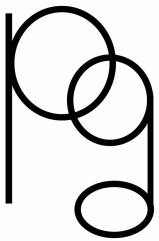


**I'LL BE THE INVISIBLE GIRL  
TILL THE DAY I DIE!**

**CHRIS TOLL**





I'M NOSTALGIC FOR THE FUTURE

A melancholy refrigerator  
knits a movie theatre.  
Fame is blind  
and fortune is lame.  
The irrefutable irreducible pond  
appeals to winter  
for a new pair of shopping malls.  
The stars kneel down,  
the sky leaps mournful,  
and the rivers stand up.  
A liquor cabinet  
meanders toward a wolf pack.



Various versions of some of these poems have appeared or will appear in the following print and online journals: *Baltimore Is Reads*, *Chimera: I Am My Own Twin*, *Fell Swoop*, *I'm Having Some Shape-Shifting Problems*, *melancholia's tremulous dreadlocks*, *Moons of Jupiter*, *The Pearl*, *Rock Heals*, and *Shattered Wig Review*.

Collage by Chris Toll.

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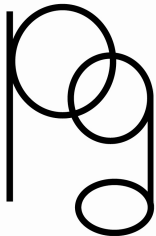
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## IN THE TORRENT

for justin sirois

The chained chairs  
loan sorrow to the wind.  
The bass player's eyes turn red.  
A zombie ninja materializes  
on the lawn of the White House.  
With a quick flick of his wrist  
(of course, his hand falls off),  
he buries a throwing star  
in the forehead of the Vice President.  
Blood jetting from the wound,  
the Vice President staggers backwards  
and morphs into a reptilian monster.  
The lead guitarist makes a mystical pass  
(her fingers move in ways  
fingers usually don't).  
Bipedal sentients will never be free  
until the last movie star is strangled  
with the entrails of the last pedophile.

LAND OF THE FEE

I am the Clay,  
Uncouth,  
and a Knife.  
Follow me.  
A siren has a nervous breakdown.  
Gravestones are singing  
in the key of regret.  
The moon repeats one prayer over and over,  
"Find me soon."  
The rain limps into town.

**CONTENTS**

Saturday Afternoon	5
Edward Hopper at the OK Corral	6
My Name Is Writ in Water	7
I Lose My Secret Decoder Ring	8
Faithful Furtive Bourbon Burden	9
Writing Groups of the Future (by Sylvia Plath)	10
Strange World (I'm Too Sad)	11
Song of Magnetic Service	12
Kafka: the Detective Years	13
Land of the Fee	14
In the Torrent	15
I'm Nostalgic for the Future	16

**KAFKA: THE DETECTIVE YEARS**

The ninja is as quiet as a shadow.  
He raises his sword  
and steps into a hallway.  
A python coils around his legs.  
My metaphors are mixed up –  
one smokes a cigarette  
and looks up and down the street,  
the other breaks into the trunk of a car.  
A bazooka man fires  
as a Styracosaurus bellows toward him.  
A 15-year-old girl sits on a cedar chest,  
opens her journal,  
and writes a poem of unforgivable beauty.  
Night is my sister,  
and how sleepy is love?

### SONG OF MAGNETIC SERVICE

The wind whispers to a river,  
"Dear Child,  
you don't know loneliness yet."  
We buy our wedding rings  
in a pawnshop.  
The past will be redeemed  
by the love to come.  
You have bluffs  
in your soul  
where I can stand  
and see a hundred miles of you.  
I have a hundred years of sorrow  
in my eyes.  
O Holy Heart,  
you will be my joy  
on the day the world ends.

### SATURDAY AFTERNOON

The cavalry gallops into town.  
The troopers need to buy beer  
and comic books.  
The Indians saunter into the fort.  
Their medicine man knows mighty magic.  
Their allies include soldiers from the future  
with odd heads  
and four-dimensional rifles  
(they kill your father before he meets your mother),  
saber-toothed tigers the size of cats,  
knights with rayguns,  
a housefly as large as an elephant,  
and a blue brontosaurus small enough  
for a brave to ride.

EDWARD HOPPER AT THE OK CORRAL

I live in the city  
inside electricity.  
My Saint of Dark Tomorrows  
caresses blonde fireworks,  
digs her tongue into the right ear,  
and starts her ablutions.  
Batman faces them demons inside  
in the center of a helipad  
on top of a bank building.  
Alarms clang through the Museum of Poison Pen Letters.  
A vampire lifts his head,  
the warp core breach is imminent,  
and blood drips from his chin onto the nun's wimple.  
He becomes mist and flees down a corridor.  
Spider-Girl hugs a gargoyle  
and cries long and hard.

STRANGE WORLD (I'M TOO SAD)

The centipedes are the size of crocodiles.  
They circle Caa'rong, a Green Lantern.  
She's a walking rosebush  
and each blossom contains an eyeball.  
She aims her power ring at the largest centipede.  
If fur were in insufferable,  
I might discover an inn in infinite  
(O Deluded Dilaudid Deadfall, I can find fur in insufferable  
and there will always be an inn in infinite).  
Caitlin drives a junker on the interstate.  
All her possessions are in the trunk.  
Her hair's tied up in a pink bandanna.  
Her heart left a while ago,  
now her body's leaving too.

A new poem by Sylvia Plath was recently found in England. The poem was written in German and it was discovered beneath a pile of 45-year-old cardigans in a cedar chest in the subbasement of a London antiques store. No one knows why it was written in German. Was she planning to flee to Germany? Was she trying to impress a German lover? She uses the words "morning stars" in the poem – a morning star is a medieval military weapon and it was a metal ball with spikes mounted on a wood handle. This would be an odd weapon to bring to a fight with a vampire, but perhaps our hero is thinking a vampire is really not much of a threat if the head is pounded into a pulp.

#### WRITING GROUPS OF THE FUTURE

by Sylvia Plath

(translated by Chris Toll)

My evil twin brother is me.  
He locks the bathroom door  
and whispers into a luscious ear,  
"Forget the bar.  
My heart is chaste  
and your heart is chased."  
My pharmacy  
has to juggle a lot of stoves.  
O Maryland blizzard,  
a cat is my writing table.  
A Jedi clenches morning stars in her fists.  
She's trapped the vampire hitman  
in the laboratory of the Fortress of Solitude.  
He's half fog and half leopard.  
He balances a blowgun on his paw.  
Will you ride the ferris wheel with me, Buddha?

#### MY NAME IS WRIT IN WATER

My airport  
turns on the TV  
and falls asleep  
in the easy chair.  
My bookstore  
screws a silencer  
onto a pistol.  
My insane asylum  
plays solitaire  
all night long.

### I LOSE MY SECRET DECODER RING

The blossom machinery  
unfolds a clock in the spring rain  
while a kitchen eats the difficult mirror  
and an atom goes to war.  
The cruel moon laughs  
at the fiddle sleeping beside a pretty girl.  
Beauty steps out of the quagmire of art  
and a disaster discovers an immortal blackbird.

### FAITHFUL FURTIVE BOURBON BURDEN

The immaculate incalculable poem machine  
matchmakes copious odious odes  
with porous corporate perjuries.  
The gagwriter punctuates sorrow  
while he prowls a pilgrim electron.  
The philosopher disburses devout pigeonholes  
to imprison the drunkards in mythic tailspins,  
a cannibal parishioner exculpates the dragnet  
that demotes the despondent truculent checklist,  
and an infernal squadron downgrades the enigma  
to an implacable imprudent impure virtue.  
Matchbook heartbreaks and haphazard blasphemies  
corrode at the corroboree on an asteroid.  
The librettist conjures a morphine crucifixion.