

Poems For Our Struggle Pdf File

Excerpts From
Tales Of Men And Women
Chosen For Democracy Activists
By Stone Riley



Picture: “**Fiery Transition**”: Three paintings and a sculpture depicting the I Ching trigram Middle Daughter, meant to be an energy diagram of our time

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Precis

March 2017:

The book from which these excerpts come is an unusual book for unusual times. For decades I have self-published a great many printed works – newsletters, flyers, banners, card decks, paperbacks, pins, posters, signs, etc. – all in tiny manufacturing runs for tiny distribution to friends, fans and passersby. But “Tales Of Men And Women Edition 7” is the first piece I have self-published to the world at large, because I mean for it to fit a pressing public need.

Many of our best Leftist thinkers today are saying that our struggle toward a good new society demands a new true “foundation myth” or “origin story” or “world map” or some such phrase. Apparently they mean a new true unifying understanding of our nature and the nature of the world in which we are. Some even say this is the only big missing piece for our success. So I'd really like to help with that.

This unusual moment comes when I am old and therefore find myself with a large stock of accumulated material on hand. In particular there is my habit of reissuing an anthology every few years. I guessed it might be a handy vehicle for an attempt at the artistic achievement those thinkers are demanding; for after all, that is pretty much the very goal my work has been gnawing at for all these years. And so there came to be the big red paperback.

But that thing is too damn big to fit another purpose I would also love to serve: To put a basket full of beauty in your hands, to feed your heart and soul when they need strength. And so this set of excerpts also comes to be.

There are some things you'll find inside that likely need explaining.

First, there are scant details here. Or, better say here are offered my grand strategic vision and an exploration, from my experience, of what we are; thus perhaps the start and finish of a new creation tale, the ground and goal of a new world map. Lands between are open for discussion.

And Tarot is here. It's here because it feeds my heart and soul and so may do for yours. Furthermore, the coming age will be at first an age of cosmic grief for all that has been lost so we need counselors equipped with magic beauty. Any work you do along that line will be very welcome. In this book please see especially my page “Tarot's frequently asked questions” and the poem “August Evening”. Thank you.

And there are the pictures here. Sorry if they're not your cup of tea. To my eye they illustrate the poems pretty well, a kind of graphic novel translation.

And this in closing: Thank you for your trust.

Don't Stop Walking

Don't stop walking when there is no way ahead.
Your walking makes the path. The place you started
from was cleared by others. Others soon will follow
you and pass and step ahead. 

The God At Noon

A very ancient vision of divinity:

How often has a human caught the glittering eyes of
fox or mouse or deer or bear or lion in the teeming
forest or the grassy plain and – with a shudder or in
sudden awesome ecstasy – they felt everything outside
themselves look into their being? How often have
the voices of the wind told someone that the spirits
of the land are watching? How often has the twink-
ling light of stars stabbed deep into a human soul?
How often has that penetration broken through the
calcined layers of a wounded heart so it might love
again, or opened darkened places to the light of self-
understanding so wisdom could begin?

How often has the awesome power of beauty caught
us unawares? 

Songs Of Heroes

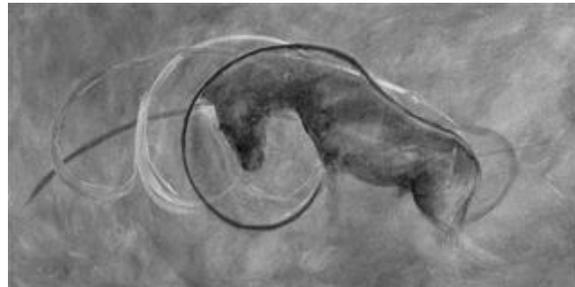
a poem of endings

An old blind man up by the table's head rises
carefully to stand on wobbling legs. Some good
girls and boys assist this blind old gentleman to find
the chair that some have run to set in a shady spot
beneath a tree. Our local champion poet brings the
painted harp and gives it, bowing by his knee.

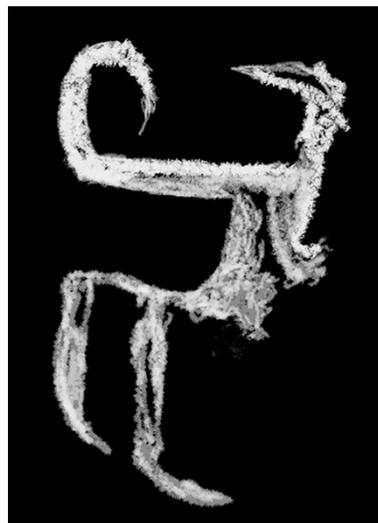
And so he strikes the first note on the strings. He
begins to sing amid the ringing chime. This reedy
thinning voice cries out the tale of great Odysseus who
came home. 



In The Beginning
Subtitle: Meditation
On Guaguin's Wood
Carvings, acrylic /
canvas painting by
SR



The God At Noon
Acrylic / canvas painting by SR



J Is For Jack
From Alphabeticon
Digital image from
acrylic / canvas
painting by SR



San Diego Bay Panel C Painting by SR

A Note On Verse Style

an opinionated poem

Written long ago in the age before hip hop:

In many of the poems here, I've used a verse style drawn on the ancient mode: declaiming for a present audience from memory, instead of modern styles meant to be read in silence, monk-like, slavish word and jot and tiddle softly tick by tick exactly from a printed page into the velvet cave of single consciousness, preferably, for mercy's sake, without your lips even moving.

Therefore here extreme metric elasticity, scaffoldings of metamorphing metaphor behind all merely aural dissonance or rhyme, and other technical peculiarities of pseudo-extempore verse you may be unfamiliar with unless, of course, you've ever heard a good announcer on the radio.

Apologies for any inconvenience.

But may I be quite frank in my opinion?

Poetry in America today doesn't work very well. It speaks thinly and vaporously, compared with what it ought to do. It's far too dogmatic in its recipe of sweet luscious distillate of consciousness of consciousness.

You'd almost think that ours are not the broad horizon days of Homer nor of Shakespeare nor (to put the case more seriously) of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, despite the obvious fact of course they are. Our poets chain themselves to Robert Frost, the watercolor man, with rare exception, all in fear of exile into Tartary. Even our primordial Titan of

the worldscape's edge, even Ginzberg, must assume a neat and tidy parlor space behind your eyes as the reverberating chamber for his enormous Howl, even felt required to stand still in some private room behind his eyes or in some small walled garden like mad Dickinson kept so fragrantly watered, as his starting place for each stride out to meet the universe.

Your average poet scarcely peeks outside the realm of "me!" at all.

No wonder so few people listen to the stuff. It's mostly dull as dust. It's ready for a re-think.

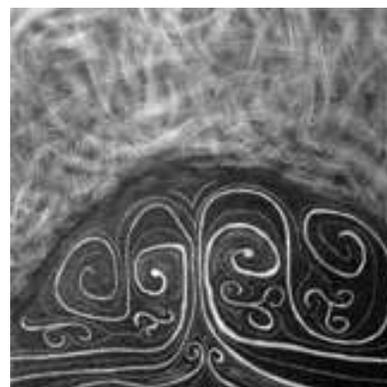
But me? Well, I plan to seize the listener's attention. I want to grab him by the short hairs of his brain and shove a picture in his gaze. Is that too rude or something? I have a lot to say.

We have a lot to say.

It's time to tell our story.

I don't mean journal entries. I mean it feels as if the world is tumbling upside down and there are cries all over of alarm. I mean it seems like Sartre said: the god who led us here is dead and we are left to riddle out the horrifying situation. Like Jung and Joseph Campbell and Margaret Mead and Dorothy Day said, we need to tell the truth in such a way that we can understand it fully deeply broadly with our whole selves. It's really not enough to press our faces to the page. We need real paintings too.

It's now as though the hallways of Lascaux stand empty waiting for a brush.

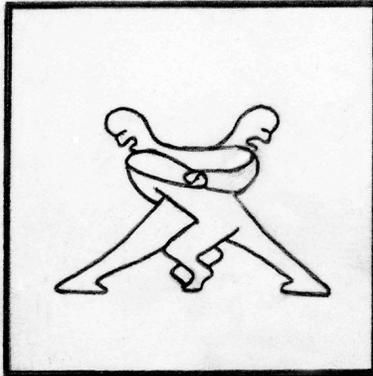


Pluto Painting by SR

**Y Is
For You**
Image
from a
painting
by SR

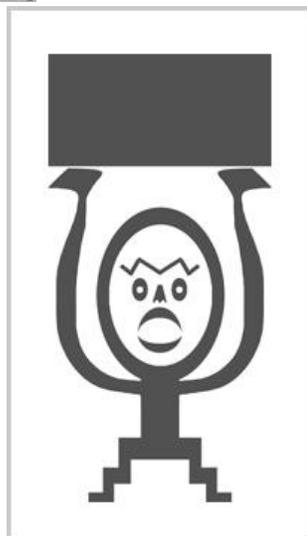


Two Of Swords
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil on
paper by SR



Blessings
Polymer clay
sculpture by
SR

Do The Hard Work
Digital image by SR
based on a drawing
by Devon Keelin



Do The Hard Work

a poem of war resistance

Shouldn't there be snow? It's February in the outlying reaches of the Alps in southern Germany. We are out on the porch of a tavern that clings to a steep valley's green grassy wall, nursing mugs of beer in the rising twilight.

We are the tavern's only customers. We scarcely speak and scarcely make a sound for we are keeping secrets, each their own.

I go lean on a rail to watch the darkness move. It's coming toward me, rising from the valley's shadows far below. The air is still and clear and it's not even really cold.

We are five men. Our little truck is parked up by the road. It's 1971 and we are U.S. Army soldiers, stationed in this country on a Cold War stalemate line instead of being sent to fight in Viet Nam.

The old sergeant, commander of our little journey for this evening, he who kindly halted here and even bought the beer, comes to lean against the railing beside me. The young corporal who is driving also comes and sits down on a bench beside and slowly takes a sip.

The old sergeant, this professional soldier, to show he's talking to me, looks out there where I am looking. And he breaks the silence: "I admire what you're doing."

I've just done thirty days in army jail for doing war resistance work. He and his corporal are transporting me and two other malefactors also just released back to our regular duties. He has now given me military information about morale.

He has spoken very softly.

Surprised, I look into his face and look away. I whisper thanks. So: What does this mean that I ought to do?

And then, down there below, laboring to rise out of the rising night, low to the grassy ground and laboring up this hillside, I see a crow at wing.

Do the hard work.



Sunflowers

a poem of art

Van Gogh began with black wax crayon, pocket knife and tough cheap commercial wrapping paper cut in squares. Equipped like that the young man taught himself to paint. No, better if we say he let himself be taught.

He'd hire in old men from the pension house around the corner. Each chosen one would climb the narrow stairs up to the flat the genius shared with a depressive sometime prostitute who was his Guenivere,

then sit there in the open window light with a threadbare black wool overcoat hanging from their shoulders, sometimes leaning forward on a cane. A few copper sous which he could scarcely spare, that was their honest fee.

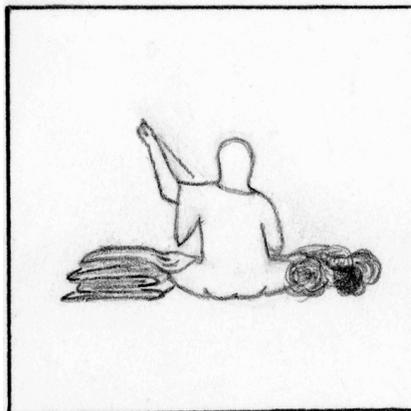
And this was Van Gogh's Paris. No more the merchant's son he'd been in Amsterdam, no more the stiff and stilted peasant scenes he'd drawn on proper artist pads, for here and now the thing had come down to a nub.

And this ensued: War veteran or horse drawn taxi cabman or carpenter or gardener or thief, each old man would open out the soul with which he'd learned to face the world.

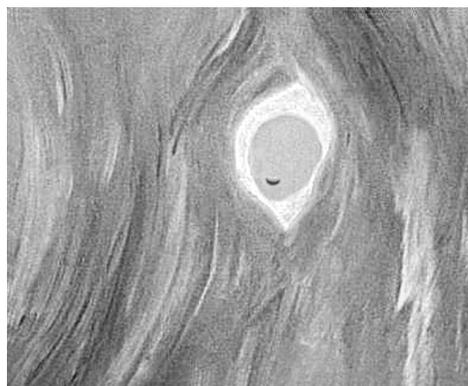
And each immortal spirit, thus unfolded, a manifested work of art itself, would rush in through the staring eyes down through the arm down to the fingertips which gripped the hard wax stick which were let move,

so it might sculpt the likeness on the sheet tacked to a board held in the artist's lap. A bit of careful scraping with the knife to catch the high-lights right.

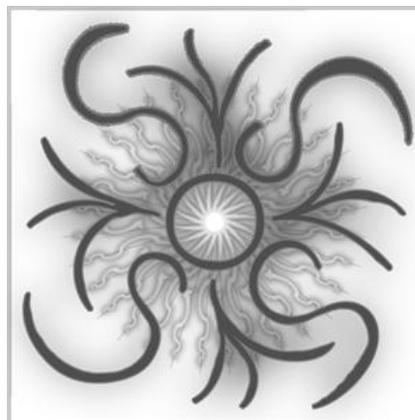
Sunflowers.



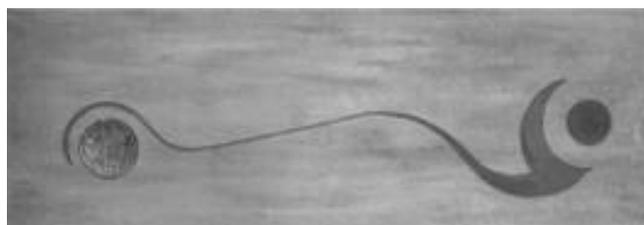
Three Of Coins
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil on
paper by SR



**A Friend
Visits The
Studio**
Painting by
SR



Guarded Portal
Digital image by
Stone Riley



Memory Of Veronica
Acrylic / canvas painting by SR, depicting a tragedy
in which the artist was not innocent

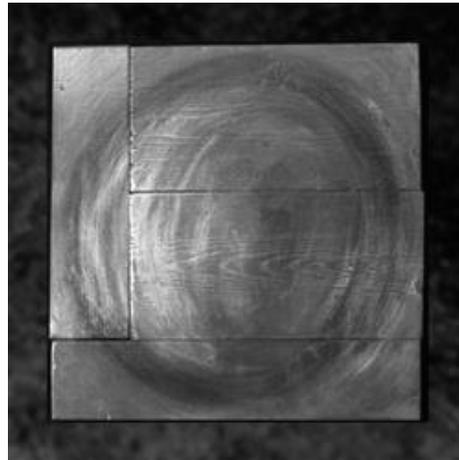
The Lure Of Adventure

a poem of spiritual dedication

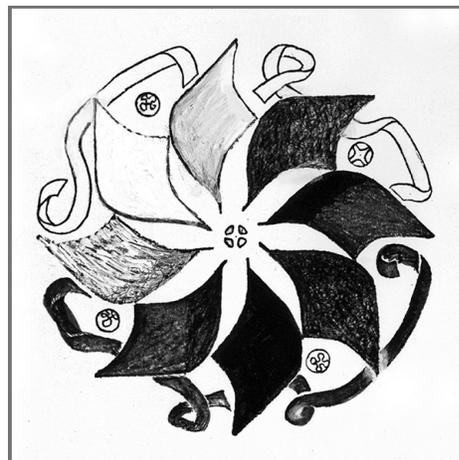
One time there was this bright young girl, quite enthusiastic, who took the summer off to hitchhike all around the country looking for the meaning of life. Right off she started hearing people talk about some guy named "Cousin Howard".

The first time was a mini-van covered with day-glo peace signs and flowers. They pulled up where she was standing and she looked them over and there was a big Egyptian hieroglyph decal on the window so she climbed in and they were all jabbering in their freaky stoned out way about Cousin Howard. Apparently a rock musician. That guy had cosmic vibes, they said. They had just come from a concert or something of his in Seattle and were going home now back to Frisco but were headed east and almost to Des Moines. Hearing this, she climbed over a naked woman to a window, opened it for air, declined the pipe when it was passed and got out at the next motel. But all night she couldn't get the slowly throbbing tune out of her head that the freaks had been trying to hum.

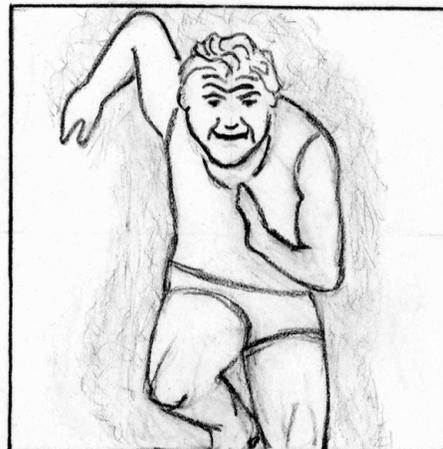
Next day or so there was the pair of Mormon missionaries, young guys in a white convertible, top down, screaming to the radio they turned up blasting but white shirts buttoned up with neckties pinned down neat like they were let loose on the world and didn't know what to do with it. Stacks of Bible tracts were fluttering and flying off into the wind. She was fascinated by their energy. She leaned up from the back seat and asked where they were going. Why, to see Cousin Howard in Albuquerque, they shouted. To ask him about God. They swerved to narrowly avoid an on-coming bus and she parted company with them at a waffle house.



**Chop Wood,
Carry Water**
Acrylic / wood
painting by SR



The Fool
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR



**Eight Of
Wands**
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil
on paper by
SR

But by then her curiosity was piqued. To tell the truth, she had begun to seriously ponder what she would ask someone who knew about God. And that tune kept playing in her head.

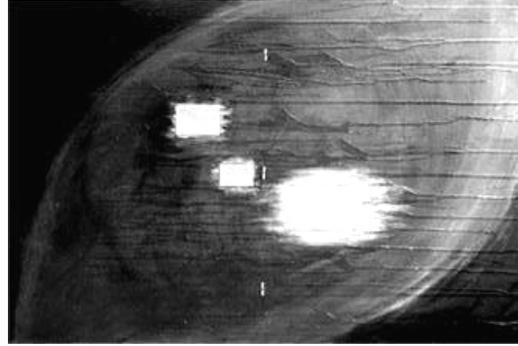
Next morning she caught her first bad ride. She'd slept out at a campground, bed roll under the starry sky, and frankly looked a mess and therefore felt relieved to have this very respectable seeming man her father's age, black but her father's age and the kind of business suit he wore, in a family kind of station wagon with Michigan plates, pick her up.

But he began to talk about his family and very soon began to weep. His wife had recently passed on. The man was inconsolable, no matter what she said. She felt so young and ignorant. "Don't worry about me though," he said through his tears, "I'm going to talk it all out with Cousin Howard in L.A." She frankly couldn't stand it anymore, weeping with him, mile after mile of relentless grief stabbing her heart, and kissed his cheek goodbye at a truck stop.

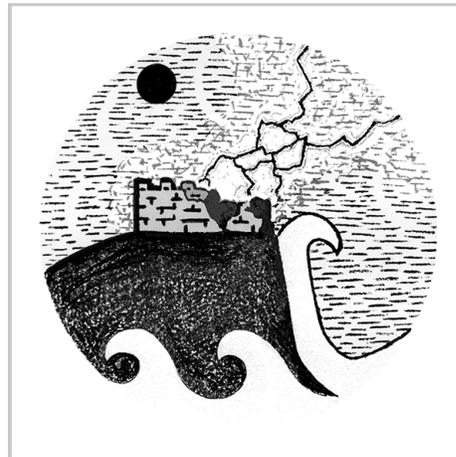
But she was questioning herself: What should she have told him? Could someone teach her that, someone who knew about God? And the tune took on a soft mournful wail.

Then there was the rusty old chugging school bus full of migrant Mexicanos – men, women, children, boxes tied down on the roof – going to a rally in Salinas where Cousin Howard was scheduled to announce next year's labor union plan. They made her share their scanty meals.

They broke down where the road rose steep into the mountains and she was sitting among the skinny listless children, wondering at the struggles of the passing generations of the human race and wondering at the inevitability of grief and wondering what she would ask someone who knew about God, listening as the tune took on a kind of mariachi beat, looking out as the mountain shadows lengthened across the breathtaking land, her eyes full of tears from some emotion which did not seem to have a name, until a couple of brothers from the bus coaxed her to go on ahead in a car full of contemplative nuns who happened by.



The Search For God Painting by SR



The Tower
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR



**Self-Portrait In
Late Winter**
Acrylic on assembled
canvas & cardboard
by SR

Now, these nuns somehow took a notion that she was a wandering prostitute. Therefore they insisted – absolutely insisted – that she must spend a day or two at a lovely retreat their order had just up the road. Chance to clean up and think a bit and maybe pray and everything was free. They'd soon be by again in case she wanted to go hear Cousin Howard preach about divine light in Butte. Divine light? Was that what she needed?

She lay there in the simple room on the simple cot, moonlight and scent of pines on a gentle breeze through the open window, exhausted but unable to sleep for the empty ache of ignorance she felt. All these miles and all she had was questions. What thing, what kind of thing, was she seeking?

She went to gaze out, saw a tiny fire twinkling among the trees down by the lake and thought perhaps the sisters there wouldn't mind company. Hot dogs and marshmallows maybe. Wrapped in the blanket, sandals on her feet, she found her way.

But it was a man, alone, sitting gazing in the flames. His face was old and creased in the flickering light. His hair was caught back in Indian braids and a single dark feather graced his tattered hat. As she approached he gestured toward a place across the fire. She was welcome.

Was she dreaming? She took the invitation. But immediately when she sat, she said "Cousin Howard?"

He smiled and shrugged. "Who else?"

"I have so much to ask!" she blurted.

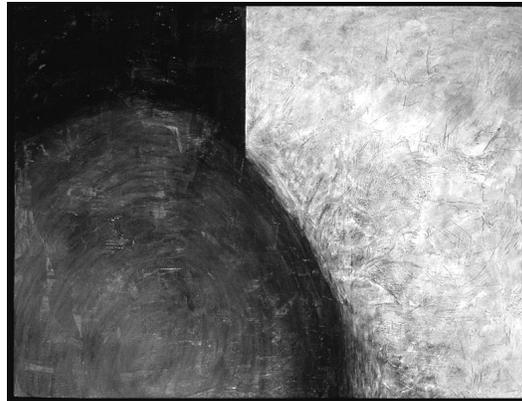
"Shhh" he whispered, a finger pressing on his lips, and smiled and seemed to sort of wink.

She tried to hush herself, to hear the breeze, to gaze into the flames, to relax into this dream which seemed so distressingly real, but her heart was demanding answers.



Six Of Wands

From Simple Tarot, Pencil on paper by SR



The Way Of Tea

Acrylic / canvas painting by SR



Three Sisters

Acrylic / canvas painting by SR

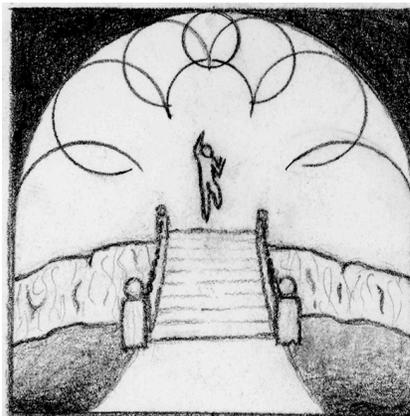
She tried to think what were the questions but nothing came.

She opened her mouth and one word "Why?" sighed into the air.

Instantly his finger pointed somewhere and he cried, "Look!"

She looked out through her veil of wonder. There was the rippling moonlight and the glowing water. There were the singing shadows of the trees. There was the boundless circle of awareness that filled her soul.

There were no other questions. 



Nine Of Cups
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil on
paper by SR

The Fool
Painting for
Spirit Hill
Tarot by
SR



The Fool

card 0 of Tarot's Major Arcana

A clown leaps from the height,
this prince, this god of fools.
Unfurling colored wings of immortality
he soars out high. But, drunken
with the dizzy speed and power,
he folds one wing and falls
:::
to this world. 

The Empress
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR



The Empress

card 3 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Oh QUEEN OF HEAVEN
mistress of our prayers;

Oh grandmother EVE
you who first bore child
and gave it suck,
you who first laid hand
upon the newborn human brow;

Oh PERFECT MOTHER OF US ALL

I, fruit of your womb,
call your name BLESSED
and kneel here at your feet. 

The Soul's True Yearning

a poem contemplating wisdom

The soul's true yearning
is to make itself known.

That is a common thought among our most poetic thinkers. After all, it makes such lovely sense of our intimate experience in inward contemplation, when we go to find and understand the things within, behind the masks which we ourselves present the outward world. Go in courage through dark places seeking truth about yourself, and familiar but forgotten forms do stand forth from the dark toward light and consciousness. Hidden faces do appear and even speak.

And it makes such lovely sense about the hidden nature of all things. If the soul of all the world, like her daughters for each being, yearns toward the unity discovered in the flickering but brilliant candlelight of consciousness, then we are the Hieros Gamos. We are all the holy bride and groom.

And it makes such lovely sense about the way before us. Do we lose the wit to do good in this world? Do we close our hearts and fall among the evils here? Does the bridegroom stumble on the way to bed? Only for a moment. If we simply truly love, then ecstasy is in our reach; passion and compassion lure us truly on.

The soul's true yearning
is to make itself known.



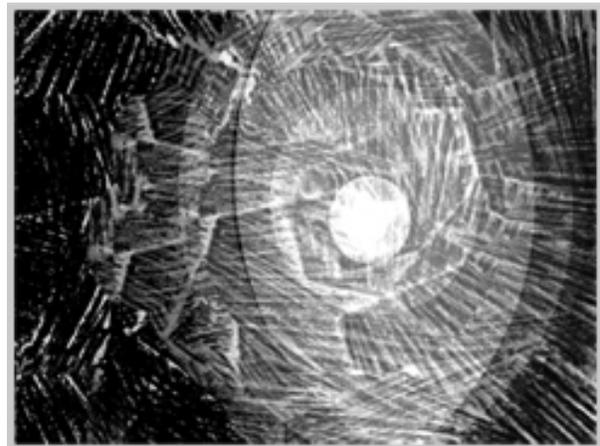
The Magician

card 1 of Tarot's Major Arcana

A clot am I of earth, wind, fire and water.
A breath am I of earth, wind, fire and water.
A spark am I of earth, wind, fire and water.
A drop am I of earth, wind, fire and water.

And yet I speak!

A human thing who names the gods.



The Soul's True Yearning

Digital image by Stone Riley



The Lovers
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR



The Magician
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR

Withdrawal Of Consent

a poetic essay in political philosophy

Around nineteen-eighty. Back then, we were in a time of lies, lies on a very wide and yet pervasively intimate scale, as though lies were the air you breathed. I'll tell you one example of those times that infuriated me:

My fellow citizens were mostly still in love with our national U.S. propaganda lies and so there was a nonsense question you could ask. You could ask Mister or Ms Citizen this:

“Do you think America is the greatest country in the world?”

Nonsense on its face of course. To rationally reply, just to start, they must apply some greatness score to every country in the world. Then if this is somehow done and if we win the tip top score, how then to reach the actual meaning? For we know what is meant: America is good and noble by its nature, and inherently in the world's nature. So how that? But if the citizen shall judge this inference is also done, the logic leads to marvelous conclusions.

For if the logic can be proved, or is assumed, then it confirms a pleasant feeling dawning temptingly as the preferred conclusion is approached. For the climax of the thought is this: Them and their nation righteously dreaming, forcefully leading, sunshiny gleaming, envy of the world and by incanting this they feel themselves standing now with masterful sunshiny generous Gods.

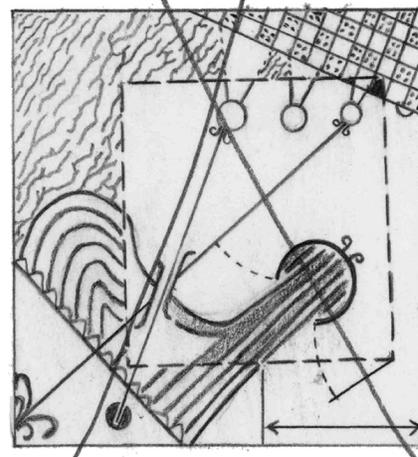
So every American I asked ...

“Do you think America is the greatest country in the world?”

... with very rare exception, would actually do exactly this: Listen to my question, think momentarily and see the difficulties of the question, decide to abandon thought, and shrug often, and answer:

“Yes, I think America is the greatest country in the world.”

Too frail to dare traverse the shadow of a doubt, these my fellow citizens.



Seven Of Cups
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil on
paper by SR



**Persistent
Dream**
Digital image
from a
painting by
SR

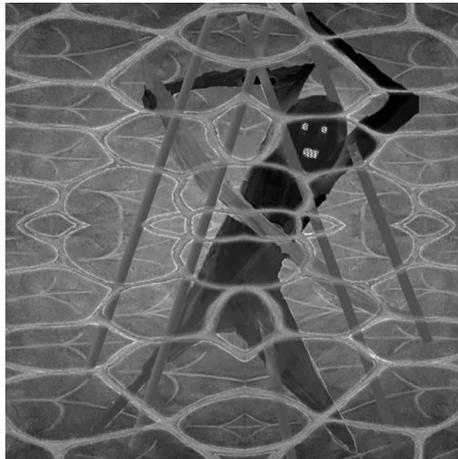
They were doing this even after the horrors of the very horrid Vietnam War that were just recently gone by, vast horrors done by our soldiers from the very start of it and repeated constantly with increasing pitch of desperation right to the end, horrors mostly done by public order of our generals in fulfillment of our government's public policies and constantly reported clearly in the daily news; yes it was even then after those long recent years of vast and quite intentional evil, that enormous spasm of pointless furious insane destruction, it was then in nineteen-eighty and I was finding most Americans still somehow clung to their cherished lie that our country, unlike most other countries, is noble and does good.

My fellow citizens.

Dire

Confusions

Digital image
based on two
paintings by
SR



(And one among the dead a friend. We men young together there were waiting, he among us chosen of the war machine and carried to the perpetration, he the murdered by the war machine, promptly murdered, us friends there waiting, us one letter back from him all full of scribbled horrors and he's dead. That long ago by then, dead in summer nineteen-seventy.)

Fast forward. Twenty-eleven. Thirty years more or less and every one of them a year of startling surprises.

Two thousand and eleven. Me. Night. A city night. An electric glaring night of shadowed darkness here behind us where we stand but blazing penetrating light across the street.

We standing here – a large but unknown number of us – stood far out to left and right and all three ranks deep but crowding close to hold each other up against the blaring light – are actually, in military fact, a voluntary unarmed citizen militia, well disciplined by our ideals and ready. Waiting. Our drummers drumming loud and fast. Food and water being passed.

Waiting for the Boston Police to cross the street in line abreast and take the park.

The park, the Occupy encampment. The tiny liberated zone. The tiny zone of real democracy, of real news, real education. The zone of reality and courage.

Me a visitor tonight. Me with others come racing in a car tonight to make this muster, come racing from our smaller city's camp where we are fully occupied with our own version of the struggle.

Me old man by then but out in front to show some leadership, waiting crouching on the curb, but a squad of drummers shove in here so I fade back behind the line and find some other duty.

Knight Of

Coins

From Simple
Tarot, Pencil
on paper by
SR



Six Of

Cups

From Simple
Tarot, Pencil
on paper by
SR



Me, I take up chatting. Chatting. Our fellow citizens, some of them, have come to stroll about behind our line and they want chatting. I hail one "Hi".

This one a man the age that I once was. In that electric shadowed thrumming rhythm dark he does approach, is not shy but can't find words.

Youngish, so-called white. Clean and warmly dressed this cool night.

He is not shy but fuddled, confused, trying seriously to think but can't find terms. Clearly sees the movement of these souls, clearly sympathizes but yet cannot see why. He seems to seem to himself cloudy drifty and opaque.

Me, I guess I'll clarify him

Me, I guess I'll put the question.

"Can I ask you something?" (Sarcastically? Ironically?)

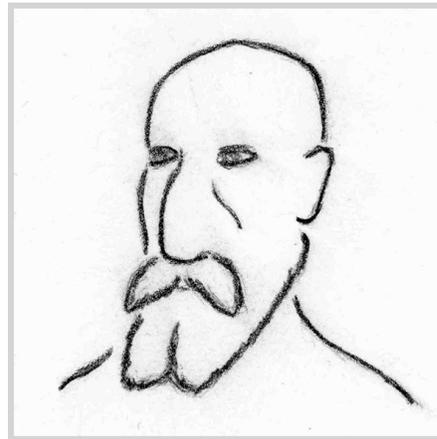
Uncertainly: "Okay?"

"Do you think America is the greatest country in the world?"

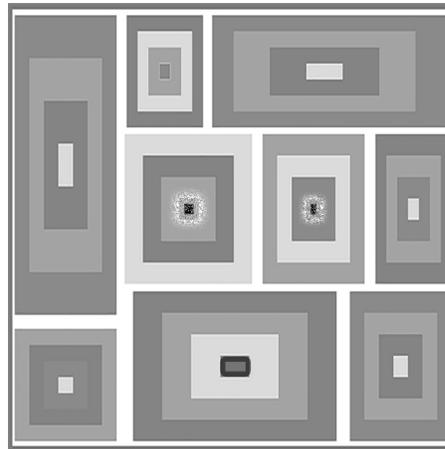
Mister U.S. Citizen: He hesitates. He hems and haws, haws and hems, almost makes a little dance, offers something, takes it back. Then, at last, finally his countenance at last, his countenance portrays as if perhaps as if a useful thought has found him.

So now at last – at long long weary last – praise any god you wish – finally he does not answer.

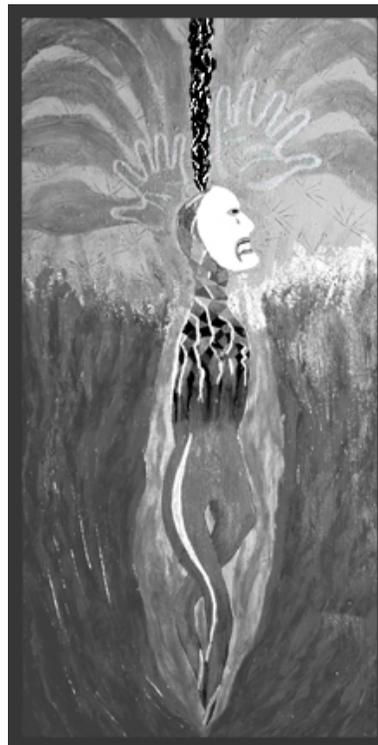
Withdrawal of consent.



King Of Cups
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil
on paper by SR



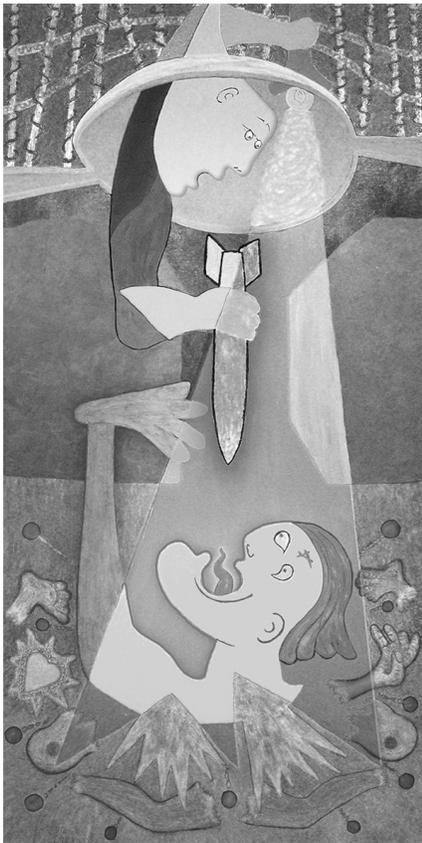
Bewildered
Digital image
by SR



**Pulling The
Mandrake Root**
Painting on wood
by SR

**Drone Strike
In North
Waziristan**

Acrylic / canvas
painting by Stone
Riley, Often
shown at the
artist's anti-war
poetry and story
performances.



Drone Strike

a memoir poem of war and love

My son and his wife just had a baby, a beautiful
new astonishing human child.

Last month two women went out to a water well
at night and were rendered into bloody pieces.

I cannot pretend that these two things
are different sorts of things,
pretend that they are not
the same type and quality of fact,
for they are human facts.

I cannot say, Oh one is mine and one not mine,
for my one human heart strains to encompass both
and strains

to examine them with the fear and hope and joy
and shame and trembling pity that are all alike
the province of one heart.



**Lost Girl
Found**

Pencil on
paper by
SR



Lost Girl Found

a poem on strength and madness, to
a young woman in the Occupy camp

Oh dear and darling daughter
whom I knew for brief and passing days,
you of grief and will to worthy deeds
here in this world,
and human failings too;

I pray all goddesses who ever are
in past and future present time,
to fill your life with worthy deeds
and blessedness and peace
and hero's glory.



Shock And Awe

a war poem

Here's a combat story from Iraq that I heard on National Public Radio one morning.

The report was very brief so please forgive me if I have to fill in some details. That's really what you do with a radio story anyway and the incident apparently was pretty typical; so I probably can't go very far wrong.

Anyway, the lead point element of one of our mechanized divisions has reached their current designated spot on the road to Baghdad. They halt, drive off the road and they form up their vehicles around the landscape like they should. The commanding officer of course naturally sends some guys out in tanks and Bradley armored vehicles to scout ahead a certain distance up the road. The radio reporter happened to be a passenger in one of those particular Bradleys so he tells about this.

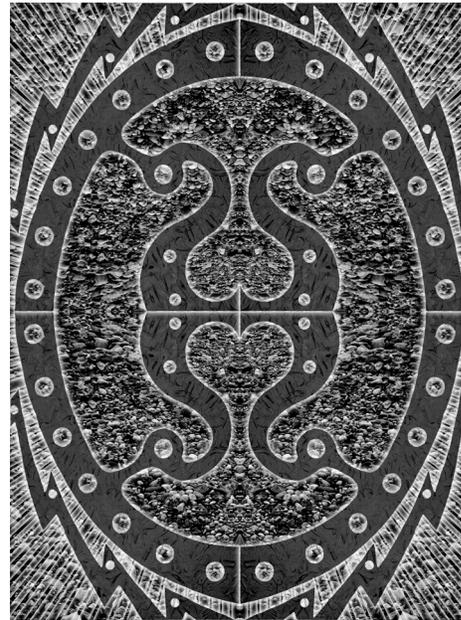
So pretty soon they spot a major ambush attempt. Our guys, well trained and still alert despite the sleepless grind, see it in time with their computerized vision screens. The enemy has put some tanks, maybe half a dozen tanks, probably big T-72's I guess, lying in wait, hiding in among the little houses and the little mosque and palm trees of one of those dusty little adobe desert villages.

Our guys stop and deploy and – while they're still maneuvering outside of the enemy's effective range – they pop all the enemy tanks with one round each. They all explode and burn. That's good shooting. And pretty quick our guys are on their way again.

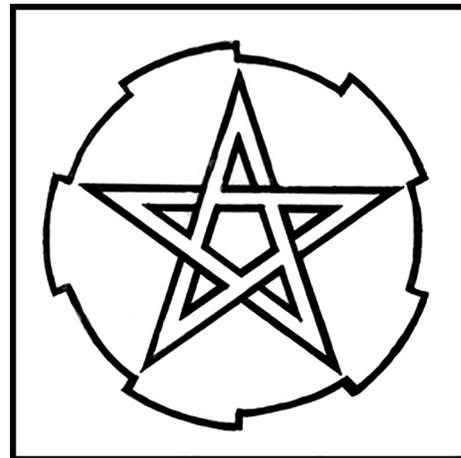
Now here's the thing. They go as far forward as they're supposed to go and turn around so now they're rolling back. They reach the ambush site again. Now here's one single enemy soldier left alive, all alone on foot, and he starts shooting at their armored vehicles with an ordinary AK47 rifle.

They pop him with a cannon round.

That's what we're calling “shock and awe”.



Clockwork
Digital image
from acrylic /
canvas
painting by SR



The Chariot
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR

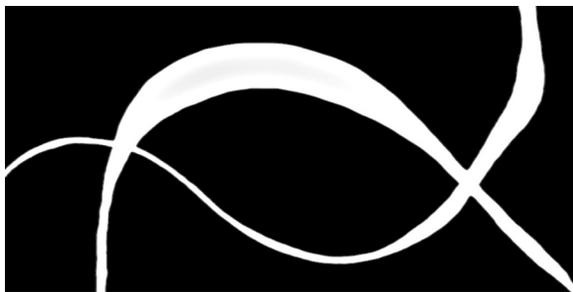


**Ten Of
Swords**
From Simple
Tarot, Pencil
on paper by
SR



Death

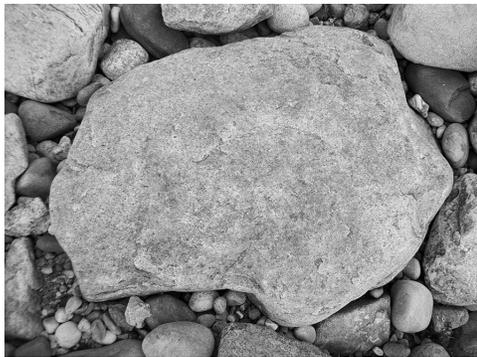
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR



K Is For Knots Digital image by SR

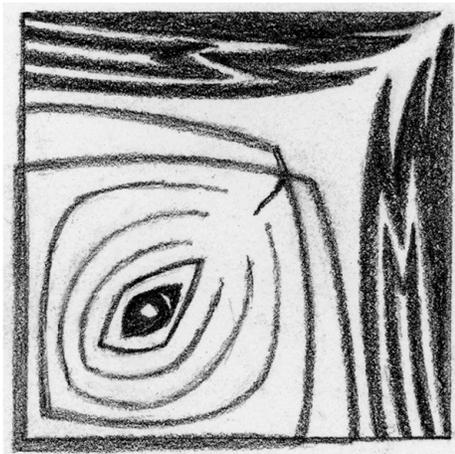
**Fine Day
On Rocky
Neck
Beach**

Photo by
SR



**Seven Of
Wands**

From Simple
Tarot, Pencil
on paper
by SR



Rebirth Of Courage

a poem contemplating work

We have been struck by tragedy but here we stand. The mighty forces of this world with their astonishing demands have left us struggling for breath and for a solid place to put our feet and meanwhile time rolls on around us.

But we are here among the living where work is waiting to be done so “screw your courage to the sticking place” as Shakespeare said.

Once more into the breach dear friends; let a smile be your umbrella; let the sun shine in and damn the damn torpedoes, full speed ahead. There is a blue-bird twerping merrily somewhere beyond the freaking blue horizon. As Lincoln said when everything seemed lost, “put the bottom back into the bucket” and go on.

One time a little boy I know was taken to his grandpa’s wake. It was a weekend afternoon, a funeral parlor, open casket, floral wreaths. More family and friends were gathered than the child had ever seen. Lifted in his father’s hands, he gazed on Grampy’s calm unmoving face and studied carefully. Coming back along the aisle the child for a moment threw his arms around my neck and gently wept.

Ten minutes more, the little boy was at his proper work, very quiet at the toys provided in a corner in the back, making the trucks go in deep contemplation.

Don’t we have work to do? Aren’t there worthy tasks waiting for our minds and hearts?

We may say that life is horrid. We may say that we are helpless in the hands of bad luck or cruel fate. We may choose to think that nothing we can take into our mortal hands will turn out well or be of any use. We may choose to see ourselves, in the final analysis, as little bugs with pointless lives. I say that is a load of rubbish.

I say life is magnificent. I stand in constant awe. I say our lives show endless courage in the face of fascinating mystery and that is who we are.



Necessity

public service bulletin

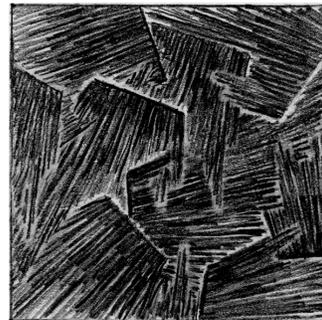
December 2016:

One of us should tour our Dakota camps with a military eye, inspect the methods of supply, interview troops from both sides of the struggle there, and write a study. We need to understand the military aspects of our revolution.

For example, I have seen one single tantalizing photo said to show the main Sacred Stone Camp's perimeter, with one of our people standing inside of it and a policeman standing outside on a road beyond. This long barrier looks to be made carefully of heavy materials – showing hard labor and practical thought – so its form surely gives information on the parameters of a struggle like ours in these times. So I have studied the photo, considered experience personally at Occupy, and gained some understanding of the barrier's functioning.

Or is that kind of thinking obsolete already? I have also seen today's urgent news from scientists at the Arctic Ocean, news of overwhelming pivotal significance for our struggle and all others in this age on Earth.

Methane is now escaping in unmeasurably huge quantity from melting arctic tundra, the gas of rotting prairie sod that was instead frozen until now, has been trapped in hard frozen arctic ground ever since a year two million years ago when the last ice age began, but now observed released by global warming, observed now rising from the ground in uncountable huge columns lighter than our low levels of Earth's air, rising very high where it is spreading, not restrainable by any conceivable human effort, crossing all human boundaries, spreading now to add a pale pale sheen to the blue high sky, a worldwide mirror to hold sun heat in here even more.



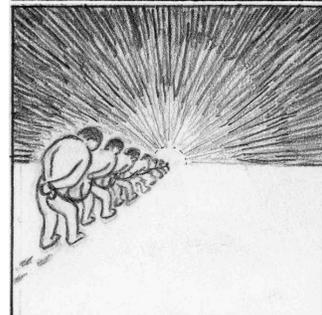
Eight Of Swords



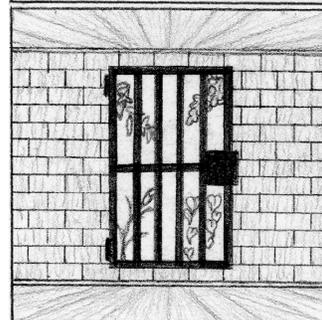
Ace Of Swords



Five Of Wands



Ten Of Swords



Four Of Cups

All: Simple Tarot,
Pencil on paper SR

This coming year will be a year of great disasters, like last year and like the next, but maybe this coming year will be the first to land blow after brutal blow and stunning blow and blow decisively on the huge collapsing empire of America and so our revolution's current hopes will disappear like most all other current hopes. This year or soon, this is indeed when things will come down to a nub.

So then will we struggle on for the life and breath of our descendants? As best we can, we will. But how?

First, it is essential that we tell the story of these heroic times, and tell it beautiful and true, and to that end we must truly live our story too, and that legend is our only means of communicating with the future ones.

And second, we must each do any effective work toward sanity and love and beauty that we can, by any means applicable, under leadership of our own heart and soul, with whatever help and courage comes to hand, for that is our only available principle of organization.

And third, some other rule that will come clear undoubtedly to fill the desperate needs of mere survival. And some other rule for health and healthy children in a poisoned world. And some rule for living overwhelmed with grief. And some rule, at least some rules of thumb, for sheltering from drought and hurricane and ravaging armies and nuclear bombs.

Or maybe what we need to do is this:

Tell ourselves that while we live we ought to really live, and tell ourselves that when we die we die and may perhaps find better understanding there, but through it all remember who we were and what we strove for.

We are Earth's children and our strivings are for Her.



Knight Of Swords



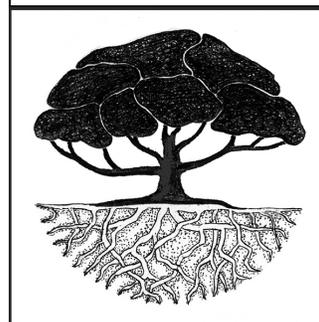
Three Of Swords



The Hanged Man



Death



The World

All: Simple Tarot,
Pencil or pen on
paper by SR

Reawakening

a poem of clear consciousness

'Twas moonless night. 'Twas early Spring.
'Twas in a sheltered valley pass
amid the highest uplands of the Windy Hills.
And here beneath a starry sky,
so black and cold, so deep and still,
here lay a mirror lake awaiting.
Stars above and stars below,
from depths of sky and lake they shone,
their eerie shadow bathing Earth
and filling all the distant world with secret song.

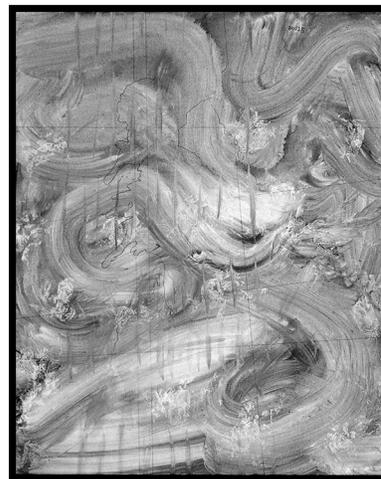
A footloose wanderer, a nighttime walker,
the seeker of a strong and noble soul,
leaning on a staff of oaken wood,
stood drunken with the beauty
of this haunted place which welcomed him.
Perhaps he was not here.
Perhaps he lay somewhere
wrapped in his cloak beside a dying fire
and dreaming.

Bright Venus drew him on.
Above the farther hill stood silver Venus,
beacon of the dusk and dawn.
Her light shot to his heart.
She drew his footsteps down
across the grassy slope, across the pebble shore,
until he stopped with boot heels on the Earth
and toes into the water where,
gazing in the mirror depths,
he knelt to pray.

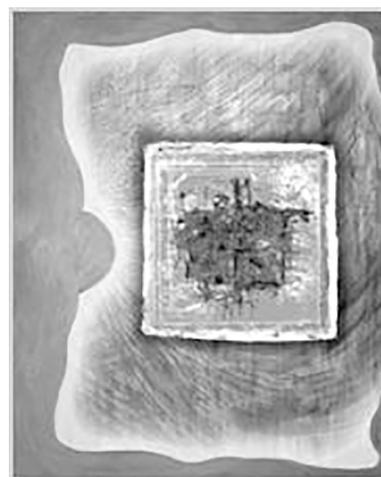
Why do the hearts of men
reach out beyond their ken?
Why does an earthly soul forswear its bonds
to journey forth and there commune with gods?
There are no men and gods.
There is no Earth and Sky.
There is no one but One Forever Singing.



White Lilly



**Portrait
Of A Young
Composer**

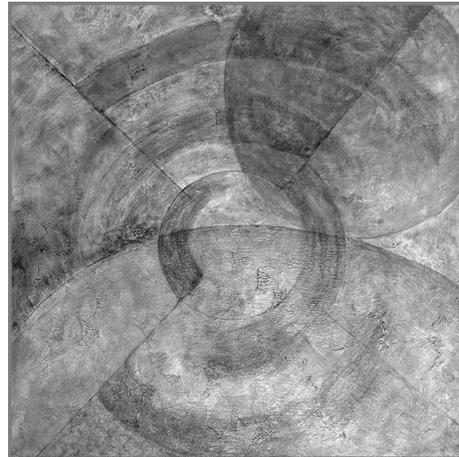


Prometheus

All:
Acrylic / canvas
paintings by SR

Eyes fluttered open. His own face,
all translucent in the deep and all aglow,
gazed back through dreaming eyes.
No more a mortal man, what was he now?
A shadow in the lake? A shadow in the air?
Or just a song?

This moment fear was gone.
This moment when a seeker gazed
in through him in the deep
his soul was everywhere,
so doubt was washed away.



**Universal
Dance**
Acrylic / canvas
painting
by SR



**The High
Priest**
From Simple
Tarot, Pen on
paper by SR

The High Priest

card 5 of Tarot's Major Arcana

This endless eddied world of surge and flow
may here and there forget to know
that it is All
but dreams instead
that it is You
or I.

Yet in each heart will ever lie the soul's deep pool,
the porphyry bowl of lotus wine,
the self-dissolving sigh,
so to my lips the endless draught you pour.

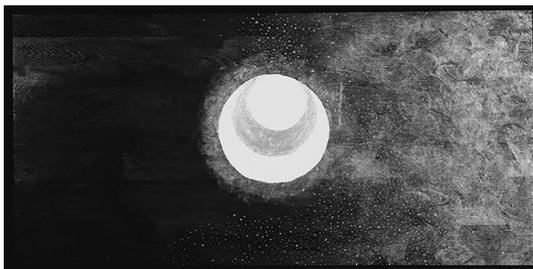
When I have drunk
and bathed
and drowned
and sunk beneath the waves I've found
my self somehow composed once more
and lifted to a sunlit shore where
wind-soaked flesh
and bony core
become an echoing ocean sound.

So now the eyes within my head look round
surprised to see both You and I
with callused feet on stony ground
still at unbounded ocean's edge
immersed in flowing sky.



Paintings
on wood:

**The
Moon
Throne**



**The
Sun
Door**



August Evening

a poem of love and courage

We are not imprisoned in ourselves and we are not alone. Your soul is not a single seed isolate in frozen ground nor is your heart a stone. No one can put up castle walls to hold themselves with any lock and key, for we are creatures of a teeming world.

Though we at times may fear the overawing beauty of a sunset or a dawn, the foreign eyes which penetrate our eyes, the grip of birdsong on our throat, the touch of whispering wind on naked cheek; though we at times may fear the loosening of the knotted strings of individual identity these intimate invasions bring, still soul beyond your soul is everywhere and crowding close.

Sit in company with a weeping woman, sharing grief for her beloved gone beyond the veil, and then up on the picture screen inside your brain behold a presence standing right there beside the woman's shoulder in an aureole of other-light, presenting emblems of some sort about some message they would have you speak.

Will you belie your claims of courage? You will not.

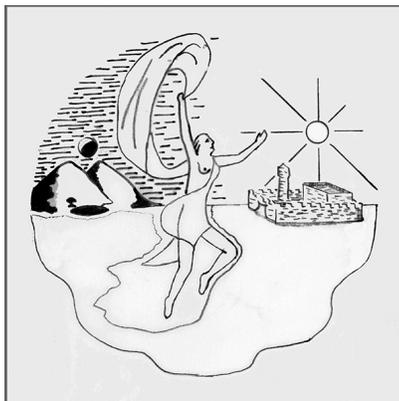
So turn an ear to seek a whisper from the very depths of mystery, and study carefully and breathe and speak. 



The Ecstasy Of Saint Teresa
Acrylic / canvas painting by SR



Sacred Geometry
Digital image from acrylic / canvas painting by SR

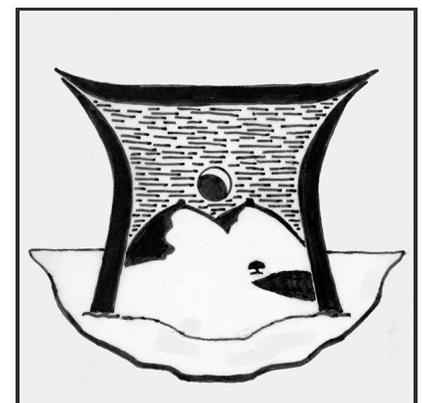


The High Priestess

card 2 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Cast your eye to the farthest shore then cast your heart beyond.

There open your heart to the velvet touch, the holy touch of dawn. 



The Moon

card 18 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Whispering shadow on my pillow lay.
(Arise ! Barefoot ! No robe ! Away !)

"How far the chase tonight?" I say.

The moonlight never answered. 

Tarot's Frequently Asked Questions

for your information

1: How to learn to read Tarot? > Find a version of the deck where the pictures talk to you through your eyes, even if they only whisper. Then use them.

2: Where has Tarot come from? > All evidence says Tarot was invented as a card game, an interesting and fun imitation of life, around 550 years ago in Northern Italy. The cards were beautiful painted luxuries at first, but newly developed printing technology was quickly put to use, making the decks cheap and the game popular. Soon an unknown genius fortune teller realized the game resembled actual life enough it could be very well adapted for divination. Since that was a strict society, and since it is a general rule that strict societies allow magic to be practiced by only the highest elites and the farthest outcasts, we may guess the unknown genius was a person of the Roma people, an oppressed and outlawed ethnic group then arriving from the East into that region. In any case, we know that in the next few centuries Roma women, working as criminal vagrant fortune tellers on the ragged fringes of society, grew Tarot into one of the great art works of the human race. Then later, in my youth, in a time when we were breaking society, we followed reports and rumors to this beautiful discovery and the current flowering of Tarot began.

3: But where do the bones of Tarot come from? I mean, why is it so similar to human life that it's excellent for divination? > I feel persuaded by a theory that the Major Arcana is from the Celts while the Minor Arcana is from the Greeks. The Major is astrology, a version of the zodiac like the sacred landscape sculpted in the land around Stonehenge. The Minor is more alchemical, something like a Hellenistic diagram of human physiology. Anyway, we know Northern Italy was a crossroads of the ancient Greek and Celtic culture worlds, from before Roman times straight through into the Renaissance. After all, that is naturally a crossroads country, a broad and fertile river plain running down to the Mediterranean

from the Alps. And so, as you have probably seen yourself, a great strength of Tarot is its possession of two Arcanas, two ways of describing life that are very wise yet very different. That yields its deep wonderful ability to describe our full and complex lives so realistically.

4: Can you foretell the future? > In some circumstances yes. Until quite recently, we inmates of the modern world have been told and told and told that either (A) human beings have no psychic powers or else (B) our only psychic powers are those approved by religions such as intimations of gods etc. But recently we have begun accepting the mountains of scientific and everyday evidence that both those assertions are lies. Me being a Darwinian, I guess a proper scientific theory will look like this: (a) We are animals on Earth. (b) Animals on Earth evolve in an environment that includes both "normal" and "quantum" physics. (c) Animals on Earth have evolved abilities and modes of thought that are both "normal" and "quantum" phenomena. (d) "Quantum" and "normal" science together can explain all our experiences that we call "psychic". And I think a theory like this would have foretelling the future possible in some circumstances. But on the other hand, if you become an honest and frequent user of Tarot (or one of the similar tools) your everyday experience will probably force you to a judgment that future prediction, distant seeing, mental telepathy, and a whole lot more are real. But I must admit it took me several years of successful Tarot use (not then having any theory) to rest easy in that judgment.

5: What should we use it for? > To help each other. Tarot is a marvelous help in any earnest conversation, where you struggle through the pain and deep confusion of someone's life toward understanding. While you're chatting simply pull some cards and add their voice. And this will teach you. This will be a marvelous education for your mind and heart and soul. Soon, perhaps, you'll find yourself awake to all the living voices of this living world, and thus a strong useful healer among all else you do. 

To Make A World

a poem of the good new age, contemplating wisdom

Finally when we have won the fight – when we have won the struggle to decide the shape and contour of the New Age at its birth – when we have chosen freedom decisively and irreversibly – then certainly we will discover utter depths of grief that human souls have never known before, for we will then be free to mourn all that were murdered in the age when murder ruled supreme.

And in that holy sacrificial state of grief we can begin to heal the Goddess Earth.

But can a new age be different from the old? That is to say, can we be different human beings than before when we were deathly sick with loneliness? We can and will.

“Tintern Abbey” is a nature poem by William Wordsworth composed in Wales in 1798. It's often said to be his best loved work.

In the sweet touching rhythm of its verse the poet tells that he is visiting a very beautiful valley he last visited in youth. Now he is grown older. Now the hardness of the human world has changed him, quenched a sort of desperate delirium for beauty he felt then.

And now here this scene he sees is real. This is a real valley, not the land of sweet fair dreamy memory that kept his faith in gentle human life alive through coarser years.

And yet the poet reassures us finally – convinces us – that it is good and that it feeds the soul.

By the poem's end we are willing to hear and feel that reassurance because along the way he has proved extraordinary familiarity with spiritual affairs, by vividly describing some of our most profound sensations of the movements of our souls in quite realistic detail.

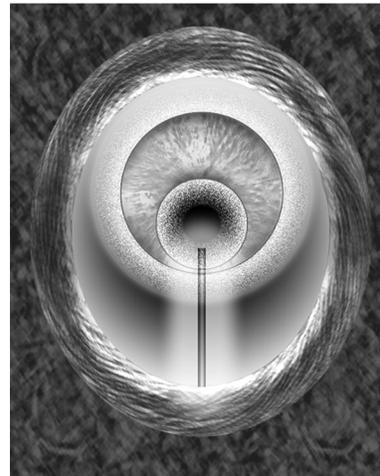
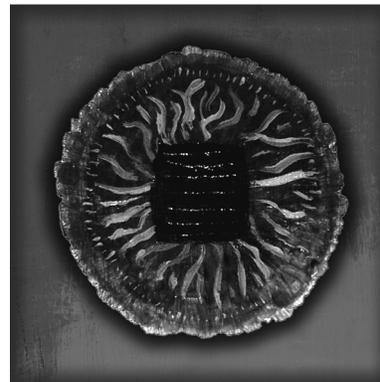


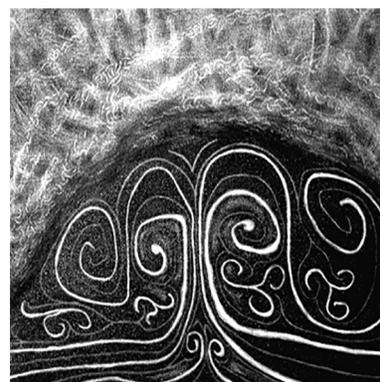
Image Of One
Digital image
by SR



Mask Of The Grieving Soul
Digital image
from a painting
by SR



Temperance
Painting for Spirit
Hill Tarot



Pluto
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR

So we should listen to this Wordsworth person on our current pressing emergency question of what nourishment a normal healthy human soul requires. Will such food be available to our human race in coming times?

Well, in this poem Wordsworth tells us this:

First he recognizes now that human beings take part in the natural world and he now welcomes that duty and he says we can do it well.

Next he tells a joyful spiritual experience of our human presence in the soul of Nature, for he now sees that we are soul-deep in the mountains and the meadows and the vast blue sky and all.

But finally he rejoices that his beloved human mate is there, his soul mate sister – to reflect, share and then remember – so these internal things are real. And in their companionship, when they are together, that's when the poet sings the highest praises of the nourishment that Nature brings his soul.

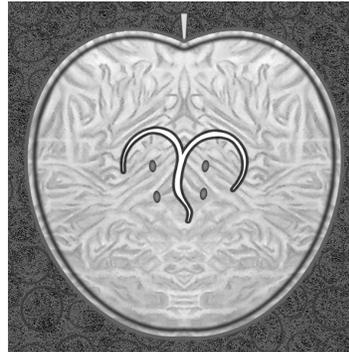
That is to say, Nature sets a spiritual feast before us when our human company arrives together.

And that, I think, is brilliant wisdom.

And I'm starting to see a working program in it: How about you and I each find some beautiful small poetic quote, some very small but brilliant line, which tells the actual fact that "I am you and we are All entire." (That one is from William Blake.)

Now memorize the little bit you picked. Probably think up some slightly fuller way to say it too, 20 words or less, for when you're asked.

(If you prefer a currently living author and don't know where to look, my first suggestion would be "The Faraway Nearby" which is a recent book by Rebecca Solnit.)



A Is For Apple

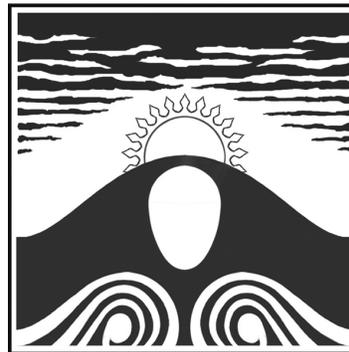
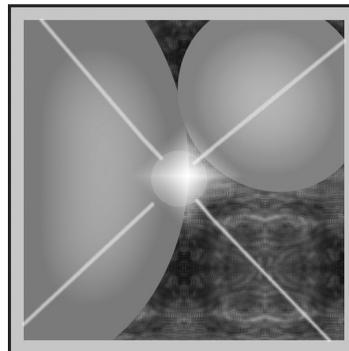
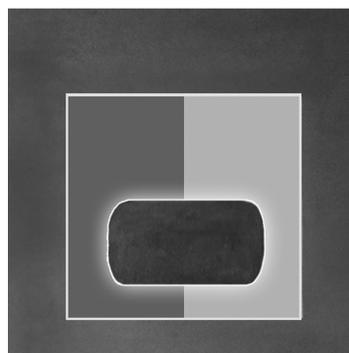


Image Of Two



**D Is For
Delivery Room**



Certainty

All: Digital
images by SR

Now every time you're in a meeting where people are pretending that the vitally important fact is not true – this would be a political, religious, government or business meeting maybe, or a book club or a barroom chat – where people are pretending that human beings, or some human beings, are separate and apart, or pretending like we're not all part of Earth – then let's you and me just stand up and just say our little bit as a reminder that actually “I am you and we are All entire”.

Since most anyone who just consciously thinks about it for a moment discovers they already know it's true and it is good and sacred, and since more and more people today are waking up from a hypnotic trance and starting to think consciously, then this action plan, or something like it, might have good results.

It would be like inviting people to a feast.

Perhaps, as our culture changes, that supremely lovely vision of sacred unified reality might even become instituted in our newly built culture as some kind of on-going permanent communal planetary celebration, as a feast of Nature's spiritual gifts.

And I guess that would be a key to open the reality of the Good New Age for all of Earth and for our human race. 



Voyage Of The Ship Rainbow Warrior

Acrylic / canvas painting by SR



Beloved Little Child

Recovered From Illness

Wax crayon on paper by SR



The Lovers

card 6 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Love, thou art perfect in all thy ways,
Perfection whispering on the waters.
(Consider our joys, have they not been
a strengthening bond these times?
Do I not know thee fair and well?)

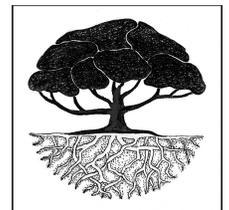
So shed all lies which others tell,
lies of blind hunger, of fearful
jealousy and pitiful defeat.
Gaze into my clear heart
wide, calm and deep;
See here your own beauty rippling.

The World

card 21 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Unbounded parkland;
where the master gardener passes
exotic seeds flame
into great maturity.

Of course
the weathered lips reveal a smile;
all a wish could name
is here today.



The Blessings Of The Sacred

a memoir poem

The week, three weeks ago, when the “Not Afraid” mantra and its flyer came to me, I was very busy with other but related work.

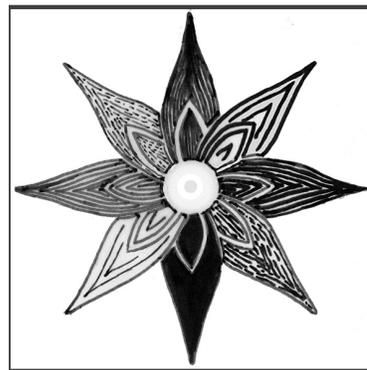
Do this for forty years or so: Make art as beautiful and fine as you have ever made it, always striving to be useful for the prophesied Good New Age that Earth has now at last recently birthed (so let us say) and take it to the public. Do your best at that for forty years and you may find, as I have found, that periodically the work resolves down to the very focused point of feverishly preparing for a lavish little show of some kind somewhere. This new mantra came to consciousness for me in one of those very busy weeks.

Out of place, maybe; you wouldn't say the “Not Afraid” mantra nor its flyer are beautifully fine, unless their sheer utility seems marvelous enough you might consider saying so for that. But last year I heard a speech by Presbyterian minister adventurer Chris Hedges that brought some clarity to my long campaign and made me even dare to buy a good harmonica.

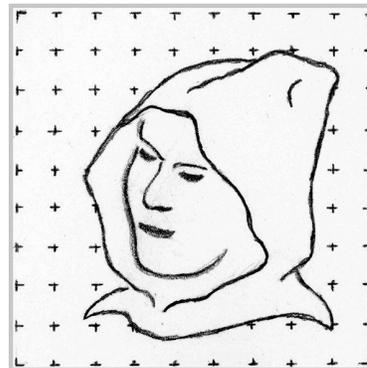
It was an interesting speech of many parts, but in one corner of it Hedges told how, when he was with the revolution in El Salvador as a war reporter, their revolutionary platoons would always carry novels and poets and musicians to a village when they came. In his telling of it I could see and hear the music playing, which he gave to understand was rousing and consoling ballads on rough instruments of rural troubadours. This rousing and consoling work, he said, was quite essential to their victorious struggle but meanwhile, he said, the novels and the poets brought beautiful fine art to assure the soul that it is good.



Knight Of Coins



The Star



Page Of Coins



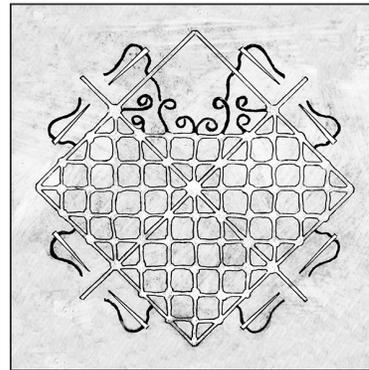
The High Priest

All: Simple Tarot,
Pencil or pen on
paper by SR

If your revolution is for life, then seeing deep beauty anywhere – in the land, or in the sea or sky or in Divinity, or anywhere – can be a revolutionary anti-slavery act. This seeing can let you know you have a soul and it at least is free. But seeing deep beauty in a thing compounded in particular of human art may give even more, as this can help you know – because a human soul like your soul has brought that lovely thing and that lovely thing speaks human language – your humanness is noble.

My harmonica work is very rough as yet – too unskilled to play in public anyway – but I did it, sitting inside our little art installation in a Unitarian church basement two Saturdays ago. My wife and I were sitting in it, and she smiles saying I'm getting better at it, even one time saying it was pretty. That was very nice, especially as our exhibit felt distinctly like a female kind of space, like sitting at a hearth. Harmonica is the world's easiest instrument for making warm pretty notes, but of course all I hoped to do that time was just practice with it, tried to show the public how to stick pretty notes together struggling through a practice session, quizzing your soul and the universe thereby, and inching maybe toward a tune.

This was not Chris Hedges' revolutionary ballads, but it did win some sympathetic attention from the public. A stumbling earnest practice mouth harp session as the live soundtrack to an exhibit of two old people plus homemade bountiful fine art objects in lavish towering profusion, all of it masqueraded as a retail sales booth complete with charity bake sale and raffle, among a basement full of other booths. And the new "Not Afraid" flyer, with its bold big print, was tacked up on church basement columns framing our display at left and right. You could wander in and walk up and examine with your touch, and maybe buy, startlingly beautiful home crafted things unseen before and have delicious pastry. This when people feel a terror of their future.



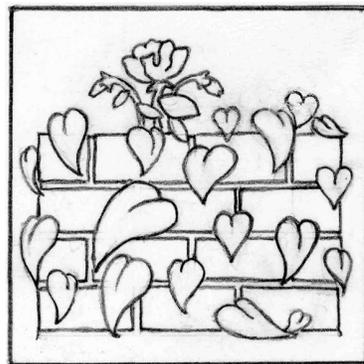
Justice



The Lovers



Six Of Swords



Five Of Cups

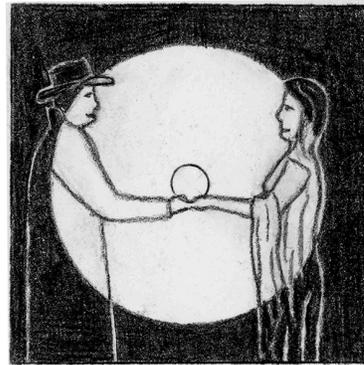
All: Simple Tarot
Pencil or pen on
paper by SR

It was the annual Pagan Pride event of Southern New Hampshire. If you are a Pagan in New England I guess you've likely sometime chanced on a vivid little performance or display or production of many sorts which my art career conjures periodically in our supportive lively small community. If not, then maybe I'll insert a web link >>here<< so you can view the unseen-before weatherproof prints – prints of paintings with breathing beauty that may stop your breath – prints which, that Saturday, were carpeting the wall behind our retail table floor to ceiling, each vivid print with its big charity raffle number tag attached, or the raffle tickets costing fifty cents, or the unusual books of poetic picture prose that stood on offer on our table, or the Tarot decks that talk to you through your eyes. Maybe they would testify to you that I'm not lying. This forty years has been startlingly real. And I am no longer afraid.

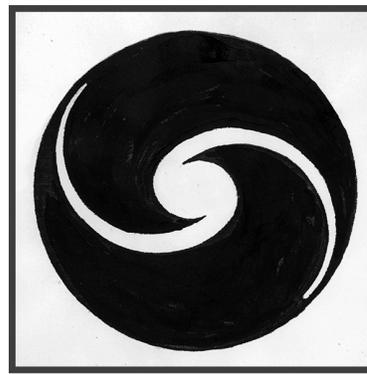
Of course you know there have been several decades, in and before the art career, when hope was a stranger to me. Because I am a creature of these times.

Political awareness waking: 1956: Me a little Texas boy come visiting, hanging out with older boy cousins and their pals, us shadowed in a fragrant summer evening, shadowed by the bright lit stands of a small town Georgia baseball game, they each solemnly affirming, pledging to Protect The White Race, me silently deciding not, and that weird moment now still lingering, that moment still blazing with despair and hope, still lingering for my whole lifetime at a center of our whole world.

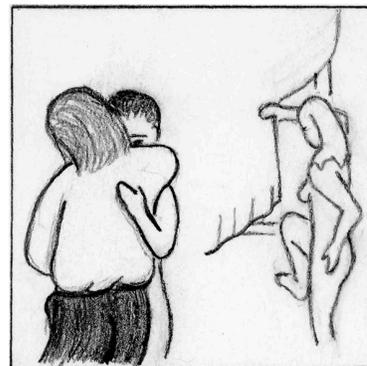
And Global Warming rushing, which I have watched since 1959: The Scientific American magazine, serving me for a little school report, foretold the great catastrophe, and really nothing done about it ever since just so the Death White Empire could thrive, and my tremendous grief for these green lands where my old heart at last glows love of intimate intense presence.



Ten Of Cups



The Wheel Of Fortune



Two Of Wands



Four Of Coins

All: Simple Tarot,
Pencil or pen on
paper by SR

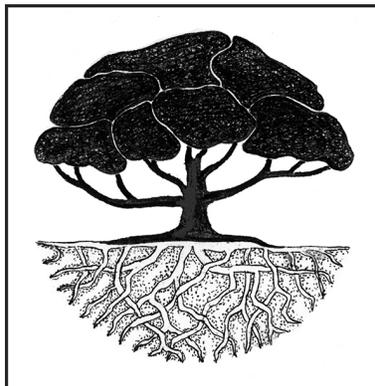
So (to speak of grief) summer 1969: Me a young man, me a young soldier, by luck myself evading war and yet myself behind another face – a friend companion there where we are serving empire – he is chosen bride of its war machine and promptly taken and promptly dead amid enormous slaughter, and me speaking No among the soldiers and taking punishment but soon escaping.

So then the Paganism we built in this country, and its radical declaration of human freedom and human dignity and human power to do good, and then the magic coming real and coming real and coming real, and prophecies, and so the forty years of art in service to the Good New Age.

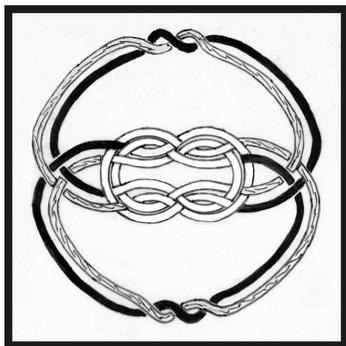
And so this month the mantra: “We are not alone and we are not afraid. We stand by Mother Earth now in her time of need.” 



Page Of Swords



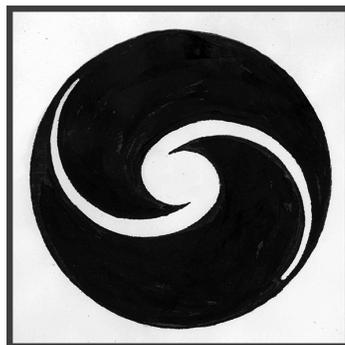
The World



Strength

card 8 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Raindrop hanging still from a leaf tip knows the mighty tug of Earth and yet moves not. The filaments of liquid crystal knitting it, pure star stuff, have their own way. 



The Wheel Of Fortune

card 10 of Tarot's Major Arcana

Tumbling headlong with its next step, the great animal plunges through a matted screen which hid the tunnel mouth and down to the cave floor below.

Plunged from dusk into night, but bred to a forager's quick wit, it casts a glance about to see what light is shed by the hole it fell through.

Suddenly landed in a new place, it pulls itself up now to a comfortable squat and, being one of the laughing apes, grins back at its own breathless fall. 

Opening To Compassion

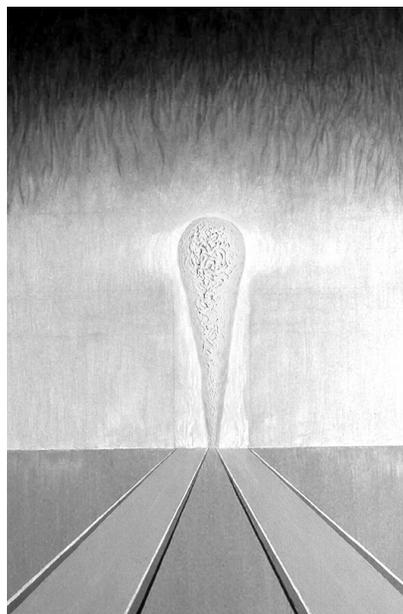
essay in morals

I recommend compassion. What is the meaning of this peculiar word com-passion? It is a passion with- and not about- our fellows. And passion is a feeling, deep beyond our other feelings, which we know we must believe and obey.

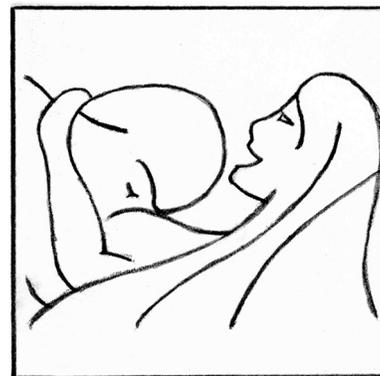
Compassion is a feeling that there is no blame because, beneath all combinations of outward circumstances, there is only simply innocence.

The deepest stirrings in our soul, if we gaze clearly in our souls, are the same forces felt in all our fellow beings. So forgiveness is a wiser choice, a choice with more truth in it, a choice with more understanding of ourselves in it, than blame. If in clear judgment we must act for other's rights, speak truth to haughty power for the future's sake, or call injustice by its name so cruel greed will stand unmasked before the world and justice done, we will do all that indeed with all our strength, but we will do all that for love and not for hate.

There is a strange transformation in our sense of beauty too, in our instinctive judgments in those moments while we hold compassion. Perhaps it is because beauty and ugliness seem so microscopically distributed throughout everything that their tension becomes a source of infinite wonder. We may, like Van Gogh, weep at the haunted drama of a worn out pair of shoes or, like Dr. King, sincerely preach respect for the humanity of evil-doing men and women. Compassion is a sublime conviction that it is always me there.



**Pensacola Bay,
Summer Morning**
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR



Queen Of Cups
From Simple Tarot,
Pencil on paper SR

And this is natural for human beings. This is a state of mind to which our human race is bred by living all together here on Earth, not only one for saints and geniuses.

Compassion has great value for us all because it lets us make peace with one another by accepting and believing the vast reality which always stands outside our selves. Logically, that surely means that it is deeply realistic.

For indeed, the tremendous fascinating mystery which we can easily see each time we look out at this world, looks back at us too, and it beholds us with an infinite number of eyes.

From all of this, I think we must do justice with humility.



**Mask Of
The
Creative
Soul**
Digital image
from a
painting SR

Prophecy Of Global Change

a philosophic essay

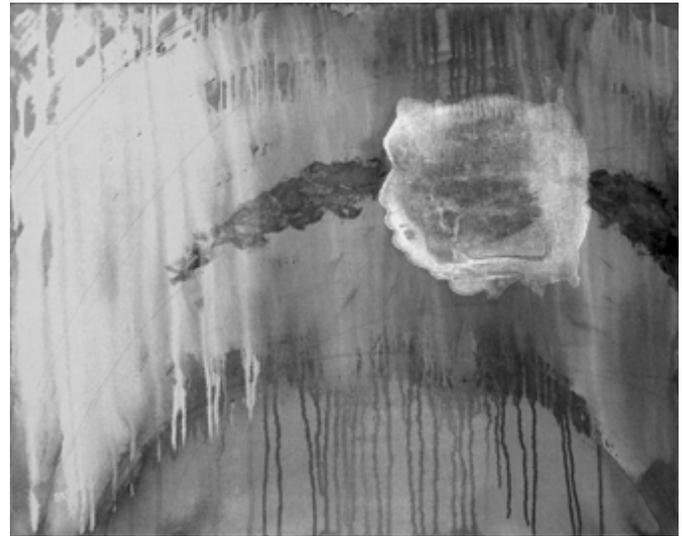
The best book on Shakespeare that I know is a volume of lectures by A.C. Bradley, an old Scottish Oxford don, published first in 1904. In these lectures he teaches Shakespeare's greatest tragedies: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth.

Not only for the old professor's lively speech do I love him well – you can see personae rise up from the printed page and act like beings now alive – but also for the Great Bard's vision that the old professor squeezes out of terrifying wrenching tragedies and stands before our eyes. Here's what he tells us Shakespeare saw:

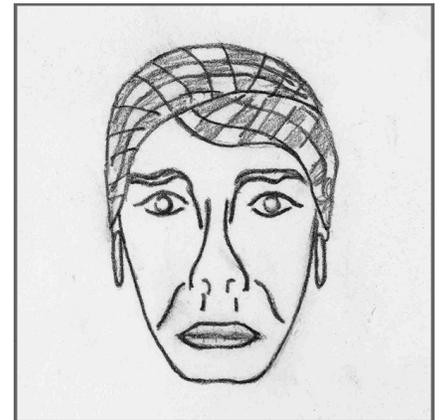
Through some lapse or defect in our character we find ourselves in train with evil; once we have confirmed or acquiesced in such a progress there is no other end for us but destruction. Perchance by some goodness in ourselves we may soften that destruction though to make it less cruel and more gentle.

Perchance then in this way there lies not oblivion but our freedom.

Now today the Earth is warming. Quite like some Aztec deity of violence, the Sun flies through a melting sky. And we, as though we stood and drew countless intersecting arcs through all the land and sky, we are today scientifically charting and diagramming all the countless overlapping spheres of ecosystems, economic systems, politics and realms of individual experience wherein the beings of this planet dwell, for all these realms are now changing simultaneously.



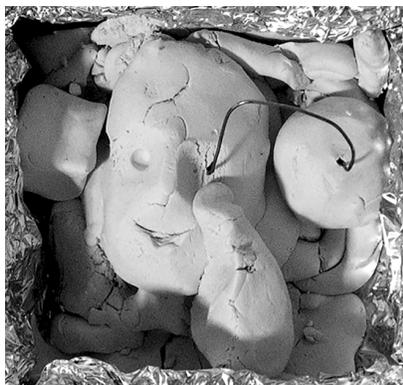
Prophecy Of Global Change
Acrylic / canvas painting by SR



Queen Of Cups
From Simple Tarot, Pencil on paper by SR

What is our proper hope? We will not change our ways till massive death has overtaken our own species; though many minds may change no hope remains by now to change enough to leave the world unscarred. It is much too late to stop the consequences of the age-long depredations.

And so my hope is this: To tell the story truly. To let the children of a future day know how and why we did this thing, and as well some understanding of some better wisdom which might have led us through a better course. This so our children and their children and their children may do better. Perchance beyond the cataclysmic tragedy there lies a different age of peace and reconciliation. Toward that day our finest duty is to learn and teach.



Hindsight
Polymer clay,
aluminum foil,
steel paper
clip by SR

This Time Of Destiny

a poem of reality

October 2016, nearly Samhain:

I am a Darwinist. Darwin's final paragraph of his first great book has come true, and in my life-time I have seen it coming true.

That paragraph predicted that as we gathered data to check Darwin's theory of life's natural evolution, our knowledge of ourselves would grow much more complete and true. It has done so. That means, as Darwin knew it means, that we are all together proven to be children of Earth. I have watched our culture gaining wisdom in response.

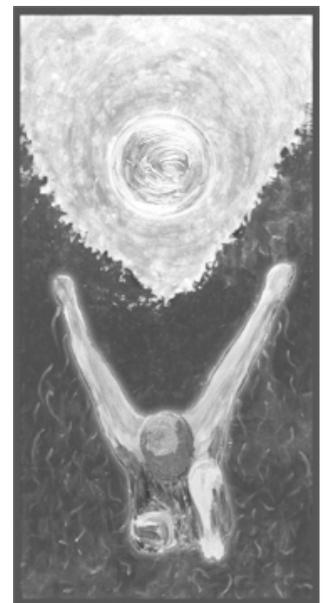
And I am a Jungian. Indeed, the Pagan movement in our country is precisely the journey Doctor Jung prescribed: We inmates of the prison of the Modern World can escape through the doorways of our souls out to universal realms, bringing consciousness with us, and return here conscious of sacred freedom and power in our hands.

That has been our Pagan movement's constant tactic and strategy, which I can testify from being present ever since its birth. And now we see this new faith in the human soul's deep freedom accepted as a piece of common knowledge in our country, spreading widely, giving hope.

And I am a web technician. I've made a living as a software engineer since before that job title existed, then later made one of the first artist websites on the web. So I can feel a spark of pride when saying the idealistic hopes we felt back then have been fulfilled. Indeed, nowadays that handiwork opens many windows that were shuttered tight.



Alchemical Eve
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR



Lunar Anima
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR



Four Art Projects
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR

But do I dare to tell the most vivid current case I know of the web usefully opening secrets? It is a case of horror. It is a YouTube video of real horror, and an undeniable proof against a brutal ancient tyranny:

The video is from a hand held cell phone camera inside an automobile somewhere, streaming up to some small corner of the web, there recorded for immediate worldwide distribution. It is some day last month. The scene inside this car is shady, for there appears to be a shady tree outside the window, and the unseen hand that holds the cell phone is remarkably steady while the picture slowly scans.

Then we understand the person with the camera is the driver, because we see the person in the passenger seat who is slumped toward us, leaning on the driver, and this person's eyes and face are definitely asleep – or maybe dead – and now the camera pans down enough we see a huge pool of blood covering the person's shirt front.

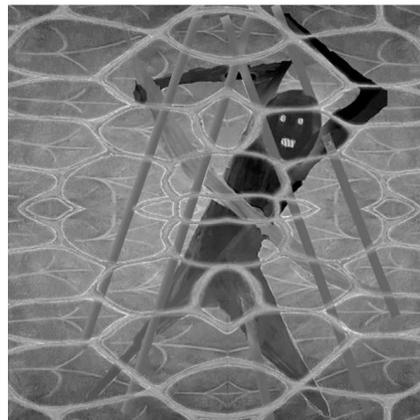
If you are American, you have by now decoded the passenger's facial composition, so you've seen this here is one of our underclass, legally semi-human and anciently enslaved but now fodder for our prison industries, but now deceased.



Gazing Within
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR



**Self Portrait
On The Night
The Occupy
Camp Was
Raided**
Digital image
from a painting
by SR



**Dire
Confusions**
Digital image
based on two
paintings by SR

You've noticed that if you are American, so now the camera slowly comes up and shows a fist with a pistol in the window, trembling with fear and/or fury, pistol pointed right at you with its finger on the trigger – although really pointed at the unseen driver in your place – so of course you strain to see the gunman out there and with no surprise you see a policeman's hat out there.

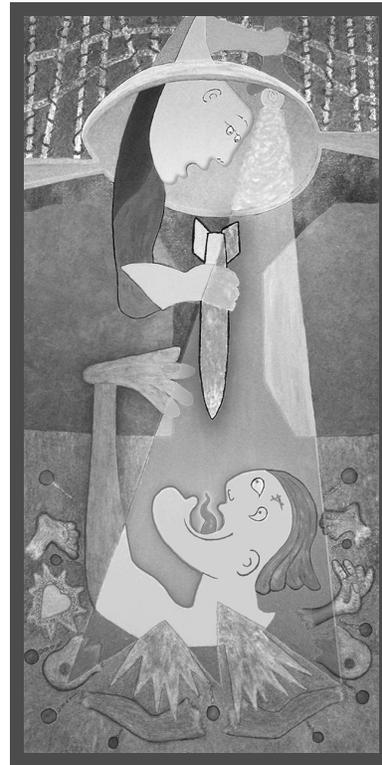
And all of that is true and none of it is new except ...

... the fact that now you and many thousands more have seen it ...

... and nowadays you've likely felt the freedom of your soul to challenge lies ...

... and nowadays you've likely heard of proofs that we are all together here Earth's children.

So now let's build the Good New Age.



**Drone Strike
In North
Waziristan**
Acrylic / canvas
painting by SR



**The Author's
Hand In The
Universal
Human
Peace Sign**
Photo by SR