

Poetry Series

**Glen Martin Fitch**  
**- poems -**

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# Glen Martin Fitch()

I'm a 16th Century poet lost in the 21st Century.

# 5000 Pieces

Not just a quest  
[a test of patience,  
skill,  
a chance for us  
to scratch our heads  
and rap our fingers)  
it was fun!  
Oh what a thrill,  
surprised and satisfied,  
to hear that snap.  
No competition here and  
nothing scored,  
I offered you an edge  
to fill a gap.  
I didn't want to think  
I'd been ignored.  
A few I tried to force in  
with a tap.  
The picture's incomplete.  
Did you get bored?  
Lose interest in the helpful clues  
I tossed?  
At first I didn't want to think  
you'd hoard the ones I sought.  
I know they're hidden, lost.  
Yup, you're not here for me  
and I concede I'll never have  
the pieces that you need.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Classic Homecoming

Well, look who's here!  
I remember you,  
Ya flea bitten piece of shit.  
Home at last!

Seen the world?  
You and your mangy pack  
traipsing gutter to gutter  
looking for a fight

or just wild with the itch,  
panting breath, raving mad,  
following your nose,  
chasing every bitch in heat?

Well, hail, hero! Guardian!  
Leaving us at home, alone.  
Hard time I've had of it,  
keeping everyone in line.

Been gone so long  
you won't eve know your pup  
and every mutt in town's  
sniffing at his mother's tail.

She knows I've done my best.  
It's sad. All her waiting,  
All her whining- for you!  
Poor Penelope.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Complaint To Rachael Ray Of Thirty-Minute Meals ™

It's not the food  
that makes me dread your show.  
It's "sammies, '  
"stoups" and "choups"  
"E.V.O.O."  
Just so I hate to hear,  
"It's time to PLATE UP."  
Someday 'eat' will be 'de-plate.'  
You grate my nerves like cheese.  
Why make each noun a verb?  
The urge to "fork" a pie crust  
I would curb.  
Things change,  
perhaps evolve,  
to meet new needs.  
New foods, new tools  
demand new words, new deeds.  
"Pop-OVERs" make me smile and  
"simmer DOWN."  
At "finish OFF" like  
"Where's it AT? "  
I frown.  
"To stir" makes sense.  
So why so much ado?  
You stir it "IN" or "UP" or  
"AROUND" or "THROUGH."  
I sit and eat and watch you  
just to scoff.  
Perhaps it's time  
to turn my T.V. OFF.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Confession

As if we had been plundered  
we went room to room.  
What's gone! '  
Must look at that'  
And there! '  
In time we all rebuilt.  
Yet we assume disaster  
will return,  
so we prepare  
with batteries and matches  
water, gas.  
We keep our family photos  
by the door or somewhere  
near the bins  
for paper, glass  
or lost amid  
the useless crap  
we store.  
God!  
avalanche my magazines;  
and rain away my relatives;  
old clothes flambé;  
tornado through commitments;  
hurricane me clean;  
tsunami all my shit away!  
Yet, even as I ponder all at stake,  
I sometimes really wish  
the earth would quake!

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Contemporary 'Get Well' Card

Ancient Egyptians, plagued by plague,  
Still scribbled figures on papyrus.  
(Illnesses wear us down and yet  
Communication's ever tireless)  
Conquering eastward, was it war  
Or just a cold that killed Great Cyrus?  
Likewise, perhaps infection kept  
Marconi steady at his wireless.  
Modern machines (internally  
with each new year appear more gyrous)  
Swiftly complex travail perform.  
If good health wishes yet inspire us  
Hopefully your computer will  
Soon overcome its latest virus.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Daddy's Lullaby

Your daddy can do many things for you,  
Yet there is one he can't, it seems.  
Alone, alone, you must alone  
Go find the land of dreams.

And I have taught you many things, but this  
May be the hardest of our games,  
For each of us must every night  
Go find the land of dreams.

But I'll be here to hold you till  
You're on your way.  
I'll tell you what to do, my child.  
Abide by what I say.

Pull your pillow to your cheek, child.  
Tuck the blanket in under your chin.  
Be still. Be calm. Close your eyes, child.  
Breathe deep, la, la, la, la. Good night.

And if you wake tonight, alone in darkness  
To shadows and moonbeams  
You'll know now, how, yes, all alone  
To find the land of dreams.

I need you now to sleep, not laugh, child.  
The night's no time for toys and schemes.  
Your daddy, soon, himself, alone  
Must seek the land of dreams.

But I'll be here to hold you  
Until you're on your way.  
I'll tell you what to do, child.  
Abide by what I say.

Pull your pillow to your cheek, child.  
Tuck the blanket in under your chin.

lie still. Be calm. Close your eyes, child.  
Breathe deep, la, la, la, la. Good night.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Dream

(Having fallen asleep on top of an electric blanket)

Well, no one really got the joke at first.

As fields burnt brown,

As birds fell from the sky,

As winds blew hotter,

Children cried of thirst.

We lied to them,

But they knew we would die.

Then trees went up like matches,

Rivers shrank,

The cities crumbled.

Shaking grew too much to stand.

The day was night.

The geysers stank.

By then the ground

Became too hot to touch.

'We're moving!'

Someone yelled.

Then each gut felt that tugging sense

As bumper cars collide.

Just so, the earth,

Undone at every welt,

Abandoned us

On molten seas to glide.

The joke?

Who first perceived

Amid our screams

The world had come apart,

Right at the seams?

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Dream Of A Poet

When in the Morphean realm oft' have I seen  
Sublime, fantastic visions of the night.  
Once as I slept within a forest green  
My eyes beheld a most adventurous sight.  
Pitch dark it was, but then flew flashing bright  
A fiery image of a wingèd steed  
Who proudly pranced, yet bounding could take flight  
A stallion from all earthly fetters freed.  
And yet as I approached he took no heed.  
Not even as I dared to touch his side.  
I thought, 'Now, fool, 'tis confidence you need.'  
And as I climbed, he stooped to let me ride.  
Then up we flew! I felt no trace of fear  
Not even as the distant moon grew near.

Each stroke of hoof, the rhythmic beat of wings  
Like chanting music without word or tune,  
Enthralled me so. Still in my ears it rings  
To start my pulse to race, my brain to swoon.  
I thought, 'No man could ever see at noon  
The starry visions forming 'fore my eyes.  
Dame Cynthia, the Goddess of the moon.  
Does She now steer this steed, these sights devise  
To lure me to Her side, in mortal 'guise  
With me to lie, breed dreams and never die? '  
But I awoke. Yet ere light filled the skies  
I dreamt I had, my soul to purify,  
Drunk deep the sacred pool of Hippocrene  
And spied the world, both troubled and serene.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Farewell

The ship boards creak. The rigging sings  
And down my cheeks stream mist and spray.  
My breath grows fast. My knees feel weak.  
As fate speeds me away.

Her eyes, her lips become her face.  
The white form I just held, a glow.  
The town recedes. The sky looms vast,  
As ranks of white-caps grow.

What once was green now fades to blue.  
Above the shifting rows of gray.  
My heels lift up. The hilltops sink.  
I'm bound away, away.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Hard Habit To Break

While walking down a street  
Behind some guy  
He flicked his cigarette butt  
In the air.  
It arced  
And almost landed in my hair.  
To say I wasn't mad  
Would be a lie.  
A harmful habit,  
Hurting others too,  
I couldn't just ignore.  
I stooped and picked it up.  
He sat down yards ahead.  
I licked my lips.  
I paused,  
Not certain what I'd do.  
As if  
Hey buddy, check your fly.'  
I said:  
I think you dropped this.'  
I left it.  
I walked away.  
I wasn't going to shame him.  
I can't say he'd stop it,  
But, now,  
I am in his head.  
For power isn't always force.  
I think he felt my kindness.  
Gentleness has strength. □

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Harvest Ode

Truly the blessed gods have  
proclaimed a most beautiful secret  
Death comes not as a curse  
but as a blessing to men'  
an Eleusinian epitaph

□

How long we waited watching every deed  
So fearful of the failure of the seed.  
We eyed our priest, 'Thrice-daring, the devout.'  
To him She taught a simple farmer's creed;  
The rite of burial for a puppet reed.  
Yet memory of Her wrath increased our doubt  
For once She brought us only cursed drought.  
Then nothing grew, no child, no sheaf, no weed.  
This gift She gave all bounty to exceed.  
At last we saw the long awaited sprout.

□

In sorrow we are born, that is our plight.  
Yet soon our hearts grow light in warmth and love.  
See with me now a bower domed above,  
Therein a gray-eyed woman dressed in white  
Receiving three red buds still folded tight.  
Is She, who seems so regal yet so meek,  
Not Demeter, the guardian of the Bride,  
Now crowned of corn, green tresses o're each cheek?  
The slender footed maiden at Her side?  
'Tis Kore, whose new name we must never speak!

□

'Twas Kore's return that finally brought the Spring  
For from their separate sorrow they unite.  
No thought of past or future do They bring  
Into the vale, where nymphs oft' hide at night  
To hear the echo of Their laughter ring.

They walk about all morning hand in hand  
And often do They o're a blossom stand  
To whisper hints to aid the helpful bees  
Or check the hue and scent of vines and trees,  
Collecting dew from flowers o'er the land.

❑

Here gathered at Eleusis once again  
Let us now sing a song of thankful praise.  
With life and growth She's blessed each citizen.  
Accept the Kykeon cup and cake we raise.  
These first fruits now we taste and are as one  
And yet decay can never be o'er crossed.  
The poison on our lips kills as the frost.  
We see the longer shadows of the sun  
And sadden, for the crane's flight has begun,  
Remembering it was here that Kore was lost.

❑

Here daughters of the tide and Kore were seen  
At twilight all about the crags at play.  
To harvest sweet Narcissus She did stray.  
The Dark Lord rose and saw His future Queen!  
'Twas then She felt a freezing grasp unseen.  
Down darkened ways He made His chariot fly.  
Kore cried, but soon fell in a deadly daze.  
In vain Her mother searched the sea and sky;  
Each bough She draped in sorrow's brilliant sprays  
'Till veiled in black She stripped them with a cry!

❑

When Demeter Her daughter's fate had learned  
So strong Her wrath She made Olympus quake.  
In Hades' heart both love and anger burned;  
The captive Kore lived for Her mother's sake;  
How bitter grew His love when none returned!  
He let Her free, but first His Queen to save  
As token of His love, a pit He gave.  
Her mother's joy was crushed when She was told

Of Hades' gift. She knew that Kore was sold  
Into a cycle, bound to be its slave.

❏

Our fate? Decreed to rot our tale must tell  
But maybe picked at prime. Yet think of She  
Who sits beneath the barren olive tree  
Where maidens come to linger o'er the well,  
In endless joy and sorrow She must dwell.  
And Kore, 'neath poplar white on bended knee  
Who weeps into the Pool of Memory  
While from a casement dark eyes sadly swell;  
Yes She, the seed, whose path must always be  
So like a mortal's but immortally.

□

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Healthy Serving

A sentence should be hard to the tooth,  
never brittle,  
never mushy,  
but soft to the tongue.

A sentence should be long enough  
to stay on the mind,  
but never so long  
it fights with you.

A sentence should hold a thought.  
Too many, too short  
fall off the tongs.  
What's the point?

A sentence should be sticky  
enough to hold the sauce.  
Use wisely oily adverbs,  
and spicy adjectives.

Pause your pace to savor each.  
Nutritious, filling.  
Easy to digest,  
A sentence should be enjoyed.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Lullaby In Time Of Plague

Crawl in my arms and rest your head.  
My love, I will not lie to you.  
We both know we might soon be dead.  
Beneath my chin, love, tuck your head.  
There's nothing we can do instead  
And every day bring sorrows new.  
Above my heart now rest your head.  
You know I cannot lie to you.

When you awake I won't be here.  
When I return you might not wake.  
But till you're fast asleep, my love,  
I'll hold you for love's sake.

My love, there's nothing we can do,  
So why not get a little sleep?  
My love, I cannot lie to you.  
There just is nothing we can do,  
But tears and hugs can help, it's true.  
So feel my arms, my love and weep.  
You know there's nothing we can do.  
Let's try to get a little sleep.

When you awake I won't be here.  
When I return you might not wake.  
But till you're fast asleep, my love,  
I'll hold you for love's sake.

You're frightened, weary from the pain.  
If you feel pain you're still alive.  
Let's hope when dead it won't remain.  
I know you're desperate from the pain  
And wine tonight would numb the brain,  
But numb our love as well. So strive  
To feel my love, and feel the pain,  
So we will know we're still alive.

When you awake I won't be here.  
When I return you might not wake.

But till you're fast asleep, my love,  
I hold you for love's sake.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Mother's Song

The sea is deep.  
The sea is vast.  
The winds, they die.  
The winds they blast.

Does he think of the sheets on the clothes-lines  
As he darts mid the rigging and sails?  
Does his ship rock him calm like the cradle?  
Is his soup on his chin in a gale?  
There'll be no sleep, tonight.  
Oh, where sleeps my Laddie tonight?

In the tub he was always in soap swells.  
In my womb he would bound all night long.  
Does he kick when he's dreaming of Neptune  
Or does Neptune now join him in song?

The sea is deep.  
The sea is vast.  
The winds, they die.  
The winds, they blast.

Can Sirens sing 'Lullaby Laddie? '  
Do the Mermaids kiss foreheads 'Sweet dreams'?  
On the mast in the squall will he hear me  
When in tears to the waves my heart screams:  
Oh, where sleeps my boy, tonight?  
Oh, where lies my Laddie, tonight? '

Glen Martin Fitch

# A New Years Day Poem

To day's the day  
I back up all my files  
and sort my folders,  
empty out my trash,  
set preferences  
for colors, fonts and styles,  
sort out accounts,  
all cookies, and my cache.  
Old applications  
I can now let go.  
Annoying pop up programs  
I will halt.  
But why stop now?  
Adjust my settings so  
my daily exercise  
is now default.  
Unplug all fools  
who sap my energy.  
Bad memories and porn  
I now delete.  
Fresh pass words  
to protect my privacy.  
And now, reboot.  
Ta-da!  
It's all complete.  
I look ahead with hope  
and feel sincere.  
I'm quite prepared.  
Now bring on this new year.

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Personal Habit

That brilliant paradox  
On Keats' Urn would seem  
The pinnacle of art.  
But truth is rarely beautiful  
I've learned  
and beauty's seldom truthful,  
Ask my heart.  
In some way  
Every simile is true,  
yet faced with truth  
We mostly ask for lies.  
While often pretty things  
Please me and you,  
an ugly image  
Can be fresh and wise:  
□  
I get a metaphor.  
I pick at it for days.  
Perhaps it rose up  
from within—  
A mental boil,  
Or maybe something bit me  
In my sleep,  
Or scarred my soul's thin skin.  
And when I pull it free,  
Oh, such delight,  
Relief as well,  
'That's one less poem to write.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# A Thanksgiving Psalm Of Graces

□

The table is set.  
I'll have all the food I need,  
All the time I need.

□

The sacrifice begins.  
Like a priest I wash my hands.  
My meal awaits me.

□

Sitting in my chair  
I regard my naked plate,  
My empty stomach.

□

My feet touching the floor,  
My mind free of distractions,  
I view my choices.

□

I grasp my napkin.  
In thought, in spirit, body,  
I'm truly present.

□

My eyes are open.  
My heart beats with excitement.  
I feel overwhelmed.

□

With platter in hand

I pick what will sustain me,  
And keep me healthy.

vii

Gifts from rain, dung, sweat.  
Bless the hands who brought these here.  
Gifts of sky, earth, sea.

ix

From spade, hook, hearth, knife,  
Live worthy to receive each  
Root, fin, crust and wing.

x

We ask forgiveness  
Of all taken in its prime,  
Giving life for life.

xi

I pause. I focus on  
Favorite dreams, memories  
To aid digestion.

xii

Even when alone,  
For bites to chew and swallow  
I take small portions.

xiii

I slowly raise my fork.  
Each time I know I must do  
Justice to each bite

xiv

My teeth gnaw and tear.  
I taste, smell, feel and savor  
To appreciate.

xv

Scents assault my nose.  
Embracing life with intent  
I stop again to breathe.

xvi

Though others hunger  
I choose to leave these morsel  
I am satisfied.

xvii

Here and now I sip.  
Mind and body dwell as one.  
I made wise choices.

xviii

Full of gratitude,  
Our hands to wash, teeth to brush.  
This meal is over.

□

Glen Martin Fitch

# About That Bliss

I had a constant daydream.  
I could see a task  
I knew would call  
upon my skill.  
With guidance and support  
I had the will  
to change the world,  
to fill my destiny.  
And for awhile,  
but after many tries,  
I reached a place  
where everything seemed right  
and I made good mistakes  
and I grew wise.

Just who the hell were you  
to tell me 'No!  
That can't be done! '  
Prepared to fly or fail,  
I wondered,  
Did you fear  
I might prevail?  
Or was it change, itself,  
that's your own foe? "  
Without review  
my vision you dismissed.  
Deliberately  
on my sweet bliss  
you pissed.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Advice To A Young Poet (When I Find One)

"But Poetry's dead, "  
They say  
"And Song and Drama, Painting too!  
No Muse. No Bard.  
To write in verse and meter's  
Simply wrong and rhyme  
Is only for a greeting card.  
There's nothing more to say.  
It's all been said."

"Not so!  
If you, like me,  
Must answer to the call,  
we have to reach  
Beyond the blasè bred conventions  
Of the unconventional."  
Say I,  
Keep writing.  
Read.  
Don't borrow, take.  
Revise.  
Scan jargon, slang,  
But keep it true.  
Record your dreams.  
Re-heed mistakes you make.  
Clichès are lazy.  
Tweak the old anew.  
Just overhear  
A girl with doll declare her sorrows.  
Hark when drunken sailors swear."

Glen Martin Fitch

## After Words

Well, there they are.  
Observe the best I've done.  
What's coin?  
What's slug?  
What's new?  
What's out of style?  
Some lines just came,  
while others were a trial.  
Some ditties were a pain,  
laments were fun.  
A few dear friends and mentors  
gave support.  
When logic left,  
I put my trust in sound  
and chance and form.  
I doubt I'll be around  
to hear my verdict read  
in fashion's court.  
Which lines delight,  
instruct  
or bore,  
offend?  
Now all are poets.  
No one pays for verse.  
Who hasn't found  
their passion is a curse?  
Each reader writes a poem  
from what I've penned.  
I hope there's something here  
that you can use.  
If you're not pleased, my friend,  
please blame my muse.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Age Inappropriate

I wish I had  
more heinous sins to hide  
for all the grief I suffer  
and for what?  
Reflecting back  
past follies pierce my pride.  
A flame in shame,  
my heart hides in my gut.  
Who in their twenties  
isn't foolish, lewd,  
at thirty striving,  
forty-five irate,  
by fifty overwhelmed,  
at sixty rude,  
by decade seven bitter,  
stared by eight?  
We act polite, mature,  
refined and fair,  
but under pressure  
we go just so far  
until we snap,  
each soul stripped bare.  
At every moment  
we are who we are.  
We're liable forever,  
but to live  
we have to stop,  
reflect,  
ourselves forgive.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Allergies

It doesn't have to be  
a germ at wait.  
Just anything  
my body thinks is strange,  
some substance  
inhaled or touched or ate  
and instantly  
my body starts to change.  
My skin grows hot or cold.  
I sweat or shake.  
My head  
becomes too heavy for my spine.  
I gag.  
I gasp.  
My muscles cramp and ache.  
All this  
for what may really be benign.  
I marvel at  
each ready white blood cell.  
I'd give them  
shiny metals to parade.  
They're on patrol  
for agents to dispel,  
defend me well  
and seek to be of aid.  
We must maintain the best defense  
and yet our fear  
might be more harmful  
than the threat.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Amazing Dream

Late afternoon  
I'm homeward at a crawl.  
I'm musing  
What if I? ' or  
What to do? '  
TURN LEFT.  
How come?  
I thought I'd go right through.  
And on each side  
the endless urban wall.  
I watch the tail lights flash.  
I hear car horns sound.  
The traffic inches on.  
We all stop dead.  
Well, if not this, then that'  
Eyes straight ahead.  
Another LEFT?  
This isn't good.  
I can't turn round.  
I clutch the wheel.  
I slump against the door.  
What? LEFT again?  
That means I'm heading back.  
Life has to change.'  
I'm stuck here in the pack.  
TURN LEFT.  
I've seen that sign an hour before.  
Once more to start again.  
Though in a daze  
I know I trapped.  
Obsessives in a maze.

Glen Martin Fitch

# An 'Elegy' For Irony

Sharp trickster,  
How we loved to watch you tie  
our muddled minds  
into a knotted maze.  
Your jests and jokes  
did twist each question,  
Why? '  
fill heart and head  
were drugged in deadly daze.  
Wise cynic,  
never have you had such praise  
for tense distortion,  
farce and helplessness.  
With hope abandoned,  
darkest night betrays  
dead' land,  
dead' minds  
and only Death to bless.  
And yet in spite of Lethe,  
I must confess my heart still beats  
and wiser have I grown,  
for,  
while I have no spirit left to guess,  
I know the constants  
even you have known.  
And so if queer queens love  
and scapegoats die  
won't spring reveal the truth  
of every "lie"?

Glen Martin Fitch

# An Epistolary Romance

Papyrus, parchment, paper,  
Email, tweet.  
Forbidden or betrothed,  
all lovers quest to find  
the means to see their love  
expressed, accepted, cherished  
through their pledges sweet.  
Once passion filled  
a perfumed billet-doux.  
Now teens  
who once searched racks of  
Hallmark hearts  
will tempt another  
texting private parts.  
So what's an old romantic  
left to do?  
We've flirted,  
yet we haven't even met.  
We chat,  
although I've never heard your voice.  
Will Skype reveal  
your smile, your wink?  
Please let us meet.  
At our first kiss  
I will rejoice to feel your touch.  
I am,  
do not forget,  
the Valentine  
you haven't opened yet.

Glen Martin Fitch

# And My God Said (Part 1)

"I am.  
And I am love.  
And I am near.  
You have a mission to fulfill,  
Or fight.  
The 'What?' or 'When?' or 'Why?'  
You needn't hear.  
When stymied, stop, and pray.  
You'll know what's right.  
I also promise you:  
You will not face more grief  
than you can stand.  
Yes, pain's your lot.  
Mistakes are how you learn  
You can embrace your tasks  
You are that strong,  
though fear you're not.  
You doubt me  
Every hurt seems my betrayal.  
You think me angry.  
Dread I wish you ill.  
Before you were,  
I loved you,  
And I will forgive you, too,  
before you fail.  
As I forgive,  
forgive- yourself.  
Be true to Love  
and love yourself,  
as I love you."

Glen Martin Fitch

## And My God Said (Part 2)

"You fail a test  
and then ask me to cheat.  
If only WHAT?  
You pray for sun or rain.  
Most times you think  
you call on me in vain.  
I know your strife.  
No, Death's not my deceit.  
I'm here for you.  
I know what life demands.  
But comets, quakes and floods  
are not my flaws,  
Cause gravity and time  
have their own laws.  
So at the curb look twice  
and wash your hands.  
Your spouse,  
your job  
are always on your mind.  
I'll hear to your woes  
but try this:  
stop some time and listen.  
Love and courage  
you will find.  
Life isn't fair  
but life can be sublime.  
So don't blame me for war  
or dirty tricks.  
Shut up.  
The mess you make  
is yours to fix."

Glen Martin Fitch

# Antidotal

By sip or sniff or puff  
the poison wound its way  
into our hearts and  
made us ill,  
but wanting more,  
a want beyond our will.  
We tried.  
No simple cure  
has yet been found.  
On body,  
mind it  
slowly takes its toll.  
The frame grows weak,  
the crazy thoughts increase.  
All try.  
Most fail.  
It's not enough to cease,  
you have to work on you,  
rebuild your soul.  
If you can stand up  
you can hold a door.  
The humbler the task,  
the more you gain.  
Be here and now  
not lost inside your brain.  
Help make change happen and  
help some more.  
It's not about  
what you think you deserve.  
Give up.  
Let go.  
Now find a way to serve.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Apocrypha

¶unc praecurrit comis...'

Years ago, St. Jerome-  
(Don't give me that look!  
I'm NOT off the subject  
and this is NOT a shaggy dog story,  
though there IS a dog in it)

(I'm trying to tell you  
You want the truth  
and you want it 'Gospel'  
but you take me 'Apocryphal'  
before I even start) -

lied, but he didn't really.  
(and neither did I.  
It's just some times  
the truth needs a little help)

Hey, hear me out!  
You see, long ago  
(Whether it happened or not  
is NOT the issue,  
though right now that IS the issue)

this guy, Tobias\*, went on an errand  
and he brought along his dog  
(No he was NOT shaggy)  
and he met an angel  
(well, this MIGHT be true)

Wait! here's the important part.  
You see, years later  
poor St. Jerome is translating  
this story into the vulgar tongue  
and he can't find out  
what happened to the dog.

So honest Saint Jerry  
(falling into the translators temptation)  
CORRECTED the Holy Bible  
and said the dog came back too.

Now that wasn't in the Greek  
and so that wasn't the Truth.  
but it wasn't a lie either, get it!  
It just HAD to be true.

I mean, what happened to the DOG?  
See, these things just happen.  
Even the word of God  
might need editing,  
sometimes.

Glen Martin Fitch

# As Of Today

I left my parents  
Chanting few complaints.  
Too hard I stomped my footprints  
amid the crowd.  
I did a lot  
in spite of most constraints  
to help by lending hand,  
of which I'm proud.  
Though many sought  
to bury me with shame,  
I owned my own.  
I fought for what was right.  
Though some may roll their eyes,  
few curse my name.  
In peace I dream my dreams  
and sleep the night.  
Though time erode  
my epitaph of facts,  
chiseled deep.  
I hope my words will hold.  
And though I second guess  
a thousand acts  
the love I lived was staunch  
and kind and bold.  
No 'If I hadn't...  
had.'  
No 'If I could.'  
If I should die before I wake  
I'm good.

Glen Martin Fitch

# At Home, In Bed, Awake, On My Side, Alone

Beside him, silent, stately,  
On his right,  
the old magician's  
fair assistant stands alert,  
yet selfless,  
keeping out of sight  
the trove of secret props  
held in her hands.  
Just so I'd like to think  
you're guarding me.  
I know you're watching,  
fear you're judging too.  
You are the first and last thing  
that I see.  
In darkness full of fear  
I reach for you.  
Just once I found unlocked  
my father's drawer and spied  
his potions, entertainments, aids  
and shut it,  
reassured, embarrassed, sore.  
Those linger  
even as his figure fades.  
"Protect and comfort me.  
I'll kill the light.  
Good night, my night-stand,  
standing guard.  
Good night."

Glen Martin Fitch

# At The Pool

'You're wasting your time.'  
He leers the jock.  
And I glare back.  
'My time is mine to waste.'  
There's what and when and how,  
and where's the clock,  
and I don't want  
my towel and keys misplaced.  
'Go on and play'  
the anxious parents plead.  
They fear the hesitation  
of their child is fear.  
Kids know instinctively  
they need to watch and test  
while data is compiled.  
'Get down from there! '  
Surprised a parent screams.  
Look who did what  
while waiting out of sight!  
Most kids will dare  
a studied task,  
it seems,  
when confident  
that now the time is right.  
Today's not 'bout  
how fast or hard or more.  
My hardest exercise  
is my front door.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Ballad Of The Fall Of Troy

I earned this ballad in my youth.  
Perhaps the tale will bring you joy.  
Our elders tell our people of  
The Fall of Troy.

Great Hector was a Trojan prince.  
Twixt Greece and Troy there grew great strife  
When Paris charmed a Grecian King  
And stole his wife.

Then Menelaus summoned Greece.  
He planned and boasted o'er his wine.  
I vow I will reclaim my wife.  
Fair Helen's mine! '

Achilles came to conquer Troy.  
So great his fame all Trojans fled.  
But Hector fought until he thought  
Achilles dead.

Alas, when Hector stripped his arms  
Achilles' friend instead he spied.  
What trick of god or man is this? '  
Sad Hector cried.

Achilles slept within his tent.  
When he awoke his wrath grew sore!  
Patroclus dead! His armor now  
Ere Hector wore!

Though Hector kept the Greeks at bay  
He went back into Troy and bade  
His mother, 'Hurry, ask the gods  
To send us aid! '

Andromeda, his wife, grew faint  
And Hector laughed at her alarm.  
She didn't recognize him in  
Achilles' arms!

Your father and your son will die  
If you die, Hector. Who will save  
Your mother and your wife when we  
Are sold as slaves? '

Said Hector, 'No! I can't remain.  
We live and die within fate's plan.  
Pray may you never have to love  
Another man.'

As Hector kissed his wife and babe  
The Trojans fled inside Troy's gate.  
But he went out on to the plain  
To meet his fate.

Andromeda sat at her loom.  
But how she shivered when she spied  
Bold Paris holding Helen close,  
The fickle bride.

Before Athena's sacrifice  
Dame Hecuba fell on her knees.  
Oh Goddess, pity Illiam!  
Have mercy, please! '

And Priam cried, 'My son, my son!  
Your strength and deeds have won you fame.  
If you withdraw behind the gate  
You'll know no blame.'

Upon her loom Andromeda  
Worked woof and warp to bright array.  
He must be past the gates, ' she thought.  
Well on his way.'

Achilles newly clad ran swift.  
So brightly flashed the shield he bore.  
He spied his former helm and arms  
Which Hector wore.

Andromeda called for his robes.  
For Hector's bath a fire burned.  
The loot, ' she said. 'They'll soon divide  
Then he'll return.'

Great Hector stood before Troy's walls.  
Though brave his heart became forlorn.  
Once more he had to fight the man  
Of goddess born.

Within her grasp the shuttle paused.  
By now he must be turning round.'  
Her 'little Hector' by her slept  
Without a sound.

Achilles lifted up his helm.  
When Hector saw his wrathful eyes  
He knew the luck of Troy had passed  
And he would die.

Achilles' spear pierced Hector's throat.  
Each Trojan heart felt sadness swell.  
Andromeda her baby seized.  
The shuttle fell.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Be Mine

Dear Valentine,  
List on the space below  
the three things you won't eat,  
won't do in bed,  
the joke,  
two dreams.  
Describe when 'No' means 'NO! '  
Five quirks  
(and what you ought  
to do instead.)  
Why YOU love me.  
Define your need for space  
not just alone,  
including closet, shelf,  
the proper length of time  
for an embrace,  
to punish,  
sleep, and  
to forgive  
yourself.  
Note with your binding signature  
you vow to be on my side,  
demonstrate you care  
to look at me and listen,  
starting now,  
talk openly and  
promise to be fair.  
So 'Are you true or false? '  
To end this quiz check:  
yes\_ or no \_  
I will take you  
as 'as is'.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Bedding

If I could be your blanket  
I'd hug you through the night  
To keep you safe and warm.  
Say, would it be alright?

Please let me be the pillow  
Where you rest your drowsy head.  
I'll kiss behind your ears.  
I'll catch the tears you shed.

I want to breathe as you breathe  
I want to turn as your turn  
Let me linger close beside you  
For your touch I yearn.

And let me be the sheets  
Around you all night long.  
Rub your thighs against me.  
Oh, how could that be wrong?

But I'll be cold and rough,  
If you let another in your bed.  
That you might love another  
Is the only thing I dread.

I want to breathe as you breathe  
I want to turn as your turn.  
Let me linger close beside you.  
For your touch I yearn.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Beer

Drinking's what it's all about.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Wash down beef and sauerkraut  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

We sip graceful. We're no rout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Sipping ale will cure your gout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Louder, friends, you'll have to shout  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Cursed be he who goes without  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Pity them that's so devout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

He's not drinking. Kick him out!  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Flask is dry? don't sit and pout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Touch my cup, you'll get a clout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Ready for a chugging bout?  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Suck it out right from the spout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

What's that foaming on your snout?  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Don't get sick, you stupid lout!  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Guzzle, gulp till you blackout.  
Lager, pilsner, porter, stout!

Again!

Glen Martin Fitch

# Before I Delete You (If You Haven'T Deleted Me Already)

'... As she saw nothing but young men all day long...this sight of her fellow-traveler was completely lost in her mind, as the crooked pin dropped by a child into the wishing-well twirls in the water and disappears forever.'

Virginia Woolf Jacob's Room

I bet you don't remember me.  
Dismiss this if you don't.  
The gravity of time  
Sucks all we know  
Down deep into a dark abyss.  
The wonder is  
How much we can recall.  
A straight pin  
Would have fallen down  
Without resistance,  
Swiftly in the dark.  
That crooked pin descending  
Circled round a little slower  
In its spinning arc.  
I want to say,  
However brief our bond together was,  
Just know,  
Before you drop away,  
Some human bent in you  
Made me respond.  
I wanted here  
To honor that today.  
My wish for you,  
'Good luck.'  
Just thought I'd tell you,  
While you're sinking,  
Whirling down my well.□

Glen Martin Fitch

# Break Time

Consumed with anger  
and self-pity too  
I heard  
my wounded inner-toddler whine.  
Before the vending crud machine  
I knew to poise above the C,  
to thumb the 9.  
As good as chewed and flushed!  
Oh God, I hate myself! '  
I fed the bill.  
Without a doubt it sucked it up.  
I said, 'Now it's too late.'  
My chin dropped  
as it spit the dollar out.  
The jones-ing was still running  
in my skull.  
I pray to God to show his love  
and then...  
My second thought  
was 'It's a miracle'  
My first was  
I can't put it in again.'  
I bought a Diet Coke®.  
Then pinched my jaw.  
Left feeling weird,  
yet with a kind of awe.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Breaking My Fast

I take a dozen eggs  
Out of the fridge.  
My thumb nail tests  
The firmness of a shell.  
A world's contained  
Within each fragile cell.  
Is living  
Not a wondrous privilege?  
Yet everything I eat  
Makes me feel fat.  
It seems I've lost  
Before the day's begun.  
The carton cradles each  
And I pick one,  
Which falls out of my fingers  
With a splat.  
Do I do this to me  
or is it fate?  
No me be true! '  
Each day new schemes  
Try to finally take control,  
yet cheat and lie.  
I know the soul  
I'm working to create.  
I ought to stoop  
and wipe it off the floor.  
Instead I turn  
and drop eleven more.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Buffing My Soul

Okay! I feel the pain.  
Sb where's the gain?  
We limp through life.  
Sbme keep the march.  
Sbme crawl.  
Aavoiding hazards,  
Llonging to complain,  
We scan our scars,  
While hoping death to stall.  
We all want bliss.  
Aroused, entranced we think  
fthe gross, the grand and  
everything between  
will fill the void.  
And so we eat.  
We drink.  
We screw and shop  
to try to feel serene.  
Of course,  
there never really is enough.  
Too soon  
the over-loaded senses fade  
and faced with anxious fear  
we bluff, evade, and  
leave our hidden needs betrayed.  
Often think  
I'd rather die than feel.  
At least with every wince  
I know what's real.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Calling In Well

□punch in.  
□shall I play the pawn or jerk?  
□at home at night  
□m just too tired to eat.  
□feel defeated,  
□trapped,  
□complete.  
□some weekends though  
□d rather stay at work.  
□he law requires  
□we take our days of rest,  
□for hobbies,  
□preparations,  
□games, salons,  
□for shopping, clean-up,  
□travel marathons,  
□til having fun  
□ields more ways to feel stressed.  
□o day  
□m going to hide,  
□urn off my phone,  
□lock guilt, nix shame,  
□and banish all regret,  
□eat what I want,  
□enjoy it and not fret,  
□emain unwashed,  
□unbrushed,  
□at peace, alone.  
□ntil next dawn  
□m having my own way.  
□I stay in bed.  
□claim my 'Pajama Day.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Canoe

'We won't get lost.'

He says and I,

'Or sink? Or drown? '

Trust him.

'Hey, we'll have some fun.'

(So how did I get into this? ' I think.)

Our journey down the river has begun.

(What will I do to be with him? '

scoff)

'You hold the side for me

and I'll for you.'

We're in!

'Sit still! '

and with a thrust we're off.

The gliding calms

the trembling canoe.

'You paddle on the left.

It's not an oar.

And not too deep

and not too fast.'

(I guess, 'You're thinking

what I'm thinking...')

suppress a groan.

He jokes:

'Tomorrow we'll be sore.'

(God, what if he loves me

a little more than I love him

or worse, a little less? ') □

Glen Martin Fitch

## Castles On The Shore

Yes, many castles I have built of sand  
With shells and wood, the gifts the waves have thrown,  
Each strong and fast against the sea at hand  
But in the night the sea reclaims its own.  
And many castles have been built of stone  
With mighty walls, by knowledge wrought to stand,  
Where torches guard against the night unknown,  
As tides of troubled darkness flood the land.  
From sand to stone what progress has been gained  
Against the ebb and flow, the rise and fall?  
And in their ruin what trace has remained  
Of futile efforts from the dark to flee?  
And does it matter when the tide takes all?  
What matters is that we still fight the sea.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Cavafy In Carmel

Is there anything more embarrassing  
Than the tell-tale wreckage of love  
The morning after?

My accomplice and I might smile,  
But an intruder's smirk  
Would make me blush.

He struck me at first sight- classic form,  
Eternal youth, such thoughtless beauty,  
A careless gesture.

At once I felt the urge to grab, to hide,  
To weep, to pee, to die, to bite,  
To shout for joy!

As Alexander I'd have bribed him,  
Made metal, marble sing this warrior's praise  
And be his slave.

Mid-glance his eyes pierced mine.  
I felt redeemed. He saw right through me  
And turned away.

His face was on my pillow last night.  
(His downy cheek against my scratchy chin.  
Encircled in my arms,

In that other world we seek to conquer,  
All night my love was mine.)  
How the feathers flew!

Glen Martin Fitch

# Champion

I think you're always  
Looking for a fight.  
You spring dive into isolation.  
While we dodge your dribbled venom,  
You pitch bile,  
Kick kindness,  
Bench press hate,  
Ob gall, punt spite.  
Your figure eights of slander  
Are a crime.  
Your marathons of grudges  
All seem crude.  
You sweat contempt.  
You practice being rude.  
And doesn't it take energy,  
Waste time?  
Suppose you just relax.  
Let people be.  
No points. No score.  
Forget resentments past.  
If you want friends,  
Play fair,  
Your goals recast,  
And be a sport.  
Defenseless you'll feel free.  
Hear this:  
Not for us,  
For your own sake,  
Go hit the showers.  
Give us all a break.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Change Of Plans

I had it figured out.  
It just made sense.  
I thought  
to ease the pain  
and deaden fear,  
I'd simply to slink away  
and disappear.  
This helped a bit  
whenever I felt tense.  
Till you came,  
each dawn I could not think why  
I had to rise.  
It tore up my insides.  
So I took risks.  
I tried subtle suicides.  
If nothing happened soon,  
I prayed to die.  
I'd faced my failure.  
Yet I couldn't cope  
with my desire.  
I left my dreams to laps.  
Lost Faith.  
Grew cold inside.  
And yet, perhaps,  
It only happens  
when you give up hope.  
New confidence, relief  
and new demands.  
I'm so damn glad  
you messed up all my plans.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Charlie Horse

We drove to see a play  
I'd only read.  
I'm really glad  
My seat was on the aisle.  
Act V, scene iii  
All eyes were watching,  
While old Lear holds in his arms  
Cordelia, dead.  
The only dry eyes in the house  
Were mine.  
(All tears  
Were beaten out of me  
When young)  
Instead, a ham string knots.  
I jump.  
I'm strung out on the carpet,  
Dent,  
With bouncing spine.  
It's years since you have gone,  
Not months or days.  
Not every thought's  
Disheartening to me.  
Not every ache  
Springs from a memory.  
I feel your loss  
In many different ways.  
Yet there are times  
I find the slightest strain  
Can zap and twist my soul  
In wrenching pain.

Glen Martin Fitch

## Coming "home"

I often hate myself,  
despise my life.  
I steep in shame.  
I won't pick up the phone.  
I poke each vice,  
like jesting with a knife.  
I hide my wounds and  
keep myself alone.  
I see the lucky ones,  
spot those that cheat,  
but I've learned things  
I'm sure they'll never know.  
I forge my soul.  
Though strife transcend deceit.  
You've greeted me  
each time I dared to show.  
I'm grateful for  
your hands that reached  
again and yet again,  
though I had slapped them back.  
I'm grateful for  
your honest sharing,  
when I felt unworthy.  
Courage I still lack.  
I'm grateful for  
the failings you reveal,  
the peace, the strength,  
acceptance,  
love  
I feel.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Confessions Of A Five Year Old

Upon the cellar door  
I wrote my name in chalk.  
I scrawled it backwards  
to avoid detection.  
I bred,  
I did it as a game.  
My parents guessed.  
Once more they were annoyed.  
How tempting was  
the dust upon your shelf.  
I wrote my name  
without a second thought.  
I'm sorry.  
I was only thinking of myself.  
I meant no harm  
nor thought that I'd get 'caught.'  
You guessed that was my nasty way  
to say that you're a slob.  
If you did that to me  
that's what you'd mean,  
I fear.  
But can't you see  
Perhaps my only motive  
was to play?  
No, I'm not minimizing what I did.  
It wasn't me!  
That was my inner kid.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Consider The Possibility

Look, no one's watching.  
Even if they stare at you,  
they're thinking about debts,  
of pain, or moments lost,  
they never will regain.  
You're no one special.  
They don't really care.  
And if they dare,  
you meet each stupid leer,  
you show them  
you have courage,  
strength and will.  
And if you fail.  
Your laugh will make them ill.  
So screw 'em  
if they're paralyzed by fear.  
Now, take the risk  
to earn a memory,  
to spin past gravity,  
transcend the grave.  
Light-headed, weightless, giddy,  
bold and brave  
through movement, music, magic  
you'll feel free.  
If life is dying,  
why not take this chance?  
Get off your ass, you fool.  
Get up and dance.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Contrary Realities

In dreams  
I often go back  
where I've been  
to visit buildings  
long since left behind.  
There,  
well beyond thought,  
I again begin to re-enact  
the Zodiac of my mind.  
But why,  
I wonder,  
do I often find that  
through some strange new door  
I've gone astray?  
Or to this passage  
where my eyes made blind  
when last I saw this wall  
by light of day?  
By night  
this altered vision  
has its way of shining  
just as true as any star  
and yet by dawn  
this door cannot delay to fade  
into the wall without a scar.  
But rival 'scapes  
I only see at night,  
as stars at noon  
are absent to our sight.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Crayon Tin

I miss their greasy feel,  
their subtle scent.  
In my hot fists,  
they jostled,  
trading specks.  
I prized the ones  
with gold or silver flecks.  
Some wear my spit.  
I made that milk tooth dent.  
There's almond,  
chestnut, eggplant,  
copper, or canary,  
coral, ruby, sapphire, jade  
or olive, orange, lime  
or onyx shade  
or orchid, rose.  
Each hue's a metaphor!  
I learned which ones to use  
on pad or page  
for waxy waves  
or soapy skies,  
chalk rocks.  
Some broken in their sleeves,  
by use they age..  
For years most stood attention  
in their box,  
a rainbow of potential  
all infused.  
Like me  
they wait unrealized,  
unused.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Cupiditas And Caritas

At dusk  
the city's restless crowd  
begins to thin  
into a park, or  
cemetery,  
beach or  
alley way.  
Each contemplating sins,  
their need for love, and  
hopes beyond their reach.  
It's dangerous and yet  
the drive is strong.  
The risk of punishment,  
attack or  
shame  
cannot detour  
the longing to belong  
the rapture  
each one's seeking to proclaim.  
This urge  
will not be satisfied alone.  
It seeks  
another's touch,  
the other soul,  
a fellowship of wounded  
seeking to atone  
a hopeless life  
with needs beyond control.  
A shifting shadow lingers  
with the wish another's foot  
will dare complete a wish.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Dawn Song

Oh, don't get up, my love. Come back to bed.  
It's cold out side. I'll warm you if you stay.  
Come crawl into my arms, again, instead.

Get back in here, dear. You heard what I said.  
Your lover's every wish you should obey.  
Oh, don't get up, my love. Come back to bed.

Beneath my chin, love, tuck your sleepy head.  
Whatever tasks await, you can delay.  
Come crawl into my arms, again, instead.

The clock is wrong. The moon's still overhead.  
It's still tonight. It's dark, It's not the day.  
Oh, don't get up, my love. Come back to bed.

To lie awake alone fills one with dread.  
My heart grows cold. Could you my love betray?  
Come crawl into my arms, again, instead.

A kiss and I can face the day ahead.  
But later, dear. Right now don't go away.  
Oh, don't get up, my love. Come back to bed.  
Come crawl into my arms, again, instead.

Glen Martin Fitch

# De Gustibus Non Disputandum Est

I'm writing  
With carnations at my side.  
On one pinked, ruby rim  
Press my lips.  
Its musky scent  
Suck in gentle sips.  
Have I some rule  
Of tact or taste defied?  
The intimate  
Earned through modesty.  
Who breaks  
A strict taboo or sacred rite?  
One person's dread's  
Another one's delight.  
Will you explore  
Forbidden realms with me  
With blushing cheeks  
On tablecloth or sheet?  
I seek to taste and feed  
Illicit bliss.  
Forgive me  
If I'm forward, indiscreet.  
Please don't deny me.  
You will be remiss to bar me  
From the privilege  
Just to kiss the puckered bud  
You're pressing to your seat.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Dealership

Top salesman here.  
I make them  
Sign away their sad,  
Installment souls.  
They kick the tires.  
They haggle prices.  
I sense their desires and problems.  
Each one I will solve today.  
I don't sell vehicles, friend,  
I sell dreams,  
Prestige and comfort  
for that well paved  
course to Hell.  
They'll cruise awhile  
before remorse sinks in.  
I'll hear their echoed  
road side screams.  
That guy wants speed.  
That girl craves ecstasy.  
That mellow dude,  
A late night drive-through run.  
That cherried pill  
will get the project done.  
That loser seeks the means  
to score and flee.  
I'm cunning, baffling,  
powerful and mean.  
There hasn't been a fool  
I haven't seen.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Dear Sir Or Madam

Here's my complaint and  
I want your reply  
A.S.A.P.  
I got this as a gift.  
I never asked for it.  
I know that I have used up  
more than half,  
which has me miffed.  
I'm hooked on it,  
but it's not all that good.  
It doesn't keep.  
It's cheap and yet so dear.  
I'm not excited by it,  
but I would not want  
to give or lose it.  
When I hear instructions multiply,  
they contradict.  
I wouldn't mind a thrill or  
glimpse of bliss.  
It seems so over-rated  
I feel tricked.  
But mostly I feel bored.  
So tell me this:  
Can you replace  
the years I've wasted or  
inform me  
what this product,  
"LIFE",  
is for?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Directions For Using The Enclosed

The best ingredients,  
Some fresh, some aged,  
In new, exciting ways  
Have been combined.  
For your delight and health  
They have been gauged  
To please you senses,  
And both heart and mind.  
The contents packaged here  
Have been condensed.  
When prepped and ready  
Add discernment, warmed.  
A small amount  
Need only be dispensed.  
With gentle kneading  
You will feel transformed.  
Apply,  
Let set,  
Rinse well,  
And then repeat.  
Discretion:  
Recommended for adults.  
Forewarned:  
Avoid excessive cold or heat.  
Do not expect  
Immediate results.  
Assess effect  
When process is complete.  
(Not pleased?  
Reply!  
Get refund- with receipt.)

Glen Martin Fitch

# Disclaimer

FOREWARNED:

All works within

are pressurized

as image, metaphor or simile.

Mature material!

So be advised

Enclosed could irritate complacency.

Proceed with caution!

Do not drive and read!

These may induce

strange day dreams,

fantasies.

Rare nightmare

may occur or

sleep impede.

Ab blush or gasp

might some displease.

At your own risk

you read between the lines.

You will be teased.

You will encounter rhyme.

Remember,

you can stop at any time.

To reproduce unauthorized—

face fines!

Misread-

you risk the loss of hand or eye!

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Glen Martin Fitch

# Dog Is God Backwards

If puppies know a canine God,  
How can He justify  
the wanton ways of Man?  
This world was once  
the land of dinosaurs  
till, suddenly,  
they all became extinct  
by nature  
(who creates and  
then ignores us all) or  
by a nodding God  
who blinked.  
Who keeps the bees  
so social in their hives?  
Their age-old dance  
communicates the track,  
each working  
to insure the clan  
survives disasters and  
intruders who attack.  
A Group Of Drunks  
all longing to connect  
who pray some  
higher force will intercede  
to heal the wounds  
of strife, abuse, neglect,  
create a Power  
out of human need.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Doing My Duty

A neighbor let her dog  
shit on my lawn.  
I saw her,  
bag in hand,  
just walk away.  
'Give up'  
'Forget about it.'  
My friends say,  
But still my anger pulses  
on and on.  
'It really doesn't matter.'  
But it does  
I saw it when I left.  
I smelt the stink.  
I confront her.  
'Make her pick it up.'  
I think.  
I can't pretend  
as if it never was.  
I shouldn't have to  
deal with this.  
I live for peace,  
keep my stuff straight,  
and do my share.  
I care that this is wrong.  
It isn't fair.  
Yet it's in my best interest  
to forgive.  
Not 'off the hook'  
or 'blacked out.'  
To be free I have to  
get this shit turd  
out of me. □

Glen Martin Fitch

# Don'T Take All The Sheets

Hello, excuse me.  
Hate to interrupt you  
When your teeming thoughts  
Are coming fast.  
But I'm here too.  
Don't mean to be abrupt.  
I'm waiting  
for your great climatic blast.  
Is there a reason  
Why you want to share?  
Go be alone.  
Don't waste my time.  
With all or in succession  
I don't care.  
I only ask you  
Make me sense we rhyme.  
My eyes! Look deep.  
Caress my ears. Don't shout!  
I mean,  
if you want my attention  
be attentive too.  
Ya, okay, get it out!  
But first surprise me,  
Stir me, be with me.  
You've got a journal.  
Scribble safe at home.  
As far as I'm concerned  
We're not a poem.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Double Homicide

The cops will find  
two bodies on the floor.  
The stabbed one  
took awhile to die,  
the other's flesh still warm.  
They won't know why  
both killers snuck out  
through a different door.  
If I must kill you  
let me pick the way.  
Perhaps pour lies and bile  
in your ears or  
throw you in a tub  
of spit and tears,  
inject resentment's gall  
for quick decay.  
It's sad when love dies  
the heart at a time.  
The love you had for me  
you won't revive.  
In spite of all your hate  
mine's still alive.  
I guess I must reciprocate your crime.  
It hurts.  
You won't look back  
and you feel fine.  
Since yours is dead  
I'll have to murder mine.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Driver Alert

In summer  
I see hazards to avoid.  
Up north come fall  
I scan for sleet and ice.  
By thaw and freeze  
Asphalt turns to dice.  
We hope come May  
The crews have pitch employed  
to heal the pavement wounds  
Of winter time.  
Beneath the tires on snowpack  
Who can guess what pit falls grow  
By all the weight we press.  
Though cold  
The hoary landscape seems sublime.  
But then each March  
I find I speed along  
and day dream or recall or fantasize.  
Then POW,  
I rage at foes whom I despise,  
Wax jealous,  
Wane in shamed at deeds gone wrong.  
Repave these thoughts  
Before I go insane.  
I have to heal  
The pot holes in my brain.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Ear Worm

Just stop and listen.

Don't you have some song or other

all day running 'round your brain?

Why THAT tune?

Each one driving me insane.

Some dawns I think:

Did THAT go all night long? '

And worse yet,

there are voices in my head.

You dassen't do that! '

How she'd pinch my ear!

A nigger might have touched it.'

Still hear my grandma shout again,

though long since dead.

And I confess

I hear your voice as well.

I'm thinking thoughts

I'm sure that are my own

but hear them spoken

in your rhythm, tone.

I'm glad.

I guess it's just part of your spell.

My life is moral,

sound and never dull

while you are living

burrowed in my skull.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Elvis Has Left The Building

Braccae Tuae A Periuntur

Ya, this is really awkward  
I confess.  
I'm glad you're friend enough  
Let me know.  
Perhaps my troubled mind,  
Some sign of stress or chance,  
Uncovered what one mustn't show.  
What I've betrayed  
Comes from my inner core.  
It's vital to myself  
And to my pride.  
Though I sense your discomfort  
I most abhor what's dear to me  
And will not be denied.  
I am no fool.  
I keep a constant watch  
To hold in check  
What I have hardly tamed.  
Perhaps I had  
To take me down a notch.  
Though I'm embarrassed,  
I am not ashamed.  
Forgive my human-self.  
I don't know why  
Somehow I've left undone  
My moral fly.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Endgame

I try not staring at the guy  
Who stares at me all day.  
These cubicles get stale.  
I keep out  
Of our company's affairs.  
One sight of HER,  
We all turn pale.  
Can't even look back at the boss,  
I'm told.  
I see them shifting past,  
Some bounding stud  
Of biased holy,  
Cookies buffed and bold.  
Not work,  
it's war.  
They're out for blood.  
They say  
They'll treat me royal  
If I make it through the ranks.  
Across,  
The other team's new guy,  
The rumor says,  
Is out to take my spot.  
I ask,  
Who sets up these extremes?  
Who moves the mover  
Of us pawns? '  
Next I expect to hear  
The queen is dead!  
The king's been checked! "

Glen Martin Fitch

# Entombed

Down deep,  
Down steep, dark tunnels I descend,  
Ill statue, scroll, or frieze appears.  
I scan the gilded images.  
Might each portent  
Grand rites and mysteries  
As old as man?  
Behold a cat, a boat,  
A frozen scene of sacrifice,  
A priest in bird-faced cap.  
A coiled cobra,  
Could that mean a Queen?  
Rebirth's a scarab?  
Life, a sandal strap?  
I've read how old reliefs  
Can crumble, fade or rot  
From light of day  
And human breath.  
These works were wrought with hope  
To outlive death.  
They die  
By those who sought  
To give them aid.  
Just so,  
Thought I would hoard them,  
Yet it seems each dawn arrives  
To dissipate my dreams.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Ètonnement, Persistance Et Sillage

'Hmmm! What is this? '  
Before I heard or saw  
I caught the subtle scent  
You wore that day.  
I noticed it  
The night I said, 'Please stay.'  
You stayed.  
Each day  
You filled my heart with awe.  
I've heard the sense of smell  
I quickly bored.  
But sometimes,  
With the best,  
A fragrance floats through time  
As well as space,  
Like music notes,  
First fruit,  
Then flower, wood  
To make a chord.  
Now you are just a tale  
I tell about myself  
To those  
Who never noticed you.  
I keep your unwashed sweaters  
To renew what pictures lack,  
When I'm in doubt.  
I'm told  
I ought to strive  
To ease this ache.  
Instead  
I seek to linger in your wake.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Etymology

Weed through the slang  
of pompous modern man,  
past every status phrase  
defined for new roles,  
back past the jargon  
forged for every plan that sought  
to raise mankind  
to higher goals,  
then back beyond  
the crafty printing press  
that made a civil language  
of each tongue,  
yes, back when words  
could fluidly express  
a hero's tale,  
when praise and  
prayer were sung,  
then back  
to the prehistoric slime  
to find that beastly grunt  
or frightened groan  
and like a riddle  
trace a word through time.  
It's age-old journey's  
not unlike our own,  
for with each subtle change  
you'll find unfurled  
within that word  
the history of the world.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Everyone's Favorite Sport

Though seldom warm,  
More often bracing cold,  
I soon adjust.  
Uplifted, blissful, freed.  
My skin feels numb.  
Inhaling long  
I hold my breath,  
Exhale, then pause,  
Once more proceed.  
The surface ripples  
As I stretch and turn.  
I flex, relax, and  
Sense I my body glide.  
I let my mind  
Drift off without concern.  
Secure I close my eyes.  
All fears subside.  
Invigorating and  
Restorative,  
I sneak a dip in,  
If the time is right.  
But focused sessions  
Meet my need to live  
A self-respectful life.  
And so each night I,  
Like a swimmer,  
With a leap  
Dive deep in bed  
For laps and laps  
Of luscious sleep.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Evil Twin

Two bullies, brothers,  
Ugly, friends to none,  
Identical  
But not in every way  
Confront me often.  
I hear what they say  
and I've determined  
Who's the toxic one.  
I dread the first  
because he's in my mind.  
Whenever I do wrong  
I sense him near.  
Though harsh  
he preaches  
what I ought to hear.  
By showing me  
my sins  
he's almost kind.  
Far worse  
the other brother  
jabs my heart.  
My secret self's assaulted  
by each slur.  
Infected mortally  
without a cure,  
believing I am bad,  
I fall apart.  
For Guilt speaks truth  
that hurts yet makes me wise,  
but Shame,  
his brother,  
always speaks in lies.  
□

Glen Martin Fitch

# Evolution

In nature there's  
no music, myth or math,  
but modern minds seek  
patterns, reasons, plans.  
Once growing skulls and tongues  
surpassed our hands  
and discourse cleared  
our civilizing path.  
From cells  
whose needs they seek to gratify  
to selves  
who organize, repress and please,  
to moral souls  
who must their guilt appease  
perhaps we'll find a way  
to justify the suffering we face  
when lost, alone,  
inspired by some sense.  
No language rules  
and many gods are used  
by fools like tools,  
yet we crave power  
higher than our own.  
What spirit waits  
beyond dogmatic herds?  
What wisdom whispers  
around our web of words?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Ex Libris

I lend this to you  
And I want this back  
As good as it is now  
And soon. If not...

May your sticky fingers shake.  
May your spongy liver quake.  
May your greedy stomach churn.  
May your grabby cracked palms burn.

Pussy Pimples on your chin.  
Purple Bruises on your shin.  
Warts between your toes.  
Blisters on your nose.

May your smelly butt hole itch  
May your sneaky eyelids twitch  
May your ears ring you cry  
May your heart race till you die.

But first, before you go,  
my former friend,  
Promptly and unharmed  
Give me my BOOK\* back.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Farewell To Nausikaa

My ship is waiting and I have to go.  
Yes, this is our farewell. I won't say I'll  
Return, sweet Princess. But I won't forget  
The fairest of the maids who dropped their veils  
And laundry baskets on the shore to chant  
And pass the ball in time. I heard your shout  
Above the rest. Such snowy arms I saw  
And thrashing braids! And how could I forget  
Your courage or your kindness when I came  
To you with olive branch in hand to hide  
My nakedness, rain drenched, brine swollen, scarred.  
You stayed while others fled. You gave me food  
And drink. And I'll recall your foresight, how  
You hid me in the cart you sent to town,  
Avoiding scandal. Clever one! You got  
Your wisdom from your mother, I suspect,  
Who, even though I knelt in fire glow  
And she upon her throne was weaving wool,  
Still spied the robe you lent me as her work.  
And how could I forget how nobles sighed,  
'Will she have him? What, none of us will suit  
Her?' or amid the folded linen how  
I overheard you whisper to a friend,  
'Oh, may my husband be as fine as he.'  
Or how the King, who never could deny  
A wish of yours, said, even ere he knew  
My name or deeds or kingdom, 'Come, my friend,  
My daughter's yours, my land, and you my son  
If you remain.' Oh, would that I could be  
Your husband, rule this country, father sons,  
With you grow old. Alas, that cannot be.  
I'd be your husband, but I have a wife.  
I have a boy who must by now be man.  
I love your parents even as I love my own.  
And great Phaiaka, a kingdom blessed  
With ramparts, orchards, harbors, gardens, squares  
All greater than sad Ithaka, my home.

My home. No! Here I cannot die. Just so

I said amid the din and dust of Troy  
And so when trapped within the Cyklop's Cave,  
Or when the Laestrygonians attacked,  
When Scylla and Charydid drowned my crew,  
Just so when I was washed up on your shore.  
For when I die I die a second death  
To wander on the Island of the Dead.  
Oh, Princess, this is hard for me to say,  
As hard as when I sadly had to tell  
My mother's ghost she could not drink the blood  
I'd poured until Tereasias had drunk.  
Oh, don't you see, I have rejected death  
So many times, when death, oh, would have been  
The greatest balm to one who's suffered, as  
I have, so long. And yet I choose to live.

Believe me, in my aged eyes you are  
The fairest maid that ever lived, save one.  
And I have seen them all in Hades's crowd,  
Save one, and you. You make me young. Once she  
Was young like you. It is the memory  
Of her who shared my hearth and plate and bed  
That moved my mind and stirs my heart from rest.  
Believe me when I say, had I seen her  
In Hades, surely she'd have said, 'Return,  
Live, fight, rule, love.' And though she's still alive  
Were I a crasser man I'd take you home  
As mistress. She, I'm sure, would greet you, call you daughter, take you gladly to  
her heart.  
Ah, dear Penelope, I'd ne'er do that  
To you...Oh, sweet and brave maid, don't you see?  
The greatest curse the Gods have placed on me  
Is not their wrath. It's hope and memory.

Cruel temptress! Do not cry! Please turn away  
From me those sad and brimming eyes. Oh Gods!  
Not one of the enchantments I have faced,  
No, not the lotus of forgetfulness,  
Nor Cirke's bed of pleasures, spells and charms,  
Not even, dear one, great Claypso's pledge  
Of ageless youth, of immortality,  
Could tempt me as you do. Your sighs, so sad,

So soft make my heart quake; they rent me more,  
They pierce me deeper than the Siren's songs.  
Not beauty, youth, foreknowledge, power, wealth  
Could tempt me from my quest. But innocence,  
A home, real rest, true peace, security,  
To one who's traveled, oh, so many miles,  
Road worn, nigh hopeless, tempts me. Tempts me still!  
Security is certain death to that  
In me which none of them could ever touch.  
Oh, Ithaca! I do not know if I  
Will reach my home or what I'll find there, or  
If I will stay. But here I cannot stay.  
I leave. Farewell! Please, kiss me, turn and go.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Faux Pas

It's like

~~w~~e're hand in hand

~~t~~o cross a stream.

At first we hope,

~~f~~careful,

~~w~~e'll stay dry.

Each step we test

~~a~~nd then another try.

But then, to stay on course

~~b~~ecomes our scheme.

The deeper pools

~~d~~emand a slower pace,

~~u~~ntil by toe and heel

~~o~~ur feet get wet.

The current hugs our ankles, caves.

~~O~~bet you'll end up

~~o~~n your ass

~~o~~r I, my face.

'So marry me? '

~~B~~ut you, 'Ya, probably.'

~~N~~ot quite what I was hoping for

~~f~~rom you.

'Wrong answer.'

~~Q~~uickly you knew what to do.

~~Y~~our 'YES! ' and kiss

~~S~~oon won a grin from me.

~~H~~ow does one speak

~~a~~nd not soon feel regret?

~~O~~ur well worn words

~~a~~re slippery when wet.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Fifth Graders At Play

They roll the dice.  
The thimble, cannon, boot  
Creep round the board.  
Three ten year olds at play.  
Let's NOT pay rent.'  
Let's go the OTHER way.'  
A motel FIRST.'  
Let's pass out ALL the loot.'  
At eight they tried to grasp  
this complex game.  
By twelve they'll master it  
and take their turn.  
Right now, by every 'what if...'  
they will learn when things go wrong,  
just how and what's to blame.  
But if you're twenty-one  
there's no defense  
to land on Marvin Gardens  
and NOT pay,  
Skip "Go to Jail, "  
Claim bankrupt  
and then play.  
And where's the proper,  
timely consequence?  
At ten they play not BY  
but WITH the rules.  
At seventy, they're either  
crooks or fools.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Fig Tree

Strolling in a garden, I bent  
And stooped beneath a branch.  
Looking up I saw  
Two swollen sacks, swaying,  
With darkened skins unwrinkling,

Tapered above but bulging below,  
Suspended before my eyes.  
Sagging with the burden  
Of their sweet seeds inside  
About to burst,

I cupped one in my hand.  
Warm bulb, heavy in my palm,  
I dared to stroke my fingers down  
As my thumb rolled up  
In a gentle squeeze and whispered:

"Dare I pull you close to me,  
To tease you with my breath,  
Draw you in beyond my kisses,  
Hold you captive with my teeth  
And caress you with my tongue?"

"Right now, would you again retreat  
(Instinctively to hide,  
Unable to endure such pleasure  
And NOT be in control) or  
Surprise me with your trust? "

Glen Martin Fitch

# Filthy Lucre

All I have mined and melted,  
minted, stored  
Offered you  
And yet I can't compete.  
Does my attention  
Leave you cold and bored?  
My heart's locked coffer's key  
Lies at your feet.  
I've seen him with you  
Callous if not cruel  
And yet you're thrilled,  
No matter what I say.  
(Had he a brain  
He play you for the fool)  
He dumps his problems,  
Then goes on his way.  
I wonder  
If you'll ever change your mind.  
Today I wonder  
More about your taste  
(and mine!)  
I wonder  
When and how you'll find out  
What an ass he is.  
(Am I unkind, my love?)  
I wonder why  
And with such haste  
You gaily shovel up  
His stinking waste.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Finger Lakes

I close my eyes and wet my hands.  
I churn the lapping waves.

Up rise huge billowing clouds  
of pink and white and purple

reflected in a lake below,  
bobbing slowly with the breeze.

You bound in my frothy surf.  
It clings then slides down your skin.

Like the essence of you, it repeats  
and repeats, wafting without fatigue.

I open to the swell in my palms  
and bring the foam up to my lips.

Will you smell Spring on my neck  
from this lather of lilac soap?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Flesh

My palm fits curve to bulge.  
So heavy, firm,  
Your freckled skin conceals  
A softer spot.  
Your spicy scent  
Betrays a hint of rot.  
Your pentagram  
Protects the magic germ.  
I pull you close  
To view your nether side.  
I fear I'll find  
A flaw or wound or scar.  
Below I spy  
The sun-shy withered star.  
Within the past and future both reside.  
Once grateful hunters  
Asked the beasts they'd slain  
To grant them their forgiveness  
With a prayer.  
Just so I close my eyes.  
My teeth I bare.  
My body, breed and spirit  
To maintain,  
I lick my lips with enzymes.  
I prepare for gritty,  
Crisp and gushious  
Bursts of pear.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Forecast

It's not the heat.  
It's my humidity.  
Some days on every thing  
we disagree.  
Beneath your stormy lids  
sharp glances let off jabs.  
I hope a rumbling  
of regret will roll. I count.  
But when you cry,  
I flee in place.  
You rain it out  
and then you're free.  
I envy you.  
You'll talk or leave it be.  
Yet all feels wet to me.  
I brood.  
I fret.

It's not the heat.  
I'm built to take it.  
And I guarantee in love  
there will be tension.  
I foresee more strife.  
And so I compromise.  
I sweat.  
It's me.  
I can't release yet won't forget  
my uncried tears.  
It's my humidity.  
It's not the heat.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Forgotten Before Waking

At night I lay me down  
to get some sleep.  
I toss and stretch and burp.  
I must ignore  
that weasling in my throat.  
My pulse must keep  
a slower beat.  
I rest and then I snore.  
At dawn I wake and  
sure enough I've slept all night.  
My breath went in and out and in.  
Without a thought from me on pumping.  
I made it.  
Let my day begin.  
But damn where was I?  
Wasn't I just there?  
Who was it?  
Asking what? And when?  
And why?  
Digest my day?  
See throughout my inner eye?  
Once more I've lost the clues  
to my self-care.  
And yet I live.  
I benefit I bet  
from dreaming dreams  
I gimps and then forget.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Fostering: An Ode

□

I wish this baby,  
flannel, oatmeal, bells, balloons,  
a kite, a cat, a bike, a phone.  
I wish her tryouts, outfits, ocean swells  
and dances, love notes,  
babies of her own.  
But dare I wish her fevers, bruises, tears?  
Who knows what trials life will make her face?  
(Strip searches, sirens?)  
When you hear her fears I hope  
you'll help  
(or not help,  
as the case may be)  
her try until she fails and then despairs  
and asks and learns and tries again.

□

Your burden's great.  
Some parent's can't adjust.  
A few (indignant, ignorant)  
deprive their own  
(as they were once?)  
betray their trust.  
(In hunger, silence, filth  
some fail to thrive!)  
Kids cower, cringe from curses, glaring eyes.  
The slaps and belts kill confidence,  
perce pride.  
If we are only what we know,  
then lies and threats they'll learn (and teach) .  
Some bold, some snide,  
their spirit wastes away while wasting time.  
Sbuls cursed to cruelty,  
owardice and crime.

III

I'm sure you wish this baby  
 Party clothes, recitals, ribbons,  
 Cars, diplomas, deeds.  
 By now I'm sure her nursery  
 Overflows with books and puzzles  
 Years beyond her needs.  
 It's tempting  
 (Gardeners graft and florists dye)  
 to change, improve  
 (Each flaw makes you despair)  
 The best are mere cosmetics feats.  
 (Why try?)  
 Because her first milk tooth,  
 Her first gray hair  
 (and when and where)  
 already are foretold within each cell,  
 within the spiral code.

IV

Some babes are colicky,  
 some chatty, dumb.  
 She'll walk, she'll talk  
 (no matter what you do)  
 when ready.  
 (No doll. No slate.)  
 She'll become her own self  
 with (or else in spite of) you.  
 So while there's much you cannot do,  
 there's much you can  
 (and must) .  
 Good goals, safe limits,  
 fair, respectful choices  
 (just your ear, your touch)  
 all help.  
 She might (with your concern and care)  
 transcend misfortune,  
 sail through strife, create her chances,

Master skills, transform her fate.

✓

Her needs are simple,  
Water, food and air.  
Her tasks, to eat and shit  
and sleep and dream (or scream) .  
She needs you now  
(while in your care)  
to keep her warm and dry.  
All she'll achieve in life  
is based on these.  
So let her be,  
because her business now is to perceive,  
fast time and space  
and distance, gravity  
to learn to sing and count  
and climb and slide and spell,  
to learn to value, judge, decide.

✓

If not from you,  
from whom will she begin  
to master brushes, thank-yous;  
learn to live with others,  
right from wrong,  
and how to win, to lose,  
confront, apologize, forgive?  
No gift or gadget  
could inspire her to inspire herself,  
help her experience the world,  
create her memories.  
For you can make her feel she matters,  
find a sense of worth, of family;  
and (knowing she is loved and loving)  
dance her destiny.



# Free Advice

I learned

you've got to try

and yet not try.

It's getting out there.

If it's up to chance

You've got to snap out of

self-pity's trance and,

helping fate,

go roam where options lie.

While true to yourself,

striving for your prime,

let others spy,

at rest in work or jest,

you look and act and be you

at your best.

This will take effort,

practice, thought and time.

And next

is chemistry,

that sudden thrill

by scent or tone or spark,

that makes you crave,

while sensing this is silly,

and yet grave,

and hope

another's dreams you can fulfill.

Hear,

many loves are lost

for lack of will,

cause, lastly,

love comes only to the brave.

Glen Martin Fitch

# From The Car-Seat Behind Me

Enthroned within her realm  
she asks me 'Why? '  
(I can't recall just  
what she wants to know.)  
I answer logically.  
'But why? '  
I lie this time.  
(a phase? a game?)  
I let it go.  
'But whyyyyyyyy? "  
She asks again.  
I feel attacked.  
My face turns red.  
I glare.  
I clench my jaws.  
(If I were you  
I would have gotten smacked.)  
I use the default setting,  
I must because.'  
Well, 'Why? ' indeed.  
Don't we all fret and strive to know?  
But get the answer- nothing's solved.  
I've seen  
injustice and addictions thrive.  
Small comfort,  
waste of time,  
and what's resolved?  
But asking,  
(Joy!)  
Her learning has begun.  
'Not all 'Why questions'  
have an answer, Hon'.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Getting Perspective

A blind man told me  
What he thought of sight.  
"As if you open up a Russian doll  
and place each front to back.  
If you have light,  
the near one's big.  
The farthest one is small.'  
We learn from decibels,  
from rods and cones,  
from sour, sweet and  
rough and smooth,  
begin from heat and cold,  
from scents and pheromones  
to recreate the outer world  
within.  
So you think you know me.  
Well, you got nerve.  
Each synapse gives sensations  
but no clue.  
It's clear  
you never listen or observe.  
The me inside you  
Isn't me, it's YOU.  
I hope some day you'll see  
why I won't stay.  
Watch me get smaller  
as I walk away.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Gift Horse

Romance would have us  
never question love.  
To barter for affection  
does seems crude.  
One needs surprise and magic  
for the mood.  
Truth is we're all on show.  
To keep above the market value  
is the goal.  
I've tried to find  
companionship,  
acceptance, peace.  
We act our best,  
but like that horse from Greece  
we all have hidden warriors inside.  
Though love makes lovers' quirks  
appear sublime,  
to heartache  
every human heart is cursed.  
When left to luck  
we always pick the worst.  
It's unromantic  
but I take my time.  
I kick the stool.  
I poke the gums.  
You bet!  
Pursuing love,  
I scan, I plot, I vet.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Go Fly A Kite

Once more.  
Please notice how  
keep it taut  
by only letting out a bit.  
So try to keep it high enough.  
Then, once it's caught,  
let go.  
I'm certain we can make this fly  
and once we get it up  
you'll see how long the tail is.  
Sunshine makes the panels glow.  
Don't stand there!  
Come on! Run!  
The breeze is strong.  
You changed your mind?  
You could have told me so.  
'Cause I'm prepared  
to fix a flimsy frame or  
untie knots,  
face winds that gust or shift  
and I'm not here to play  
the game called 'BLAME'  
but I can't do this  
if you let it drift  
or drop the spool.  
Oh hell!  
Just cut it free.  
It can't fly  
if you don't believe in me.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Gone

I thought I was prepared.  
I should have known.  
You weren't the first nor  
the last to leave.  
I'm bitter, empty, lost.  
I can't believe  
you won't return.  
It hurts to be alone.  
Again come all the stinging questions,  
'Why? '  
I've often curse your picture  
right out loud.  
I thought I saw you once  
lost in a crowd.  
I've called your name at night  
with no reply.  
No touch,  
no call,  
no note,  
no sign from you.  
It's so unkind,  
so painful,  
so unfair.  
How can you hurt me  
when you know I care?  
But someday  
I'll slip out an exit too.  
By this no loss of love  
should be construed:  
It's just it seems to me  
the dead are rude.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Good Cop

'Sit down. Relax.  
Just tell me  
from the start.'  
'I didn't plan on  
getting in this mess.  
I strive to be a  
helpful man.  
I guess I see a soul in need  
right to my heart.'  
'Go on? '  
'This isn't easy here, you know.  
I've needs as well.  
I told that bad ass cop,  
I offered aid.  
I reached.  
Then I heard 'Stop! '  
But why?  
I meant no harm.  
You've done that, no? '  
'Come on.'  
'That hurt.  
To me, that too's assault.  
Why prey upon  
my vulnerability?  
From nice to nasty!  
Why? I mean, 'Why me? '  
I'm sorry things went bad.  
It's not my fault.  
No, I'm the victim here.  
My record's clean.'  
'You're fifty-four, sir.  
She's just seventeen.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Good News, Bad News

Excited, jubilant,  
In joyous bliss  
He came to me.  
I felt excitement swell.  
Enthused yet scared,  
I'm longed so for his kiss.

"But, what I heard from you  
Sounds vague. Do tell.'  
'I want to change your life.'

Yes, I want change.  
Yet when he's close me  
I can't get near.  
Though flattered by his focus,  
Something's strange.

"You filter what I say.  
You're not sincere.  
No thanks."

He's bluffing kindness,  
That's the vibe.  
I mention love  
But he acts put upon.  
Guess to a con  
A gift is just a bribe  
And it's impossible  
To con a con.  
He could've had my heart,  
But if I did, he'd bury me  
Beneath his pyramid.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Grooming

(poem left below the bathroom mirror)

Such sharp and brittle fingers  
Comb my hair.  
Within the narrows  
Of each pit the Speed Stick™  
Leaves its scented spit.  
I turn and stare.  
Behold a wet,  
But lucky fool, indeed.'  
Free of its cap,  
Fat in my palm,  
Grip the toothpaste tube.  
Fill gobs just with the stress  
Fill with a squeeze  
Espurts.  
Take a drip.  
The bristles  
Fail to mold to my caress.  
I've shaved  
And yet again  
Gently wipe stale foamy cream  
That's seeped out of the spout.  
And leaning in the mirror  
Fog I swipe  
To see if kisses  
Show on lips I pout.  
I'm off to work.  
You sleep.  
I have to fight the urge to crawl back.  
Thank you for last night.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Happy Motoring

Some driver cut me off  
in my commute.

I swore.

At work I told a friend  
still mad.

Said she,

'I scream 'God BLESS you'.'

I fell mute,

incredulous,

then foolish,

hopeless, sad.

'God BLESS you.'

Euh?

Just belch among your friends,  
your manners they'll deride.

But arch and huff,

sneew out with germs

far flung

and others act

as if you almost died.

Perhaps this isn't

about that stupid lout.

(Hey, does controlling others

ever really work?)

Perhaps,

myself is what it's all about.

Cause next mile

I don't want to be the jerk.

I wish we all would truly

sneek to please.

Perhaps rude driving's

just a moral sneeze.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Here's How They Do That

When senses meet  
a new found work of art  
the grace notes, patterns, textures  
dazzle more than  
backdrops, platforms.  
Structures we ignore because  
its on the surface that we start.  
Good tailors know the stitches  
to concealed by inner folds,  
frayed edges hid within.  
It's when a mystery's solved  
that we then begin to check  
each clue and herring  
now revealed.  
No landscape painter  
tabs the details first.  
The background must  
define the depth of space.  
Delight, surprise, dismay  
are put in place.  
Perception and creation  
are reverse to make  
the finished outside  
come about  
from working backwards,  
thinking inside out.

Glen Martin Fitch

# His Spiritual Journey

I had to ask a stranger  
for the dirt.  
'Things change.  
He's moving on.  
He's doing fine.'

' If only I could have some word,  
some sign'

'He's in a peaceful space,  
so don't act hurt.'

'But there's no better place  
than next to me.  
I need his help,  
while helping him as well.  
With joy, devotion, memories,  
please tell me  
why he prefers  
to wander free?  
I can't read minds like you, '

Came my attack.  
How dare he leave me  
lost, alone, ' I cried.

'He's got his work now  
on the other side.'

I raised my eyes and screamed,  
I want you back! ' I snapped,  
He's grown so selfish  
since he died.'

'So HE'S the selfish one? '  
the psychic sighed.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Hospitable

Once, standing  
in a patient parking lot  
with jumper cables  
held out in my hand,  
all passed me by.  
I'm thinking,  
They understand  
my battery's too weak.'  
The watchman got his car.  
Exhaust soon filled  
the cold night air.  
Above, my dad  
too weak to lift his head,  
attached to tubes and wires,  
lay in a bed.  
The guard said,  
No one here  
has will to spare.'  
We prayed our barter bribes to God  
and lost.  
That guard, the car, my dad,  
are long since gone.  
Night nurses, aids and cook  
punched out at dawn.  
They cared.  
How can comprehend the cost.  
Benign good will connectors  
never viewed.  
For those who toil I pray  
my gratitude.

Glen Martin Fitch

# How I Survived

First fact of bitter life:

All parents lie.

Not just the loss of Santa

Made me grieve

I was a fool!

Now how could not deny

I'd ever been so stupid

To believe?

Humiliated,

Shamed

I grew morose.

My parents feared

I wanted to be cruel

As I absorbed the gruesome

And the gross.

I mastered farce,

Sarcasm, ridicule.

Years later,

Overwhelmed by sex,

The lewd gave me relief,

With death,

Through satire, wit.

We learn what's cool, what's crude.

Those jokes of puss and barf

And snot and shit

Were more than just rebellion

On my part.

It's all absurd!

Just laugh.

We belch!

We fart!

□

Glen Martin Fitch

# Humors

When I tell jokes  
I want roars at the end.  
I learn them,  
I fade them.  
Humor has a code.  
The biggest laugh  
comes when a solemn friend  
lets drop a bomb,  
amazed we all explode.  
I'm healthy and  
its seldom I get ill.  
When weak  
I get confused,  
I dismayed and wilt.  
The ailing learn their cure and  
flex their will.  
But I, when sick,  
to call in sick,  
I face guilt.  
I sense your feelings  
better than my own.  
It's foremost in my nature  
to be kind.  
To give away my power  
I am prone or else  
I pay for harshness  
in my mind.  
Forewarned,  
although compassion is my rule  
I'm ugly,  
shocking, brutal  
when I'm cruel.

Glen Martin Fitch

# I Affirm

I am alive.  
And even when alone,  
I have the skills and peace  
and all the stuff I need to thrive.  
I'm more than good enough.  
I value,  
honor,  
all that I have known.  
My love's immense.  
My humor is profound.  
I show respect  
in everything I do.  
I see the best in all.  
My word is true.  
I now embrace my health.  
I'm strong and sound.  
I will be gentle  
with myself today.  
I will fulfill  
commitments I have made.  
I will confront,  
forgive,  
and be of aid.  
I will pursue my dreams  
and pray  
and play.  
Right here,  
right now,  
I claim and own what's mine.  
I am prepared  
and this day I will shine.

Glen Martin Fitch

# I Commit

To change my life today,  
I'll not ignore injustice;  
I won't covet what I haven't got;  
I won't repress or  
pity myself,  
I won't placate,  
I won't plot.  
I can,  
no matter what I've done before,  
create the person  
that I want to be.  
I'll look for lessons  
when I feel attacked.  
I'll own my feelings,  
think before I act.  
I know I can live  
should-less, shame-less, free.  
Today I will not take or  
risk my life,  
nor harm myself  
by little suicides.  
I'll shun what sabotages me or  
rides my worth or  
aggravates my inner strife.  
And as I dare today  
to show my face,  
I vow to make our world  
a better place.

Glen Martin Fitch

# I Never Thought I Would Say This

'The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households.'

Attributed to SOCRATES

Our parents, I think,  
taught us to behave.  
I know we kids  
were often angry, sad.  
It seems now happy children  
parents crave.  
But are they?  
Often they seem awfully bad.  
Who's pleased  
to hear a toddler's harsh lament?  
But I improved  
from feeling my distress.  
What did I learn  
when I was pleased, content?  
Through service  
I gained skills for each success.  
Though when my will was thwarted  
I felt stung,  
safe limits  
helped me find my own delight.  
To suffer is the cure  
for being young.  
I made mistakes.  
I learned to do what's right.  
Of course  
I would be happy if I could.  
Keen consolation comes  
from doing good.

Glen Martin Fitch

# If Only

If only what?  
Should what's the cross you bear?  
If fools and tyrants  
Stayed out of your way  
If only you possessed  
Straight teeth, more hair?  
If cancer, heartache, beer  
Just went away?  
Perhaps you suffered  
Feeling different, strange?  
Your parents nailed you up  
For every flaw?  
Your buddy-boss-man  
Sold you off for change?  
Your lover cheated,  
Left you with the law?  
You want life perfect.  
Lacking beauty, wealth  
Might help, not hurt,  
You hone an honest heart,  
What courage facing  
Conflict, grief, ill health.  
In Christ's life  
Judas played a crucial part.  
Be grateful.  
Don't begrudge the luck you lack.  
When Judas kisses you,  
You kiss him back.

Glen Martin Fitch

# If Only I Could Have Said

Hey, parents.  
Back off.  
Thanks, but leave me be.  
I've got a mind to stretch and  
flex and tone  
to challenge speed,  
fast time, tease gravity.  
I've got to do it now  
and on my own.  
You want to help?  
Okay. Hear my demand:  
Safe space, all day,  
some friends and  
open air.  
Please trust me.  
Let me build  
my 'what if' land,  
a stage to act out  
triumph and despair.  
Those hyper ads  
would make me beg and  
learn to hoard  
the moving, plastic,  
painted stuff.  
The more each does for me  
the less I learn.  
For pure imagination  
is enough to give me  
mud or snow and  
sticks and rocks.  
Return that gadget,  
but I need the box.

Glen Martin Fitch

## Ill Wind

Oppressive, inescapable,  
inflamed,  
you suck all reason  
right out of the air  
and under that incendiary glare  
we broil and bake  
in singeing gusts,  
untamed.  
No matter how we hide  
we have to hear you howl  
and screech and rant  
'til you prevail.  
We wilt and wither  
in a toxic gale of filth  
that bellows  
in each bullied ear.  
You blast us on and on  
relentlessly  
oblivious that we might be  
annoyed or want to speak  
or just sit quietly.  
Guess you think conversations  
fear a void.  
How can you talk so long,  
talk crap, and why?  
Be silent, silenced,  
lose that voice, or die.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Impersonal Time

There's solitaire or  
shooting hoops, alone,  
the chocolate box and book,  
brew marathons with popcorn troth  
and endless football on,  
or wine by candle light  
to set the tone.

At night when pie is calling  
who has pride?

Some check while sober  
if their fingers shake,  
if their face is swollen,  
head or liver ache.

Your time-release,  
progressive suicide?

With intrigue, porn,  
we stretch erotic bliss.

If you want blindness  
simply chug and chug.

We gorge on sugar, salt,  
fast doses and drug.

Get off! Get on! Get out!

It comes to this:

we fear true joy,  
oblivion, or thrill.

It's not ourselves,

it's time

we seek to kill.

Glen Martin Fitch

# In Search Of Beauty

Up north at dusk  
the winter snow  
reflects the sky  
for one enchanted hour of blue.  
Down south at noon  
the desert sand projects  
bewitching, rippling pools  
too bright to view.  
The drifts of white  
are grand until you drive.  
Then shoveling at dawn  
becomes your lot.  
That brilliant sun  
makes all things seem alive.  
Yet everything you touch  
is skillet hot.  
When young  
I dreamt the highway was the sea.  
Near waves  
I hear old roads I can't forget.  
Remain at home  
you never might feel free.  
Move once or more  
you'll always feel regret.  
We seldom feel content  
at any time.  
Then search about  
for anything sublime. □

Glen Martin Fitch

# Inclemency

It's like in summer,  
When your throat is dry  
Your lips draw tight,  
Your lungs refuse the air,  
it's all you think about.  
You dread the sky.  
Your ears are singed.  
Your lids can't shield the glare.  
Just so  
When traveling in a foreign land  
You find yourself  
seem stupid, lost, alone,  
because to eat or shop  
or understand directions  
all you do is shrug and groan.  
Oppressive, daunting, endless,  
feeling trapped within  
an age-old nightmare circumstance,  
to cope seems futile,  
let alone adapt.  
But, oh that moment when,  
by gust or glance,  
in curse or whisper,  
whether slurred or sung  
that soothing breeze!  
You hear your native tongue.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Internal Dialogues

I heard it isn't hard  
to pen a play.  
Divide your mind in parts  
then let them  
act out conflicts,  
state with feeling  
Every fact or fib  
you get to write  
the words they say.  
I replay conversations in my head  
'I should have...'  
'I'll tell...'  
When next we speak.  
You talk so seldom.  
When you do  
you tweak my words  
or quote some phrase I never said.  
I feel as if I'm stuck within a scene,  
the more reluctant villain  
in your cast of  
parents, foes and lovers  
from your past,  
all victims of  
your self-esteem machine.  
Since you're not fighting fair  
and I feel gypped,  
Please go away.  
Remove me from your script.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Intervention

They toddle.  
It's a phase.  
Each used to crawl.  
They watch and try and  
master how to climb.  
A little more they'll learn  
with every fall.  
Soon each will run.  
They'll speak in their own time.  
They bite.  
Get bitten.  
It's a phase.  
We pick one teacher to observe,  
intrude, prevent.  
Once Mouth was all and  
minds are quick.  
Complex emotions  
words must represent.  
The bitten need words too.  
So much to say and then  
to learn to listen  
to what's said.  
I'm full of feelings  
I would wish away.  
I bite.  
But now I bite myself, instead.  
Where are the arms  
to hold me and appeal?  
Nope.  
Use your words.  
Speak out!  
Say how you feel."

Glen Martin Fitch

# Introductions

So who are you?  
You greet or just retreat?  
You trust your eyes  
Or trust your gut much more?  
Respect your heart or brain?  
Do they compete?  
You leave the cupboard open?  
Close the door?  
What lessons did you learn  
from leers and jeers.  
Born first or last?  
Were you an only child?  
You feared your skin  
Was darker than your peers?  
Too short?  
Too tall?  
Too fat?  
Too thin?  
Too wild?  
I'll never know your life,  
The tears you've shed,  
Your trials, triumphs, joys,  
Your secret shame.  
But I have cried and laughed.  
When pricked I bled.  
On this I dare  
To offer you my name.  
Though no one lets a stranger  
Come too near  
Each foe's a friend  
Whose tale you've yet to hear.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Inventory

I try,  
I'm sure like you,  
to do what's right.  
For jobs well done  
I wouldn't mind a raise.  
I think I'm kind,  
considerate.  
I fight injustice as I can.  
I don't need praise.  
I sometimes do things wrong.  
When 'Who's to blame?' resounds,  
I hope I'm first to say,  
'It's me!'  
Then there's the acts  
I should have done.  
What shame from  
'That was YOUR responsibility.'  
But what about the bad  
I didn't do?  
The pie I didn't eat?  
The words unsaid?  
Would I be thanked  
if everybody knew?  
And if the world were just  
I'd like instead the cash  
I didn't spend on booze and bets,  
on drugs and porn and  
shoes and cigarettes.

Glen Martin Fitch

# It

Come on. It's worth it, '  
You said. 'Go ahead.'  
Your 'it'  
Just might be all  
that I crave most,  
Or all that I have settled for instead,  
Or what will keep me  
In my shame engrossed.  
How easy it would be,  
The letting go.  
Why Not? ...A little...  
Just this once...I can.'  
The old familiar senses  
I still know.  
But then I'd have to face 'it'  
Once again.  
Do you know  
What MY 'it'  
Still means to me?  
My 'it'  
Is one sane thought  
In my sick mind.  
My 'it'  
Is my last chance  
To be set free.  
Excuse me,  
Damn your kindness so unkind.  
You couldn't say so,  
If you knew my lot.  
When you say,  
'It's worth it.'  
I say, 'It's NOT! '

Glen Martin Fitch

# It's All About Whom?

We cracked the code!  
Not every problem's solved,  
but now at least  
this much we understand.  
I wake up feeling blue.  
I hadn't planned it-  
no one's fault.  
In this you're not involved.  
The things I'm grateful for  
should give me joy.  
Your hug would help.  
No hug? So I feel worse.  
I frown and sigh.  
Your words become more terse.  
If I am hurting  
why would that annoy you?  
Now I see  
you start to wonder  
while with someone  
constant, clever, cute, and kind,  
who loves me for my faults  
and lives resigned to forfeit  
all you prize  
to make me smile)  
how in your presence  
I dare NOT be glad,  
as if in spite  
I've chosen to act sad?

Glen Martin Fitch

# It's Not You

You had no choice.  
It's I who set you free.  
Cause I'm the jerk  
Who turns the green lights red,  
And I'm the scary monster  
Death your bed.  
The one responsible  
Is always me.  
You didn't want  
to let me in your life.  
It's I who keeps  
the mice and roaches fed.  
It's I  
Who speeds gray mold  
around your bread.  
I made you hurt me.  
Made you live in strife.  
You're blameless.  
I plead guilty by default  
Since I'm the nagging voice  
inside your head,  
It's I should suffer  
endlessly instead.  
So blame me.  
ME!  
You're not the one at fault.  
I must have magic powers  
over you  
to make you do things  
you don't want to do.

Glen Martin Fitch

# It's Physical

Yes, beauty's great,  
But suddenly  
Before some vista vast,  
I sense the need to pee.  
I fear I'll fall  
When truth makes sense to me.  
If image matches meaning,  
Metaphor is born.  
Grand art can me me high,  
Although my stomach sinks.  
Damn, how can I compete? '  
The Muse can shout so,  
I forget to eat.  
A simile can sting inside.  
I know a poem is close  
When zombie eyed at night  
And panther pace by day  
I glow with sweat.  
I want to pen down  
Whirling words,  
And yet I'd rather  
Trip the floors again  
Than write.  
It's not when planets line up  
In accord.  
I'm most productive  
When I'm tired and bored.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Jack Ass

So just how stupid  
do you think I am?  
Did you think  
you invented sex or crime?  
Do you think  
I can't spot a fib or scam?  
Your silence,  
jokes and jabber  
waste my time.  
Today your body  
may be at its prime,  
but, trust me, not so  
is your growing mind.  
Your nasty wit's not wisdom.  
Mostly I'm annoyed  
by all the many woes  
you've whined.  
I'd rather have a mule.  
Though unrefined  
they're sterile,  
tough,  
and don't shit where they eat.  
I'm sure less stubborn,  
lazy or unkind,  
not prone to blame,  
sarcasm or deceit.  
It walks the day it's born.  
Your life ain't rough.  
Just nine months?  
Twenty years is not enough.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Job Description

Have Fame and Fortune  
turned you down?  
You too can join a group  
Covered, elite, yet true.  
Some education's helpful.  
If you knew  
Some basic culture and  
at least one fluent language,  
then your primary review  
might be a decade  
after your adieu.  
No guarantee of praise  
at your debut.  
Self-motivation is a must.  
No crew mentality.  
Slight overhead is due:  
Just pencil, pen and ink,  
Laptop or two.  
No Benefits or salary  
will accrue.  
Though suffering is helpful  
don't pursue it,  
Self-inflicted pain  
you must subdue.  
So be a poet.  
Someone has to do it!  
Everybody tries it.  
Why not YOU?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Keys To Success For Poets

Must write.  
No form, no rhyme.  
Be free.  
Try strange associations.  
Confuse all when you can.  
Don't punctuate  
Cause no one hears,  
they scan.  
And you know  
Where to pause  
And lines can change.  
Get famous friends  
And drop a name or two.  
Be of your age.  
Assume a nom de plume.  
And be a victim.  
Find a cause.  
Don't groom.  
Be of a place.  
A high-way sign will do.  
Think of your publisher,  
His bottom line.  
He needs a series,  
think in trilogies.  
And make your life  
A myth to gloss  
to please some  
future student's paper's  
grand design.  
Must fill the page  
With jargon  
Crazy stuff.  
Be free.  
Type words on paper.  
That's enough.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Latency

White and sticky  
I let it dry on the inside of my wrist.  
It was years before I knew  
what else was white and sticky.  
But not before I knew love.

Slouched in my chair  
trapped in First Grade  
I hid from our teacher,  
day dreaming of Dickie Jamieson,  
the cub master's son.

I twisted the rounded top  
and squeezed the bottle  
'til it squirted warm, creamy glue.  
I waited for it to dry on my hand  
to peel off in one piece.

You are on my wrist.  
I'll wait for you to dry.  
Sleepy now in your arms  
I recall Dickie Jamieson  
And I know love.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Lesser Laws Of Karma

We live our life  
the hero of our tale.  
We suffer, conquer  
as we face our lot.  
We try to write our script,  
perform our plot,  
and sometimes we succeed,  
sometimes we fail.  
We make mistakes.  
Our innocence is scorned.  
Each action  
has a consequence to face.  
What's gained  
if we don't try  
and risk disgrace?  
Be careful what you wish for  
we are warned.  
Each dream's adventure  
is a fantasy.  
I am the hero.  
Too am the foe.  
As every aspect  
is some part of me,  
my shadow self knows  
what I ought to know.  
Be careful what you dread.  
You'll summon near  
the very obstacle  
that you most fear.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Let's Make A Deal

Though seldom seen  
He's always hanging 'round.  
You're never safe.  
He'll elbowed his way in.  
I fear if I deny him  
He'll confound my plan,  
Surprise me with his killer grin.  
I keep out of his way,  
Because I hope  
If I ignore him,  
He'll ignore me too.  
I tease him sometimes  
(It's a way to cope)  
A moth and flame game,  
One cannot undo.  
I fear he likes his humor  
Gross and grim.  
I've lately thought  
Should I make him my friend  
Till he gets bored with me? '  
I bet the end will come too soon  
When I've forgotten him.  
I ask  
(Though I seem morbid,  
Praying, rude)  
What deal have YOU made  
With that Reaper dude?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Life Is A Banquet And...

Most poor suckers are starving to death'

Name Dennis

□

Perhaps it is too late.

We always had enough

to feed the planet

if we tried.

We stored for famine,

shared with those denied.

New methods, tools we found

when crops grew bad.

But tyrants create scarcity

by war.

We dread we will not have

our own fair share

and scheme to sneak a crumb

for our own care.

We sell our souls.

We hunger, craving more.

You won't say

you love yourself

or me,

hear I love you

or ask for what you need.

You fear each sign of longing,

weakness, greed.

Your habits hide your hurt.

But you can free yourself.

There's heaps of love

enough to carve a slice of happiness

and no one starve.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Like A Virus

On shelf or counter  
they will latent lie.  
In supermarkets,  
boxes 'neath the stairs,  
or from a friend,  
through ear or eye,  
the sly contagious germ  
will enter unawares.  
And once infected  
no help can you find.  
First you'll deny it,  
try to carry on  
until the fever bans work  
from your mind.  
Your hands are hasty.  
Appetite is gone.  
You might as well give up.  
Go home to bed.  
Take phone off hook.  
Turn heater on or fan.  
Put coffee at your side.  
Lamp over head.  
For, though you'll toss and turn,  
you're quite resolved to end  
the mystery novel while you can,  
cause you can't function  
till the murder's solved.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Like Guppies

With snapping tails  
While swimming around and round  
They each explore  
The kingdom of their sphere.  
With all needs met  
Why would they bound from here?  
But freedom is an urge  
That's quite profound.  
The globe of glass  
Confounds that pesky wish.  
To eat? To sleep?  
To bite? To hide? To go?  
It's said the only one  
Who doesn't know a fish  
Is under water  
Is a fish.  
You kept us,  
Showed us off.  
Each was your toy.  
You teased us more and more  
When you got bored.  
Not love and life,  
Hostility you stored.  
To rid yourself of us  
Brought swells of joy.  
You spill your little swimmers  
Down the bowl  
With such relief.  
Then flush us down the hole.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Lines Sent Above A Work To Be Considered By A Reader's Theater

Go little poem.

Go sneak into each ear

and vellicate the lobe

with vowels that chime

or blow upon the drum

to make them hear,

not see

(tug eyelids shut)

the rising climb of consonants,

the echo of each rhyme.

Make lips and tongue

trace words that must evade.

Make fingers beat

to dancing feet in time

with bouncing brow

as syllables cascade.

Then, maybe,

judgment can be stalled, delayed,

conventions circumvented.

Quick!

Outrun the hasty glance

and dull the urge to grade,

before they say

'This simply can't be done.'

Go, sprite!

Assure them that they needn't fear.

Release their hearts.

I'm lonely.

Bring them near.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Lines Written On A Paper Napkin

If you think  
I'm just goin' to go away,  
then you've got me all wrong.  
And if you bet  
I'll take offense  
or get discouraged,  
say 'I'm done. I quit! '  
then you don't know me yet.  
Cause I'm a salesman.  
Selling's in my core.  
And in the end,  
No matter what you sell  
You have to sell yourself.'  
Yes, I'm a bore.  
This is the only thing  
that I do well.  
But I'm not like  
the others of my tribe  
Cause I'm not one  
to pressure or misguide,  
to intimidate, or bargain,  
to beat down, bribe.  
But shark or saint,  
a salesman has no pride.  
I'm still here.  
Even if you grow irate.  
Cause as a salesman  
I know how to wait.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Lore Of The Banshee

What gives good luck?  
What should I gently pluck?  
The cherry and the  
Clover and the...O  
What test or lot  
Proves if he loves or not?  
The daisy and the  
Buttercup.

What 'neath my head  
Brings visions to my bed?  
The lilac and the  
Mandrake and the...O  
What should I view  
To make my lover true?  
The myrtle and the  
Marigold.

What saves my house  
From rain and fire and mouse?  
The fennel and the  
Seaweed and the...O  
What keeps the child  
From growing rash and wild?  
The rowan and the  
Mistletoe.

When fever fills  
What cures the aches and chills?  
The nettle and the  
Aspen and the...O  
What stops the pain,  
Makes gout and headaches wane?  
The cowslip and the  
Blackberry.

What should I shun,  
Not touch till day's begun?

The nightshade and the  
Poppy and the...O  
What plucked at night  
Gives dreams and second-sight?  
The primrose and the  
Impernel.

What at my lip  
Is certain death to sip?  
The elder and the  
Hemlock and the...O  
What serves them best  
When dead are laid to rest?  
The holly and the  
Meadow sweet.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Man To Man

How does a child learn  
What is right, what's wrong?  
The cartoons stage  
The magical and cruel.  
Our parents preach.  
Our peers know what is cool.  
We're taught one must be  
Clever, quick and strong.  
My elders tried  
To slap in me 'some sense'  
On: pregnancy and drink  
And drugs and crime,  
The consequence  
Of living in a time  
Of foreign wars  
And local violence.  
Once with my dad  
I watched a western,  
When a cowboy felled a bad guy  
With one blow.  
My father caught my eye.  
His words were slow.  
I tried that once.  
I learned my lesson then.'  
And more than that advice  
I won't forget  
The ring of honesty,  
His deep regret.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Mi Casa, Su Casa

Hello, come in my friend!  
You're welcome here.  
I have an extra toothbrush,  
a towel and comb.  
You got here safely.  
Hope I sound sincere as I say,  
I want you to feel at home.  
But I'm not sure  
just what home means to you  
and what if  
how I live  
to you seems wrong.  
Well, be yourself  
and somehow we'll make do.  
I only ask you  
not to stay too long.  
With every year  
we're more set in our ways.  
As we grow strict  
we're destined to offend.  
So let us make the most  
of these few days.  
You wouldn't be here  
if you weren't my friend.  
Sit down,  
relax,  
be real.  
Just understand,  
you cannot be  
both comfortable and grand.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Missions Impossible

Our her: Super?

Not! Disguised as me.

Love interest?

You, confused

yet unaware.

The villains:

Space and Time and Gravity

and Luck and Fate,

Lost Confidence, Despair.

The Scene:

A speeding train.

I have to leap upon another

tracing near and

use my strength and wits,

unseen through cars to creep,

unlock the coded door, and

light a fuse.

Pressed flesh to flesh

I feel you stretch and moan.

You sense yourself

all powerful, divine.

Just as you realize

you're not alone

I have one sec.

to bump your heart with mine.

Too soon and

I'll be crushed

beneath the train.

Too late?

You're changing hubcaps

in your brain.

□

Glen Martin Fitch

# Mistress Mary

I bought a suit  
then gave that suit away.  
'It goes with everything! '  
So said the clerk.  
Not so.  
My brown belt  
made the pants looked gray,  
but then the black belt  
somehow didn't work.  
I swear by day  
I'd call the color stone,  
but underneath a lamp  
it could be sand.  
In photographs  
it had a purple tone.  
It seemed by plan perverse,  
but just looked bland.  
Please tell me  
why you contradict your boss;  
claim yourself vegan  
at a bar-bee-que;  
at 'Daddy's temple'  
wear your 'Mommy's cross? '  
You must know  
it's a pain to be near you.  
Your answer to each offer's  
always 'Nope.'  
Go die.  
I bet your cosmic aura's taupe.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Monumental

For every soul  
It seems a different sight.  
It happened on  
A version unaware  
And I was shocked.  
I didn't think I'd care.  
Deferred, I managed  
To avoid that fight.  
Just like a scar  
It cut across the lawn,  
A gouge that jagged  
And upward rose one side,  
An unhealed wound  
Recalling all who died,  
Commemorating  
All the lives now gone.  
How can a work so simple  
Yet impart to each  
The sadness, pride,  
Frustration, grief,  
Or shame that lingers still  
And give relief,  
Expressed serenely  
Through the power of art?  
To honor, mourn and  
Jab those hearts grown dull,  
The Vietnam  
Veteran's Memorial.

Glen Martin Fitch

# More Advice To A Young Poet

Perhaps you don't want me  
to know you're done.  
Your thought's complete.  
Perhaps you don't want me to note  
an insert,  
a clause, or  
a series has begun, or  
when a thing's possessed, or  
strange,  
foresee omissions,  
quotes' or  
something that's left out  
as in an after-thought,  
some (F.Y.I.) or  
something emphasized.  
We read without a hint.  
I fear we often go awry.  
A play is written  
for the eye and ear.  
When reading one  
you search the text for clues.  
Once poems were heard and seen,  
passed year to year.  
Please make me write your poem.  
Please be my muse.  
Give me the signal  
when to pause or  
wait and breathe and think.  
Please, poet, punctuate.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Mount Rushmore

The faces stare out  
Chiseled proud and bold  
With polished cheeks,  
Their character defined.  
No monument shows  
Heroes silly, kind or frail.  
These giants look down  
Stoic, cold.  
You face the world  
Resolved to make your day.  
You strut and lean in  
To intimidate.  
When charm won't trick,  
You'll then manipulate or bully  
To insure you get your way.  
But like geologists  
Who chip then name each strata,  
Have tracked your faults and  
Mapped your self-contempt,  
Your molten fury,  
Trapped deep pits of prejudice,  
Frustration, shame.  
Your fierce facade  
Is just a thick veneer to hide  
Your guilt and  
Cowardice and fear.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Moving On

She laughed at me!  
I must have punched her heart  
when I, at four, first screamed,  
I HATE you, mom! '  
I'd thought that I'd get hit,  
But she stayed calm.  
She knew  
Our private journey had to part.  
At fourteen all I did  
Was stomp and groan.  
At dad's polite suggestions  
How I frowned.  
I loved and needed them  
Yet still felt bound.  
Up swelled that urge  
To fend off on my own.  
Once we were one  
But now you're gone  
And hoarding your things  
Will not bring you back.  
My grief masks  
My resentment.  
Though I lack the courage  
And the will  
I must move on.  
I hope you're smiling  
As I chew my lip  
And let your treasures slip  
Out of my grip.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Mulberry Circle

Jack's back.  
That jack's an ass.  
He's so damn crude.  
He's all I hate.  
He'll catch me unaware,  
Embarrass me,  
Make me look crass and rude.  
He'll itch me  
Till I scratch and people stare.  
He got me in such trouble  
In my youth.  
Around and round we go.  
But he's no fool!  
The stupid grin's on me  
As he speaks truth.  
He must be very wise  
To be so cruel.  
At night his weasel eyes  
Invade my dreams.  
I'm calm. I'm cool.  
He's planning his attack.  
The better I become,  
The more he schemes.  
I'd kill him if I could.  
But I am Jack.  
I ought to let him out,  
Yet I buy locks.  
One hand on lid  
I shove him in his box.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Arsenal

I like to stack them tall  
or end-to-end,  
but then I dread  
I find a dud I've penned.  
Each syllable feels heavy  
in my hand,  
a sharp, slick sound  
to pierce and then expand.  
Like shrapnel  
multi-meanings pack each shell.  
A shot with match-grade words  
set to propel incendiary sentences.  
I use the slightly fraying phrases  
as a fuse.  
And oh, the satisfaction,  
oh the fun to set with care  
then hide the trip-wire pun,  
or plant an ode or sonnet meadow  
with no hint of hidden mines  
of symbol, myth.  
Believe me  
no offense meant on my part,  
but every bullet's  
aiming at your heart.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Arthritis

If once more  
I could move just as I please.  
Some days are not so bad.  
Some days I cry.  
You know, I feel it  
In my fingers, knees,  
My body's breaking down.  
I don't know why.  
Just thinking of the past  
Makes me more ill.  
A future life of pain  
Seems cruel and strange.  
And yet there comes a time  
When sitting still hurts more  
Than getting up  
And facing change.  
The past is gone.  
I know it in my heart.  
And yet I long for you  
Through out the day.  
I have to face a life  
With us apart.  
This is the hardest thing  
I'll ever say.  
I must move on.  
I need to set you free.  
I have to ask you  
Not to talk to me.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Best Recipe

In one bowl  
Scoop in truth  
With fine milled grains.  
Too much is data,  
Less seems trite,  
Though which way will affect  
The wisdom this contains.  
Next measure beauty,  
Cause too much is kitsch  
And less seems dry.  
Tradition makes this rise.  
When foaming mix  
(Or you'll get lumpy prose)  
Then knead the words  
To build good lines  
That ties it pliant, firm.  
Next leave it its repose.  
While ferment builds,  
The magic's starting,  
For it's up to chance.  
Then, when it's at its prime,  
You punch it down.  
Then punch it down once more.  
Next shape to form,  
Let rise, and  
Bake in time.  
Then test it if it is done.  
You'll pay for haste.  
This sonnet's hot and fresh.  
You like the taste?

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Big Sir

□

Where sleeps the Trickster who carved this sacred land;  
In his slumbers when HE tosses we shake in fear.

He, who clawed the deep canyons  
Beneath the spindrift waves  
And scooped up the Pacific floor  
To pile on the Santa Lucia peaks?  
As beads of sweat shine on a forehead,  
The cliffs of Pico Blanco sparkle in the sun.

Above ruddy manzanita and chaparral scrub,  
Over deer-grass and dusty sagebrush,  
Where poppies glint like ore  
And lupine flash then fade,  
Beneath the honking harlequin  
And the sun stirred monarchs,  
The rising haze vanishes.  
The ocean drizzle disappears.

As sweat glistens down an arm pit,  
The thickets collect the dew from the mist.  
What snow may fall on the mountain slopes  
On perching cypress and blood berried madrone  
On crags of twirling fir and pungent pine,  
Melts down dells where still redwoods sip the fog,  
And divides into the Surs, Little and Big,  
To race down hillsides of sprawling laurel,  
Where hovering hawks and owls spy field mice,  
The downy woodpeckers pound for beetles,  
Where mountain lions stalk the deer  
And yapping coyotes chase wild hare  
And the live oaks stretch branch to branch.  
As lashes hide the sleep in the gully of an eye,  
The leaf meal and needles gather 'neath ferns.  
Down river beds to lagoons the salmon commute,  
Down ravines to marshes the stickleback swarm,  
Where spray and surf pound the beach sand  
And foam and froth stir the tide pools.

Here sea lions bark and bask  
And otters pry mussels and abalone  
And kelp forests sway with the current  
And algae bloom red and green and brown,  
Above the alley of sharks  
And the boulevard of whales.  
As pink and pale as the nail of a finger,  
The secret sides of the shells are revealed.

With every step I glance down in case  
Left lost on a high out crop or  
Exposed by the tides in the mud of a creek  
Find an arrowhead.

☐

Once the Esselen filled  
Baskets with berries and acorns.  
Once the Ohlone made boats  
Of tule with lines and nets.  
They had their wars;  
They dumped their waste,  
But they lived on not out of the land  
They made peace with the elk  
And the bear they killed.

Like Cabrillo and Drake  
I want to survey your form.  
Like Portola and Father Serra  
I seek to possess your soul.  
Like Pfeiffer and Figueroa  
I lust to own you.

As if I could map the waves;  
As if I could fence the skies.  
Who am I to clip a lock from your head?  
It is my desire I must conquer.

☒

You nap now in your splendor  
☒nd know me not,  
You sleep in stillness  
☒ver quick to quake.  
Arise and accept my devotion.

Like a spear you pierce my heart with your gaze.  
☒With my tears I ache to erode your brow.  
☒ong to tongue the crease of your chin,  
☒he stubble on the crest of your cheek.  
☒yearn to nuzzle your walnut nipples.

With my lips let me kiss you with my breath  
☒he hard knot of your ankle,  
☒he hollow dent of your breast bone,  
☒he milkweed down of your ass cheeks,  
☒he bracken in the gorge of your butt.

Deny not my eyes  
☒he river bed wrinkles of your scrotum,  
☒he shaded, shy burrow of your anus,  
☒he oak cap of your foreskin,  
☒he burl root of your shaft.

Stretch out your wings to embrace me.  
☒ke a hovering hawk,  
☒ke a soaring condor,  
By my neck lift me up in your bite.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Brand-New Daily Planner

I like to plan.  
I like these pages bare,  
my future fresh.  
(I never mind the cost.)  
So many possibilities!  
With care I keep it,  
fearing, dreading it get lost.  
My old one seems so fragile,  
patched and stained,  
with names and numbers  
cramped on every line.  
So much crossed out  
and yet a lot remained,  
insertions, too,  
but not by my design.  
The heedless youth believes  
"I'll never die!"  
The old  
"Is this the day?"  
We in-betweens obsess,  
By greasy valves?  
By sugar high?  
By bug bite,  
Bomb,  
false step?  
By threats unseen?"  
I can't control  
the where or when or how.  
Still I prefer  
to start my planning now.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Half Life

Boy, meeting you that day  
Was such a blast.  
Laughed, I stared, I glowed.  
Felt so good.  
Felt so special,  
Valued, understood.  
"Could this be it? "  
Thought and  
"Can it last? "  
We met again.  
You dropped the bomb on me.  
You're spoken for.  
My luck!  
Must like the rest.  
As if you could be free.  
I should have guessed.  
'At-first-sight love'  
Comes with no guarantee.  
So torn in two,  
At odds,  
I did my best to hide,  
To lessen love and act at ease.  
Just to be near you,  
How I sought to please you.  
Over time  
I've felt a kind of rest.  
And so we're friends.  
Must friends.  
I live my lie,  
Cause if the theory's true,  
My love can't die.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Invitation To You

We're all alone.  
Sit down. Relax.  
Lay back.  
I'm here for you  
and, yes, for me as well.  
Adventure's what I'm offering.  
You lack experience, excitement.  
I can tell.  
A bully makes one small  
to seem more tall.  
I don't seek private joy  
at your expense.  
I won't make you  
do anything at all.  
If safe, if free, if fun,  
it just makes sense.  
I think there's part of you  
who wants this too.  
Let's get past shame,  
embarrassment and fear.  
At every step  
there is a choice for you.  
Your every secret wish  
I want to hear.  
Come feel. Come taste.  
You want to.  
Don't just guess.  
It's ripe. It's sweet.  
It's here. It's yours.  
Say, "YES! "

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Kind Of Town

The men's room closed,  
I waited with no choice.  
I saw two lesbians,  
Both elderly.  
The older of the couple  
Seemed to be androgynous.  
Their love made me rejoice.  
The younger waited  
In a shopper's daze.  
But then a girl with Down came out.  
Face red with rage  
I saw a MAN in there! '  
I said, 'But women can be  
Many different ways.'  
Yet she was sure and  
She began to shout.  
He TOUCHED himself! '  
Five people raised her well.  
If somethings wrong, I  
find grown ups,  
tell them.  
Tell until you're heard.'  
I said 'I'll check this out.'  
I'm proud to live  
Where women can be strong,  
and safe and brave and  
know that they belong.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Right Big Toe

My mother taught me  
how to clip my nails.  
Just one more parent's duty  
I suppose.  
Self-care creates self-worth  
with such details,  
and how you treat yourself  
shows in your toes.  
She had a nail, I know,  
that went astray.  
(It's funny how kids  
never miss a flaw)  
I clipped away  
and suddenly  
one day  
same nail on me  
had curled by nature's law.  
Today I noticed  
that one had turned black,  
but when and how it bruised  
can't recall.  
It had to have been  
quite a nasty whack.  
It's weird  
I don't remember it at all.  
Though,  
while in three month's time,  
it will be gone,  
the mystery of what and why  
goes on.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Rummage Sale

Step up and check 'em out.  
Oh, don't be shy.  
You like disaster? horror?  
Got this from a plane seat neighbor.  
Stock tips from a guy at work.  
Dumb humor?  
Travel tales of Spain?  
From waiting rooms here's  
cures for troubled minds.  
Take one, take all!  
A one-date song of woe of jilted love.  
While trapped in check-out lines  
here's stacks of seedy star dirt.  
All must go.  
Old texts you toss  
or sell or give away.  
A book you pick and  
choose to read  
or not.  
But stories, lore and rumor  
find their way into my brain  
to clutter, rattle, rot.  
Please help me clear my mind  
to think or sleep.  
There's really nothing here  
I want to keep.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Secret Prayer

Strange, super-human powers  
I possess.

I know what's hidden, where,  
and I can guess your history  
from your breath,  
and what things weigh.

My ears can hear a rip  
from rooms away.

I know what's in your 'fridge,  
your cart, your bag.

What's missing from a shelf,  
what's on a rag.

The diagrams

my inner eye divides.

I never asked for this.

Besides I'm powerless.

I fret to see folks frown.

Observed alone,

as a guest, or on the town

they think me rude.

What nerve! '

What gall! '

They watch me stare  
and drool and scheme

at all that's gulped or

sucked or licked or bit and chewed

I pray then:

Thank you, God,

that's not my food.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Theory Of Gardening

Ideas sprout.  
Words shoot out of my pen  
Like unsown seeds  
That never knew a hand  
But lie about  
To crack the untilled land  
With desperate roots,  
who know their how and when,  
Emerging,  
Digging fast and deep  
And then a stalk up soars.  
Ere leaf and bloom expand  
I cut them back  
Again and yet again.  
Some favor weak willed vines,  
some value weeds.  
Their pens are free to roam  
As they compose.  
I plan. I prune. I graft.  
This poet breeds each precious bud  
As if a perfect rose.  
Curse not the barren branch,  
the fallow yard.  
To write is easy.  
Not to write is hard.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Theory Of You

What primal pulse propels  
the starry dust to fill  
the seeming void?  
Throughout the vast expanding universe  
that vibrant gust elates,  
enthalls all  
in its bursting blast.  
What constant converse power  
counteracts that outward thrust?  
What vigor tugs and turns  
each atom back?  
The weight of mass attracts,  
as each to every other  
likewise yearns.  
Your wisdom  
(flash of particle or wave)  
excites, impels us,  
spinning into space-  
clear-sighted, joyous,  
resolute, and brave.  
Your dignity, compassion,  
kindness, grace, your gaze,  
your smile compels us  
just to be at peace  
within your hugging gravity.

Glen Martin Fitch

# My Warning Citation

(after being stopped after my day-care shift)

Exhausted, overwhelmed,  
confused, up-set,  
as when a toddler  
bellows on the rug,  
so small and powerless,  
her needs unmet,  
she fights me,  
but I know she needs a hug.  
(My loving parents  
would have belted me  
or worse ignored my plight)  
Though she resists  
my arms encircle her.  
She can't get free.  
When you relax,  
I'll let you go.'  
She twists and bends  
and yet I know  
she craves restraint.  
She longs to know  
that someone's big enough  
and cares enough  
to answer her complaint.

So we need others  
constant, careful, tough.  
Thanks, officer,  
for making me slow down.  
Our town is safe.  
I'm safer in our town.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Never Complain, Never Explain

You ever notice,  
If you break your arm,  
Each friend shows such dismay  
At your account  
And then,  
(Though you're the one  
Who's come to harm)  
Each tells THEIR tale of pain,  
The type, amount?  
You ever notice  
How they know  
So much about the ins and outs  
Of treatment,  
Share the symptoms, warnings,  
Firm advice and such,  
As if your doctor  
Doesn't know your care?  
They mean well.  
But they wonder why I stall,  
As each detail and clue  
They try to learn.  
It's really not  
About MY health at all.  
Their OWN health ought to be  
Their main concern.  
I'll not report, excuse,  
Take heed or whine.  
Now all you need to know  
Is that- I'm fine.

Glen Martin Fitch

## Next Level

So am I still your friend if  
If I poke your eye?  
A toddler's bold experiment,  
That's existential  
Without mean intent.  
What if I grab or share?  
Bite or stroke?  
Am I your friend  
If I go spread  
Lies about you?  
High school trials:  
Who's in? who's out?  
What actions, words  
Yield pride  
Or guilt or doubt?  
What's private?  
What is trust?  
Respect? and why.  
Am I your friend  
If I move in your house?  
Or drink your booze?  
Or steal the cash you earn?  
Or punch your face?  
(I guess I didn't learn)  
Or start a rumor?  
If I bed your spouse?  
The game is still the same,  
But if you're wise  
You'll sense the pain  
As consequences rise.

Glen Martin Fitch

## Not An Excuse, But...

Adults are pleased and proud to see  
their child behave so well,  
so cute in party dress.  
Forgotten are their years  
of pain and stress.  
It's THEIR shame  
when their kid is acting wild.  
But cherubs make me nervous.  
Little elves are busy testing  
in their quest to learn.  
It never stops.  
Our souls we have to earn.  
They're surest  
when they are their messy selves.  
But party cloths still chafe.  
I grew amiss.  
My imp-self sought  
a witness, yard stick, sage.  
In my distress,  
my tantrum showed my age.  
Why you?  
Why then?  
No consolation this:  
Though I betrayed your trust  
and broke your heart,  
I did feel safe enough  
to fall apart.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Not Available In All States

For you,  
A special offer!  
Rare! Unreal! Exclusive!  
All your day-dreams  
You could see fulfilled.  
You'll never get a better deal.  
A "once a life-time"  
Opportunity.  
Invest in character,  
In whimsy, style!  
Mature, yet barely used,  
Much more than show.  
This could be yours alone!  
Unique! worthwhile!  
(See glowing testimonials below)

Act now!  
Redeem this coupon for my heart.  
It's priceless, precious.  
Please don't miss this chance.  
Your interest will gain interest.  
So be smart!  
You too  
Can have security, romance.  
Your satisfaction guaranteed.  
Supply is short.

(Note: some exclusions may apply.)

Glen Martin Fitch

# Note Left On A Plate At A Buffet

I like the way you eat.  
It says a lot about a man,  
Your way with fork and knife.  
You're careful,  
cautious of what's hot,  
But with each bite  
I watch you relish life.  
My God,  
If you could see yourself  
Right now as I do.  
Did you know your eyebrows  
Dance each swallow?  
Others munch and gnaw  
Like cow or pig at trough,  
Like zombies in a trance.  
You savor,  
Pace yourself and  
Wisely pick.  
You breathe.  
You drink,  
Not greedy gulps,  
But sips.  
And when just now  
That sauce I saw you lick,  
I thought  
"If only I could only kiss those lips."  
But now your face  
Reveals dismay, surprise.  
Look up  
And see the hunger in my eyes.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Nsa

Once bride and groom were bound.  
Each marriage planned at birth.  
Of course divorce was not a choice.  
Romantic love  
has finally found a voice.  
Now gender, past or race  
walk hand in hand.  
Today it seems the vogue  
to find a friend with benefits,  
get pleasure without grief,  
Keep busy at our tasks,  
and snatch relief  
and hope we won't feel lonely  
at the end.  
But aren't we also yearning  
to connect?  
To find a special one?  
Feel special too?  
Share private jokes  
and rituals to do that strengthen love  
and foster trust, respect?  
We all crave freedom,  
peace, some time apart  
and yet we need those strings  
to bind our heart.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Observe A Traveler In A Foreign Land

Each habit he tries on,  
Each sight explores.  
As if it were his home  
He proudly stands  
when each new secret  
In his heart he stores.  
But soon some flaw  
The traveler quickly spies.  
Bored with the new  
His restless heart will roam  
Or worse,  
Designed to change  
Invade his eyes  
To make this land  
As perfect as his home.  
And I have roamed  
The counties of your soul.  
Your smile was warmth.  
Your wisdom  
Made me start.  
Proud of your deeds  
And prouder of your goal,  
I mapped your moods.  
I searched  
Your hidden heart.  
Please show me more.  
Please put this heart to rest.  
Make me no exile.  
Just a better guest.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Of Usage And Misusage

I have his pliers,  
h̄ack saw,  
h̄uler, sledge,  
h̄e tools my father  
h̄aught me to maintain.  
h̄nd which to pick to cinch,  
h̄r torque, or plane  
h̄nd when to grab a chisel  
h̄r a wedge  
I have her grater,  
h̄tter,  
h̄lling pin,  
h̄tensils mother  
h̄sed for every need,  
She said  
h̄You picked the right one,  
h̄en proceed  
h̄ whisk, or slice,  
h̄r chop, or strain, or skin."  
They were so skilled.  
Each gesture was concise.  
h̄hey often said 'You can't...'  
h̄bw I'd resent it,  
h̄hided 'hasty, lazy, ignorant.'  
h̄learned to spot the cheap,  
h̄e imprecise.  
Just so you can't rely  
h̄n what you've heard.  
You have to think and  
h̄ck the proper word.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Off Beat

In life we're forced  
to march in step,  
in line.  
But ragtime offers  
unexpected joy and tension.  
Stressing unstressed notes  
can buoy us,  
strutting in revolt  
and feeling fine.  
My friend's a radical  
I'm proud to know.  
To be like other kids  
was not his fate.  
He seeks out ways  
to deviate.  
It started when  
he dealt with polio.

One protest  
dressed in drag  
he parked his van.  
A hostile cop barked,  
'What's for handicapped! '  
So full of sass and spite,  
'I am! ' he snapped  
and lifted up his gown.  
We laughed and ran.  
His graceful gate  
of shoulders, hips, and feet  
was bouncing to  
his syncopated beat.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Oh No It's Not

'A man was crying. He said they make buttons and soap out of us.'  
'Life is Beautiful'

A film, a fable:

Guido tells his son  
the Nazi's camp's a game  
with points to gain.  
I know through humor  
one can deal with pain.  
But all is falsehood  
once this lie's begun.  
Reality can leave  
a fatal bruise.  
It seems so cruel.  
Deceit instead most use.  
But lying to a child's  
a coward's crime.  
Fit to their age  
kids need to know  
what's true  
He might have said  
The sea becomes the snow.  
Hot lava turns to rock  
that's worn to sand.  
From pear to poop to root...  
I understand it's scary  
and you're miserable,  
but know that I  
will always fight  
to be near you.  
We too become  
all other things in time.'□

Glen Martin Fitch

# On Discovering My Childhood Plans Of My Future Home

Those kids  
who won the race or  
spelling prize  
with blocks built walls  
the higher to knock down.  
But I, with cast off pieces,  
could devise split-level homes  
to fill a sprawling town.  
No teacher guessed  
behind my nap-time gaze  
grew domes of glass,  
a fortress in a tree,  
deep caves,  
a castle keep,  
a garden maze,  
a Doric temple,  
cities 'neath the sea.  
For years  
I've slept alone  
in rented rooms,  
yet still some nights  
I float up stairs of stone  
to tower loft  
or down through vaulted tombs  
to claim forgotten treasures  
as my own.  
I'll never build my dream-house,  
yet, in kind,  
these dreams and day dreams  
helped me build my mind.

Glen Martin Fitch

# On First Looking Into Jung's 'Man And His Symbols'

Before my birth  
Words showered down on me.  
Before I spoke  
Understood.  
Tried. I called. I named.  
Chatted thoughtlessly  
Engulfed in rapid discourse,  
Surging pride.  
Before I read  
Knew the picture book.  
From letters  
Sounds and syllables arose,  
Till I was swept away  
At every look,  
Immersed in verse  
And dialogue and prose.  
Since birth  
(Before?)  
I've dreamt.  
But I forgot the horror,  
Puzzle, bliss  
Before dawn's glow.  
Yet after reading Jung  
Hot visions shot and spewed up  
Geyser-like from deep below  
Confusing my primed conscious mind  
With awe, like Keller  
At the spigot  
Shouting 'Waaaaa...'

Glen Martin Fitch

# On My Kindness

When I consider  
How our income's spent  
as aimlessly  
we wander far and wide,  
or find receipts and bills  
you tried to hide from me,  
I wonder where our money went.  
Good reasons for each purchase  
you present  
if I object or  
whine or tease or chide.  
The swelling of our debt  
we've both denied.  
I'm sure we're doomed.  
Yet how can I prevent you  
buying things  
we simply do not need?  
It's my fault too,  
I know.  
I try my best to be supportive,  
yet our sorry state,  
I'm sure,  
grows worse each day  
with greater speed.  
In line I am as guilty as the rest.  
They also shop  
who only hold and wait.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Orfeo's Lament

So 'lone is the stranger  
A way from his homeland.  
Sb sad is the shipwrecked,  
The castaway clinging.  
Sb silent the stillborn  
A drift in the womb's sea.

A sailor, an exile,  
I sought a new country  
Till ocean and heaven  
Above and below me  
In deluge did battle  
And left me for flotsam.

Sb cold was the water!  
It pierced till it numbed me.  
Sb swift was the current  
That pulled and embraced me.  
Sb fierce were the brine waves  
That tasted like tear drops.

It I had been washed up  
To wake on the shore of  
The Isle of Dead Heroes,  
The Kingdom of Hades,  
I'd rest with the valiant,  
Share tales and libations.

But death did not take me,  
Instead I was stranded  
To weep with the living,  
Who battered by sorrows  
Still gasp, though despairing,  
And thrash in misfortune.

It I long for silence  
Why still does my heart beat?  
It I wish for darkness  
Why still do my eyes see?

¶ I'm bound for dying  
¶ Why still do my wounds heal?

¶ don't mourn for infants  
¶ At rest from life's labors.  
¶ don't cry for sailors  
¶ Who sway 'neath the ocean.  
¶ Sigh for the exile  
¶ Who lingers untaken.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Our First Road Trip

I've not been one  
to tell you how to drive.  
It's your car, your gas.  
I'm here for the ride.  
Right now,  
It's up to you  
when we arrive.  
But this is what I'm seeing  
from my side.  
When fearing that  
we're moving way too fast,  
you panic,  
citing doubts and finding fault,  
as somehow, something here  
reflects the past  
which brings our journey  
to a grinding halt.  
I don't expect  
you'll trust me with the wheel.  
Not asking!  
You can navigate this maze.  
And though I cannot change  
the way you feel,  
I'm here for you.  
You have my faith and praise.  
Believe me,  
objects in the rear-view mirror  
are much more wonderful  
than they appear.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Out Of The Mouth Of Babes

It ended

With each fighting off a smile.

Although relieved,

Not knowing what to say,

Back in their cars

Both quickly drove away,

Embarrassed,

Grateful for each passing mile.

It started

With two bumpers in one place.

My friend was heading homeward

After lunch.

The car ahead had stopped.

Then came the crunch.

Each righteous stood there

Yelling face to face.

My friend had been

Familiar with the law,

The wrong way.

Worse he saw a little kid inside.

Their blood was hot.

Their nerves were raw.

He couldn't end this

As he always did.

When from the car seat,

Louder than a slap,

The toddler shouted,

'Someone needs a nap!'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Patch Work

Back home one night  
I felt a steady draft.  
I found a bundle  
On a closet shelf.  
My mom had treasured  
Her mom's handicraft.  
My grandma was  
A comforter herself.  
A flannel field,  
A denim sky,  
No waste!  
Each frayed and faded piece-  
A mystery.  
No scrap was ever  
Lost away in haste.  
Each old time print  
Contains its history.  
That night  
Like almost every restless night  
Strange vignettes flash  
Of faces, things,  
Yet switched in time or place.  
Haphazard remnants  
Stitched together,  
Making no sense  
Come the light.  
Those crazy quilts of dreams  
I can't explain.  
I seek a blissful  
Land of counter-pain.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Pay No Attention To That Man Behind The...

You're looking for a wizard?  
Don't look here.  
(I'm no Professor Marvel.  
I'm a sham.)  
Whenever I sense  
someone's need or fear,  
I play the part.  
I let them think I am.  
It's true I lie,  
but as a poet lies.  
We both were boring Kansas  
born and bred.  
(I think it's black and white life  
we despise.)  
We long  
for rainbow tinted lands instead.  
To raise an emerald city  
was their dream.  
Don't hurry back too soon,  
for as you view it  
so you build it too  
and it would seem the old  
(if I've done my job well)  
is new.  
So make your own Oz.  
Find your own way home.  
Now go.  
Don't trust this poet,  
trust your poem.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Perineal Raphe

What did enduring Atlas think of his Earth?  
Did he ever give it a good look?  
Stretch his Titan shoulders of the burden  
And peer at the seas and islands and peaks?

My love, you are my world to cherish.  
Every dimple, every hair is my delight.  
I long to embrace you from behind  
and hold you as we drop to our knees.

As Atlas I'd push Arabia and Asia aside,  
Kiss India with the Monsoon of my lips,  
and explore from the Himalayas to the pole  
the curious Ural with my tongue.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Peripheral Vision

Just like a child  
I always long  
to be with you  
and when I'm not  
I fret and sigh  
until I finally turn  
my head and see you  
busy in the corner  
of my eye.  
And like a teen  
I fight so to feel free,  
I push away  
and yet I also  
try to keep you trapped  
in case you start to flee.  
Stay busy in the corner  
of my eye.  
My sadness seeks  
to have you linger near  
because I sense that  
somehow you're not real.  
My pride claims all  
until you disappear.  
But whether close or far  
don't ever feel you're bound  
or you're abandoned,  
when you spy me  
busy in the corner  
of your eye.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Philately

Well since you showed me yours,  
I'll show you mine.  
Here's HOLIDAYS.  
There's SPORTS  
for quick review.  
A lot are faded, old,  
unique, some new.  
They look like scabs.  
I've stuck them in a line.  
There's PORTRAITS:  
fools, fake friends  
and famous flakes,  
Ex-lovers, relatives,  
false profits, fiends.  
COMMEM'RATIVES go here:  
our war machines,  
that cruise, the pet we lost,  
and tax mistakes.  
Collecting these  
felt useful for awhile.  
More than a hobby,  
this became my style.  
Their values change.  
Few special, rare.  
Each only opens wounds  
and leaves them bare.  
Back then ignoring crimes  
seemed such a crime.  
But held resentments  
simply wastes my time.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Plaque

Used wrapping paper,  
plastic cups, faux hair,  
cliff hangers, instant coffee,  
child-proof caps,  
repeated jingles,  
static, squelch, dead air.  
Oh, every other driver,  
cell phones,  
snaps, all polka dots,  
and pot-holes, power lines,  
stringed lights, long cords and cables,  
tiny type, those packing pellets,  
pop-up windows, signs that flash,  
most garnish, all election hype,  
those cards that fall from magazines,  
stuffed birds,  
chewed gum, cheap sandals,  
copy ink, frayed ends,  
words mispronounced, misquotes  
and made-up words,  
my friends' ex-lovers,  
worse! ex-lover's friends,  
all surveys, pet hair,  
floral scent shampoo,  
rude waiters, shower scum,  
cigar smoke,  
you.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Playing With Matches

Some poets lead romantic lives,  
Some not.  
Some thrive by talent, friends,  
Or luck, or taste.  
Some seem to represent  
What's lewd or chaste  
And some stay sober.  
Some use booze or pot.  
But you crave fun and fame  
And want them soon.  
Reject the current myth  
Of risk and pain.  
If you,  
Instead of effort,  
Think you'll gain by turning  
To a needle and a spoon,  
Then,  
Like the pit crew fool  
With plugs to clean,  
Who struck a match  
To play a deadly game  
By handily extinguishing  
The flame deep  
In a half-filled pail of gasoline,  
You just might last  
To boast of highs or strife,  
But it's more likely  
You will blow your life.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Plucked

I'm sure you've seen a man  
in hot debate or  
foaming lost in thought,  
as in a trance  
reach out,  
snap up a bud to mutilate,  
then quickly toss it off  
without a glance.  
Did you feel empty,  
desperate,  
deep despair?  
Or was it boredom, rage,  
frustration, fear  
that made you kiss me  
more than I could bear  
and leave me,  
with this bruise  
beneath my ear?  
I mean,  
why bother reaching out to me?  
Why crush me close  
and then run on your way?  
I sought to give you joy,  
but could it be your joy  
arose from feeling  
my dismay?  
That bite left on my neck  
will cease to smart,  
but what about  
the hickey on my heart?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Poison Oak

A gardener,  
A semi-feral guy I knew,  
Averse to clothing,  
Even shoes,  
In searing sun or  
Fending rain  
Would chose to be outside.  
Until we wondered  
Why one day on belly  
In a bok choy bed,  
Mid berry bush and fern,  
Should howl with tears  
Of agony,  
Why after all these years  
His seasoned skin swelled  
Itchy, raging red?  
For me  
I seek to monitor my mind  
For prejudice,  
My shadow's blatant slur,  
Last word or act by me  
Might now occur  
Insensitive,  
Intolerant,  
Unkind.  
Once tough to gore,  
Once versed on what is right  
I catch myself  
Betray a hostile slight.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Potted

Since seedling  
I've been dreaming  
On this shelf.  
If only  
Myth might shower  
On my head.  
If only  
I might stretch out  
In a bed of writers,  
Scholars growing like myself.  
What if my roots  
Had Latin, even Greek?  
What if all day  
My thoughts could see the sky,  
My branches pruned  
To please a critic's eye,  
Tradition's trellis  
Left when limbs grow weak?  
No, I don't mind  
My blossoms turning brown  
But was I bred for this?  
What I might write,  
If I had inspiration,  
Shining light?  
Will boredom dry my leaves  
Till I fall down?  
If only someone  
Pluck and smell a word  
I wish my fading colors  
Might be heard.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Primality

Take three or five, eleven, seventeen,  
or nineteen, twenty-three, or fifty-nine,  
Each one's unique, content,  
Complete, serene,  
Uncrackable  
By any known design.  
Feel trust, find self,  
feel will, find confidence  
Against fear and doubt and  
Guilt and being shamed;  
the Call, one heart,  
a prize, a sense of sense  
Of face confusion,  
Lonely, trapped and blamed.  
If mommy's breast or  
Daddy's praise  
Imports the rush of sex  
With birthing's primal force,  
Perhaps your puppy lost plus  
Boobie shorts,  
A friend's betrayal  
Combined might be divorce.  
Each life's formula  
Of mysteries  
Through time.  
Seek out, confront,  
accept, combine  
What's prime.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Priority

Whatever! Sure!  
What's your bizarre request?  
I've worn assorted panties,  
Briefs and thongs for others,  
Sitting still as they've obsessed  
Of life, of love,  
And catalogue their wrongs.  
Like there's the guy  
Who had me call him 'dad.'  
I'm cool.  
So what's your preference?  
'Sir?' or 'Son? '  
Come on.  
It's no time to feel tired or sad.  
You paid for this.  
The evening's just begun.  
We all pay.  
God, by masters  
I've been trained in guilt,  
Betrayal, denial, and jealousy.  
Intimidate or plead.  
Your choice.  
Your feigned concern is nice.  
Tonight's 'bout you not me.  
No matter how mistreated,  
Fricked or scarred,  
Right now,  
It's all 'bout you  
And keeping hard.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Privy Thoughts

At dawn I crawl and  
plop down on the pot  
How long? '  
Face another day of dread,  
of tedium,  
bored,  
wishing I were dead,  
As if  
persistent terror  
were my lot.  
My quiet desperation  
is a rut.  
Self-pity is the leash  
that keeps me stuck  
and in my place,  
expecting change  
through luck.  
I day dream victory and  
scratch my butt.  
Or  
I could rise and  
find the truth I knew.  
That's not heroics,  
just an attitude,  
the one thing I can change  
if it's pursued.  
And so I ask myself,  
What can I do  
to earn my health,  
to act the useful way,  
to hear and see and feel  
this special day? '

Glen Martin Fitch

# Problem Solving

It's like the way  
I run all day in fear  
Of how impatiently  
I stomp and kick  
Of bend and stretch,  
(That nimble hiding trick)  
Of stand and shift  
Until the end draws near.  
I sense the ache  
And yet it isn't till  
My feet are up, relaxed,  
I feel the pain.  
The pressure's off my heart.  
No muscles strain,  
Yet still the torment swells  
Beyond my will.  
So I apologize,  
Admit I'm wrong,  
Commit to follow through  
To make things right  
Because I AM sincere  
And not contrite,  
Yet still your anger glares on  
Just as strong.  
All's fixed and yet  
We're back where we've begun,  
Cause nothing's finished  
Till the feeling's done.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Puberty

A toddler's life  
is wonderful and strange.  
From innocence through pain  
we come to know  
the world, our place,  
observe our bodies grow.  
Though molded much,  
we sense each inner change.  
Within my cells  
the clever code incurled  
the when and where and how  
I am to be.  
And in my teens  
quite unbeknownst to me  
one day  
my first coiled private hair unfurled.  
And while my muscles swelled  
and frame soared tall  
a sense of malcontent  
within me grew,  
emotions surged and dove.  
As if on cue  
up surged a sense of self.  
I got my Call  
and no repressive,  
fearful force could stop  
this soaring, conscious thought  
from going pop.

Glen Martin Fitch

## Reason 17 Of 28

You tutored me.  
Can still recite by rote  
The who and whom begats.  
On details drilled I mastered cues  
To quote the anecdote  
and when to laugh or sigh  
Mid tales distilled  
Of rogues revealed,  
A fateful curse fulfilled.  
Can catalogue the foods  
You love and hate,  
The stars, the styles.  
In dos and don'ts  
I'm skilled in guessing  
Just the trait  
That you'll berate or praise.  
And I've complied without debate.  
The times I bit my tongue  
You can't believe,  
While on your final judgment  
I'd await.  
God damn you!  
Where'd I fail you?  
You can't leave me.  
Can it come to this?  
What will I do?  
What good'll be  
My PhD. in you?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Reclassification

Once poets chanted  
epic tales,  
dark rites.  
A country's pride,  
its glories past were kept  
in verse,  
not mega-bites, □  
So rituals, and  
lineage would last.  
A poet then was held  
in high regard,  
as custom keeper,  
master of the school.  
As worshiped as  
a Prophet, Hero, Fool,  
A place was kept in honor  
for the Bard.  
Consensus now determines  
what is just,  
as politicians cut and paste  
the law.  
The loud and fast  
now manufacture awe  
And lore's  
on back-up files.  
So work I must.  
If only God  
would ease my first complaint:  
To live on  
grace WITH substance,  
like a saint.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Re-Creation

We each have our ideal,  
awaking dream,  
the sum of all desired.  
The hands of dad,  
the heart of mom.  
We splice the joys we've had  
distorting everything  
to our extreme.  
The problem is  
when flesh meets flesh,  
how can you match  
your vision to a brutal truth?  
Sweet innocence  
sends wafts of smelly youth.  
One wants to hack  
and graft and mold to plan.  
Although I tried,  
you could not make me  
be the one you wanted.  
Ignored so much.  
I fell apart  
when you denied my touch.  
A monster not an idol's  
what you see.  
Hope lies,  
it can't find that love divine.  
But we're not God,  
just Dr Frankenstein. □

Glen Martin Fitch

# Rehearsal

The theatre is empty, dark.  
The stage is bare.  
My heart is all I hear.  
My temples ache.  
I'm caught within  
a piercing spot light's glare,  
that follows every step and turn I take.  
I'm tired, pissed.  
What contract did I sign?  
Where's my director?  
Get up in some seat?  
Why am I here?  
Who said this script is mine?  
I long to stop,  
yet once more repeat:  
'See HOW you ARE? '  
I scream, 'Just go way! '  
I whine 'Why me? Poor me! '  
and then I start:  
'It's fine. It's fine.  
'It really is okay.'  
I even hear me  
speak the other's part.  
A nightmare gives you  
gifts that you can take,  
but fret-filled day-mares  
never take a break.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Rejection

"There's nothing in your entry  
we can use.  
You're not a porn star,  
victim, zealot, prince or teen.  
Though you're sincere,  
you can't convince me  
this will sell.  
Go find a different 'muse.'

You're boring.  
Not your work,  
but who you are.  
Try bondage, drugs, disease,  
religion, crime.

It's taste.  
You need profanity not rhyme.  
Think calendars.  
Think mugs.  
Then you'll go far.  
No profit without sequels!

Man, it's tough to build  
a hot new brand.  
So where's your HIT?  
In our portfolio  
this doesn't fit.  
I'm sorry,  
being brilliant's not enough.  
Now change your style and bio,  
or, instead, come back and see me  
when you're twelve years dead.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Relationships

Upon the hippos' backs  
the egrets light  
to feed on ticks.  
Their darting eyes  
can see when foes approach.  
The hippo's girth and might  
protect the egret,  
symbiotically.  
A pungent, painted orchid  
hangs serene.  
Its pollen needs  
the hungry honey bee.  
Amid the poison columns  
clown fish clean the algae  
off the sea anemone.  
You're cheerful,  
stunning,  
clever,  
and yet I'm exhausted.  
I can't breathe!  
And how you squirm into my wallet,  
friendships;  
sap my time.  
You're lethal,  
so my friends have diagnosed.  
It's not in the best interest  
of a germ, like HIV or you,  
to kill its host.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Rent To Own

You're moving in  
Where I moved out,  
Oh please enjoy.  
Still warm, though worn,  
You'll be surprised.  
I slept there entertained and exercised.  
I leave with many  
private memories.  
The owner was attentive at the start.  
I made it mine  
With Incense, linen, down.  
Too soon things changed.  
I faced a glare or frown.  
When told I had to leave  
It pierced my heart.  
Here's my advice:  
Though given space and peace,  
If issues rise-  
In late, too loud,  
Not clean enough  
(Such criticism just seems mean)  
EDREWARNED-  
This lord of land  
Will break your lease  
And you'll be exiled  
from beneath that spread.  
Don't lose the sheet!  
Guard YOUR side of that bed. ☐

Glen Martin Fitch

# Right Off Track

I skip the orange  
and grab the salty snack.  
I'll take the lift,  
though I should climb the stairs.  
I'll have a beer and chips.  
I mean, who cares?  
Would that I cared enough  
to keep on track.  
But all the healthy choices  
seem so dull.  
Why jog? Why walk?  
when I can sit right here  
just killing time  
with all my vices near  
and never feel them  
hit my chest and skull.  
So who am I to question  
whom you pick?  
Guess running after fools  
is exercise.  
Give up on love.  
Go gorge on smiles and lies  
until you're sad or crazy,  
wretched, sick.  
I'd be your healthy choice,  
but there's the curse:  
I could do better too,  
but you'll do worse.

Glen Martin Fitch

## S.A.S.E.

So, if you're reading this  
We made it though another year.  
I'm grateful  
We survived to make our mark.  
Our end has not arrived.  
By next year  
This is what I wish for you:  
You'll need to hear once more  
for our own good:  
Please breathe.  
Don't shovel, savor.  
Exercise.  
Get sleep.  
With safety never compromise.  
And look your best,  
because you should.  
But have you made the world  
a better place?  
Risk ridicule.  
Find allies.  
Lend a hand.  
Confront injustice.  
Make a battle plan.  
Now, go make change.  
To fail is no disgrace.  
Fulfill our dreams, my friend,  
but while we're here  
be good to us.  
We'll make it to next year.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Sailing The Sound

We shove off.  
I take starboard,  
you take port and rudder,  
I the jib.  
The rising sail puffs proudly,  
It slackens then inhales in sport.  
Will we have  
shifting gusts or calm or gale?  
Above the ribbons,  
one on either side,  
take turns,  
to flutter, fall, flash red or green  
to signal changes in the wind and  
guide us where to steer,  
which way to shift and lean.  
I want today  
to be a special day  
and yet I fear  
I'll see your anger flare.  
If we can stay in rhythm,  
ask, and play  
perhaps you won't observe  
my jealous glare.  
By dock  
will there be tears  
amid the brine?  
I scan your face  
for any tell-tale sign.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Says Who?

You ever notice  
When folks ask 'How do? '  
You start  
And they can't wait  
Until you're done?  
Before you've stopped  
As their tale they've begun.  
They want to talk.  
Who's listening to you?  
So why?  
Why bother doing this?  
Why now?  
Perhaps you seek to learn  
Some truth of life or love,  
To solve a mystery,  
To conquer strife,  
To make you snort or tear,  
Say 'Yes! ' or 'Wow! '  
I thank you.  
Thanks for your attention,  
Time, concern.  
But if you hear a thought  
That seems to be your own,  
Like fate fulfilled,  
Like well worked rhyme  
Then I feel satisfied.  
If you would rob my words  
As yours  
Then I have done my job.

Glen Martin Fitch

# She Said 'save Yourself'

My friend,  
If you mean save my mortal soul  
Before the pass/fail test  
When I decay  
For pre-paid bliss)  
Or face the heated hole,  
I'll run the risk-  
I'm Sorry,  
I won't play.  
Or do you mean  
I ought to hoard my goods to barter  
In the market of the tough?  
Or how I should survive  
The world of shoulds?  
Addictions say  
There never is enough.  
Or do you mean  
I ought to bide my time,  
As if I am a resource to conserve,  
For all too soon  
I will be past my prime?  
I doubt if I am worthy  
To preserve)  
Do I need rescuing?  
It's plain to see  
That no one's saving me,  
My friend, but me.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Shea's Buffalo Theater 1955

'No animals were harmed during the filming of this production.'

American Humane Association 1980

Across the screen

A cowboy rides the plain.

We watched.

He stops.

I bounced on grandma's knee.

An arrow flies.

His horse rears up in pain

and falls and dies.

I cried.

She laughed at me.

Now, tell me

did her German cousin

hide the Nazi's rise

or praise it out of fear?

And did my father's mother's cousin

hide a slave or own one?

Now the choice seems clear.

At five I knew injustice.

Didn't you?

(At every age we think

we know it all)

Which thoughtless act

we do without a clue

will bring us shame-

our grandchildren appall?

Those innocent but wise

may show us how to be

tomorrow's honored hero now.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Shy Perch

Soft and firm, but cold,  
I see you slide about  
Kissing everything below,  
Even what the sun can't see.

He must be part fish too.  
How he bobs and sinks and bounds.  
Yes, I could splash with him,  
But I don't.

If I were you, I'd move in close,  
Offer him your back to ride,  
Show him where his gills should be  
And how to flick a tail.

I'd nibble at the moss  
Running round his nipples,  
Trace it down his chest,  
His navel and beyond.

If I could get that close  
I would-  
Instead I linger here  
Torturing my toes.

But you! What's stopping you?  
Don't dally here with me.  
Make waves with Neptune's pal  
And kiss him since I can't.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Skin

So soft, forgiving  
Is a new born's skin.  
Through time  
No little trace remains  
Of bites and scratches,  
Cuts and scrapes  
Of playground fights.  
From birth the sharp assaults  
On us begin.  
But as we age  
Some signs remain of past abuses.  
Pox or acne pits may show.  
Incision welts don't fade  
And wrinkles grow.  
Black veins and calluses  
And age spots last.  
Consuming  
Is the Newly-wed's fresh bond.  
So much forgiven  
By a sigh or kiss.  
But silence, pouting, grudges  
Puncture bliss.  
Attacks soon leave each  
Feeling bitter, conned.  
Resilience wanes  
As angry lovers spar.  
Cruel teasing wounds,  
Sarcastic insults scar.

Glen Martin Fitch

## Sleazy (Note Left In A Returned Paperback)

How dare you?  
You thought,  
no, you assumed  
I would...  
because you did  
that I might too.  
And if I don't?

Just because you flirt at bookstores,  
wander the library stacks,  
scan the trade at swap meets,  
finger, even buy on occasion  
You think I'd be interested too?  
Hope you enjoy them.  
I guess when done or bored  
(or challenged) you just pass them on.

I don't take  
such things lightly.  
I seek, crave,  
experiences,  
committing time  
and effort.  
I risk. I trust.

Each time I allow myself to be  
surprised, teased, tricked, touched,  
even shocked, hurt, but never cheated.  
No matter what the outcome  
I expect to learn, see the world anew,  
feel, meet at least one other soul.

Frankly,  
you don't know me  
well enough.  
Sorry, Thank you  
I DO thank you,  
but, please,  
no hard feelings,

just take back this book.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Snap Out Of It

Depression,  
grief,  
the sinking pit of 'Why? '  
Fate's wheel turned down.  
As I remember  
when misfortune struck,  
defeat or worse  
how I betrayed myself,  
I chant 'If only...then.'  
Elation,  
daydreams,  
freaky happenstance,  
perhaps good luck.  
Just so  
it seems my lot is better.  
Spending nights  
as in a trance  
I blurt out 'What if...'  
As I dream and plot.  
I circle round my brain  
as if this "how"  
this time 'Escape!  
Behold a different way."  
But 'here and now.'  
This IS my 'here' my 'now.'  
To stop these thoughts,  
(although I fear you'll say  
I've got some nerve.'  
'We get what we deserve.')I pause, repeat,  
This simply does not serve.'  
□

Glen Martin Fitch

# Snit

How dare you take away from me  
the love that others gave me,  
leaving me alone.  
We're trapped.  
I gnash my teeth and groan.  
We're pushed around.  
I wince with every shove.  
We're not like you.  
Our world we can't control,  
ourselves as well.  
Addictions feed our face.  
In pain inflicting pain  
we stay in place.  
I won't give up  
but cannot save my soul.  
I hate you.  
I hate myself.  
I stink of gall.  
Let's have it out right now  
and then be done.  
I have my hostage  
pinned against the wall  
and at my temple, look,  
I shove a gun.  
I'll shoot!  
"No?"  
"Yes?"  
I want to see you nod.  
I dare you!  
Show me that you love me, God.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Soul Stone

I picked a pebble  
from a gritty shore.  
I licked it.  
Tell me of your molten birth,  
Your journey from a crag  
to ocean's floor,  
of layered time,  
of floods and quaking earth.  
His eyes have flecks of mica, gold.  
Like you he's hard and quiet,  
full of mysteries.  
So, hold you?  
Toss you back?  
What should I do?  
Can I display you  
near my coins and keys? '  
I kissed behind his ear  
and smelled the sea.  
From whom his chin,  
the gullies on his brow,  
each scar-  
I want to know its history,  
I loved him then.  
I want to love him now.  
I'll place you  
on my dresser's sordid shrine,  
Perhaps he'll keep his wallet  
next to mine."

Glen Martin Fitch

# Special Interests

I expect to play and sleep  
and without fear.  
At night to not feel nervous  
when I walk.  
To pass a group of teens and  
not hear 'Queer, '  
To wed  
and not change pronouns  
when I talk.  
To not have landlords  
not return my calls.  
And I don't want a nurse  
to block my way.  
Look down,  
avoiding kids  
know at malls,  
or not get hired  
just because I'm gay.  
I'd like to think  
my neighbors value me,  
that I'm unique,  
acknowledge what I do,  
to feel I'm part  
of our community.  
Yes, these are what I want.  
Ask: 'Don't you? '  
But most I want and kiss him  
when we greet and  
hold his hand  
while strolling  
down the street.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Spinach

We formed a bond  
We want the world to bless,  
But differences  
In politics or age,  
Experience or faith  
Or race or wage,  
Ability or health  
Bring added stress.  
Too often we compete  
To be the best  
Or grow dependent  
Just to meet our needs.  
Who's parent?  
Who's the kid?  
Which often leads  
To everything seem  
Like a power test  
'I shouldn't have to  
Point that out to you.'  
You think but do not say.  
You wait to blurt that out next fight,  
The more to shame and hurt.  
I need to know,  
If not from you then who?  
And who more so than you  
To speak the truth,  
If I can't see  
I've spinach on my tooth? ' □

Glen Martin Fitch

# Stormy Weather

Wind stirs.  
The shadows merge  
and darkness spreads.  
As silence swallows sound,  
the flag pole tolls.  
East Flash! Forked etching.  
Stomach growling rolls.  
One fleck. Grey spots.  
August. Quick steps. Bowed heads.  
Mist, drizzle, shower,  
deluge, cloud burst roar.  
A pounding volley  
flashes reborn streams,  
wind rippled lawn,  
of gutter lake  
that teems and churns,  
and splashes in the endless pour,  
as pelting bullets □  
pummel speckled panes  
and arrows pierce,  
spring crowns,  
strew puddle rings.  
Then spurting gutters,  
black pools,  
leaf damed drains.  
Shift pine, rosemary,  
stopping wool that stings.  
Drenched dripping boughs.  
Street mirrors.  
Fading marks.  
Then sunshine!  
Rainbow!  
Double rainbow arcs! □

Glen Martin Fitch

# Stubbed

Sure-footed, nimble,  
stable, sturdy, swift,  
So I present myself  
and so I've fared.  
I do so much.  
Endurance is a gift.  
Does anybody know  
I'm running scared?  
You swept me off my feet  
the other night.  
We hugged and kissed  
and fucked and talked till dawn.  
Doors opened bravely  
(God, it felt so right)  
I dared to cross.  
I tripped.  
I found you gone.  
I just kept right on going anyhow.  
(Perhaps that night together  
never was)  
You're free.  
Perhaps you'll call  
and I'll be glad.  
I've no regrets.  
It doesn't hurt right now.  
I know it will.  
Not yet.  
But when it does,  
real soon,  
it's gonna hurt  
and hurt real bad.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Stud

In denim blues, his t-shirt shines.  
No tux could strut so fine.  
He is bad.  
With dirty hands as if he worked,  
Few care he cuts in line.

Oh he's bad...  
He smells of brim-stone, sweat and sex  
With stubble on his chin.  
What hides his cloven hooves and tail?  
Are horns beneath his skin?  
He's bad, but bad never looked so good.

He eyes the exit. Eyes my soul.  
Which is the better bet?  
He is bad.  
He'll pick a fight. He'll kick a dog  
And never feel regret.

Oh he's bad...  
He'll charm a waitress, skip her tip  
And never look the fool.  
He won't say sorry, please or thanks,  
And come off looking cool.  
He's bad, but bad never looked so good.

He'll peel his tread, ignore all signs,  
But damn, I feel the thrill.  
He is bad.  
He'll take my seat. He'll steal my cap.  
I'm pissed, but linger still.  
Oh he's bad...  
He pees off porches, spits on food.  
Loves breaking mirrors, clocks.  
His cards aren't good. He fibs for fun.  
He's always testing locks.  
He's bad, but bad never looked so good.

And he said to me:  
I want you to be my friend..  
I don't know why yet,  
But some day I'll need you and then...  
You'll owe me- Sucker.'  
then gave me his killer smile.

What am I missing? What's it like,  
Those things I don't allow?  
He is bad.  
He rubs his crotch. He curls his lip.  
He wants, and wants it now.

Oh he's bad...  
But I feel guilty lacking guilt.  
I know what's right and yet  
Am I the gutless fool 'cause I  
Regret I can't regret?  
He's bad, but bad never looked so good.

He fearless, bold. He takes the lead,  
Yet never takes the blame.  
He is bad.  
I envy how he takes his fill,  
And takes off without shame.  
□

Oh he's bad...  
And when he falls, he lands on top.  
Then off. He can't be found.  
His luck will leave. But he'll be dead  
Before he caught and bound.  
He's bad, but bad never looked so good.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Taking Stock

Like bulls and bears  
within the market pit  
the publishers and critics  
seek the prize investment  
next great no-risk,  
sure to rise in value,  
erudite certificate.  
Proust, Shakespeare, Mozart,  
Joyce, O'Keefe and Welles,  
as culture's blue chip icons  
they will stay  
I think the bubble burst  
on Hemingway)  
It's brand demand  
not quality that sells.  
I don't crave chauffeured wealth  
or glittered fame.  
I want my verses heard,  
enjoyed and taught.  
So will you broker me,  
promote my name  
for public offerings  
of private thought,  
make interest soar  
in just one heart  
who cares to see  
my folio's unvalued shares?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Team Player

I worshipped you.  
I followed you about  
to copy every move.  
But I felt doomed to fail  
worse, lose myself  
and be consumed.  
I studied harder  
just to find you out.  
I'm never good enough.  
You make me sick.  
I thought I had no choice  
but to compete  
and if I beat you,  
would I feel complete?  
Your friendly banter  
was your cruelest trick.  
No, I don't want  
to be with you,  
but BE you,  
not as partner, brother,  
lover, son,  
but hero.  
Must I either grab a gun  
and kill myself  
or kill you  
to feel free?  
As envy, pride or lust  
soon burns a blush,  
Your bonding rivalry  
aroused this crush.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Temporarily Possessed

Just try to pry apart  
an infant's clasp.  
'That's MY toy'  
Works beneath a toddler's bite.  
'Mine's better. Trade ya.'  
Everything in sight,  
each treasure, trophy, deed,  
begs for our grasp.  
We crave and save  
and shop and cart  
and yet  
how does one keep stuff safe  
and find the space?  
Devalued, dated,  
worn and torn,  
we face  
if not default,  
remorse and  
fear and debt.  
You know,  
the things you own, own you.  
Each year it's what to save  
and what to give away  
and what to loan or chuck or hoard.  
Each day you fret and sort,  
fill that which you hold dear,  
a book or photo,  
next to where you sleep,  
all the friendly nurses  
let you keep.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Tender

I stared and thought,  
"How small, how strange, how plain."  
Details my memory  
knew so well and  
look so often,  
never stopping to retain.  
I felt a fool  
and yet I had to look.  
What I beheld  
I once held constantly.  
I guarded,  
trusted,  
valued nothing more.  
So what was most surprising  
was for me to see,  
as if I'd never seen before.  
Just so it was  
when I was months abroad  
a fellow Yankee  
flashed at me a 'buck.'  
I sat dumbfounded,  
reassured,  
yet awed.  
Just so last night,  
well-healed I thought,  
Ill-luck stuck you  
before my eyes.  
Too shocked for pain  
I stared and thought,  
"How small, how strange, how plain."  
□

Glen Martin Fitch

# Tennis, Anyone?

I envy them.  
I watch them serve, receive.  
The forehand, backspin, smash,  
Each smacked with care.  
Except to rest or  
Stopping to retrieve,  
The volley rhythm  
Builds between the pair.  
Engaging conflict  
Would be a delight.  
I stare and wait.  
My racquet arm is sore  
From bouncing balls  
Against my guts  
Strung tight.  
The mystery to me  
Is how to score.  
More couples come.  
Shift and scratch.  
Pretending my approach,  
My slice,  
I pray to find a mate and  
Maybe meet my match.  
Hey, I don't have to win.  
I need to play.  
It's just a game and  
I should be a sport.  
Guess love means zero  
On and off the court.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Terminal

I got here early.  
Now I pace or sit.  
I don't know when I'll leave.  
I can't go back.  
I'm not in pain  
I'm just bored.  
It's hope I lack.  
No interest, intrigue.  
I make the best of it.'  
It's cold here.  
Over there it's hot.  
The air is stuffy.  
Gross graffiti on the wall.  
My goal?  
A meal, a nap.  
The cleanest stall.  
I want a quiet table,  
Cushioned chair.  
Where lingers here injustice  
Left to right?  
What wisdom lurks  
Within this magazine?  
What unmet friend?  
What beauty yet unseen?  
What day dream still  
Can get me through the night?  
Whose life is happy, healthy,  
long, and great?  
I'm stuck here  
Seeking comfort  
While I wait.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Thank God

I can't undo  
What stupidly I've done.  
To face embarrassment  
I'd rather die.  
I've lost their trust, respect.  
We cannot lie.  
I know from this  
my friendship they will shun.  
But one's response  
defines integrity.  
Confronted I did NOT  
reflect,  
deny,  
discredit,  
minimize or  
justify,  
manipulate or  
claim the hurt for me.  
I listened,  
took responsibility,  
apologized,  
accepted all the blame.  
I sought support for change  
and in my shame  
did NOT  
retreat or  
act addictively.  
One seldom gets momentum  
at a start,  
a stinging slap  
from God  
to make me smart.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Thanks, I Needed That- Not!

Wooo! what a hateful,  
hurtful thing to say.  
Most people try  
to hide their ignorance.  
It's harder then  
to take a counter-stance.  
At this  
I will not blindly walk away.  
I do have things new or  
just the way they were.  
We will our wants  
and push to make that change,  
You crave reaction  
from a rough exchange,  
but did you think  
I'd thank you for that slur?  
Just so the noir anti-hero  
smacked his femme fatale,  
as if for her own good.  
Who listens, changes  
when they feel attacked?  
I lean but never lash  
although I could.  
I'm tempted  
just to volley back  
your crap,  
but no one,  
no way,  
ever needs a slap.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Bogie

My leaven makes my muffins rise.  
My eggs are never runny  
My pudding could take any prize.  
My secret? Not for money.

Flush!

There's a bogie in my kitchen.  
He's the joy that makes my life.  
By night he sweeps the crumbs away  
And sharpens every knife.

Who catches eggs when falling fast  
And sets them down without a crack?  
No mold I find. My jellies last.  
There's always apples in my sack.

Flush!

There's a bogie in my kitchen.  
Ah, the happiness I've found.  
By night he shoos the bugs away  
And makes my butter sound.

But once I had another house!  
And, oh, the porridge stuck, the cider spilt!  
My grain was gone! So fat the mouse!  
My carrots shrank! The greens would wilt!

Ach!

The wrong Bogie! the wrong kitchen!  
The worst life then I had!  
My tongue was burnt! My elbows bled!  
I howled like I was mad!

□

But in this house my life is charmed.  
And, oh the compliments I get.  
And if I yawn, why nothing's harmed.  
Yet him I dassen't e're upset.

And so!

The bogie in my little house  
Gets by night his bowl of cream.  
My family's happy, so am I,  
And so's the bogie, it would seem.

But if he'd help the mallet  
Hit the steak, I'd never scream!

□

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Joy Of...

I stroke the glossy spreads  
of dimpled skin.  
The flesh so ripe  
I want to sniff and bite.  
Compulsion, passion, curse,  
addiction, sin?  
I drool at kneaded mounds  
of hot delight.  
The money, time,  
to feed this appetite!  
I seek detailed techniques,  
exotic schools.  
To whet, prolong, and savor  
I recite the age-old rites  
and catalogue my tools.  
I live a proxy life.  
Like other fools  
I file my clippings,  
downloads from the net,  
trade stained and  
greasy books  
with secret rules of  
what and when and how.  
I stare and sweat.  
This seems the only way  
I can appease  
my urge to cook.  
I must for recipes.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Lord Of Misrule

I'm at a funeral.  
We're solemn, sad  
and though I want  
my thoughtfulness expressed  
but rips a laugh  
that will not be suppressed.  
I meant no malice  
feeling shamed,  
yet glad.  
We lock our box  
to keep our Jack inside  
and yet  
I misspoke truth  
offends our guest.  
Some Mongol  
pays a whore  
to whip his chest.  
We smell so fresh.  
Who knows what farts reside?  
Once long ago  
the jester took the throne  
and for a day  
the folks broke all the rules.  
The beggar played the priest,  
the scholars- fools.  
Your shadow is a self  
you have to own.  
We don our masks.  
Our secret selves are seen,  
revealed at Maudi Gras  
or Halloween.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Mountain

Oh mighty fallen Titan,  
Once so great,  
With ancient purple cheeks  
Now cracked by tears,  
Has fatal time  
So caught thee through the years  
And kept thy backbone  
In this rigid state?  
What art thou still?  
Thy clutching hands dead weight?  
Each knuckle's rigor mortalness  
Yet leers the fear  
That thou art dead.  
Thy scalp appears  
A snowy crown  
Now frigid by thy fate.  
Yet is there frozen  
In some cavern's yawn  
Still blood enough  
Of passion's molten flame  
To stir thy sleeping body  
From this trance?  
Say this,  
That thou wilt rise  
Against what was drawn  
And claim thy throne  
And reign on never tame;  
To take thy stance and  
Do thy cosmic dance!

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Mutability Sonnet

Though no one really changes,  
Many try  
Or say they will.  
Some mellow  
freed from strife,  
Allot betray themselves,  
yet feign and lie,  
and most adapt to loss  
with scars for life.  
It seems we all get more set  
in our way.  
The bold wax bolder  
till they're grandiose.  
The frugal seem  
more miserly each day.  
The quiet don't grow chatty,  
just morose.  
As kernels linger  
for the sun and rain  
An avalanche  
awaits one falling flake,  
Believe me  
Change can come,  
transform, remain.  
With kindness,  
love,  
a new man you can make.  
I'm stuck.  
Ignore my gut,  
believe that hunch,  
grab hold my ankles,  
curse me as I crunch.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Myth Of Memory: An Ode

II

How strong it is, this feeling of regret,  
You long to see the lands and loves you've known.  
(For Eden's flowers fade if you forget)  
In dreams you may return, but wake alone.  
Yes, now I know why great Ulysses wept  
While searching for his love, his home, his throne.  
Back where our timeless isle of time is kept,  
Each moment you've remolded to renew.  
When sailing back this new tale you accept,  
For though you can't touch it, it touches you.

III

Not being, but becoming life was then.  
Yet with our hindsight pain need not return.  
In gilded tales we don't recall again  
How bonded rough our souls we had to earn.  
A natural instinct makes all quick things thrive.  
But mortals also grow from strife to learn  
That caustic conflict each one must survive  
Ere parents' loving lessons have begun.  
Much is betrayed and lost ere we arrive  
Where we are briefly wise and round and one.

IV

The past is purged and saved forevermore.  
(Regret like hope sees what it wants to see)  
Yet, while our painful past we still ignore,  
From grief our great romance is not set free.  
For chance, which forged us one, tore us apart.  
Alone we drift as on an empty sea.  
Except for dreaming, no course can we chart  
To bring our Eden isle back into view.  
And worse, the rumors rise to pierce my heart:  
No longer are my friends the friends I knew.

#### IV

The dreams that drift us close to Eden's shore  
May tug us to the Island of the Dead  
Where men must face the darkness they abhor.  
There great Ulysses took a young ewe's head  
And severed it in two with his whet blade;  
Just so my brain is lanced, pierced to the core  
As conscience stabs and churns my memory.  
From that appears a gathering of shade.  
The nightmare of my mind is now set free.  
Before me fearful faces form and fade  
Whom I can't touch, but chill as they touch me.

#### V

From cloudy apparitions made of mist  
Arise the countless souls I never knew.  
Those wronged (by chance ne'er righted) can't resist  
To drink the blood still dripping from the ewe.  
Next icy spirits form to taunt and scold,  
Past foes they are who hurt me and still do.  
Yet worse the silent figures I behold  
Whom thoughtlessly I harmed by act or slur.  
And frigid shadows round my form enfold:  
My friends as they are now, not as they were.

#### VI

But none of these can help to ease the strife,  
When ghostly visions of myself appear.  
Evolving emblems of each novel-life  
Torment my mind. For in each one I fear  
To see the tender souls I did betray,  
The clinging flaws that even now adhere.  
The foolish dreams and deeds will not decay,  
Not if they hold a truth that I can see.  
While others drink from river Lethe and stay  
I taste the bitter Pool of Memory.

#### VII

A natural numbness eases all the pain,  
Like waking from a dream no more afraid.  
Preserve the tales if memories still remain  
(Then never will the rose and lilac fade)  
But when the ghosts come, listen as they speak:  
'At home a sailor never could have stayed.'  
"New lands, new bonds, new moments each must seek.  
And if it need be conflict to induce."  
"To learn, to grow, to strengthen what is weak  
And always with oneself to seek a truce.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Pool Of Memory

Within a wood there is a spring.  
Its taste is bitter, sharp and cold.  
It chills my bones, yet each sip brings  
Before me visions to behold.  
Not all are pleasant sights to see.  
Taste the Pool of Memory.

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Now tip the chalice to your lips.  
My love you'll have forever.  
Like tender kisses are your sips.  
Oh, love, let me linger, linger.

False lovers drink of mead and wine  
To ease their fears, the past forget.  
They think their boasts and sobs refined.  
Their spirits soar beyond regret.  
At dawn they wake in misery.  
My love, I taste of Memory.

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Now tip the chalice to your lips  
My love you'll have forever  
Like tender kisses are your sips.  
Oh, love, let me linger, linger.

At first the rippling surface shines  
Till cloudy shapes below float by.  
Beneath the dreamy sky I find  
The darkened depths where shadows lie.  
Up swells the spring to meet the sea!  
Love, taste 'The Pool of Memory.'

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Now tip the chalice to your lips.  
My love you'll have forever.  
Like tender kisses are your sips.  
Oh love, let me linger, linger.



# The Profane And The Sacred

You green poop' Koko,  
Dragons of Eden, Carl Sagan

My father said  
he knew he loved me  
when he volunteered  
for my first diaper change.  
It wasn't something done  
by men back then.  
'Your poop was green and gooey,  
creepy, strange.'  
All life seems one long,  
time consuming quest to separate  
the good things from the bad.  
We hoard the precious  
then discard the rest.  
"Just tell me I'm not THAT  
and I'll be glad."  
Alas, 'shit happens'  
much to our dismay.  
We often panic  
trying to stay calm.  
We search in vain  
to find some other way.  
But ask a farmer,  
artist,  
healer,  
mom:  
in life  
there is no "me" or "you" or "it, "  
'cause everything is sacred,  
even...

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Real Reason I Left

I went into the staff room  
On my break.  
I opened up the 'fridge and  
Got inside.  
The door slammed shut.  
That made the bottles shake.  
Good sign at least,  
The light stayed on.  
I tried but failed  
To find a latch.  
I thought:  
"Cold trap!  
To yell  
Would use up all the air in here.  
To sleep  
Might not wake or  
Could tap in hope  
That someone, sometime  
Just might hear."  
I woke without a scream  
But wet with sweat.  
The trap was not my job  
But my despair of doing  
What I someday might regret.  
To get such good advice in life  
Is rare.  
I faced a truth  
I never would admit.  
With no excuse  
I said,  
"I have to quit."

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Rest

I later learned  
She almost died.  
Although she didn't try  
to keep the fact from me,  
the how and how come  
were not mine to know.  
My feelings  
weren't her first priority.  
So when I heard,  
I had the time to think.  
I didn't call her, just  
as I was bid.  
Another time  
I might have forced a link.  
She didn't want my help,  
yet help I did.  
Musicians read staff measures  
scanning notes.  
The order, tempo, volume,  
are displayed.  
A rest is more than silence.  
It devotes a value, beat,  
a presence still conveyed.  
My absence, silence,  
were not crass neglect.  
They proved my love,  
support,  
-  
trust,  
respect.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Salomè Platter

I'm not sure you'll get this.  
I'm not sure I care.  
As if you care!  
Who knows?

This is just to tell you that  
I broke that dish  
You gave me years ago.  
I'm sure you know the one.

How strange. Looking down  
I saw a piece in each hand.  
I was just washing it  
And thinking of you.

God, I lugged that thing around.  
Displayed it. Hid it.  
Lent it. Retrieved it.  
Thought they'll put it in my grave!

So now it's gone.  
Dumped in the trash.  
And someday I'll forget it.  
And you.

Oh, I forgot!  
Before I threw it out  
I put it in a sack  
And smashed it to bits.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Show Must Go On

Back there are storage rooms  
crammed to the beams  
with trunks of costumes,  
coats, and shoes and hats,  
old scripts and notes in boxes,  
powders, creams and  
tables, chairs and  
thickly painted flats.

This stage is set.

Everything has been arranged.

Whichever role I pick to play

I know my lines, my moves,

what must be changed.

I'm planning

quite a lively, moving show.

For many years

I've fought off my despair,

rehearsing what I could alone.

I bought this nice cologne,

here's naughty underwear.

Which lights,

which sheets,

which wine

took lots of thought.

I hoard these props

still hoping to attract

another actor

for my opening act.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Spirit: A Song

Let's hear it for the spirit.  
Now lift your voice in song.  
But if your arm's too weak, my friend,  
You'd best not sing along.

So drink to the fellow with the scar on his chest  
And drink to the `tender with the scowl on his face  
And drink to the sailor who drinks with the best  
And drink to the lady with the rouge and the lace.

Now bees make dew to honey  
But it makes honey, mead!  
To the wee ones give the cider,  
Oh Jack is what I'll feed.

Let's hear it for the spirit.  
Now lift your voice in song.  
But if your arm's too weak, my friend,  
You'd best not sing along.

So drink to the sailor with the scar on his chest  
And drink to the `tender with the scowl on his face  
And drink to the fellow who drinks with the best  
And drink to the lady with the rouge and the lace.

Now the spirit can get nasty.  
Yes, I've many spirits seen  
At night when homeward crawlin'  
Stay here- or face the fiend!  
Let's hear it for the spirit.  
Now lift your voice in song.  
But if your arm's too weak, my friend,  
You'd best not sing along.

So drink to the fellow with the scar on his chest  
And drink to the sailor with the scowl on his face  
And drink to the `tender who drinks with the best  
And drink to the lady with the rouge and the lace.

The spirit sets the bubbles winkin'.  
The spirit makes your fingers shake.  
But I want spirit in your laughter,  
If just for spirit's sake!

Let's hear it for the spirit.  
Now lift your voice in song.  
But if your arm's too weak, my friend,  
You'd best not sing along.

So drink to the `tender with the scar on his chest  
And drink to the lady with the scowl on her face  
And drink to the fellow who drinks with the best  
And drink to the sailor with the rouge and the lace.

So drink!

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Tale Of The Humble Smithy To Caliph Harum Al Ras-Hid

As he told his son

'Yes, for a lowly slave much danger lies  
In any act that others find too bold  
And certain death awaits the one who tries  
To find the famous hidden caves of old.  
Yet one had dreamt of secrets never told  
And of gem the color of the skies.  
Soon he escaped in stolen garments old  
To journey safely in another's Guise.  
Though never seen before the path he knew  
And when within the cave the stone he spied  
He watched as every artful image grew.  
No fear he felt. He knew no dream had lied.  
He took the gem. This was his only thought,  
'Without a means how is a vision caught? '

'So with this stone a perfect ring he made  
With flawless ease as if it had been planned  
And chance was there had trembling hands betrayed  
His gift to grace the Sultan's mighty hand.  
Wise Sultan made him smithy of his land.  
But first an answer from the man he bade.  
'Though this seems new, it bears an ancient brand.  
How did it come to you, by theft or trade? '  
'Lord, in a desert pool I saw it glow  
And as I looked I dreamt a vision true  
Of how your father lost it long ago.  
I knew I must return this ring to you.'  
So son, think not of glory, love, or grief.  
An artist is a liar and a thief.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# The True Test Or Our Second Date

We'll enter an arena of delight

to satisfy a primal need.

But while excited,

yet, my love,

I dread tonight.

We'll meet each other's

sense of taste and style.

Our histories

and our future

will unfold in every gesture.

Start this- you or I?

The old traditions

now no longer hold.

We all can be a Master

or can try.

Trust intuition?

Risk repas critique?

By now we're well past

going by the book.

Will knowledge, judgment

or technique decide,

or just a pinch

or twist or look?

Our first adventure.

Well, it's me or you.

We'll see now,

who's the chef, and

who's the sous?

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Universal Response

The tickle

Of each sensuous delight,

The public joke,

The private jest all seem

like drunkenness and

yield bold laughter,

Bright enough

to bring one's straining eyes

to stream.

To mask the torture

Of one's gnawing fears,

Embarrassment, or chronic misery,

to hide absurd grotesqueness

One finds tears

that yield a laughter

like insanity.

But when our human frailty is shown

or when surprise's riddle

has been solved

we come to learn the truth

we hadn't known

and laughter makes us

with the truth resolved.

The first response!

And on its own behalf

Laugh's the fittest answer

to a laugh!

Glen Martin Fitch

# The Vale Of Argatos: A Tale

Once Pan, the God of mischief and of mirth,  
Conceived a plan the mortals to dismay.  
Argatos bred the saddest folk on earth.  
It's there they say the men complained all day.  
So Pan their prayers did answer, every one.  
A land of green and gold that vale became;  
All ripe and prime beneath the summer sun  
With all the beauties that a man could name.  
And then Pan gave a box unto their queen,  
Which she soon opened, as Pandora did,  
And from it spites of love and wealth were seen  
And peace and health did spring out from its lid.  
But like Pandora's hope one sprite remained.  
Argatian men the last had boredom gained.

Thus in their boredom Pan did take delight,  
For even growth and pain he set aside.  
They could not even hope for death or night  
Until the mighty Zeus this kingdom spied.  
At last Pan let dame Nature take her course.  
Then stillness settled o'er the puzzled vale  
The sun then set; the cold wind of remorse  
Did flood their hearts and flush their faces pale.  
And so Argatans did their ancient dance  
Of birth and death, of passion and cruel war;  
Some happy just to die, free from this trance  
And some went back complaining as before.  
And some were happy just to have this past;  
A joy remembered, but not there to last.

Glen Martin Fitch

# The X Factor

I took you at face value,  
though unknown.  
But if you count  
each sacrifice I've made,  
add every night  
I should have left but stayed,  
times all those times  
you left me on my own,  
your rudeness,  
squared,  
your irresponsibility,  
less my respect  
you let depreciate,  
and take away from that  
the food you ate,  
from that deduct  
your negativity,  
divided by my pay check  
split in two  
you tally less than zero.  
That's a fact.  
You're just the kind  
of loser I attract.  
The latest ex in my life  
how is you.  
Too late to add your heartache,  
needs or wrath.  
Here's proof!  
Remember you said,  
Do the math.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Thirty Years After He Died

The room is crowded,  
somber, stale, dark.  
A wake?  
No, shiva!  
(and I am not a Jew) .  
The widow's look at me-  
a question mark.  
I don't know them or  
what I ought do.  
'And who are you? '  
I blurt,  
'I'm Marty's boy.'  
Then from the back,  
'Wait. Marty Fitch?  
That guy with duct tape  
saved my life.'  
Such sudden joy.  
I stood mid hand shakes, hugs,  
about to cry.  
He was a handy man  
who knew each tool.  
From holding things for him  
I'm often debt.  
He wanted better things for me,  
like school.  
I'm older now  
than he was when he left.  
I woke up feeling grateful,  
glowing,  
glad I was his son,  
and proud he was my dad.

Glen Martin Fitch

# This Ever Happen To You?

From what I've tasted of desire  
Hold with those who favor fire."  
FIRE AND ICE by Robert Frost

You're trudging on your track  
from day to day  
when suddenly  
you see a trick of light,  
a twirl of water,  
a gust of wind,  
a play of shadows,  
brilliant stars at night.  
Perhaps  
a phrase of music pierces you,  
a cookie's taste  
brings moments from the past,  
a detail in a painting  
strikes you new.  
Just so a flash provoked me  
fading fast.  
One day at school,  
some class,  
a film: The Blind.  
(At that some moron slurred  
another 'tard! ')  
A woman reading Braille,  
another signed.  
'Some say the earth will end in fire...'  
Off guard,  
Surprised by joy!  
By me!  
for I forgot (had been so long)  
the first tears spurt out hot.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Thoughts At The Beach At Night

Can cells sense something's wrong  
When cancer starts?  
The body as a whole  
Is self-contained,  
Complete,  
Compatible in all its parts.  
Its function, features, fate  
Are all maintained.  
What is this maverick madness,  
Counter-fate,  
A tyrant spirit  
Ending all awry  
To sap and warp,  
Confound and mutilate,  
A manic mayhem  
Forced to multiply?  
What kind of baneful guest  
Is so engrossed  
Within the selfish meeting  
Of his needs  
To damn his future,  
Jeopardize his host?  
Now everything that eats  
And shits and breeds,  
The very stars and waves,  
And wind and sand,  
Must dread our gaze,  
The moving of a hand.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Threats: A Love Poem

Out of a crowd  
You picked me for your love.  
I'm happy, grateful,  
Proud yet without pride.  
Your happiness  
Is all I'm thinking of.  
It's we against the world now,  
Side by side.  
Know this,  
I'm here for you  
For good,  
Or bad.  
It won't be me  
Who says we have to part.  
And if you ever bid me go,  
I'll be so sad.  
I will not leave,  
I've given you my heart.  
I'll be the tune  
You'll notice when you yawn,  
Repeating on and on,  
No matter what you may.  
I'll be the shadow  
At your feet all day.  
As darkness  
I will hold you all night long.  
Try all your might,  
I'll be the booger on your finger  
That you cannot flick away.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Through A Looking Glass

The end. A coffee shop.  
We're sitting side  
(not close) by side  
before a mirrored wall  
The 'we-not-we'  
glare back within their stall.  
Our faces show we tried.  
We sighed. We lied.  
We sit.  
To look each other in the eye  
we'd have to turn.  
I spy the you my mind creates.  
As it's not my love I find.  
In's spite, resentment and regret.  
Then 'bye.'  
I see two pair of hands, palms down.  
And then you  
check your image,  
stoot your chair  
and leave.  
Now we're alone, me-two.  
I can't believe  
they'll never see  
the likes of us again.  
But us? Yes,  
even if my eyes went blind,  
our vacant stare  
is etched upon my mind.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Ties

I fix the Windsor knot  
Just like my dad.  
You said 'Oh, no!  
The style is now the half.'  
Debated often  
I would not get mad  
I hid my meek defiance  
With a laugh.  
I found the perfect tie  
for you today,  
your colors,  
flashy, playful but not bold.  
I set it down  
but couldn't walk away.  
So strong the urge  
I bought it just to hold.  
It's 'Shop until you drop'  
(then shop some more,  
but now by proxy,  
as it were, on cue) .  
The last tie I picked out  
you did adore.  
Like dad  
I won't see it again or you.  
Enough of fantasy,  
denial and lies,  
I know the truth is  
dead men tie no ties.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Time For A Change

I can't forgive myself  
for feeling trapped.  
Resentments grow.  
This isn't what I planned.  
My faith begins to fade.  
I can't adapt.  
I slither off  
from where I used to stand.  
My old convictions  
simply do not fit.  
It think it's time  
for me to slink away.  
Campaigns and hobbies, tasks  
I have to quit,  
abandon games and music  
I don't play.  
It's time to throw out  
worn out clothes.  
It's time to toss  
old books and odds and ends.  
To free myself  
of tastes and creeds  
all goes.  
It's time to shuck off  
relatives and friends.  
It's not betrayal  
of fear of what's ahead.  
So I'm a snake.  
Well, this one's got to shed.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To A Mentor

First note the scholar bee  
Who finds relief  
When she performs  
The formal dance.  
She must ignore the hue and scent  
Of every leaf.  
Her quest is just to find  
The golden dust.  
Then there's the critic bee  
Who builds the hive.  
The coffer's lucre  
Never her attracts.  
She only takes enough  
To keep alive,  
For her clan works  
The wondrous scheme of wax.  
Within our academic hive  
I seem a lazy drone  
Who never will succeed.  
I roam and scan.  
I taste and hum and dream.  
But honeyed psalms  
Can fill each empty cell.  
Dear Queen of Bees,  
Feed me your sacred mead  
And with each sip  
The songs in me shall swell.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To A New Friend

Now everything is cool.  
We're at that stage  
When trust, respect feel sure.  
We sense a link in struggle,  
Pain and hope.  
As we engage  
Things fall in place,  
We think in sync.  
But some day  
I am going to let you down  
And then you'll feel betrayed.  
I'll be too late. I'll fib,  
Put myself first.  
You'll see a frown.  
Will I then be  
The focus of your hate?  
As best I can  
I pledge you truth  
And vow to you,  
Within fair limits,  
To be near.  
Least friendly  
I will need you most.  
Hear now:  
I'm fallible. I'm flawed.  
Be brave with me.  
Be clear.  
Forgive me.  
Treasures lie beyond.  
I claim I will forgive you  
When I feel the same.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To A Starling

Shut your mouth, bird!  
I know what you saw.  
You needn't squawk about it  
Or chase me though the wood.

You followed him as he approached.  
Snow sparkled in the moonlight.  
Like wings his arms stretched wide.  
I kissed his frosted beard.

Anyone would think to hear you chatter  
You never gussied up your tail  
Or helped another build a cozy nest.  
So why this moral tone?

You sure were quiet then,  
When he and I were lying in the snow.  
Oh, his warm breath on my neck!  
Then that shudder up my spine!

Any bird above would guess  
Two stranger's paths had crossed.  
Do you have to tell them  
How two lovers came and went?

Foot-prints swell in sunlight.  
Our secret all will know.  
Quick, shake the clouds above  
And hide my angel in the snow.

Glen Martin Fitch

## To An Uncoy "mistress"

I've met the virtuous  
and they are rare  
and many others seem so,  
but are not.  
(Their words are cool  
and yet their blood runs hot  
to feed the lust  
beneath that pious air) .  
I'd like to think I try,  
like most, to do the right things.  
Carnal motives  
you can tell in words and deeds.  
They have their place as well.  
(Have fun and  
yet be good) .  
And then there's you.  
The rumor has it  
you sure get about,  
so fast and loose and free  
(I hear you love to flirt  
with old or young,  
a girl or boy)  
but in the end,  
somehow  
you don't put out.  
Why die, dear,  
with the reputation of a whore  
and never really know the joy?

Glen Martin Fitch

# To Edmund Spenser

Oh land of fluid 'scape and timeless time,  
Where gardens shine in beauty far more bright,  
Where terror lies in dungeon path to climb,  
What better place for men to find their might?  
Oh land of high Romance, where heroes fight  
'Gainst inner dragons for their ladies fair,  
And lovers pine just for their loved one's sight,  
And villains plot a false fair face to wear.  
Oh blessèd dreamer how you work with care  
Your multi-leveled polyphonic quest  
In interlockèd rhyme and language fair  
To lure enchanted readers through each test.  
Sweet honey bee in your six-sided cell  
Who else could tell of once dreamt scenes so well?

Glen Martin Fitch

## To John Keats

Dear priest and prophet, cantor of sweet time,  
Grand dreamer of delicious lore and fame,  
What e'er you viewed that spirit you became  
To sing its joy and sorrow in rich rhyme.  
And when the frenzy wrought a poem sublime  
Each line reveals the soul you sought to claim.  
But now unto Apollo songs you frame.  
For us your hymn fell silent ere its prime.  
But in the sacred bower of your mind,  
Before the timeless font of pleasure-pain  
Will you not say a prayer of soft design  
To make his Muses mold me in your kind  
And by your saintly chants have me ordained,  
If unsung rhymes in Faerielande remain?

Glen Martin Fitch

# To Northrop Frye

Night gazer,  
See the works that fill the skies.  
Each orb was placed there  
By some humble hand.  
Yet even while  
Their brilliance mystifies,  
you wonder  
What each wise creator planned.  
Above spot Ovid's Venus,  
Homer's Mars.  
See Sidney's Stella,  
Chaucer's Milky Way.  
Spy Spenser's Queene,  
Milton's ringing stars  
and Shakespeare's Zodiac  
in bright array.  
Through Galileo's eye  
you clearly see  
The full design,  
As seasons cycle true.  
Our minds must order.  
Your task is to chart  
The form  
Of heaven's great anatomy;  
For with your cosmic vision vast  
you view  
The ever-growing galaxy of art.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To Search One's Heart Is Not An Easy Task.

To search one's heart  
is not an easy task.  
I took a stand  
on what I still assert.  
I must do this.  
I can't do what you ask,  
not even  
if you make yourself be hurt.  
Yet each complaint  
still breaks me down again.  
You catalogue  
each sacrifice you've done.  
Your pleas show so much fondness  
through the pain.  
Why do they all assume  
on my part none?  
The more you call me stubborn  
when we fight,  
the more you tell me  
your love I repel,  
the harder it is for me  
not to write  
as if it's true,  
when I would wish you well.  
You tell me how you suffer,  
and you do.  
yet sometime you might see  
I suffer too.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To The Muses: Consider Yourselves Invoked

Oh welcome sisters of the sacred well,  
Who married Cadmus, mourned Achilles' soul.  
You guard the chest of endless unsung scrolls,  
What greater tales have you yet left to tell?  
Between your magic horse's rhythmic wings  
Each anxious novice begged to hear some word.  
You teased dull minds with chanting overheard  
To make weak witted Ancients humbly sing.  
Now poets talk. Deriding tongues demand.  
They lie if they affirm. They plot to teach.  
Untempered frenzy, chance alone in hand,  
No magic in their words, their poems they preach!  
They know you not. Your spirit I'll defend.  
Through me, I thank you, this poem you have penned.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To Virgins If There Still Are Any Or Musings On The Unicorn In Captivity Tapestry

He thinks he's captive by some strange device,  
But he's imprisoned in or out of cage.  
Like Eden's Adam, bored with Paradise,  
By trick he may be killed but will not age.  
How awkward is the horn above his mane.  
He thinks he's bound. He fears the fence and yet,  
Like Eve, he doesn't know enough of pain  
Or wrinkles, age or death, to know the threat.  
But mortals are not unicorns, my dear,  
And doom, not death, came with the apple bite.  
Within your cave of innocence you fear  
You're fettered. Leap now! Let your heart take flight  
To seize the day, before you lose your prime  
For each new love will be a new first time.

Glen Martin Fitch

# To You, Plural

For all the times  
I made you ill at ease,  
for all the times  
I showed up unannounced,  
for all the foolish things  
I did to please you,  
all those times  
you felt your boundaries trounced,  
I want to thank you all.  
You were so kind.  
You tried to firmly stop me  
at the start.  
You showed how much you cared  
as you declined to match my efforts,  
fake my willing heart.  
You would not  
let me cheat myself,  
divert your efforts  
that I sought to misconstrue.  
So easily you could have use  
or hurt me.  
(You know  
I'd have let you do it too)  
For stares,  
unwanted words,  
my many tries at closeness,  
I hereby apologize.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Too Late For Words

You could have told me what you wanted.  
You could have told me what made you mad.  
You could have told me how I've failed you.  
You could have saved the love we had.  
It's too late now. It's too late for words.

It was a shock but looking back I see  
That you were just pretending and avoiding me.  
Your 'when' and 'how' and 'why' 's aren't my concern.  
From other lovers the truth we'll learn.  
It's too late now. It's too late for words.

I know...  
We knew each other's thoughts  
while high on hot romance  
So if I really loved you  
I'd have known by look, by stance  
all that was too obvious for comment,  
so blatant at a glance.  
And so you held your silence.  
~~You~~ had your chance.

I'll keep my comments to myself  
It doesn't matter any more  
Cause I don't want to hear it now.  
You'll learn what words are for.  
It's too late now. It's too late for words.  
It's too late now. It's too late for words.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Toxic Relationships

In great dismay you came.  
Look! I've been bit! '  
'You play with serpents, friend.  
The charmer charmed.'  
Distressed, you cried out,  
flailing in a fit,  
fill shock set in.  
At that I grew alarmed.  
I'm scouting trained.  
My friendship I can prove.  
I lanced your wound  
and sucked and spat  
and sucked and spat again,  
the deadly poison to remove.  
I saved your life,  
so why do I feel fucked?  
And even then I thought,  
I can't ignore I risk this venom  
getting in my veins.  
And what's in this for me  
for all my pains?  
And haven't we done  
just this thing before?  
I watch you limping back  
to find that snake.  
How often must we make  
the same mistake?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Toying With You

First ears: I would like two.

One either side,  
I'm not a cubist.

Eyes:

the same as mine  
though others have their charm,  
however dyed  
and all if spied  
reveal a soul's design.

A nose:

but often that's the problem part  
(there are so many) ,

Lips: both fine and full,  
to make a smiling face  
to move my heart.

Desire's ever vigilant  
amid the push and pull.

How many of us are consumed,  
obsessed, with other,  
secret parts,  
and private glands  
and drool at genitalia,  
butt, or breast?

Yet having all the pieces

in your hands  
(and none of them impaired)  
the real trick?

to find that  
not yet rotten spud to stick.

NOTE: MR. POTATOHEAD by PLAYSKOOL™ now  
includes a plastic potato, which says something, doesn't it?

Glen Martin Fitch

# Trapped In The Haunted House Ride

The speeding carts  
In darkness lunge and squeal,  
(Eyes glow then fade)  
Down through a dragon's jaw,  
Passed bats and skulls.  
Kids shriek with anxious awe,  
But, though we duck,  
Few think the phantoms real.  
What scares me  
(More than plywood ghoul or witch,  
Who just like us  
Are forced around then back)  
is what's beneath us  
On this endless track,  
how hidden wheels  
Provoke the pre-set switch.  
Just so the scent of thyme-  
Up swells regret.  
A train at night-  
I'm homesick once again.  
A book-  
Lost love.  
Enough!  
Not what, it's when and why  
That stumps me,  
Haunts me,  
Makes me fret.  
The shuttle not the shame  
Is what I dread,  
this Mobius madness  
jolting in my head.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Trash Or Treasure?

A string of buttons  
(But for what?) ,  
a cord, a pen  
(no point)  
a jig-saw puzzle piece,  
(Impossible to chuck,  
none to hoard.  
Loss when I die.  
(I not cease till I cease)  
A bottle stopper,  
watchband  
(ostrich hide) ,  
eleven eyelets  
(none for seven hooks)  
Should I have dumped this box  
the year you died  
while sorting out  
our closets, drawers and books?  
That snotty clerk,  
the secret place I kissed,  
our favorite meal,  
(Tell who now? How and why?)  
shared spite,  
shared worries,  
all the things I've missed.  
(a look from you, I laughed,  
the word, you sighed.)  
Lost lock,  
when will you know again this key?  
(What does one do  
with half a memory?)

Glen Martin Fitch

# Two Legs Or Three, It's All About Me

Each night in dreams  
I face a knight or snake.  
I seek a maiden, fair  
Or hermit, kind.  
I fly or fall or flee  
Before I wake.  
It's said each is  
An aspect of my mind.  
My boss is not my shadow,  
Not my dad.  
To see him so  
Is just a mental fraud.  
I've seen myself  
Within the grocery lad.  
Like me,  
They're foolish,  
Fallible and flawed.  
I thought I loved you.  
Yours for me seemed real.  
But was it more about  
My loving you?  
I grieve,  
But is it still your loss I feel  
Or is my grieving  
All about me too?  
"How can I know another? '  
I complain.  
"The Devil's Pitchfork's  
Twisting in my brain.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Two Moths

I know I see  
What others cannot see.  
I've spied  
The desperate frenzy  
In your eyes.  
My love is not the drug  
That makes you dance.  
It's heat and light  
That draw you ever near.  
But do you see  
My yearning to be free?  
If you could hear  
The fantasies and lies that feed  
My deep addiction  
To romance  
You'd sense  
How trapped I am  
By my own fear.  
Your fate?  
To be consumed.  
(You long each night  
To kiss the glow  
The clever glass contains) .  
My fate?  
Abandoned here  
With growing fright.  
(These portals, clear,  
Reveal, yet each retains) .  
At dusk you fly more frantic  
Around the light  
As I spin slower  
Trapped between two panes.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Vast Kingdoms Once Did Span This Shrinking Sphere.

Vast kingdoms once  
did span this shrinking sphere.  
One monarch bold  
a million men could rule.  
To teach the dumb,  
protect the poor from fear,  
to sow these seeds,  
a scepter was his tool.  
If I could have  
an empire of my friends  
to aid and guide,  
the happiness I'd find.  
I'd plant and reap  
a love that never ends  
and hoard it in the coffers  
of my mind.  
But now I see  
my gifts were bribes,  
not seeds.  
Good will  
was to enslave you,  
not to free.  
I am a tyrant  
out of fear and greed.  
From loneliness it is  
that I aggress.  
Your solitude  
was never poverty.  
It is my bounty  
that is barrenness.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Vision

A leaf turns towards the sun.  
The worm shuns light.  
A bee perceives a bud  
By cone and rod,  
For depth  
The one-eyed octopus  
Must nod.  
A fly sees much.  
The owl spies best at night.  
Each lens distorts.  
The nerves relay.  
But when we view  
We scan to guess each pattern's plan.  
You cannot know  
And no one truly can.  
You have to stop  
And look and look again.  
We view the world  
Oblivious to all  
We fail to see.  
Assumptions, bias,  
Fears and prejudice fill in.  
While we act wise,  
We're ignorant  
Of that which might appall.  
We have to check  
The content of our mind,  
Cause every eye contains  
A spot that's blind.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Waiting For A Refill On Christmas Eve

Who lives the glittered lives  
Of greeting cards?  
Old Santa's just the first  
Of many lies.  
Who dare resists  
When every song bombards us,  
Makes us spend, consume,  
Our life despise.  
What if your past  
Was filled with scenes of strife,  
Of feasts of gall, betrayal,  
Unsettled scores?  
What if  
As captive kids  
You lived your life a hostage  
Trapped in dinner table wars.  
If mandatory cheer  
Just makes you mad,  
Escape allotted bonds, genetic chains,  
Renounce the bad,  
Refuse what makes you sad,  
Create traditions new  
Of what remains.  
How can you feel included,  
Safe and calm?  
Just call that late night diner waitress,  
"Mom."

Glen Martin Fitch

# Waiting For The Fat Lady To Sing

So awkward! I feel,  
agitated, trapped,  
but I feel that way  
even when alone.  
I checked my watch  
while everybody clapped.  
Why aren't you here?  
I hate it on my own.  
What's all this ruckus?  
I can't comprehend what's funny,  
fragic, planned coincidence.  
It just goes on and on.  
When will it end?  
Repeating louder  
doesn't make more sense.  
But human nature  
weakens the line of life.  
In every trial, marriage,  
death, and birth  
we seek a graceful arc  
to give us worth,  
as if were living tales  
of joy or strife.  
They're lies.  
All lies.  
It's years since you've been gone.  
I don't know how  
I keep on keeping on.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Wanted

One Higher Power,  
understanding, kind,  
all knowing, patient, wise,  
forgiving, near, compassionate,  
attentive to mankind.  
more powerful than  
TV,  
peanuts, beer  
and sex.  
From you I'll ask  
but won't expect  
that miracle,  
(the little ones will do) .  
Just so I'll pray  
you'll keep disasters checked,  
for justice, vision,  
peace and mercy, too.

Adore me,  
keep me honest,  
make me laugh, feel needed,  
special, healed and whole.  
I need your silent help  
on my behalf  
to live,  
each day abstain,  
rebuild my soul.  
And what I am grateful for  
you'll hear from me on hold,  
while pumping gas,  
and as I pee.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Washing Patroklos

This isn't right. This isn't how it was  
To be. Oh Cousin! Years ago when we  
Shared jug and javelin, hammock, jerkin, harp  
And horse together, we had it all planned.  
We knew my fate. We played it endlessly.  
For I was to be he who died too young  
But bravely. You were to be he who sang  
The dirge before the pyre. What trick of fate  
Is this? Now I mourn you. Here on your brow  
I see it still, your badge of bravery,  
The scar carved by my wooden sword, like that.  
I thought you dead. I wanted so to die.  
I didn't know how I could live without  
You then. I don't know now. I stand alone.  
They hate me. I hate them. But they loved you.  
No, no one else on earth could tell me what to do.  
With you the finest part of me has died.

I care not what they say. I killed a boar  
At six. The Centaurs taught me all I know  
Of weapons, courage, skills and manliness.  
And I whipped every man who dared to sneer  
The name of 'Pyrrah.' Yes, my mother sought  
To hide me with the maidens from my fate  
I stayed. No, not from fear, but joy. So dressed  
What ease I knew to woo and win my wife  
And how my mother cried when trumpets blared  
To see me strip the veil and grab a sword,  
Myself revealed for war, my destiny.  
Achilles! First in everything he tries.  
In strength and speed no Ajax can compare.  
And second only once, in this, the first  
To land on shore was fated first to die.  
No glory there. The second down was I!  
The praise of mouthy Menelaus I  
Don't need, not he who needs an army just  
To catch his wife. Nor well wrought words from wise  
Odysseus. Such talk is women's work.  
No, I speak with my hands. And least of all

Our rich and greedy Agamemnon, King.  
How can I care what he who stole my prize,  
My glory, says of me? Nor care I now  
What any God may say. Like cocks they pit  
Us for their fight! I cannot care. Your slap  
And smile meant more to me than all of Troy.  
My friend, I fought, I lived for you, your praise.

Impostor, traitor, cheater, liar, thief!  
The only man I loved. What did you mean  
To do? I let you take my armor just  
To save the ships. But did you think to take  
My glory too? They thought you me and fled.  
Perhaps before Troy's gate you thought so too.  
Good soldier, you were you, but better for  
My sword and shield. You did it, doing as  
I've done. The glory's yours and my respect.  
But had I known, you never would have gone.  
Now every soldier, slave, and general  
Sheds tears of grief for you. I miss you so.  
So happy, humble, wise and caring, kind,  
The kindest man I knew. A friend to all  
And every ounce a man. I envied and  
Mistrusted you. How could you leave me so?

If only you could see me now! At dawn  
My mother brought this armor to replace  
What Hector took from you. You'd love it. He  
Who's lame and scorned by all the Gods, yet strong  
And skilled, Hephaetus, crafted this last night.  
As he works metal, I work battle. Love  
And wealth once won seem useless, rot us, fade.  
Perfection, praise, supremacy (pursuits  
So endless and elusive) that's the life  
I choose to live. Yes, short but valiant. Yet  
What honor is there when dishonored? Strength  
Not weakness seems absurd now. Gods must mock  
Me too. Die young and foolish, I die twice.  
And now to die alone. I could have faced  
It all, while I had you. In dying you  
Were brave. In living, loving, braver still.  
I've only crafted glory, you your soul.

Oh, would that I had imitated you!

You've got your glory now and now you're dead.  
Much good! You can't enjoy it nor I you.  
Well, you died once and bravely. That I know.  
I guess I'm glad I'm not immortal. Soon  
I'll die. Each act of bravery might be  
My best, the last. I don't fear dying, death  
(I race in battle only to that end)  
But little deaths destroy me endlessly.  
For anything save death, save glory, must  
Be failure. Mortal death cannot be worse  
Than that. When dead, no more will I know pain,  
Affront, embarrassment, or jealousy.  
No loneliness, remorse, or guilt or grief.  
To live is brave. I'd rather die than feel.  
Soon I will be with you. Our ashes I'll  
Have mixed, then never will we part. By Zeus!  
Tomorrow I will kill the man who wears  
My armor, he who slew you, Hector, Prince  
Of husbandry. He'll die. Then Troy will die  
And I will meet my fate. Two hounds, four steeds,  
Twelve Trojans, sons of Priam, I will toss  
Upon your pyre. Then glory will be yours.  
I swear I will have vengeance now! I will  
Have glory, but of satisfaction, none.  
You're gone! Farewell, fine friend. Now everything  
That's near enough to touch me I will kill.

□

Glen Martin Fitch

# What A New Pink Pearl <sup>TM</sup> Eraser Means To Me

I've sworn off holidays.  
The treat's the trick.  
Renewed resolve caves in  
With each excuse.  
From racing year to year,  
I'm dizzy, sick.  
Red hearts, green beer, brown eggs  
try to seduce me  
in their festive joy.  
They all induce my self contempt  
from 'Ole Lang Syne' to 'Yule' with rites  
of food and alcohol abuse  
in every culture, nation.  
Call me 'Fool'  
my favorite time of year  
is back to school.  
Unsharpened pencils, notebooks, pads,  
the smell of flannel, swish of cords,  
what's new, what's cool,  
I wander down the aisles  
as in a spell.  
I'm anxious,  
yet potential fills my heart  
for fresh adventures,  
yet another start.

Glen Martin Fitch

# What I Can Do

I wish I could undo  
What has been done.  
I cannot fix it.  
Not my place to try.  
To make you think I could  
Would be a lie.  
No end in sight  
And this has just begun.  
The stress consumes your body  
And your soul.  
I know  
The future things you dread  
Seem real.  
I cannot make you change  
The way you feel.  
Upon your spirit  
This will take its toll.  
But dare I say,  
I see you  
and feel pride.  
I, too, have felt  
Frustration, hurt and shame.  
A different cause,  
Yet feeling just the same.  
On that  
I am your ally  
At your side.  
Right now,  
I know my needs  
Cannot compete  
Against your woes,  
but may I rub your feet?

Glen Martin Fitch

# What I Need From You

I need to know

you're really here for me,

that I can be myself

and you won't mind.

I need to know

it's safe for me

to be exposed or

silly,

serious or

kind.

Like cloudy days

please tolerate my moods.

Be playful,

patient

as we learn our roles.

I'll need some privacy.

Ignore my feuds.

Respect my time,

as I too have my goals.

And tell me you need me,

often, please.

When I'm at my worst

I'll need you most.

I need the truth.

Watch how you scold or tease.

What joy to break my fast

with tea and toast,

and see you raise your brow

without a word to bust me,

as I'm reaching for my third.

Glen Martin Fitch

# What I'M Offering You

First, my attention,  
You will have my time,  
my thoughts, my energy.  
Soon all I'll seek  
will be to meet  
your unmet needs,  
for I'm committed to your wants  
before you speak.  
Next I'll embrace your family  
and your friends.  
Your teams will be my teams.  
Your schemes my schemes.  
If I offend,  
I vow I'll make amends.  
My dream come true-  
to see us live our dreams.  
You'll have my ear.  
Your secrets I will keep.  
When asked  
you'll have my feedback,  
frank but kind.  
You'll have my hand,  
my lips  
when you're inclined.  
My body heat  
will warm you when we sleep.  
By day your back  
I'll cover on the street.  
At night your back  
I'll cover with a sheet.  
□

Glen Martin Fitch

# What The Martian Didn'T See

He saw a two inch rock  
amid the sand.  
He saw three sections  
with three lobes across.  
He blinked his eye and  
dropped it with a toss and  
poked another  
with his sucker hand.  
I saw a shield-like shell  
of armored scales,  
Saw tentacle-like eyes,  
a sword-like spine.  
I watched it hover  
waiting for a sign  
to dart and gulp some shrimp  
who squirms and flails.  
He didn't see  
a creature lost a mile above,  
five hundred million years  
away from home,  
transformed from flesh  
to lime and clay,  
and trapped in layered time  
in pile on pile.  
He saw  
as is.'  
But what he couldn't see:  
a trilobite is awe and irony.

Glen Martin Fitch

# When I Go Home

The ghosts come out to meet me  
from their sleep.  
Not as my parents  
do they watch the door,  
but from each photo's frozen face  
they peep and haunt the habits  
I can wear no more.  
They summon up the dead  
from letters found  
and jab me  
with each name out of my past.  
Forgotten thoughts spring  
from each scent and sound  
to mock me  
for my dreams that didn't last.  
Yet in the dark,  
alone,  
they make me start to wonder  
who and where and when I am  
as formless faces  
that once held my heart  
beseech me  
how to join among the damned.  
They are the beings  
that I used to be.  
Each cannot yet forgive  
each change in me.

Glen Martin Fitch

# When Players Know Their Instruments So Well

When players  
know their instruments so well  
that thought is act  
and both of them are one  
or when impassioned poets  
in a spell hear chanting faster  
than a pen can run  
or when an artist  
in a vision's trance  
knows where and  
when and how  
to yield accord  
or when an actor,  
learned in voice and stance,  
can be beside himself  
in spirits stored  
or when a dancer  
whirling past all pain  
can feel the sense  
of weightless,  
formless flight  
or when beyond thought  
one can yet retain  
the order of a sport  
of test or rite,  
it's then that one draws  
pleasure out of strife,  
the moment's taste of  
lost immortal life.

Glen Martin Fitch

# Witness

One day a friend  
sat with her mom (in-law) outside  
to watch her toddler son at play.  
'My son, at his age,  
did that-  
just that way.'  
At Grandma's words  
she sobbed and  
clamped her jaw.  
Like no one else  
a parent knows a child.  
When young  
a car crash  
cracked her at her core.  
She lost her folks,  
their future and  
their lore.  
They would have seen her  
in her boy and smiled.  
You've seen the things  
that others have not seen.  
You know my flaws  
and fears  
and when I lie.  
Your presence makes me  
humble, honest, clean.  
Without your love  
I wouldn't even try.  
Attest my virtues.  
Vouch my honesty.  
Affirm my courage.  
I ask, 'Witness me.'

Glen Martin Fitch

# Yes Butting

I hear your pain, my friend.  
You do seem stuck.  
With every effort thwarted  
You're depressed.  
Yet, while you blame  
Your fated, lousy luck  
you veto  
Every option I suggest.  
You either have a god  
You must appease  
Who seeks to do you ill  
At every turn  
or else  
Each time you do  
"Just as you please"  
Creates a consequence.  
It's what you earn.  
You cannot change the past  
Although you try.  
You cannot change the weather  
Of your lot.  
You cannot take  
Because you haven't got.  
You cannot win  
Because you rage or cry.  
You pout,  
Yet seem invested in your mood.  
You have the strength to change-  
Your attitude.

Glen Martin Fitch

# You'Re Only As Mature As You Are

It's not enough  
to learn from each mistake.  
We grow up being  
someone else's test  
to see how we react  
when teased or stressed or hit.  
We learn to lie  
for our own sake.  
But on the social stage  
we play our part  
and strive to act adult  
at every age.  
We feed our grievances  
and nurture rage  
and try to hide  
our bitter, battered heart.  
Yet at the table  
for a family feast  
we eye a parent,  
adult child or sib,  
an ex (or should be)  
till the age old fib won't hold.  
Out roars our inner beast.  
The napkins fly  
at those we most despise,  
confronting liars  
to protect our lies.

Glen Martin Fitch