

B.C. THE WILD GOOSE CHASE

BY J. R. SCHELL



LIFE!

I hear you calling me...

Away!

B.C.
The Wild Goose Chase

Poetry Anthology 1

By J. R. SCHELL

Find xml

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To Robert William Service,

the Poet Laureate of the North,

My kinsman in spirit and fellow bond slave of

The Wanderlust

One of the rare hearts who really understood.

But All That He Could See

"The bear went over the mountain,
To see what he could see,"
And there stretching forever,
Was the whole world waiting for me.

And all that I could see,
Was the grass blowing long and free
And this bear leapt over the mountain
This bear skipped down the mountain
The bear drank deep from the fountains
When the Angel Wind beckoned to me.

Come Fly With Me

Come spread you wings and fly with me

The best by far is yet to be

Let us elude the bonds of earth

Embark upon a life of worth

Sucking dry this brief life's husk

Seeking to Live from dawn to dusk

Tasting freedom on the breeze

Adventures for bold hearts to seize

Beauty, wonder and new friends found

To meaningless toil no longer bound

Cutting anchor, setting sail!

Cupping our wings before the gale.

Come spread your wings and fly with me

As we become all we might be!

Footloose

I stroll, I strut, I stride,
Wanderlust's son, Footloose
I go in search of the chase
And not of the wild goose

The Canadian flies on my banner
In a bag resides my estate
Magellan sails my commander
Recklessly tempting my Fate

I'll blow north instep with the summer
Then back south fleeing the snow
I'll reach for the stars above me
And swim with the dolphins below

Eating the ground up beneath me
My hair, wind-blown and free
You might think I'm worse for the weather
When the weather's the worse for me

Paradise? Could it be somewhere
Roaming's the best I've found.
Penniless, nationless, care-less
To the land remaining unbound

A rolling stone eager to bounce
Escaping the gathering moss
A deck passage seeking adventure
Corks love being storm-tossed

The Open Road

Lonely Roads,
Heat wave highways
Aren't any fun,
Small town rednecks,
Police shakedowns
Keep me on the run.

Autumn Lanes
Windblown hairdos
Thick grass - green and warm,
Guileless smiles,
Deadhead styles
Kindness is the norm.

Couple bucks and a pack,
Bread and apples for a snack,
Wandering along the way
Meeting folks,
And trading tales,
Sucking life dry today

I heard a cry,
That urged my soul,
To spread its wings asunder.
Taking a chance,
I looked to the skies,

And glided into Wonder.

Making friends
Following Zen
Tracking down a dream
Nature's college
Higher knowledge
Simplicity, the theme

Taoist disciple
Free-wheeling bicycle
Hot springs for a bath
Confused minds
Tangled vines
Gild a simple path

Just blowing free,
Like a tumbleweed,
While filled with adoration,
Feeling alive,
Under an open sky
While testing my limitations.

Dreaming of Xanadu
And Shangri-La!
Not Kokomo Holiday Inns.
Banana boats
Up the Amazon

Not Disney Jungle boat dins.

Who ate my Doritos?
Watch out - Banditos!
Want to play some gin?
The road is muck
The trucks are stuck
Guerillas moving in

Caves and raspberries
And fresh baked pie
A shower nice and hot
The wonders of Tikal
Unveiled
But all I want is my cot
Cheese and wine,
By volcano light
Hanging with friends of the road,
Desolation
Throughout the valley
The wind blowing brisk and cold.

With descent of mirk,
Majestic fireworks,
A symphony without sound.
Auroras dazzle,
Silence us, the rabble.
Glory to God without bounds

Until I'll be,
Worn, weary and gray
As craggy as the hills
With child-eyed wonder
Like Bombadil,
Still laughing with the rills.

Oh To Look Down On Eagles

Oh to look down on eagles again,
From the top of the Top of the World.
To stand at the zenith and leap into life.
Cupping the Angel Wind in your arms
Letting it loose your soul from its moorings
Lifting your body to soar free.
To plunge from the heights
Screaming screeeee-ahh in exhilaration!
To swoop down on eagles in their brazen glory
And show them what it means to be alive.
To effortlessly rise, surfing into the heights again.
To soar wherever the wind takes you,
To be unafraid
Needing nothing,
And never look back

The Puddle Duck

The Goose

The breeze is up,
The skies are blue,
No time to waste
Let hearts be true!

The Puddle Duck

The heights are chill
And boundless too
Let's talk this over
Before we do.

The Goose

We're given wings
We were made to fly
We were meant to travel
The endless sky

The Puddle Duck

That sounds nice
And adventurous too
It would be ever so grand
To soar as you do

The Goose

Then hand off your chores,

And fill up a pack
Throw on your shoes
No time to look back

The Puddle Duck
But what if it rains
What about when it blows?
If we go far enough
We may even face snows?

The Goose
We were made for water
Made for flight
Made for the elements
By day or by night

The Puddle Duck
But how will we eat?
And where and when?
Who will chase off the foxes
That harry our den?

The Goose
We will savor each bite
We will relish each meal
We will outfox the fears
That would break in and steal

The Puddle Duck

It sounds so risky
It sound so wild
If we take such chances
How will we survive?

The Goose

Your wings aren't clipped.
There's no chain of brass
It's only your fear
Tethering you to the grass

The Puddle Duck

Oh I wish that I could!
How I wish that I might
Be free as a bird
When life's such a blight

The Goose

You speak as I did
Like ten thousand before
You wish that you dared,
Like too many more

The Puddle Duck

With eggs to be laid?
Careers to be hatched?
Bills to pay?
Jones's to catch?

The Goose

I will tarry no longer
Life's ticking away
Come fly off with me
If just for a day

The Puddle Duck

It's safer to stay
And much wiser too
It's dangerous, mad Goose
To live life as you do!

The Goose

I may feed the foxes
Fly close to the sun
Yet I will have lived
Before I am done

The Puddle Duck

But farm meals are certain
With greens freshly tossed
Farmer's preparing a surprise
Involving al' orange sauce.

Looking Down

He asked me to sell the dream!
Outwardly polite
but in my soul,
I scoffed at him as a serf enslaved to the land.
A puddle duck,
What could he offer me?

FREEDOM!
No shackles for this goose.
I spread my wings and ride on the wind.
Fully Alive.
The richest of men
Unbound
A dreamer of dreams,
Soaring high
Above it all.

Denali

Once I walked an unpaved lane,
Skies were dark with drizzly rain,
My heart was light, at my side,
Laughed a young heart, he my guide,
We had no plans, time our own,
Cool refreshing autumn tones,
We met sprites time had eldred,
In the rain, smile sheltered,
Wits and chuckles, worry free,
Just a carefree memory.

Another time I worked all night,
Under the Zoo's florescent lights,
Writing friends and banging out poems,
Seeking to tell, pondering Koans,
Silently, the clock hummed three,
My mind felt bovine, ponderously,
I slung my books, sought my bed,
The night was pitch, the stars had fled,
I couldn't see the well-known trail,
As ghosts and grizzlies me assailed,
I heard the whispers from the dark,
The hurried steps, the rushed attack!
The security guard almost died,
His girl was laughing so hard she cried,
And I had lost my vaulted pride,
Long ago, on the Denali side.

4:24 AM

How can I but resent you?
Artists with your dearth of lines,
Poets with your turn of phrase.
While I, a groping scribbler,
Rub my eyes and pound out my lines.

The Desert People

Poor they be,
Even poorer than me
Yet rich they are
With bright desert stars.

Satevo Mission

I can see the haunting mission
White against the desert sands
Simple shacks, without addition
Making houses, brick and hand

Incongruent ancient towers
Rise high over the organ pipe.
Napping through the heatwave hours
All hide from the bleaching light

In the arch before the kitchen
Leaning close beside her man
Stood a woman like a vision
Brown skin darker than sun-tanned

A summer dress of patterned flowers
A child hiding from my sight
Eyes like black holes filled with powers
Met my glance and held it tight

Swaying slowly like the heat waves
Dark hair hanging to her hips
This is a memory I must save
Red and passionate like her lips

Is it possible I had known
The instant that our eyes did meet
That her family, that her home
Had somehow made her soul complete?

How the girls back home would stare
Wondering how you get along
I'll preserve a beauty so rare
I'll preserve your grace in a song

I write this, so I'll always remember
Beauty simple as a prayer
In the starkness of November
She stole my heart without fanfare

Perfect

A watercolor wall
Reaching up, perfect
changing
Still perfect
lifting an oven bird
retreating from mountains
The Sky

The Pond in Autumn

A moment of pause by the darkened pond,
Where locust trees lean
One upon another
Like little boys staring at their reflections
In the almost tranquil waters.

I am calmed
By the steady arboreal drizzle
Of curled leaves
Descending like care-worn hands
Cupping to drink of the stillness.

Then the transforming exhale of zephyrs
And russet-sailed regattas
Skate toward lonely coves
From dawn-hushed fathomless seas.

Uncharted

Dry dirt, it's a road!
Such a strange looking thing
dust covering the plants along the roadside.
The last uncharted wilderness
uncharted not longer,
for I have spent long, lonely years
covering it's breadth.
Step by step,
coming to know
the unexpected treasures it hides.
Who would have guessed the glories I have beheld?
Doubly marvelous because
no eye before me had ever beheld them.

Accursed have I been,
No other soul have I known.
At first I wanted a woman,
but it has gone beyond that now;
I want a thought from some fresh source.
Perhaps I have gone mad
in these endless, twisting corridors of my mind.
One set of ideas, circling
for my greatest enemy has always been myself.

Blessed have I been,
for I have explored the last trackless land!

Never knowing what lay before me.
I know how the ancients felt when they saw-
 their first aurora,
 that first glimpse of the sea;
how Adam felt when he saw Eve
 on that first of all days!
 Doubly blessed
 for this land is the last.
And for people like me,
the world is an emptier place.

 To this wilderness
these records are its doom.
 To those like me
this journal is a dirge.
 To me,
it is a hollow victory.
It can never hold the fire light and overcoming.
 It is only words and numbers,
so deadly to this place and ultimately
 So empty.

 Where's the flint?
 Here's the steel-
all but out of tinder.
 Rasp, Rasp.
How pretty you will look in your new colors, my pages –

carbon black and bright coals –
like a memory...
Once I found a fire stained cave in a magical dell.
But no one will wonder at that now.
Like them, I have preserved it
For all who would follow.

Brother of My Soul

You could always count on me
For a wild caper or three.
While you, were all too happy
To pour foundations under them.
I had my plans, so big and scary,
Impossible to face alone.
But with you, watching my back
Somehow, I knew we'd pull through

I feel sort of guilty,
You could have been normal
Could have been happy
Coloring within the lines.
But instead you latched onto me
And off we went
Like a couple of mad bumble bees
Looking for adventure

Didn't matter if it was
Giant spiders and scorpions
Or mud that was axle deep
Flash floods in Wrangel
Or killer bees in Palo Verde
Though the grizzlies were hungering
And the volcanos rumbling
And the banditos bumbling

No matter how lost,
How hot,
How tired,
There you were,
Like a Pictish monument
Always standing firm

Whether the sunsets blurred into sunrises
Or glowed like fine aquamarines
The nights we danced on the tables
Or laughed until we cried
With wild men named Hank
And Honduran girls fondling your hair...
In the best of times and the worst
Never could a wild goose
Have ever dreamed of a better wingman
Oh Brother of My Soul.

A Loaf of Bread

A loaf of bread makes a pretty good pillow

Yeah a pretty good pillow

When you're rolling through Belize
On a school bus viewed in nightmares
And you're trying to catch some "Z's"

Put it down, makes a pretty good pillow

When you're sick

And your head's bopping on the pane
We've been packed in like sardines
Down this long and dusty lane.

I'm stretching rhymes, and wishing I was sleeping

Saves my mind

On a bright Thanksgiving Day
A chocolate feast was my repast
And I'll keep it down I pray

He stopped the bus, there's a peasant on the shoulder

Why the fuss?

Cause the engine needs oil
We've been stopping every mile
When the coolant starts to boil

Stretching rhymes, cause I really hate the driver

Tropical climes

I bet you he's an outpatient
A sadistic maniac
Can't you see his labelled bracelet?

I'm stretching time, makes a pretty crumby pillow
It's a crime
Cause I'm dying for a bite
Yet bread's all I have to eat
So I'm fasting through the night

Here's a thought, that makes a pretty good pillow
Since I'm caught
Cause I'm remembering a tale
About a girl who had to *push*
Through the mud her *autobus*
Feeling sort of better, for stretching a rhyme

In The Lands of The East

In the lands of the east where the sun is born,
There lies a canyon where the earth is torn,
By the mighty waters of the Torrent Swell
As the currents roar in a watery hell.
Living near a hidden eddy
Where chance has formed a hidden jetty

But in this rift, foreign to silence,
Thrives a people bereft of violence
They build bridges instead of fences,
Blaze new roads, fill old trenches.
Signs say Welcome, not Keep Out
Trusting in Trust, and not in Doubt.

Following a path largely uncharted
They live life with hearts unguarded
Living for substance and not for flings
Ignoring the lure of “finer things”
Choosing Peace as their cause
Fluttering like butterflies among moths.

Flame

Desire was a red-headed spitfire.
At least,
That was the role she played
Each year at the faire.
He approached, her eyes dismissed,
And the back of his head
Revealed little as he rambled away
But in the tale he was writing,
He named her Flame
A sassy pirates plundering hearts and hoards,
A woman more myth than real,

Until minds create reality.
And there she was,
A woman more myth than real,
Dancing, carousing, sometimes tender, unattainable,
Never to trust her,
Wanting what cannot be kept,
Sand in an hourglass,
Water in your hands.
Alone, confused
Looking outside in,
Until inside out,
Through her own eyes,
He saw, a woman more myth than real,
Misunderstood, and in need.

How He Writes

Dangerously

At pen point in a manic hand
Laying his life on the lines
Opening his heart on the page

Unwillingly

Like a scribbling insecurity
Trying to keep his soul illegible
Let it be a mystery to most
Maybe mostly to him

Universally

For the mind is uniquely suited
To play at once offence and defense
Busily flitting everywhere

Totally

Once lost in a thundering avalanche of
ideas
Hanging onto a leaping pen for dear life
Hoping to land somewhere soft...

Breathlessly

Ink

Is blood.

Listen!

For every writer knows

That ink is blood,

And when it clots you long to flow again.

Writers must long to bleed,

For darkest secrets and deepest fears

Will cut you coming out,

A pen is a rusty razor after old lead,

A desperate vampire after its own veins

The Deathless all know, that

Ink,

Will drink,

You dry.

Kathy's Song

I want to look on life with child-eyes
I want to marvel at each passing day
I want to make you feel loved
That it shines through all the veils
That all may know the measure of your joy
I want them to suspect the beauty that I know*
When each day for us will bloom
A Life Complete

Together we might be two blankets woven one
Keeping each other warm when life gets cold
I know that I can trust you
With my darling child-eye dreams
You must believe that I can see the work involved
I know that you are listening
Can we face our greatest fear?
To commit our fragile hearts to callous hands
From within comes my love sonnet
Poor in talent, pure in heart
From within must come your answer
Am I the One you're looking for?
Trust your heart, you know its answer
Be my wife! and I'll kiss your eyes

Love

Too drowsy to move
But not too drowsy to feel
In the dark my bride is close
And love warms my soul
How a life has changed
How a heart has grown
Because of your love for me
We are partners in a dance for salvation
Dreamers of the same dreams
But I am too weary to paint pictures
Perhaps you are sleeping
I would reach out and
Squeeze your little hand in mine
And just love you
But you move first, as always
And lay your gentle hands around mine
And just love me

This Morning

This morning
My bride is warm and drowsy beside me
The grass wears drops of dew
Like a field of tiny flowers
Or needles dripping nectar
Around my feet the grass is green
The air seems new
And the coffee is fresh
This morning
The world melts my heart
And I am happy.

Anya's Song

From the first of our days,

Life!

Gives those who loved us.

Their song,

Was the first that tolled,

Cradling our infant souls,

With Love's mark.

A key for the heart,

Unlocking joy,

With their unique spark.

And so it seemed,

They would always be,

Standing next to me,

My rock, my theme.

Until the world takes away,

The treasure it gave.

The unthinkable invades,

And all is lost!

Too soon gone, ever so wrong.

Echoing spaces, sealed.
Without their song to heal.

A hollow I still feel,
When Home has died.
And those irreplaceable,
in the deepest places...

Are no more,
And will never be again

.

Cold

She decided to paint him one morning
Put away her acrylics and dug out her oils.
She found him living in a flattened cubist world
Of geometric shapes and predictable angles,
A finite world where Reason – with all its mechanical
limits,
Could slay the Closet Monsters of
Life, Origins and Death.

She was short on yellows and reds, but it was no matter,
As it was a cold world she painted,
Without any desire for warmth,
A world where little Science was a Charon boatman
That could ferry souls across the Styx.
Poor Isaac had such a pale face,
Undoubtedly, from keeping his back so studiously to the
sun
At the same time,
He was troubled by the aura
Surrounding his shadow upon the wall.

Felt strangely echoing inside,
As if anyone ever imaged eternity
Without wanting it!

She gazed out the window at her watercolor world,
Where geese were feeding on the frosted grass.
She imagined the nip of frozen blades
First on webbed feet and then
Tearing loose and alighting on warm tongues.
Descending long necks.
With the finishing touches to her work,
She wafted to the kitchen with the smell of coffee
Enjoying its warmth as it filled her body,
Glad life was so much more than geometry

Greatly Indebted

Dear Mr. Service
Sure, Bob, if you insist,
How can I ever thank you
For your words, your fellowship,
For being the maddest of dreamers
For being as nutty as me?

It's so precious
For a lonely heart like mine
To find a kindred soul—
If only through your writings
Your radiant spirit
Crafting words to set my soul a-soaring.
Echoing the lure of the Wanderlust
Fathoming it, loving it, hating it
And enshrining it forever.

From your early days, skimping as a clerk
With the simplest of goals,
To your meteoric rise as
“The Poet Laureate of the North”
From the hair-brained capers,
Like not telling your wife that you were famous,
Or dragging that big boat
Over the Continental Divide
(What were you thinking?)

To discovering that indeed,
Dreams Are Best

When all I wanted was to roam free
And no one else could understand,
When the people I respected most
Told me I was a fool
(Sure they were right)
When I thought that loneliness
On Resurrection Bay
Would eat my carcass,
Ahead of the bears
And that Rory-Bory angel showed up
Whispering
That I was the richest of men

I want to thank you
For always traveling with me,
While also allowing me
To tag along on your adventures
For letting me hole up awhile
In your garret apartment
For going before me
Sharing your insights
And reminding me
That the days are quickly growing short.
I always thought there was
A rugged timelessness

To your work
But fame forgets.

Still maybe its best
That gypsy dreamers
Like you and me
Aren't among the rank and file.
For people like us
Must shoot for the moon
And climb mountains
For no reason at all
We hunger
For what's around that next bend
Wonder what treasure
Awaits in the depths of the sea
We build our castles in the sky
And tell stories
Destined to be forgotten...

Drop me a line sometime,
Whenever you get the hankering.
For the old vagabonds like us
Even in death,
Can't lie still for long.

Enlightenment

He knew the answers to the big questions,
Knew why God made evil,
Knew that Death had no sting,
That Reason wouldn't work
He knew where to find love and friendship
And went to them.
He found the secret ways of Wisdom
And even stumbled upon his purpose,
He had lived fully,
Until it all seemed done but dying,
His secret:
Seek answers, then let them find you.
Still,
He empathized with the young monk,
Who became enlightened,
But said,
He was no happier than before.

Spring and Fall

Oh to be Young and Child-eyed again,
When the World was fresh and new,
And a Day was so poignant and vibrant,
That to Thrill was all I could do.
When every hill was a mountain,
And first Love stole my heart away.
When the birds trilled of Life that was there to be lived,
Before the world became Barbizon Gray.

Numb

It had been nice to have a purpose in life
It is rather comforting to have the feeling
Of control
Over something so elusive as one's destiny.
But that's gone now, and it broke my compass going.
So I'm just apathetically awlirl,
In an eddy of self-pity,
In this, my river of lives.
Where do I go now?
After living life to the fullest
And following every dream?
And finding that everything
In the whole world
Is Oh So Empty!
I had always believed that this didn't happen,
To those sighting Dharma.
Never suspecting that I was sighting someone else's
target.
I always believed that could lay,
Some golden egg of hope,
To nourish those who suffer,
From the part that I now play.
But the magic words are gone,
With a childhood better left forgotten,
And there's no raving or rest for me,
As I resent the things that I love most,
And I pray that somewhere out there,
Awaits renewal.