside

things
like snake-guts
& rancid raccoon

vomitings
the eye of a
dead pigeon

a black
shriveled
pea

oh north
korea
tiny balance

of land
& culture
hinges on

one
mere
bomb

blasting
over
populated land

one of the axis
of evil
as dubby dubs

you
north
korea

fall-out
dust
clouds

ann is making cheesecake

graham cracker crust
& even tho we have no
electric mixer i'll
whip it with an egg-whipper
& then we'll let it chill
an hour

maybe

did you see the movie
TOTAL RECALL? the arnold
film with one of the mutants
half-fleshed into the chest
of another normal-looking
mutant?the leader of the
revolution on mars
eventually
slow-motion'd shot
blowing apart a piece
of his head
but he whispers
to arnold with dying
breaths
yes
that's cheesecake
ann's fixing
altho we ate a ton
of food for supper
at applebee's restaurant
me with a big giant beer
ribs chicken fingers
fries
slaw
baked beans
kale
ann with new orleans
pasta stuff, very spicy

well, my stomach is like
the chest of those
mutants, that
pronounced outwards,
fat, bizarre-looking,
zombie-headed normal
part of me
smiles all dumb
& meaningless
& the strange
self i also am
a sort of transmigrated
transfiguration
of cells & muscle
& bone & slobber
whispers
start it
start the machine
to produce oxygen
on the surface of
mars

fat-boy

friday night, two old people

a light to my right on a dresser,
a light to my left on another lower
dresser; otherwise, the computer
gleams, of course, & in the livingroom

the tv screen flashes & people
speak from the speakers in low
garbled discussions & ann
is asleep on the couch. she hurt

her back lugging
a full bucket of snow-dripped
water leaking from the ceiling
in the backroom of the store she

works for
thinking
she's
supergirl? & i,

in my kerchief & cap,
pulling 34 pound parts
out of a mold 53 times

wednesday night

&
i
feel
it

my
old
tight
sore back

my
sore
teeth
our minds!

beyond
the dark
doorway
ann sips

the sleepy
air of
a tv-lit
friday night

a day for art

woke, awake,
what molecular conflaguration goofs
now? i recognize i'm breathing
thru the edge of an ann-odor'd sheet,

& she is at work selling teacher
supply stuff to teachers around
this upper area of things:
erie is a hub, imagine that.

i may easily feel like a bubble.
sci-fi space bubble i
claw trapped inside all clear
& screaming & mute.

me in erie,
that's the picture.
i'd be worse in other
places,

nearer that

edge of home–
lessness &
poverty or heroin

addiction.
we're staying put.
my back is
sore, i am adjusted

by lipitor
& xanax &
herbal enhancements
& beer, or bourbon,

or vodka,
gin. well,
i don't need to
say more.

it's today.
e.e. cummings,
the crazy fuck,
was born today

a zillion years ago.
talk about a poet
abused by required
reading in high–schools.

poetry is
such a difficult
circumstantial
situation:

slice
thru
open
brain.

too early

wake way too early in early afternoon
james arness is it gunsmoke on the
tv? weird, this might be sleep,

might not be sleep, but i
did hear the cellphone,
now the real phone

is ringing.

dad, i'm at the door,
doug is saying.

i am groggy haze dad.
he's dropping my car-keys
into my hand.

thanks for lettin'
me use the buick dad.
me & mom are going to

get my car now.
then his mother
is knocking at my door.

i ask about the unlocking
lug-nuts & inspection
the dealer promised.

they're doing all that
right now.
we're grabbing lunch first

then headin' out.
oh, i say, then you're
going to teach him

how to drive a standard
5-speed?
WHY? DO YOU WANTA?

IF YOU WANTA
YOU'RE MORE THAN
WELCOME!

no,
that's
ok, i concede.

so doug has
another car,
a '93 maroon mitsubishi

mirage,
66,000 miles.
the back-seats fold down

into open trunk,
& there will be one of
his speaker-boxes

booming,

pounding,
this white boy trash shit music.

but the old buick
is now in the parkinglot
with more gas in the tank

than when i gave
it to him.
i can hear this very moment

from 10 miles away
a grinding of
gears — doug's mother's

loud
loud
voice PUT IN THE CLUTCH!

i work again
tonight. james arness
died of lung cancer did'nt

he?
i need a few more
hours of sleep.

my nose is all cold & dribbles, tips
of my ears hurt, i'm standing outside
in the parkinglot in jeans & old heavy
shirt wearing sandals but it's FALL,
it's falling away from the sun in leaps
& bounds & here's doug's
new '93 maroon-color'd mitsubishi.
nice. it's been years i've used
a clutch, but take it for a spin
while his mother stands
outside in the cold.
13-inch tires, dealer threw
an inspection-sticker on it
but i don't know if the tires
do pass. 66,000 miles
on the tires, i assume.
but his mother says she thinks
she has new 13-inch tires
in her basement
from rachel's lemans
that shld fit. doug,
meantime, has a continuous
smile on his face.

he likes it.
my face is warming up now.
ann will be home
in about an hour.
there's delicious
left-over chicken
soup she made 2 days ago
for supper.
then it will be
couch time,
nap time,
& work,
then a night off.
each moment
every moment
all moments of mind
is wonderment
& awe
we're all
space
aliens
& in the center
of the milky way
galaxy:
a newly-discovered
certainty
of a black hole.
we spin around
a black hole.
meantime so the fuck what.
i slept terribly today.
terribly.

a drink

ok, it's the 2nd drink.
the 2nd double double-shot
of beam & water & ice
in a big glass mug.

ann is drinking red wine.
i'd guess her third small
glass of blood. her eyes
are blood-shot,

my eyes are blood-shot,
blood-veins throb thru
ocular flesh as if
our hearts fill with

pure booze–like
morphine until
we
stare — that's it,

we stare.
i mean beside
all the
laughter &

shit &
hallucinatory reaction.
then we're dead,
asleep. involved

without body.
bourbon filtrates
thru lean slice
of my liver —

air in my lungs
is misted with
bourbon. writing
gets me drinking

harder,
& i want to
control
myself, so this

is
the one
poem i'm
writing tonight.

what i did

first things first.
get cash from mac machine
(no charge machine
for credit–union members)
on 38th street & i am
shocked that tho traffic
is heavy (for erie),
people are polite,
let me pull out at
3 different places
on my trek — i wave,
mouthing thank
you to them. make it

down to hollywood video
& as i'm shoving
videos into the outside
slot i hear
"well, hello!"
& it's jamie,
rachel's old friend,
tho her hair is
weird, yellow or
some orange shade,
& corn-rowed or
something kinda,
unusual, & we stand
outside the front-
door of hollywood
video: jamie is now
assistant manager there.
she used to call me
dad. her real father
left when jamie was
very young.
she's recently
married,
& loves married life.
& she mentions
ben, her son,
born 6 weeks before
dominic, but jamie
gave her baby up
to adoption --
throws me,
oh, it's an open
adoption she explains.
she gets pictures.
i remember ann & i
& jamie standing
outside hamot
hospital
after her baby was
born & gone --
smoking cigarettes.
we felt sadder
than she seemed.
so we stand outside
the door-way
as people come &
go from the store,
talking, catching
up on her news.
jamie has a pure
heart, always has,
hopefully always will.

i think she was a little
surprised i kiss her
cheek saying bye,
be good...

then i drive
to elmwood
beer with an
empty case of
returnable rolling
rock bottles,
but the guy there
explains he only
has non-returnables
& doesn't understand
why erie beer distributor
doesn't stock him
with returnables anymore,
something's changed.
but the empty returnables
are deducted from the
non-returnable case i
ok: 15 dollars even.

cool, i nod.

since i am now on 29th
street heading toward
the intersection at greengarden
i cellphone my sister's house,
thinking maybe i'll stop
in, tell her we got a postcard
from julie from japan today.
jill answers,
sadly.
that's strange!
what's wrong? i ask.
a boy, jill admits.
kathi is still at work.
i talk with jill
as i drive all the way
up greengarden
& in fact i sit in the jeep
in the parkinglot
still talking to her.
she tells me her friend
martha thinks doug
is really really hot.
(jamie, i swear, also
tells me her little sister
thinks doug is really
really hot too!).

ok jill, please be good,
& don't worry about that
stupid boy, frank. you'll
have a zillion boyfriends
& you won't even remember
this kid, i tell her.
jill turns 15 next month,
but looks 18 now.

next i lug the case of
rolling rock upstairs,
slide 4 6-packs into
the bottom of the fridge,
& pull a bottle out.
find the opener.
open, gulp,
gulp,
gulp.

that's about
it.

i had it

past 2 days i'm awake
at 11, 11:30 in the morning.
not good when falling
asleep at 9.

wake, disturbed by time,
check mail downstairs
soon over-joyed there are
tapes from pish.

afro-celt.
inside of my head
is mostly
helium. afro-celt.

new age category,
or non-categorical
music. i'm fixing
supper as i write this.

pork-chops. boxed
au gratin potatoes.
canned
peas. i'll eat early,

before ann returns
from work. i wake
after 2 hours of daylight
sleep, but

actually manage
to flutter away again
on the couch
until doug phones,

2:30.
it is a GREAT,
gray, chilly,
leaf-changing day.

rain tonight,
nearing that tendency
to ice into snow,
maybe snow by week's end.

& october is
nearly over --
tonight dominic
& chris are coming

over:
dominic is a knight
(as in "the sword
in the stone") &

chris
is a
6-month
old lion.

halloween.
i have realized
the title
of this poem

is far from
this poem
now, & my intention
was to tell you

nearly every day
for the past four years
as i turn
out of this parkinglot

i see a vista
of lake

erie
over my shoulder

or in my face.
four years
of seasons
& skies & dreams.

the point
is at 11, 11:30
a poem creeps
thru consciousness

on our couch
& i do
not
rise to type it.

i'm going to eat supper

bubbling yellow
snake-skin burnt
in swirls on
top of yellow
lava boiling.

i must allow
au gratin potatoes
time to settle
the
fuck down.

chops look
good, lots of
black pepper
tattoo'd in

dark
brown
oil'd
meat.

& the peas,
just regular
peas,
easy to chew.

i have my
dentures in.
i am ready

to chomp away.

duck

groggy, 2 o'clock, catch
myself wondering if i'm
catching a cold. i roll
on the bed like a giant
cigar from the left side
opening like a blunt
to the right side of the
bed. cool sheet section.
eyes close but it's time
this racing mind needs
calm. i rise
stiff-knee'd
shuffle down our hall
piss
& limp down steps
to check our mail.
junk mail.
better than a bill.
bag of garbage in
the kitchen i see.
this morning i agree
to a deal with ann:
she goes to deposit
her check,
& i get the garbage
out to the dumpster.
i remember.
i slip into my jeans
& flip-flops
& carry dead duck shit
& paper & crap in a white
plastic bag
down our incredibly surreal
hallway, out the door, into
42 degree afternoon sunshine,
down the parkinglot a little
to the dumpster
& the dead duck shit
is gone, gone.
ann cooked a duck last
night.
on sale at quality market.
she says what the heck,
let's try it, it's
cheap. i agree.
we both agree a cooked

duck resembles a cooked
alien. drippings & shit
from the duck are in that
white garbage bag
in the dumpster.
the duck itself is
wrapped in tin-foil
in a pan in the fridge.
i recall before she
left for work she says
"it's cooked, just warm
it up. 350 degrees
45 minutes ought to do it.
plus there's this package
of orange sauce
you can microwave.
it came with the duck."
she holds the bag
of orange sauce up
as if i can see it
from the angle at this
keyboard to the kitchen
where her arm stretches
behind the doorway
but i nod
i say ok.
i ate duck about 10 years ago
in a fancy restaurant,
recall its oily meat.
i'm eating fucking duck today,
poets.
a cooked alien sizzling on a pan
after i throw back the tin-foil
45 minutes from
now.

what some men are doing

some guys at work
are doing 12-hour days
5 days a week
plus friday night
overtime. it is a
good check amount,
a chunk of cash.
the company is willing
to pay labor costs for
what appears an increasingly
needed series of products --
major u.s. companies.

i'm thinking national defense
but what the fuck do i know
about what particular
molded fiberglass part
functions as,
& for what. something
electrical. for the purposes
of locomotives?
tomahawk missiles?
atf office-supply products?
newest spy-gear detection
devices: the front of the unit
i mold a small section of it.
it is hard, physical labor.
the sheet operators
are young & strong &
able: a sort of army.
12-hour days.
i can't do it.
i can't bodily do it.
even when i think
about the size
of that check
i can't do it.

i certainly need that
kind of money
with xmas coming soon,

but i can't do it.

i nap before work.

i love my nap.

the love of money

is ok too --- to be

young & strong &

able to work back-breaking

work in fiberglass dust

& managerial insanity

for like thirteen hundred

clear.

happy halloween

it's an autumn pre-evening kind of
5 o'clock magritte light,

or the gray of that
painting "toledo", that severity

& beauty. sands of night
streaming down from overhead,

sparkles. sand grows
to slab of blackness,

thick as a shift
at work, a monolithic

shaft of big
bossness. moon is eye

of big-wig
company president.

sees everyone
in various forms of action

& inaction,
yet we just know

it's the
moon,

it's
the noon moon reflect'd

on blue glass of
sky sometimes.

accept mysteries.
there is more mystery

than what's inside
our pea-pod skull.

ghosts, as glandular
as nervous goats,

bleat
& kids are howling

like

happy wolves

in the streets.
i have a bag

of kit-kat bars
& another half-

bag of
peppermint patties.

booooooooo...
booooooooo...

today like a dream

a pillow falls to the floor
& i'm rising on my feet from

sleep on our couch,
i see the time is past noon,

& that's good enough for me
on a saturday. no work tonight.

i check the mail.
a new POETRY MOTEL (issue #30).

hardware store
flyer.

then i sit
here

in front of
a screen,

half-asleep,
reading msnbc.com news,

getting caught
up on the world

we're
given -- reality

constructs
by mythological

inducement

pulse like a pulsar

pill
something spinning

in our
throat.

millions of
echoes

bounce around
our words.