

Eavesdrop

update



Colin Casey is an obscure, Irish-American poet.
A few of his thoughts and statements are found between
the covers of

“Eavesdrop: update”.

“Eavesdrop: update” includes old and new
reflections from Casey’s potpourri of
intimate thoughts,
exhortations, presentations,
political & personal statements
as well as
his favorite verses from other poets and writers.

2

Casey hopes you find the experience pleasing and,
if possible, thought provoking.
He did.

COVER PHOTO: *“An observer, maybe an ‘eavesdropper,’ shares their iPhone photograph of a remote, family photography session by one of California’s most popular, family photographers, Tara Cronin of Kent Avenue Photography. I love this particular photograph for the ‘loving innocence’ it depicts. I love this photographer even more because of her passion for ‘family’ and her impressive talent for working with families to create photographs which tell their unique family stories.”* **From the Publisher.**

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Teacher

*down paths never trodden
on journeys never dared
toward horizons only imagined
a **good teacher** takes you there*

*uncovering hidden treasures
unlocking impenetrable doors
releasing unknown energy
a **good teacher** shows you where*

*slaying dark dragons
exorcising doubt and fear
instilling confidence to climb mountains
a **good teacher** helps you persevere*

*realizing questions are more important than
answers*

*knowing hard work can't be shared
accepting risks and failure as part of the process
a **good teacher** makes you aware*

*but more important than any lesson
more important than fanfare
the touchstone for a **good teacher** is
one who truly **cares.***

The Essence of the Game

*It's
Nothing profound
Just a game*

*It's richness lies in the
Timelessness
Of each game.
No clock,
No hurry to get done.
Just nine innings to
Reminisce and savor the
Finest moments of
Yesterday and today.*

4

*There's no other game
That lends itself to
Numbers, to
Comparisons of
Who was the best, to
Conversations with
Sons and best friends, of
Where you were when, of
What the game once was.*

Baseball.....
*Nothing profound
Just a great game!*

Discernment

Listen.

Observe.

Reflect.

But, please, don't speak.

*Except for the questions
for the facts you seek.*

Questions

5

provide answers

*for the ambiguity we face,
for the choices to make,
for the clarity we seek
for the path to take.*

6 *The most astute statement
from **the Earth's wisest man**
has always been
the **acknowledgement** of
how little he knows.*

*The **Empires of the future**
await in fertile minds
of those too young to know
only
to be nurtured and liberated by
those who do.*

7

*If you avoid **change**,
you're standing still;
if you're standing still,
you'll be passed.*

8

Success is often
a premature proclamation,
overused and misunderstood.

For true success
is not measured by
the size of the prize
nor
in the perceptions of others;

9

rather,
success is a **peace of mind**
one hopes to find
following an
honest assessment
of one's own deeds.

A Recipe for Success

Success is a destination.

Hard work is the vehicle for getting there.

Choice is the key to get your vehicle started.

Attitude is the vehicle's fuel or energy,

that is, the grit to keep going,

through ups and downs and hills and valleys,

the proper mindset to temper disappointment,

mistakes and failures,

and, as importantly,

the euphoria of victory.

Your 'LinkedIn' network is your GPS system,

giving you information and advice

on the best route to take.

Risk, ultimately, is the speed you travel and

the route you take to reach your destination.

It goes without saying,

some speeds and routes

are more dangerous than others.

Finally, the more creative you can be

with vehicle, network, speed, risk and route,

the greater your chances for success.

*Life without **learning** is
like
a slow death
from starvation.*

11

*Without constant renewal,
one simply withers away,
to irrelevance!*

*By erecting walls to protect oneself
from **change**,
we become a prisoner of the past,
never free
to reap the bounty of
a potentially fulfilling future.*

12

Brevity

Enough!

*For every word
I'm about to say,
is just a waste
of ink and page.*

*The message obvious,
already dispatched.
Additional words
only distract.*

13

*Verbiage and redundancy
litter the way,
contaminating the essence
of what you say.*

*So tender your words
like precious stones.
Invest only what's necessary,
to make your ideas known.*

*The real value of history is
its **relevance** to
the present.*

The Story of War

*The story of war is **told by the victor**;
the vanquished muted in defeat.
Winners paint the tapestry;
the conquered acquiesce
to the victor's rendition of the struggle,
to their heroes and villains
and
cause and effect.*

*The victor's perspective is singular in purpose,
made possible by victory's bounty;
the rendering embraced by minions
too naive to doubt,
too timid to question
the victory or defeat.*

15

*Our **mission**
is to give **voice to the vanquished**,
to listen to their call.
For in their anger and sorrow,
comes another version of the conflict
and, possibly, clarity and courage
for those once too naive or too timid
to question the victor
or
to give voice to those once muted in defeat.*

16

*A leader's
most important skill
is
to 'influence' others
to work together,
to collaborate,
to compromise,
to create opportunity for
the entire community
NOT just
a partisan constituency.*

A Young Man's Soliloquy

*Adversity,
Oh, Adversity.
Listen to me.
I've seen your face;
And,
It's troubling me.*

*But, Adversity
Oh, Adversity.
I won't accept Defeat.
There are others
More enlightening
I'd rather meet.*

*Adversity,
Oh, Adversity,
I'm prepared for your friend.
His name is Discouragement;
But, be forewarned!
No welcome will I extend.*

*Adversity,
Oh, Adversity.
Can you see?
Resilience
and Perseverance
now accompany me.*

*So, Adversity,
Oh, Adversity.
Now I see.
I'm better having met you,
After overcoming
The challenge of your company.*

Before The Next Time We Speak

*Is it not
A reasonable request
For pause.....
And thought.....
Before we speak?*

*Before words are dispatched from lips
Or body language betrays a thought,
Wouldn't it make good sense,
To pause and think
About the mission of which we speak?*

*While the target of our remark is in sight
Just after its conception within the mind,
Wouldn't it be wise
To pause and reflect
On the perception and reaction to what we speak?*

*For communication is more than words we employ
To deliver what we think.
It's also about pitch and tone and eyes and feet.
So pause to muse before you speak;
You may not be saying what you think.*

*Is it not **a reasonable request**
For an epiphany among messengers,
For pause and circumspection
On the message that's intended
Before the next time we speak.*

2 Men

*There were 2 men
who helped along the way.
Each at a different station;
each in his own way.*

*Neither of the men knew
of the gift he gave.
Neither of the men knew
of the dividends it paid.*

*The first man met,
during our youth.
A casual encounter
two boys in a group.*

*Two paths
just happened to cross.
A relationship developed
while walking the course.*

*An adolescent perspective
once clouded by doubt,
soon brightened by life's challenge
from this new friend throughout*

*A friendship flourished
as boys became men.
The relationship never ended
after wife and children.*

*A second man met
in the thirtieth year
after 10 years a teacher
he offered a new career.*

*There came new duties
soon became 'vizier'.
Life's perspective altered
challenged by the 'emir'.*

*A relationship emerged
from just business at the start.
Box score and gender conversations
soon accompanied revenue and expense charts.*

*2 men obviously different,
teacher and entrepreneur.
2 men seemingly similar
beyond lifestyle and demeanor*

*The common denominator
was their impact on me.
Forever indebted for 'friendship',
unequivocally.*

*Neither of the men knew
of the gift he gave.
Neither of the men knew
of the dividends it paid.*

*Life, however, is a journey;
peaks and valleys, straight-a ways and bends!
On this journey, one man proved 'imposter';
the other **a friend to the end.***

*These were 2 men
who helped along the way.
Each at a different station,
each in different way.*

Nocturnal Reflections

Useless banter.

Kids scream.

*Collisions on the airways
delay my dreams.*

*Juvenile situations
at decibels that shock
leave me distracted and frustrated
postponing the start*

*of quiet conversations
alone or in pair
bringing comfort to the soul
before Somnus appears.*

21

*Nocturnal reflections
on what the day has borne.
Anticipating tomorrow -
sunshine or storms.*

*But silence is prerequisite
to bring the needed peace.
Someone douse the lights!
so I can go to sleep.*

A Teacher Manifesto

"Your curriculum is better suited to students in affluent communities and the privileged attending private schools NOT the students here."

(this comment, made to me by an educator in Providence, RI following one of my Social Studies 2.0 classes at Hope High School, inspired me to write this 'Manifesto')

"There is a 'will to fight', to 'compete to win', that is a function of a person's ego"¹. This "competitive fire" is the 'difference maker' between being successful and acquiescing to mediocrity and, for some, accepting failure.

'Success' is a choice; 'mediocrity', a fallback position; 'giving up' or accepting 'failure', is a 'resignation' to be less than you'd like to be.

22

The foundation of a 'will to win' attitude is 'ego'; a better word might be 'confidence' or 'self-esteem'. A person with a 'will to win' will take 'risks'; successful people take 'calculated risks' to become the person they aspire to be.

There are different factors which create 'a will to win'. For some, it may be proving someone wrong; to prove you're better than someone else thought you could be. For others, it may be fear; i.e. there is no other choice but 'compete to win'. You've decide 'failure is not an alternative'. And, for others, it may simply be becoming a person they dream to be; there may be a role model who inspiring a future vision of their own 'success'.

'*Confidence*' in one's ability OR '*fear*' of failure are the attitudes which often propel people through tough times, to persevere through adversity for the success they aspire to.

Whichever attitude one accepts, '*confidence*' or '*fear*', it is important to realize that every successful person '*fails*' some time along the way. Since most successful people take calculated risks to achieve their goals, they occasionally fail; in fact, some fail multiple times in their quest for success. The benefit of '*Confidence*' over '*Fear*' is '*clarity*', i.e. clarity enables you to 'identify' and 'understand' the '*value*' in each mistake; each failure provides lessons for '*refining*' the plan, and, in the process, to become '*smarter*', '*wiser*', and '*stronger*' than before.

'*Confidence*' also liberates '*curiosity*' that provides a state of mind that makes you comfortable asking '*questions*' you sometimes have been afraid to ask - e.g. Why? Why not? How? etc. '*Questions*' need to be answered to discover 'what you like' and '*what you don't like*', '*what job*' and '*what relationships*' to pursue, '*what job or relationship NOT*' to pursue, to eventually find the job/career or relationship that can fulfill you with a compensation for the lifestyle you determine you need.

'*Confidence*' helps you find your '*genius*' too. That's right, we ALL have some special, intrinsic '*genius*', some '*special talent*'. This inherent talent can only be discovered by being '*curious*' AND '*confident*' to ask questions for the answers you seek. **Your "*genius*" is UNQUESTIONABLE.** '*Talent*' resides in a repository within each person, waiting

to be discovered. Once discovered, your *'will-to win'* develops your *'talent'* and ultimately exploits it for use in a job or career to provide a lifestyle you would like to live.

In summary, *'confidence'* is a valuable state of mind to help you develop critical competencies, critical skills and attitudes, that are necessary for success in today's competitive, global, marketplace: your *'will to win'*; your desire to *'compete'*; your willingness to ask questions for answers that expand your horizon of what's possible. *'Confidence'* will *'push you out of your comfort zone'* to *'meet and greet'* new people from different places, with different talents, different interests and ideas, and different cultures speaking different languages to expand your horizon of what's possible and, in the process, make you wiser, think MORE critically, MORE objectively, and MORE empathetically for your lifetime success. Finally and, arguably most importantly, *'confidence'* reminds you mistakes provide valuable lessons to *'help you win'* in today's competitive, global marketplace.

24

History is filled with VERY SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE who took calculated risks, made mistakes and failed, struggled, and sometimes despaired: *Albert Einstein, JZ, Steve Jobs, Ursula Burns, Marta Aparicio, LoLo Jones, J.K. Rowling, Malala Yousafzai, Coretta Scott King, Elon Musk, Jackie Robinson, Jamie Dimon, Ben Carson, and Chinese billionaire, Jack Ma*, to name a few. Yet, all of these people persevered to *'compete-to-win'* by working hard and being *'insatiably curious'* for answers to their questions to find out *'how good they could be'* and then

developing and exploiting their genius, their talents, for the success they aspired to.

There is **NO RELIABLE TEST**, no SAT, GPA, PISA, IQ, nor FINAL EXAM that can predict how successful you can be.

The determining factor for lifetime success **HAS ALWAYS BEEN** *'will to win', 'willingness to compete,'* built upon strength of *'ego'* and *'convictions'*. The level of *'confidence'* in yourself along with a willingness to *'work hard'* with *'RELEVANT' 'COMPETENCIES'* and *'ATTITUDES'* developed along the way empower a person to push out of their comfort zone and navigate calculated risks, all to determine and ultimately appreciate *'what matters most'*.

25

This is the process, the strategy with corresponding tactics, for creating then exploiting opportunities and managing calculated, anticipated, risks to become the successful person one aspires to be.”

FOOTNOTE: (1) *"PATTON, MONTGOMERY, ROMMEL: MASTERS OF WAR"*
Terry Brighton. 2008. MF Books. PAGE 404.

Postscript to 'A Teacher Manifesto'

I have long been interested in the assessment of human potential; in other words, how talented we perceive someone to be and if a person fully maximizes their perceived talent. **Malcolm Gladwell**, popular social science author, journalist and public speaker, calls this phenomenon '*talent capitalization*'. Moreover, I am very interested in how the attitudes of people in positions of power and the influence accompanying it affects '*the capitalization of talent*', especially for young people in the inner city with but one education choice charged with capitalizing their often questioned, inherent talent.

26

Malcolm Gladwell and others have defined "*talent capitalization*" as "*the rate at which a given community capitalizes (develops/exploits) the human potential of those in its midst; i.e. what percentage of those who are capable of achieving something, actually achieve it.*"

Gladwell's conclusion - "*America generally does a poor job at talent capitalization*" and has done so for a long time.

According to Gladwell, '*optimum talent capitalization*' is not evenly distributed across population groups in America. Certain segments of the American population have higher rates of '*talent capitalization*' than others. "*Culture*" and "*wealth*" have proven to positively impact '*talent capitalization*' rates. For example, the famous psychometrician and recognized authority on IQ, **James**

Flynn, reviewed ‘*talent capitalization data*’ and found “*Chinese Americans have high capitalization rates, not because they’re more intelligent, but because they work harder! They have a **culture** that emphasizes ‘effort’ and ‘persistence’, i.e. how hard someone should work at a particular task*”. Wealth also affects ‘*talent capitalization*’. Wealth affords the opportunity for the best schools and a network of successful people for opportunities of experiential learning and professional success.

But, what about other external influences which either heighten or suppress ‘*talent capitalization*’?

Albert Einstein, the Nobel Prize winning theoretical physicist who fled Germany to find safety in America from the Nazi Germany Holocaust program designed to ‘exterminate’ “*undesirables*”, specifically, Gypsies, Jehovah’s Witnesses, disabled people, homosexuals and especially Jews, has an **interesting perspective on the impact people in positions of power and influence have on ‘*talent capitalization*’**. Einstein bravely expressed his perspective in his 1931 letter to **W.E.B. Du Bois**, the editor of *The Crisis Magazine* and a leading civil rights advocate. Dubois published Einstein’s letter in the February 1932 issue of the Magazine. Here’s an excerpt from the Einstein letter: “*It seems to be a universal **FACT** that minorities, especially when their individuals are recognized because of physical differences, are treated by majorities among whom they live as an inferior class. The tragic part of such a fate, however, lies NOT only in the automatically realized disadvantage suffered by these minorities in economic and social relations,*

*BUT ALSO IN THE FACT that those who meet such treatment themselves, for the most part, **acquiesce** in the prejudiced estimate because of the suggestive influence of the majority and come to regard people like themselves as inferior.....*

Einstein's use of the word "**acquiesce**" is profound. According to Einstein, some people accept the long standing, baseless, biased, negative assessments by some people in positions of power and influence that '*talent and intelligence is a product of one's ethnicity or social class.*' In other words, intelligence is predetermined, hereditary, and, as a result, some groups of people, by nature, are smarter than others.

28

The consequence of this '**acquiescence**' is lost talent and the life changing opportunities by not exploiting it. A metaphor for this phenomenon is a third world country blessed with an abundance of valuable, natural resources without the ability to capitalize or exploit them. It's a '*what could be.*'

Malcolm Gladwell concludes, "*we (America) has a scarcity of achievement NOT because there is a lack of talent BUT because America is squandering it!*"

Young people are aware of the **prejudice** and **bias** of people in position of influential power. **I know because I asked.** I have been collecting data on this phenomenon over the

18 year period I volunteer taught a life skills program at an inner city public high school.

FORTUNATELY, some students ignore the negative **bias**; they embrace it as motivation for the success they eventually achieve. Their names and accomplishments are an indisputable testament to this **FACT**.

UNFORTUNATELY, many do not. Their names and disappointments challenge us to alter the trajectory of this '**acquiescence**' or acceptance of the negative bias noted by **Mr Einstein** in his letter to Mr DuBois and inspire and empower them to *capitalize their inherent talent* to become the successful person they could be.

The influence of bias, prejudicial personal and political agendas as well as the ineptitude of some of the "*institutions*" and their '*people*' charged with '*capitalizing talent*', have long undermined America's potential. **Gladwell** calls this the "**stupidity constraint**". These "*institutions*" and the people in places of power and influence within them have deprived individuals AND our country of capitalizing on its greatest resource, **human talent**. Consequently, America and too many of its citizens with unrecognized or under-appreciated talent forfeit opportunities for success in a highly competitive, richly opportunistic but increasingly dangerous global marketplace. Furthermore, these same influencers, in positions of leadership charged with advancing and unifying America, divide it. One can only speculate on their agenda.

“We (America) has a scarcity of achievement

NOT

because there is a lack of talent

BUT

because America is squandering it !!!”

What can WE do,

TODAY,

to ensure ALL Americans have access to

indisputable, high quality education

for the pathway to ‘success’

ALL aspire to

and,

by doing so,

30

our country can maximize its greatest resource?

Just like Singapore.

an anticipation of
the future
followed by a reflection upon
the past
facilitates sound judgement 31
for prudent management
*of **the present.***

Cynic's Lament

Be forewarned, you innocents.

'TRUTH' is not always what you believe it to be.

'TRUTH' was thought to be 'WHAT IS',
that is, verified; unequivocal, 'FACT'.

And yet, 'the truth',
professed, as such, by trusted influencers,
has repeatedly proven 'not to be'.
Self proclaimed paragons of fairness and fact
sabotage what they were entrusted to protect.

The defiling of 'truth' creates 'uncertainty';
along with the collateral damage of 'cynicism',
caused by arrogance and exploitation of power
to influence and foster
divisive, self-serving 'causes'.

32

'Truth' has become the offspring
of the 'partisan'
with no bloodlines to
'FACT'.

Bush and Biden,
Bakker and Law,
Hearst and Sulzberger,
and too many more.

A journalist's duty
SHOULD NOT BE
reporting the purported 'truth'
but exposing the 'fabricator' and the 'flaw'.

The challenge WE face today
is finding 'trust' and 'certainty'
in 'who' and 'what' professes to be 'truth'.

2022

State of the Union

*It does not rest with the President
nor his Cabinet 'appends';
real power resides with Lobbyists
and their entitled congressmen.*

*Too many American senators and representatives
are part of a 'cabal',
of **partisan** power brokers,
imbued with arrogance and gaul.*

*They leave us wanting,
for leadership of yore,
for a Washington or Lincoln;
will a likeness ever be restored?*

33

*Today's Congress is distracted
by an 'Elysium' feel,
immobilized by paralyzing **partisanship**,
insulated by gerrymandered deals.*

*There's a failure in American leadership
creating grave alarm;
there's a need for change;
expiration dates, term limits, the appropriate balm.*

*A call goes out to 'the selfless',
those with an apolitical view;
expel the entitled cabal
and their self-serving, **partisan** crew!!!*

The essence of leadership is

service,

service to the individuals you lead.

34

Eulogy for Mom

Dorothy Maureen Lang Cronin, wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, daughter and sister, a best friend to many, a clothing maker, and cooking and baking gourmet. I have indisputable data supporting this claim. As my son Colin Michael succinctly said, "*Nana made the best mittens, sweaters and pie crust in America*". My daughter Tara Katherine added "*there was nothing like Nana's cold salmon salad*" and my niece Cara Holton said "*yes there is; Nana's hotdog in a buttered, toasted roll*". Dottie was a competitive bridge player. She was more athletic than people think. She was undefeated in croquette beating me several times in the backyard in 1956; I never played again. Dottie had a deep faith in God. For those keeping score, under Dottie's leadership, our family set the Guinness record for most rosaries said in a year; 1964, pre Katie, during Advent, Lent, and the many trips we took to the cape & skiing; really, any trip longer than 45 minutes, Dottie led the family in the rosary. Dottie was an exceptional 'EVENT PLANNER' especially for her annual Easter Egg Hunt for her many Grandchildren. Like any good executive, Dottie delegated well, bringing Casey Daniel into her

'CIRCLE of TRUST' for hiding the candy in “*just the right places for little guys to find*”. She managed the finances in the Cronin household without ever being audited. She loved Tom Selleck in “Blue Bloods”, Newport Creamery coffee ice cream sodas, AND a short glass of Port with ice.

When I think about Dorothy Maureen, I think about Roger Allyn. My Mom and Dad were a partnership like Ozzie and Harriet or, more relevant for my granddaughters, JZ and Beyonce. Rarely did anyone reference my parents individually; it was usually *'Roger & Dottie'*. Like a famous law firm; *'Roger & Dottie'*. If someone was injured or sad, *'Roger and Dottie'* were there for support, not with litigation, but prayer. They were always there for others and each other. Dottie and Roger completed and cared for each other.

36

My Mom did a lot for all of us but especially for my Dad and especially with clothing. Dottie was Roger's clothing consultant. I remember the day when my Dad was going to play golf and he came out of the bedroom wearing colorful madras shorts and a brightly colored checked shirt. When my Mom saw him she said something like *“Roger dear, you can't wear that. The shorts and shirt just don't work well together. Why don't you go back into the bedroom, 2nd drawer in your bureau on the*

right side and you'll find a nice, plain, white, short sleeve, collared shirt with the Metacomet logo. Much better." Dad went back to the bedroom and returned wearing what Mom suggested: i.e. white golf shirt, madras shorts pulled up to his navel, blue socks pulled to mid-shin and brown shoes. *"How's this, Dottie?" "Wonderful, Roger. Just like you."* Dad smiled and left the house thinking he looked like Arnold Palmer. I have no way of confirming how Mom felt but she must have felt like a Major League baseball RELIEF PITCHER recording another SAVE for the team, the Roger and Dottie Team. Some of you may think this second memory is corny and certainly embellished, but it's not.

37

My second memory is one moment among many which encapsulate so many other moments of my Dad's affection and love for Mom. It's just how Roger thought about Dottie. My Dad genuinely thought my Mom was *'the best woman on earth'* and he let her know it, often, many times in front of his children. What I'm about to share with you actually happened- Dad returned home at 7am after working the night shift at the Fire Station. He came through the door, walked directly to Mom who was baking muffins or her delicious *'rollie pollies'*, and, in front of us kids sitting at the kitchen table, put his arms around her waist and

hugged her with a couple of kisses, pronouncing “*you look beautiful, Dottie. I love you.*” Turning to us kids, “*your Mom is the best.*” Mom would often get embarrassed “*Roger, the children*” and Dad would look to us with an impish grin. They really loved each other and my Dad repeatedly felt free to show his affection for her in front of us.

So, today is a day to celebrate Roger and Dottie back together again. Please don't be sad; be happy, because Roger and Dottie are.

38

One more thing. When I was lying in bed the other night, I was thinking about my Dad seeing my Mom again in heaven after so many years. I thought of a few scenarios for their re-union and they made me feel good. I wrote one down. I'll share it now hoping it does the same for some of you. I can see Dad, in heaven, ignoring the celestial protocol of Peter standing at the Gate of Heaven, waiting to welcome and bring the next guest to God who's sitting in his executive chair for the formal induction into the 'Hall of Heaven.' Dad moves quickly but respectfully and cuts in front of Peter at the gate. “*Sorry Pete. Here she comes. Doesn't she look great? You're going like her a lot!*” And then, turning to Mom, “*Dottie – what took you so long?*” “*Roger - you're not in charge of things up*

here. It wasn't my time." "Dottie, you look great! I'm glad you're here and we're back together. I've got everything ready for you. By the way, how do the sandals and cassock look?" "Wonderful, Roger. Just like you."

*Dorothy M. Cronin's Eulogy was presented at her funeral Mass,
July 11, 2022, by Esteban,
her oldest son.*

Here For You

*Worry not
when you are cold,
longing for a warming embrace.
I am here for you*

*Worry not
when assurances
seem absent.
I am here for you.*

*Worry not
when 'familia' encounters
don't understand nor tolerate.
I am here for you.*

40

*Worry not
when doubt undermines hope
and anxiety fills the air.
I am here for you.*

*Worry not
when what's really needed
is an early mornin' dunkin'.
I am here for you*

*Worry not.
Fear not.
I believe in you
I will always be here for you.*

A Shuffle of the Deck

*There's been a shuffling of the deck,
as the **world resets**;
no longer tilting 'west'
but 'east',
to China,
the focus of our mindset.*

*America and Europe
Persia and the rest;
not to forget Maya, Inca and Aztec.
All left to reminisce
on their time in the spotlight;
their time as the earth's mightiest.*

41

*Once mighty landlords
atop hegemonic crests.
Now in lesser roles,
yearning for lost prominence,
betrayed by myopic visions
of their politicians' behests.*

*It's earth's latest chapter
of a hierarchial tack.
Former empires
wrestling with consequences
from the earth's latest
shuffling of the deck.*

Betrayal

*.....How could? Why would?
it doesn't make sense.
I've been searching for answers
to end the suspense.*

*I'm left with a sinking feeling;
by someone who betrayed my trust.
It's left me angry and disappointed.
It's been tough to adjust .*

42

*So, how was I so wrong
in my judgement of a 'friend'?
It's been difficult to reconcile;
a lost friendship to comprehend.*

*But, now I've moved on
from a dear friend....
what remains, however, are many
questions.
I can not pretend...*

Favorites From Others

43

*“Never doubt
nor
question
you
are a treasure
waiting to be found.”*

44

from a Sunday morning homily by the *Reverend David W. Masello*. I remind my wife, children, grandchild, and Hope High School students they all, in *fact*, have *amazing talents*. And, for their talents to blossom, they must be emboldened, their talents nurtured by pushing out of their comfort zones, embracing change, meeting new people, entertaining new ideas, accepting failure and mistakes as part of the learning process, and being humble, respectful, and appreciative to all. Only then will their wonderful talents fully blossom and, as a result, they will feel fulfilled.

The Coin

*Into my heart's treasury
I slipped a coin
That time cannot take
Nor a thief purloin,*

*Oh better than the minting
Of a gold-crowned king
Is the **safe-kept memory**
Of **a lovely thing.***

45

If

*If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;*

*If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;*

*If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;*

*If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;*

*If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'*

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run.*

***Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it.
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!***

The Man In The Arena

***"It is not the critic who counts;
not the man who points out how
the strong man stumbles,
or where the doer of deeds
could have done them better.
The credit belongs to the man
who is actually in the arena,
whose face is marred
by dust and sweat and blood;
who strives valiantly;
who errs,
who comes short again and again,
because there is no effort without error & shortcoming;
but who actually does strive to do the deeds,
who knows great enthusiasms,
the great devotions;
who spends himself in a worthy cause;
who at the best knows in the end
the triumph of high achievement,
and who at the worst,
if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly,
so that his place
shall never be
with those cold and timid souls who
neither know victory nor defeat."***

47

Speech by Theodore Roosevelt, "Citizenship in a Republic". Delivered on April 23, 1910 at 3 p.m. at the Sorbonne (University) in Paris, France, before 900 students and 2,000 ticket holders. This speech, for some, would come to be known as *"The Man in the Arena"*.

To Leave Something Behind

*I can not say I know you well
But you can't lie to me with all these books that you sell
I'm not trying to follow you to the end of the world
I'm just trying to leave something behind*

*The words have come from men and mouse
But I can not help thinking that I have heard the wrong people
When all the water is gone my work will be too
And I'm trying to leave something behind*

*This whole world is a foreign land
We swallow the moon, but we do not know our own hand
We're running with the case, but is not gold
However, we are trying to leave something behind*

*My friends who I think are in the wrong fight
And I can not read what I have not written
I've been at home, but the teacher is gone
But I would like to leave something behind*

*There is a beast that has taken my brain
Can you put to bed, but you can not feel my pain
When the machine has taken the soul of man
It's time to leave something behind*

*Oh, money is free but love costs more than our daily bread
And the roof is hard to access
Oh, the future ahead is dead
So I'm trying to leave something behind*

*I feel I'm still on the shore
And the pockets do not know what it means to be poor
I can get through the wall if you give me a door
So I can leave something behind*

*Oh wisdom is lost somewhere in the trees
You will not find in a little mental gray hair
It is closed from the hurrying ahead
And it's time to leave something behind*

*Oh, money is free but love costs more than our daily bread
And the roof is hard to access
When my son is a man who knows what I mean
I was just trying to leave something behind
I was just trying to leave something behind*

Myself

I have to live with myself and so
I want to be fit for myself to know.

I want to be able as days go by,
always look myself straight in the eye;
I don't want to stand with the setting sun
and hate myself for the things I have done.

I don't want to keep on a closet shelf
a lot of secrets about myself
and fool myself as I come and go
into thinking no one else will ever know
the kind of person I really am,
I don't want to dress up myself in sham.

I want to go out with my head erect
I want to deserve all men's respect;
but here in the struggle for
fame and wealth
I want to be able to like myself.
I don't want to look at myself and know
I am bluster and bluff and empty show.

49

I never can hide myself from me;

I see what others may never see;
I know what others may never know,
I never can fool myself and so,
whatever happens I want to be
self respecting and conscience free.

Edgar Guest: born 1881; died 1959. Wrote about 11,000 poems, most sentimental, short, with upbeat verse. Literary critics often derided his work but America adored him. He was known as the "People's Poet"; served as Michigan's poet laureate, hosted a long-running radio show and TV show, and published more than twenty books.

The Best

*I call you when I need you, my heart's on fire.
You come to me, come to me wild and wired.
Oh, you come to me, give me everything I need.*

*Give me a life time of promises and a world of dreams.
Speak the language of love like you know what it means.
It can't be wrong; take my heart and make it strong.*

***You're simply the best, better than all the rest;
Better than anyone, anyone I ever met.
I'm stuck on your heart. I hang on every word you say.
Tear us apart; I would rather be dead.***

*In your heart I see the start of every night and every day.
In your eyes I get lost, I get washed away.
Just as long here in your arms, I could be in no better place*

50

***You're simply the best, better than all the rest.
Better than anyone, anyone I ever met.
I'm stuck on your heart. I hang on every word you say.
Tear us apart; I would rather be dead.***

*Each time you leave me I start losing control.
You're walking away with my heart and my soul.
I can feel you even when I'm alone.
Oh, baby, don't let go!*

***Oh, you're the best, better than all the rest.
Better than anyone, anyone I ever met.
I'm stuck on your heart.
I hang on every word you say.
No, tear us apart; I would rather be dead
Oh you're the best.***

My Country 'Tis of Thy People You're Dying

*Now that your big eyes have finally opened
Now that you're wondering how must they feel
Meaning them that you've chased across
America's movie screens
Now that you're wondering how can it be real
That the ones you've called colorful, noble and proud
In your school propaganda, they starve in their splendor
You've asked for my comment, I simply will render
My country 'tis of thy people you're dying*

*Now that the long houses breed superstition
You force us to send our toddlers away
To your schools where they're taught
To despise their traditions
You forbid them their languages, then further say
That American history really began
When Columbus set sail out of Europe
Then stress that the nation of leeches that conquered this land
Are the biggest and bravest and boldest and best
And yet where in your history books is the tale
Of the genocide basic to this country's birth
Of the preachers who lied, how the Bill of Rights failed
How a nation of patriots returned to their earth
And where will it tell of the Liberty Bell
As it rang with a thud o'er Kinzua mud
And of brave Uncle Sam in Alaska this year
My country 'tis of thy people you're dying*

Hear how the bargain was made for the West
With her shivering children in zero degrees
Blankets for your land, so the treaties attest
Oh well, blankets for land is a bargain indeed
And the blankets were those Uncle Sam had collected
From smallpox-diseased dying soldiers that day
And the tribes were wiped out and the history books censored
A hundred years of your statesmen have felt
It's better this way

*And yet a few of the conquered have somehow survived
Their blood runs the redder though genes have paled
From the Gran Canyon's caverns to craven sad hills
The wounded, the losers, the robbed sing their tale
From Los Angeles County to upstate New York
The white nation fattens while others grow lean
Oh the tricked and evicted they know what I mean
My country 'tis of thy people you're dying*

*The past it just crumbled, the future just threatens
Our life blood shut up in your chemical tanks
And now here you come, bill of sale in your hands
And surprise in your eyes that we're lacking in thanks
For the blessings of civilization you've brought us
The lessons you've taught us, the ruin you've wrought us
Oh see what our trust in America's brought us
My country 'tis of thy people you're dying*

52

*Now that the pride of the sires receives charity
Now that we're harmless and safe behind laws
Now that my life's to be known as your 'Heritage'
Now that even the graves have been robbed
Now that our own chosen way is a novelty
Hands on our hearts we salute you your victory
Choke on your blue white and scarlet hypocrisy
Pitying the blindness that you've never seen
That the eagles of war whose wings lent you glory
They were never no more than carrion crows
Pushed the wrens from their nest
Stole their eggs, changed their story
The mockingbird sings it, it's all that he knows
"Ah, what can I do?," say a powerless few
With a lump in your throat and a tear in your eye
Can't you see that their poverty's profiting you?
My country 'tis of thy people you're dying*

Singer/Songwriter: Buffy Sainte Marie - born 1941. Canadian-American Indian. One of the most powerful, emotive poems I've ever read. Ms Sainte Marie's live performance of this song should cause even the most callous individual to pause and reflect on man's inhumanity to man; more specifically, our country, the United States of America, inhumanity to the American Indian men, women, and children who were here first.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

*Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the
valley of Death*

Rode the six hundred.

*"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!"
he said.*

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

*"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldier knew
Someone had blundered.
Theirs not to
make reply,
Theirs not to
reason why,
Theirs but
to do and die.*

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

*Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell*

Rode the six hundred.

*Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered.*

*Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they
broke;*

Cossack and Russian

*Reeled from the sabre stroke
Shattered and sundered.*

Then, they rode back, but not

Not the six hundred.

*Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell.
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of
Death,*

*Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,*

Left of six hundred.

*When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge they made!
Honour the Light Brigade,*

Noble six hundred!

Alfred Tennyson: born 1809 in Eng-
land; died 1892.

Lovely Chance

O lovely **chance**, what can I do
To give my gratefulness to you?

You rise between myself and me
With a wise persistency;
I would have broken body and soul,
But by your grace, still I am whole.

Many a thing you did to save me,
Many a holy gift you gave me,
Music and friends and happy love
More than my dearest dreaming of;

And now in this wide twilight hour
With earth and heaven a dark, blue flower,
In a humble mood I bless
Your wisdom—and your waywardness.

You brought me here, where I
Live on a hill against the sky
And look on mountains and the sea
And a thin white moon in the pepper tree.

Trees

*I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.*

*A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;*

*A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;*

*A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;*

55

*Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.*

*Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.*

Alfred Joyce Kilmer - December 6, 1886 – July 30, 1918. Kilmer enlisted in the New York National Guard during World War I and was deployed to France with the 69th Infantry Regiment (the famous "Fighting 69th") in 1917. He was killed by a sniper's bullet at the Second Battle of the Marne in 1918 at the age of 31. He was married to Aline Murray, also an accomplished poet and author. They had five children.

*“Willie May’s glove
is where triples go to die.”*

56

my favorite observation from the hundreds of great ones from **Jim Murray**,
the incomparable Los Angeles Times Sportswriter: born 1919; died 1998.

1990 **Pulitzer Prize Award** Winner,

14 year **National Sports Writer of the Year Award** Winner (12 in succession),
the **Baseball Hall of Fame** awarded him the **J. G. Taylor Spink Award** in 1987.

*What he said
about “Eavesdrop: update”*

*“Eavesdrop: update’ hopes to be
an eyebrow raising,
curiosity igniting,
‘tsk tsk’ generating,
‘aburrido’ busting,
sometimes disappointing,
maybe informative
but, otherwise, a warm, endearing,
feel good experience.”*

*“‘Eavesdrop’ is
the place which holds my thoughts
as I move into the future.”*

*“Eavesdrop: update’ caused me
to pause and reflect on ‘time’,
a perishable gift not to be wasted
nor mis-allocated on regrettable pursuits.”*