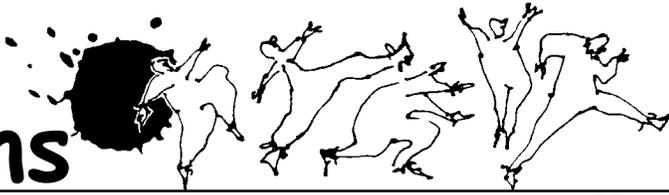


# Deanotations

Issue 106

March 2003



Dear Reader,

I'm not mentioning (after this sentence) "THE war", the one pundits and politicians refer to as if it had already happened – such Godlike certainty! – though it may have happened by the time you read this, but I hope not – a war justified in that someone MAY have something he shouldn't have, and that IF he does, he MAY use it in ways that MAY displease us, and that IF he does, that MAY cause more damage to us than would be caused by our going to war against him (and a few million other people in the same area – and against the wishes of billions of other people, more of US than before even the Vietnam so-called-war, so that a nation united by Sept. 11 is more divided than in decades, which is whose victory in the War on Terrorism?); for he may have dangerous chemicals (e.g., chemicals like those our psychiatrists now give over 8,000,000 children in this country, rated dangerous by the DEA, but I hope we don't declare war on the psychiatrists – though 8,000,000 drugged children is more than HE could ever hope to damage here, but I digress), but, I'm sick of talking about this war (which, like all our recent wars, is not to be declared by Congress because we're too busy to bother with the Constitution) – by the way, I'm not against war or even this war, just very doubtful, though it would be nice if he (the one who may have things he shouldn't have) would, after emitting an unusually long and malodorous fart, discover that he had vanished (enabling his nation to back up its oil reserves with gas), but mostly I wish we could have more FUN with war, like the Plains Indians, playing a game where losers – with panache – forfeited bodies and goods, risking them for the honor of touching an enemy in battle or standing firm (daring others to cross an invisible line), life without occasional forays for ponies or women or the sheer thrill of speed, agility, aim and daring being inconceivable to them, a bloodless bore for the young, and if ever a long peace broke out, no doubt urged by fanatic peace-mongers, braves found that peace was hell, endless hours smoking carcinogenic pipes, unpainted faces bland as mud, no way to prove themselves to the women – I'm sure the young would have marched in anti-peace movements; moreover, they had ROOM for war – look how much of the world each could possess in a glance, vast rolling vistas, room for a spirit to roam when temporarily bodiless; Baghdad is crowded, as is New York, war an event for which far too many tickets have been sold – and we don't even have enemies whose boldness we can admire (or if we do, admiration is "unpatriotic" – where's the fun?). So no more mention of you-know-what in this letter.

Morning – don't want to wake up,  
can't go back to sleep –  
a whine-whine situation.

Morning – I'm a photo, not quite ready  
to be removed from my wash...not...quite  
ready – too late. Here I am, exposed  
to the light, washed out, dim.  
You have to squint to see who I am.  
Maybe tonight something of me can be salvaged,  
Love, in our dark room.



Each house, each fence post,  
mailbox wears a white hat. Snow  
makes things heroic.

Ice melting, each branch  
trimmed with tiny water buds  
filled with sunlight.

Terrorist alert.  
Out the window, branches sway,  
breaking up the sky.

I enjoy the park for several minutes before  
I notice a guy sleeping or dead 25 feet away.  
He's curled up in the grass as if sleeping...  
let's say he's sleeping. Goodbye, park.

"I am NOT UPSET! Just leave me alone  
and I'll be FINE!" I can't win:  
If I stay, she'll become more and more  
NOT UPSET with me. If I go, she might be FINE  
without me.



### Going Ungently

I'm going to leave in a huff,  
For you're terribly terribly wrong;  
And if there's a huff large enough,  
I'll take all my umbrage along.

### To Boldly Go Where Angels Fear to Tread, But Generations Have Trod, Have Trod, Have Trod

*From the Washington Post, May, 2002: "We believe that the soul is infused into the egg by God when it's fertilized," says a member of a pro-life group of pharmacists. His name is (no kidding) Frank Nice.*

How nice, but, frankly, dull. Couldn't the Lord  
Assign infusion to some fairy sprite?  
Why make our mighty maker, day and night,  
Wade through our plumbing with horde after horde  
Of sperm, waiting for one to penetrate  
An egg, so God Almighty can infuse –  
"infuse," as if it were herb tea he brews –  
A soul? Dear God, please learn to delegate  
Such boring chores – to whom? To the Soul Fairy!

Cousin of Sandman, Tooth Fairy and Cupid,  
Blithe, blonde and twinkly, just a trifle stupid:  
With joy or rancor we might hear her airy  
"Oopsie!" as she butterflies off, giggling  
At having accidentally squirted two  
Souls into one egg – "Oopsie, my booboo!  
But how can I keep track with all that wiggling?"

And so in her diaphanous pink tutu,  
She'd flit about from bush to car to bedroom,  
Entering in where angels can't find headroom,  
Filling up eggs with you and you and you, too,  
Sprinkling her unusual fairy dust  
From a wand that's ivory-shafted, purple-tipped  
And pulsating. As quick as we unzipped,  
She'd zip to stamp God's cachet on our lust.

When God, that abstract void, gives us a gift  
That we don't want, we rage; "Why me!" we plead;  
And all too often we abort, we bleed.  
But who could cling to rage, be more than miffed –  
Like Ricky asking "What did choo do, LuCEEE?" –  
At our dear ditzzy dazzling Tinkerbell?  
She's not like God. She's CUTE! We'd shrug, "Oh well."

[continued]

She flounces, womb to womb – O can't you see  
Her ride the surging sperm, a joyous child  
Upon a dolphin, or on whirring wings,  
Gently flitting through our...you know – things,  
Tickling all the way, driving us wild!

How gladly we'd present our eggs to her,  
Like children leaving teeth beneath our pillows.  
We'd pray, "Soul Fairy, bless our peccadillos!"  
We'd leave out milk and cookies. Stuff like myhrr  
Would only make her sneeze. She might have time  
To nibble on a chocolate chip – so much  
To do! She's always in a hurry, touch  
And go, quick, in a trice, from the sublime  
To the ridiculous – no time to sleep,

But if she could, she'd probably curl up –  
As other fairies do – in a flower's cup;  
Perhaps to the lip of woman's flower she'd creep  
For a pico-second's nap – ah, who'd dare HER vex?  
Thus, even sleeping, she is at your cervix!



Biological warfare – must be what my parents  
thought we were, we seven kids – a biological  
onslaught.

### Raisin Hell

The pear shared an apple; then she detached her  
fig leaf, saying "Want a date, Honey,"  
eager to be plummed.

Love: Partaking  
is part aching.

"OOOOOOH! AAAHH! Oh! OOh! Ah!"  
Sex is a great relief, like any vowel movement.

The sign warns of "SPEED HUMPS." I prefer  
slow humps, preceded by languorous foreplay.

How can I get anything written when you strip it  
from my eyes before it can get to my pen: Twinkling  
at me as if my eyes have just told you something  
endlessly merry and clever.

**Four brand new poetic forms invented by (TADA!) me:**

*The next 6 poems exemplify a form I call the Iambit: iambic monometer sonnets. Monometer means each line is one foot in your mouth. I also call them "snots" – very short sonnets.*



How warm,  
O sun,  
thy hon-  
eyed swarm

of rays  
like bees  
that seize  
our days

and take  
our lives –  
their hives –  
to make

this bone-  
deep drone.

Bright crys-  
tal stuff,  
enough!  
I miss

dull tar-  
ry street,  
concrete,  
my car,

grass, dirt,  
leaf, bud,  
worms, mud,  
short-skirt-

ed girls,  
quick squirrels.

No thieves  
grab hold  
of gold-  
en leaves.

They lie  
in heaps  
no mi-  
ser keeps –

yet, see  
wee rouge-  
cheeked  
Scroog-  
es WHEEE! –

all rolled  
in gold.

Bright frost-  
y moon,  
cartoon  
my lost

breath in-  
to cloud-  
lets loud  
with din

of words  
and sighs  
that rise  
where birds

construe,  
pooh-pooh...

O but-  
terfly,  
you die!  
Now what

new mon-  
archs will  
o'er-spill  
like bon-

fire flame  
our trees?  
You came  
to freeze...

Unreason-  
ing season!

A war  
y web  
is Feb  
ruar-

y. Bare  
trees, peb-  
bles, ebb  
of car-

ing – snare  
for sap-  
less husks –  
dusk hair,  
warm lap,  
soft musks...

**VillainHells**, villanelles on what to do with villains in Hell:

What shall we do with Stalin?  
He wasn't very nice.  
The Man of Steel has fallen.

His coldness was appallin' –  
He'd keep quite well in ice...  
What SHALL we do with Stalin?

Can't find a hole to crawl in?  
No tiniest interstice?  
The Man of Steel has fallen.

His wily smile twists foul in  
Our latest weird device –  
We made it just for Stalin,

Hard work, our demons all in!  
Yet still they slice and dice  
This man of steel who's fallen,

Poor shrunk black thing, a yowlin',  
Quite lost among his lice –  
What shall we do with Stalin,  
The Man of Steel who's fallen?



What shall we do with Hitler –  
Who dwarfed his era's stage –  
Now that he's so much littler?

A question for the Riddler:  
He's so consumed with rage,  
What's left to burn of Hitler?

That gadget's called a "whittler" –  
How fine we've set its gauge  
Now that he's so much littler.

We'll feed him – "Where's that vittler!  
Hey! Shit for the coprophage! \*  
Let's bulk up little Hitler!

Eat more! Don't be a piddler!"  
Can't keep him in his cage  
Now that he's so much littler.

Shall we make him hear Bette Middler  
Until the next ice age?...  
What shall we do with Hitler  
Now that he's so much littler?

\* coprophage: feaster on feces.

What shall we make of Mao?  
Let's turn Tse Tung to dung,  
Torn by each peasant's plow,

Within an endless now –  
No Great Leap Forward! Hung  
In time (all done) is Mao,

Succumbing to the Tao,  
To a Thousand Flowers flung,  
Torn by each peasant's plow,

Soon rice in hot Kung Pao,  
He'll burn on every tongue –  
That's what we'll make of Mao:

Gut fodder! Then, Ciao, Chow!  
[He'll get no help from Chou.]  
Please wipe him from your bung.  
Here's more dung for the plow!

Where's that serene fat brow?  
That little wet red tongue?  
There's not much left of Mao  
[His disciples heed the Dow],  
Torn by each peasant's plow.

---

**The Haikuku** – *in haiku form, with a play on "haiku"*:

"Open the pod door,  
Hal." "I'm sorry, Dave, I can't  
do that." Haikubrick.



Pointed sheets as white  
as Fuji's snow conceal fools:  
The Haiku Klux Klan.

At the mall, slender,  
giggling, bare-belly-buttoned,  
bright-eyed haikuties.

Haik! Haik! Haik! Haik! Haik!  
Excuse me...HAIK!...Sorry, I've...HAIK!  
got the...HAIK!...haikups!

"Tick...tick...tick...tick...tick..  
tick...tic,...tick...HAIKUCKOO!" says  
the haikuckoo clock.

"Now leaving on track  
eleven for Pomona...and Hai-  
kucamonga..." [Only for old Jack Benny fans]

Off to fight Iraq:  
Bye-bye trees, hello, sand; bye,  
U.S., HaiKuwait.

Gulf War – no time to  
finish our half-done sonnets;  
even haikuwait.



"What's a girl like you  
doing in a poem like this?"  
"Oh, take a haiku!"

If she were Mae East,  
She'd greet us, "Haikumon up  
and see me some time."

Cherry-blossom time,  
poet – and just LOOK at that  
full moon – your haikue! [a cue-ball-white moon]

To Basho, whose frog  
still plops into the old pond,  
hearty haikudos.

Height-Ashbury and  
Telegraph Avenue swarm  
with haikool haikooks.

Marijuana is  
elementary cool. Like,  
beware of haikool.

Tallest trees smothered  
by bright green rounded jungles  
of vines: Haikudzu.

Beware of High Priests:  
Doubt their high dogma and don't  
drink their haikulaid.

"Be off!" said Stalin.  
"Say 'Hai, Gulags,' you stubborn,  
stubborn haikulaks!

Mexican dancers  
stomp, leap and STOMP STOMP STOMP! Hai-  
kucuraCHA!

**The PANTALOON:** *You can figure the form out from the example. This form would be ideal for operetta, with two singers alternating lines from the legs, with their criss-crossed rhymes. Here's the world's first pantaloon (perhaps a slightly bell-bottomed one, unless those are the shoes at the bottom):*



### On Getting What You Hope For



|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| He imagines his words flowing husky and sweet            |                        |
| To an ear as responsive as lips to a teat,               |                        |
| As her hand rests in his hand as light as a feather,     |                        |
| While he croons, "Life is loving: Let's do it together,  |                        |
| For you are my grape jam; you butter my bread;           |                        |
| How our love would grow wings if we but dared to shed    |                        |
| The cocoon of our distance – O please share my bed!"     |                        |
| Then she blurs in his dream eyes; replies (in his head): |                        |
| With a steamy smile,                                     | With a leaden frown,   |
| "I could drown   | "What a pile           |
| In the honey   | Of absurd              |
| Of each word,  | (Yet quite funny,      |
| Not enough   | I grant you)           |
| And yet too  | Stilted stuff,         |
| Too too much!  | Thick rich glop;       |
| Oh! Don't stop!  | It's like touch-       |
| Be the spice   | ing a custard,         |
| In my mustard,   | Too squishy,           |
| Be what's fishy  | Though nice,           |
| In my oceans;  | And you DO             |
| In my zoo,   | Make me laugh          |
| The giraffe,   | With your notions...   |
| The YES of caress...                                     | So...shall we undress? |

**Note:** You have to read each leg separately for the sense, then read them interwoven (reading straight across) for the music. The rhymes are criss-crossed. The first 8 lines of the legs are simple criss-crossed rhymes (garters?). The next 6 lines are two 3-way scrambles of rhyme. And the rhymes finally meet with the last line. As creator of the form, I decree that the rhyme schemes of the legs may vary from pantaloon to pantaloon, but must be strict and sufficiently loony. And the two legs must be alternative conclusions to the first 8 lines. It's a good form for love poems: if you write a pantaloon, you'll never pant alone! The poem could also be called an arch. Besides being shaped like one, it is very arch, if not archaic – perhaps the archness of triumph.

Besides all poems should be in pants  
Of passion: hard-fast-breathing rants.  
Ignore old-fashioned critics' cuffs, [on the ear]  
But don't forget back-cover puffs.

Why must rhymes come at the end?  
Try to put them at the start.  
I can manage it – can you?  
My lines fall: They cannot rise,  
Soar to unexpected chords;  
Doors swing open, hang and creak.  
More and more I want to meet  
Your demands and finish neat.



### A Paranoid? No, I'm the Only One Annoyed

I'm so good that three senior members of the American Academy of Poetry are assigned full-time to keeping my work from reaching readers – I don't see any other possible explanation! Little do they know that this only encourages me: If I keep writing and sending out my masterpieces, they'll have to assign more and more establishment hatchet-persons to jam all my signals and keep my work from reaching billions all over the world, its solar flare eclipsing their pathetic squibs. Thus the world will be spared all the tripe they might have written, had my genius not occupied their time. Thus do I serve poetry.

### Where's the Fourth Pig When You Need Him

"I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll BLOOOOOW your house down!" said the wolf, and this time (though it was the very best brick) he did.

What now, Practical Pig?  
Can you live – you and your poor brothers who fled to you from their shattered stick and straw hovels over two centuries – can you live in houses with 30-foot-thick walls of concrete and steel, surrounded by guard houses, barbed wire wastes, land mines?

May as well take to the caves, like the wolf you hunt. Meanwhile, you grow lean with desperation, your snout lengthening to accommodate new fangs, and lately – do my ears deceive me? – you seem to be huffing and puffing.

## Memo to the Pentagon

Somewhere in Baghdad  
a woman is just done cleaning her apartment.  
The air conditioning was noisy and ineffective;  
it was hot work, lots of dusting, scrubbing,  
carpet pounding, polishing. She plans  
to make her husband and children  
remove their shoes when they get home.  
Meanwhile she relishes the fiery rectangles  
where the setting sun ignites her  
dazzling white walls, is tempted to touch  
the slick, smudge-free kitchen counter,  
sniffs the lemony-scented living room.  
It took her all day. Please, when you arrive,  
be careful not to make a mess.

*[Note: Someone said it should be a memo to Saddam,  
as he's harming more Iraqis than we ever will. My  
answer: I keep thinking that my government is saner  
than Saddam's. But I'm just a poet. What do I know  
about war policies? No mere poem nor – alas – any  
bomb can ever be smart enough.]*

---

A tyrant knows men must be ruled  
as cattle are driven: by fear,  
for to herd cows, one must cow the herds.  
A tyrant uses secret informers,  
so that each man fears his neighbors,  
holds himself in secret from all;  
knowing this, the tyrant must fear  
all in his cowerdly country  
where none meets another's eyes  
but with cowerd-eyes.



And all the Pentagon's billions and all  
the Pentagon's tanks and planes and men and  
women couldn't put the earth together again.

---

It's not the suffering of victims that's unreal,  
but the victims, who, suffering from unreality,  
cling to the reality of their suffering.

---

Poor criminals – they'd do what they ought,  
If they weren't sick. It's malaise aforethought.

Kids shoot up their schools, mothers drown  
their kids; pretty new tablets (green, purple)  
replace the shattered tablets of the law, abetting  
Premedicated murder.



Welcome to the American Public School.  
We hope you'll enjoy your stay at Club Med-  
ication.

## How Do You Account For It?

If you love people for the good they do  
and hate people for the evil they do,  
what does it add up to? Just this:  
People are important to you: You aren't  
keeping score for grass blades, rocks or  
cocker spaniels.

## Growing Old

"This isn't so bad," I thought at 40,  
at 50, at 60....

---

Living so long among simple words, my idle English  
vocabulary shrinks. Words smile at me familiarly,  
and I smile back (pretending to remember  
who they are) to hide my blank embarrassment.

## Epitaph

I was polite. I was social.  
Knowing a way out, I kept it to myself,  
not wanting to upset anyone,  
whispering it only among a few close friends.  
To others I tossed out shy hints,  
like one who, feeding bread crumbs  
to pigeons, fears being engulfed  
by too many of the filthy things.  
I kept truth a secret, proud of my knowledge,  
and when my world sank in a muck of lies,  
I and my knowledge sank with it.

---

Yes, the evil always lose in the end.  
It doesn't follow that the good win. The good  
who are also tough and smart enough to survive  
as good while the evil wipe themselves out  
win.

“I try to be objective” means “I put my attention on things for which I am not likely to be held responsible.”

---

It is fashionable for the wise who will not govern to mock the fools who govern, as if, by complaining all the way up the ramp to the slaughterer’s knife, they convince themselves that their refusal to lead exempts them from having to follow.



The dentist says my teeth need treatment. I don’t believe it. I’ve been GOOD to my teeth! How can they do this to me? Where did I go wrong?

#### **Fast Food**

The vapid  
Trade sapid  
For rapid.

---

...and the vegetarian shall lie down  
with the eggplant...

---

I start my walk just as the rain peters out,  
sneaking up on that first crack of blue,  
bluest after rain, and the first naked blade  
of sun, that carves wet hills and trees  
in deepest gold relief.

---

Bach fugue, solid, though invisible, trunk  
of wayward branchings, differences  
echoing differences, nor any twig  
nor leaf nor bud that doesn’t grow  
it’s own way AND the tree’s.

---

Tangle of bare branches outside our bedroom window  
has been there all month, but only this morning,  
seeing them lined with ice, do I notice  
what a fine, rich, deep, lacy mesh they make.  
I think it’s because, against a blank sky,  
each whitened twig must be disentangled from sky  
by the eye’s labor, which parallels in precision  
and impossibility (though accomplished in a twinkling)  
that of whoever frosts each tiniest branch  
in one night’s work.

Fashion designer blasé-ing a trail.



New in Paris! Chocolate-coated Viagra tablets,  
marketed as “BON BONES”!

---

Internet Hustlers: Geeks baring gifts.

---

Crumpled up in the trash, in the last throes  
of green, blue, red-striped and paisleyed self-  
assertion: the first of the post-Christmas casual(-)  
ties.

#### **The Idealist’s Discontent**

My eternal love, we haven’t spoken lately.  
You seem distant. Is it because I tried to give you  
a name and face unworthy of you? Or is it me  
sulking because you became her briefly, but  
just as I embraced her, you abandoned her.

---

You can tell he’s strong when he wrenches  
that phonebook in half. How the veins  
at his temples bulge! Phonebooks, symbols  
of force, bricks of names and numbers.  
Communication can get very solid.

#### **Bruce Lee Watches Kung Fu**

“Kung Fu?!” said Lee  
Confusedly.

#### **Shakespeare Meets the Bee Gees**

Kate meets Iago. Hard hearts glowing,  
Villain and Virago go gogoing.

#### **The Timing of the Shrew**

Invective, jeers and so on –  
Hear that virago go on!  
A shrew is far worse  
Than a villain, who’s terse –  
When does Iago go on?  
But Kate, in her hearse,  
Will still mutter and curse,  
Because the shrew must go on!

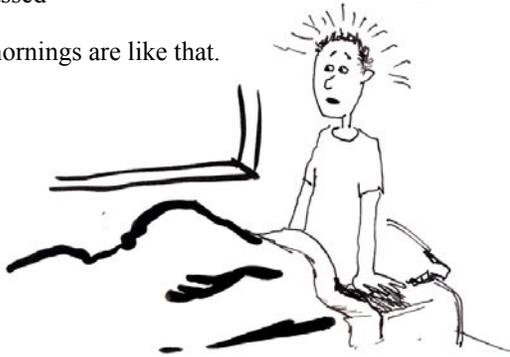
## God's Hangover

We speak of Godly ability to slow time,  
the batter who can count the stitches  
on a pitch arriving at 100 miles per hour.  
The reverse is as Godly – the ability  
to spin the globe and, like Andrew Marvell,  
make run the sun that won't stand still.

Maybe God gets bored with counting stitches  
on spinning baseballs and, for a change,  
turns us into old-time movies or, more bored,  
makes bubble-planets pop in trillion-year  
time-lapse photography. Maybe the dancer  
whose leap hesitates at each degree and longest  
at acme, speeds things up and finds himself  
in a wheelchair in a home staring  
at his scrapbook...and then accelerates  
again. Or maybe it happens this way:

We get the habit of releasing time's clutch  
(thinking we need to, not knowing our power)  
so that we can complete complex thoughts  
in micro-seconds, but one day, we forget  
to unmesh our spinning thoughts  
from the world's low gear, and awaken  
from our feverish intuitive leaps  
to find that years or generations or planets  
have passed –

some mornings are like that.



Last night, west of here,  
A huge bang. Today light snow,  
nothing in the news.

---

Past noon – I'm still in bed,  
reading. Well, now I'm writing and  
you are reading. Are you in bed?

---

Gunshots? "Car, backfiring," quickly  
I explain to myself.



A long talk: Luckily the sun came by  
to end the night, for we never would have.

---

True silence is the sound of your listening.

---

Singer, how is it the more you pour  
your voice into this space,  
the more space there is for your voice.

---

In sunlight the breeze is an aura  
flowering instantly about my face,  
as intimate as a lover's breath.  
At night each wind is a greeting  
across vast distance filled with branches  
that beat the sky to a froth of stars.

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