

Poetry Series

**Joe Howell**  
**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2021

**Publisher:**

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

## Joe Howell(05-30-1950)

I am just a man trying to write. Sometimes I find the words, sometimes I don't.

# The Lady In The Car

The Lady in the Car

It was snowing really hard  
the night I was forced to leave home.

I walked to the main road, and started walking towards town  
To overcome with anger to know where to go.

Out of the snowflakes came a car.  
I could not believe it,  
when it stopped.

Inside was a little old lady.  
I had no idea why she would be driving in the snow, late at night.

She opened the door and told me to get in. The heat in side warmed me to my  
toes.

She asked only where she could take me, not what was I doing  
out on such a night.

She took me to the door of a friend who took me in.

It took me several years to see her wings.

Joe Howell

# Day You Lied

Darkness washes over me, like the evening tide  
No one lying beside my-side.

Waves of pain, hurt from where you left  
it was the evening that i cried.

The sand was made of flesh  
for a time we walked, with hearts tied.

However, the flesh renewed  
leaving me with with blackness died.

Names written is grains of sand  
washed away, before love abide.

Darkness washed over me the day you lied.

Joe Howell

# Firestarter

She carried in her heart,  
the fire to start  
another affair

Once burnt, don't  
play with matches  
you and him

He took the fire  
left a burnt out  
flame

Now the firestarter  
watches  
from the cold

Joe Howell

# Walking Tears

I have spilled tears upon blood stained ground..  
Smelled the stench  
of burning flesh

Walked mountains  
and  
Valleys  
Hunting those who can't be seen.

Left the war  
to  
return  
home-to it.

For I have found  
the worst wounds  
can't be seen.

Joe Howell

# Snowflakes

Filigree

snowflakes

cover summer's worn carpet

yellow and orange leaves.

I desire August's heat

a Texas Moon

Joe Howell

# Cold Wind

Hot Summer Day-  
heats up everything.

Except this cold wind  
through my blood.

Joe Howell



# Day's End

Days End

-----  
It's a silent time, when i pack it all in,  
call it a night, walking to my bed  
and giving thanks for living another day

i take pride in small things, that some call nuts  
like im all-ways early for work, that's just me  
stay late if i need to, to get everything  
lined up for the next person, come this way

don't own a cell phone, i don't need to talk  
while i drive, and if you need me, im useally  
in the same place i was yesterday, at this time

some may call it bore-ing, going 40 where  
thats the speed limit, i guess that why they pass  
me, with fingers waving in the air  
but we end up at the same red light

im just a simple man, caught up in a  
multi directional latatude of light

Joe Howell

# This Ache

This ache, is more than tears,  
falling into emptiness  
is more than that invisible hand  
that grasps my heart, catches my breath

This ache is waking up in the morning,  
knowing that you will not get to share it  
breathe the fresh air, nor see the purple sky  
feel cool rain on warm skin, smell city streets

This ache, is waking up from a dead sleep,  
seeing your face  
smelling your smell  
dreaming that you were here

Joe Howell

# What The Medic Said

Blood was mixed with pieces of skin  
and torn metal.

Yet the sky was still blue  
the day 18 were blown away.

It was sometime between Aug and Sept;  
funny how you can't remember stuff  
forty years later.

I remember that it was morning  
one of our guys had fallen asleep  
next to a bouncing betty, and I  
was on watch while everyone slept.

We had been up for three days &  
three nights, and I was so tired i couldn't  
sleep. So i stood watch.

No nightmares that night, just quite  
and a blood red sunrise.

Joe Howell

# Back

The army taught me,  
back in 70  
That some people needed my help  
back in Viet Nam  
So they trained me to kill  
back at Fort Sill  
Trained me to jump from a plane  
back at Fort Benning  
Said OK, now go kill some  
back at Chu Lai  
Killed a lot, both day and night  
back at LZ FAT City  
They sent me home, after a year  
back to the 'World'  
Tried to forget all about the war  
back at the bar  
Had a lot of trouble keep a job  
back at the salt mill  
Held a lot of anger  
back of my mind  
Went to counseling  
Back at the VA  
Learned I needed pills  
Back from the pharmacy  
Now Im in a daze  
back in my mind  
And where was my bed made?  
back in Viet Nam

Joe Howell

# Clouds Of The Mind

This darkness  
in my  
heart

will it cloud  
out the  
Sun

that you claim  
to be  
Yours?

Joe Howell

# Nothing By Night

We went down that ole country road  
with the window's rolled down  
and my sleeves rolled up  
Looking for a cool place to play

We found a creek,  
by a turn in the road  
no one for miles  
we were all alone

And there it stopped, my mind left me  
sitting hot and dry.  
I saw the moon, the clouds at night  
but it did nothing, I could not write

Took a walk out by the shed  
stood by the old oak tree  
rubbed my rabbit's foot  
but nothing would enter my head

Joe Howell

# Round Stones And Black Ink

Round Stones and Black Ink

Take this mask that I wear  
Remove the pain within  
Speak soft words  
Whisper if you will

Take this bottle from my hands  
Remove the pain within  
Let me drink my past  
and sleep with the dead

Take this dagger in my chest  
Remove the pain with in  
Let it cut the hate and anger  
that bears both sides

Take this rose from my garden  
Remove the pain within  
let the thorns be removed  
and the petals made into ink.

Joe Howell

# Sammy's Girl

Sammy's Girl  
-----

Her family was always a few dollars below  
The poverty level. And no matter how hard her Dad  
Worked, they could not get ahead.

Every school year she received three things, a new dress, under clothes and a  
new pair of shoes.

Because the shoes had to last the year, they were  
what other children called 'Bro-gans'.

When she was 16 she met Sammy.  
Wow it was like a light shinning into her life.  
She knew that some day they would marry.

For Christmas that year Sammy gave her a very special  
Present. A pair of Red shoes.  
They were beautiful.  
She felt like Dorothy dancing in OZ.

When Sammy turned 18 he told her that he had to go fight for his country.

There was a war in Vietnam, and he felt that he had to go.

The day before he left, he had a dozen white roses delivered  
To her home. It was the first flowers that she had ever received.

The Good-By was awful, and she felt pain in her heart.  
Three months later a man came to visit Sammy's parents.

It was the Worst of News.  
It was the Last of Time.  
It was like Last Night,  
and  
Sammy's still 18.

Joe Howell



# Red & White

She has a thing for red shoes and  
White roses.

She owns thirty three pair, all red.

Has white roses delivered once a week  
I always suspected that someone  
had once given her a dozen.

Maybe before she dies,  
I will.

Joe Howell

# Southern Sunday

Light green eyes that light up with a smile  
Husky voice, that speaks soft -  
sensual massage the neck and shoulders  
listening to soft music  
kissing from the soul  
holding you in my arms  
looking into your eyes  
whispering your name upon the sky  
taking you in the rain  
being next to you for the sunrise  
making coffee  
washing dishes  
making the bed  
messing it up again  
walking hand in hand  
sitting next to a brook  
picnic lunch  
wine & cheese  
country roads  
starlit sky  
falling asleep in your arms  
whispering Secrets  
making love with the lights on.

Joe Howell

# Sammy's 18

Sammy was 18 when he was drafted into  
the United States Army.

Country roads, divided by pine trees  
led towards his demise

Sammy was a curly haired rod of pure energy  
that loved Mom as much as apple pie  
He made it to The DMZ, then on to Hamburger Hill  
They shipped his body home covered with a flag

His room is the same as he left it,  
and it's been  
30 years,  
but to Sammy's Mom  
Sammy's still 18

Joe Howell

# Thinking Thoughts, I Think

Thinking thoughts, I think  
-----

thinking thoughts that can not be said  
visions of weather clouds, clouds my head

whispering words that can not be heard  
positions, left & right of absurd.

one to never walk on the cracks  
cover me while I watch your back

two for one on friday night  
take the car, in case we fight

I have been told by some -'Im not right'  
maybe my bulb is not so bright

taking words two by two  
is a fad for so few

im thinking thoughts that can not be said

Joe Howell

# Dr's Waiting Room

Silver grey hair  
wrinkles like hiways on a map  
a floral pattern on her dress  
must have been made in 1932  
she sat waiting

Silver white hair  
wrinkles like ditches by the roadway  
white t-shirt, blue suspenders-no belt  
tan slacks  
he sat waiting, with her

She reached over  
kissed his cheek  
he held her hand...  
in their ninety's....  
young lovers

Joe Howell

# Cafe Of Broken Dreams

She worked in comfortable shoes  
with thick soles, polished in hearts  
of lovers that beg not to be forgotten

At my table I sat with coffee  
three day growth of whiskers  
a full collection of anger filled words

A skinny kid with acne scared skin  
plunging stolen quarters into a  
juke box full of yesterday's songs

And the waitress smiled and winked  
seeing my nerves lying on the table...  
knew her power over me  
At the Cafe of Broken Dreams

Joe Howell

# W & P

She sits before the fire  
of want and passion  
thinking that the two are the same

wanting the passion  
to burn inside of her

not knowing that the fire  
of want will burn  
her soul,

where no  
passion  
is.

Joe Howell

# A Glass Of Wine

A glass of wine, and a dozen tears  
await me at the end of the day  
Now that the pot is broken  
life made out of clay

The day you walked out  
life stopped to breathe  
now I have a glass of wine  
a dozen tears, to stay with me

Joe Howell



# Despire

My setting sun is sinking slow  
I have questions, on how to go

No book I have read  
gave advice on what you said

Do I just pick the rose,  
kick the can, with my toes

Let me see the light  
in this darkness of night

shall I go or shall I stay  
or save it for another day

does death look better in the day  
covered up in darkness's play

O death where is thy sting  
does love take to wing

this day I go forth to the well  
the end of this internal hell

Joe Howell

# The Toy Not Given

At the age of 5 I had to go  
live in an Orphan's home.  
Seems that Mother didn't want  
us kids, after Daddy died.

The children there were cruel  
to strangers, and I was small for my age.  
People came,  
looking for kids of their own

Try you out, like a used car.  
If they didn't like you.  
then they brought you back.  
seem like I got brought back a lot.

That first year at Christmas time,  
they gave away presents(one per child)  
according to age. I was to get  
a plastic machine gun..Boy I could not wait.

I stood in line, with lots of ideas of how  
I would be an out-law, or marshal. Shucks  
I could be any one.  
Then I got to the end of the line.

'You are too small', said the man. Here  
take this. A bag of fruit.  
And that is how the toy,  
was never given.

Joe Howell

# Sounds Of Silence

Hello darkness, my old friend,  
I've come to talk with you again,  
Because a vision softly creeping,  
Left its seeds while I was sleeping,

Silence shouted out of the night.  
When mortar rounds came raining, washing death.  
Silence spoke in words of wounded men, waiting for a chopper.  
When hillsides and rice patties lit up the night, Napalm spoke.

Christmas was observed with a cease fire  
except for those that  
knew not Christ's birthday.  
Rifle fire with tracers burning red.

Silence shattered by screaming. waking up at night.  
Feeling like the next round will be on me.

And the signs said, the words of the prophets  
Are written on the subway walls  
And tenement halls.  
And whisper'd in the sounds of silence

Joe Howell

# Evening In Paris

The sun, a glass marble shines on innocence.  
I lie in short grass, looking into the future.

The moon- a shiny biscuit covers the clouds.  
And midnight bleeds into childhood dreams..

The watch hands turn into a foreign country.  
The war passed, I standown in rags.

Looking thru the back glass of a Rambler Station Wagon.  
Childhood dreams escape as the dust.  
I smell Evening in Paris.

The wrinkles in skin and shirt pressed by time.  
I lie in short grass, looking into the past.

Joe Howell

# Mistress Of The Mind

Mistress of the mind, she  
chapped my lips.  
In quite conversation,  
lights on low.

Two silloutes on a window shade,  
become one, in ruby moonlight.  
Sensation's slaves.  
Sleep deprived.  
Cuddled, under lavender.

Sunshine, sleeping, sensations  
Mistress of the mind.  
Mystery Lady..  
You.

Joe Howell

# Revival

The other Sunday, I was feeling low,  
felt like some where there was more for me.  
I knew of a revival, going on at a church  
down the road. So I drove down to lift up my soul.

The preacher, he was New, I could tell.  
It was the way he kept looking at his Bible,  
checking to make sure he had read it right.

Then half an hour later, I noticed he had  
a cell phone on his belt. I said to my  
self, who would call him, more important then  
God, and he wouldn't use a phone.

Joe Howell

# Who I Am

I walk in King's palaces,  
hold my head up high.  
Have dinner with Presidents,  
and heads of Countries.  
Visit with nobles & gentry.

I was with Napoleon, at Waterloo.  
Saw Custer fight at the Big Horn.  
Edison saw my in a new light.

Fight with enemies twice my size,  
most have no chance, to survive.  
Yet, most battles, I stay immobile.

You may see me Summer, Winter, Spring & Fall  
Might visit daily, yet not at all.  
Most people fear me.

I am spider, I spin where I will.

Joe Howell

# Old Film

I bought a used camera, from ebay.

I have been thinking of some pictures to take.

How about the time we spent at that brook, back in 74.

Or beside that ole willow tree.

There was the time we spent holding hands while watching movies, at the drive in.

I can see it plain as day, the smile on your face, the first Christmas, when we were so poor, that you made mine from cloth, and yours was a bible.

Yes I could take several rolls, just of that.

Remeber that green oldsmobile?

I could take another pic, of the baby, sitting on the hood.

Her and that big wheel, that was ridden for so many miles.

Halloween night, when she was so sick, she had to go home.

Yes, I would need a flash.

Flash-

Those pictures, have allready been developed.

Joe Howell



# Tomorrows Eye

If we could see with tomorrows eye,  
We might find an alternate route

One less glaring, or dry from the harsh winds running rampant  
Lined with the oaks from all the days before now,

Aged, with their wisdom of what has passed 'round their roots,  
where all yesterdays tears have nourished their foundations,

and turned their leaves crimson and gold,  
Come autumn's fall from the sun.

Stars falling in harmony with  
hearbeats, buding forth in awe.

Blue flowers, buding as I speak your name  
listening in awe, and amazement.

Whispers of love and bright mornings,  
enter into eager ears, brighting eye tone.

Yet one wanders -if in another life  
this way we came, seeing with tomorrows eye.

Joe Howell

# 12 Men

they came to give him a rest  
twelve men in black suits  
to take him to give him a rest  
to be burried in his best

words can't say, what the heart feels  
how much pain can it take, before it breaks  
and what about the happiness we will miss  
he brought it with him, coming thru the door

tears won't water the flowers he planted  
and sunrise will be late  
for it to slowes, to say good by  
it will not shine as bright

upon a stone, bearing his name  
the word loved will be etched  
and in our hearts, a hole grows  
larger

Joe Howell

# Childhood Dreams

Sunlight peeps thru closed curtains  
like a sleepy child, nodding in - out  
yet you sleep. the wave of pre-dawn  
passion, renaming lost childhood dreams

I often wonder about some childhood friend,  
how at the time we were partners, for life  
what has become of him? is he sitting  
somewhere with a cup of coffee?

I touch your skin, to gently introduce you  
to a new day, and you with a smile, say  
'I was just dreaming about you' thus  
leaving my thoughts of childhood friends

Joe Howell

# Circle Of Gold

wayward words spilling from heated lips  
'you did's' floating in and out  
'but if', pushing in every now and then  
why not just pack up and leave

after the papers, what comes now?  
where to start from zero, at forty  
is there a supermarket of flesh  
where one can pick, the best, throw the spoils to the wind?

the thing that stays with me is the  
ring on the left hand  
now it's just an empty circle of gold

Joe Howell

# These Men I Call Brothers

'We few. We happy few. We Band of Brothers.  
For those who shed their blood with us today  
shall always be our Brothers'  
'William Shakespeare'

fought beside me in life's hell  
stood when others fell

saw pain in rain- in monsoon  
not enough to make a platoon

some led the way  
on a different day

proud soldiers we stood  
die for each other we would

medals won, but we don't wear  
not really that we don't care

the 'welcome home' that we desired  
has closed shop and retired

we meet once a year  
each one -i hold dear

the road is long, filled with tears  
the sun has sat on our fears

we sit, talk about spent lead  
never forgetting the dead

next year, again we will meet  
this band of brothers -so elite

Joe Howell

# Raindropp Pearls

Raindropp pearls, carress your skin  
this hot June day, with sunshine  
taking a break, to go play  
rain clouds arrive in bouquets of nines

skin tanned and hot, enjoy the shower,  
to cool off we lay on the grass  
while in the break, some relief, we feel  
lemonaide & ice, in a pink glass

touching, kissing, holding hands  
we walk, with heads together  
enjoying the day? -you wisper, my way  
raindropp pearls falling, like little feathers

Joe Howell

# The Death Bird

friends found in an old photo album  
so young, full of life, i remember  
when the death bird sang, calling sorrow  
calling your name

Uncle Dave was a war hero, got lots metals  
for barbery, and saving a bunch of men  
then the death bird sang, took him home  
calling his name

My brother in law, just turned 21  
bought a new car, enjoyed his job  
working with doctors in the operating room  
when the death bird sang

im sitting here thinking that, since your gone  
i wish to hear that death bird sing

Joe Howell

# Wash Day

three shiney pennies,  
a nickle and a dime  
found in a pant's pocket

a hidden treasure to a lad  
who had no home for so long  
a kings fortune, his to keep

wednesday was wash day, over  
an outside fireplace, a washpot  
and the washboard, to scrubb

as a child i got to check all  
the pockets, and make claim  
to riches, remembered later, in age

Joe Howell



# Grandpa

he stood six feet tall  
biggest man i had ever seen  
at age seven, he came into my life  
picked me up and put me in a wheelbaro  
for a ride, the first time i saw him  
gave me a ride into his heart, also

he took me hunting, fishing too  
taught me that things are still there  
in the dark, you just can't see them  
smartest man i ever knew, never went to  
school, learned everything on his own

taught me to stand on my own feet, and  
that i could cry if i need to, showed  
me the way thru a cave when i was ten  
proved to me that i could stand, after i  
fell a few times.

told me that time would go by fast  
when i got old- i thought he was nuts  
untill a few years ago, just the  
last week. Now i know, he was  
for me.

Joe Howell

# This Light

This Light  
reflected in your eyes,

Burns into my soul

Rebounds to erupt into words  
Spoken In love

Wrapped in Teardrops

Joe Howell

# Mondays Mumble

Wednesday's wind blows fire & rain  
stomps your love, kindles your pain

Monday's madness makes mayhems glow  
steals hours, cripples minutes, oh so slow

Tuesday's Twilight shows shadows silhouettes  
starched sheets -stolen cigarettes

Friday's Freaks shout & gore  
men /women, coffee whores

Saturday's sting comes in pies  
fourteen live, no one dies

Thursday's grace lies in state  
love & happiness-soul-mates

Sundays sun shines deep  
cold & sin takes a leap

Joe Howell

# Texas Sun

in an old Ford pickup  
we went looking for antiques  
in the Texas dusty streets  
of an unnamed western town

we enjoyed the air flowing from  
rolled down windows, cool soda  
from glass bottles, and grey clouds  
blue bonnets covering the shoulders

it was a lazy day, stress burned away  
as hot peppers drying in the sun  
happiness spread to smiles  
heart beats of lovers, castanets

late in the afternoon sun's painted  
chapel ceiling, we stopped by a small  
brook, layed on a blanket feeling utopia  
watching, wanting, and whispering

Joe Howell

# Idaho

Found that ole tune  
on the radio today  
though of you, it's been  
so long-so long

im glad that your just a bad  
itch that i don't have to scrach  
yesterdays news, with a bad hairdo  
you played the wrong hand, you lost

now im doing alright, sleep good  
all night, wake fresh and free  
while you, are just a bad dream  
whose mama called everyday

Heard that ole song on the radio  
picked me up and put me in Idaho  
picked me up and put me in Idaho

Joe Howell

# Hospitables

they were led by a blue horse  
dressed in pink and lavender

surgical steel instruments to  
assist in replacing, wayward bones

a home for those seeking skill  
in repairing and reviving the ill

young & old receiving treatment  
many leaving, with more than health

in rooms, controlled, for necessities  
where germs, take a dive, into antiseptic

heart beats and babies, born into  
the best hospitals, and death lives  
in the basement, carried out into black

Joe Howell

**7-4-70**

There was explosions in the air  
booms that rocked you to the core  
morter rounds and machine gun's  
shouting, seeking, whom to destroy

I remember that fourth of July  
I was in Viet Nam, and someone  
wearing black was gunning for me  
I can't remember if I thought  
about home or not, but not having  
anyone who cared about me,  
I don't think I did.

Looking back now, I don't think that  
what I did was really anything having  
to do with keeping anyone free, Mostly  
I just feel kinda left out, missing a year

But I am glad I went, when I was called  
and im glad that I live in the US of A  
and im glad to stand up, and salute the flag  
cause i know i did what i could, after all

Joe Howell

# Leaving

don't take my picture today  
leave with out it, dont stop  
at the city limits and have a smoke  
put the car in drive and get on with it

the flowers didn't bloom this may  
water wasn't fresh or fall was to late  
I will be leaving soon taking the bus  
Dallas looks good, know someone there

I had soup for supper, with some bread  
David said that he could work on the car  
the insurance check will be here soon  
and i want to just move on

don't take my picture to day  
it's too late for me to stay

Joe Howell



# Hoarded Sunshine

somewhere between childhood cries and today's cells  
i have opened a place inside, where i hoard sunshine  
when the days are cold and words cut  
where the dead use their own language, quite,  
like fallen trees in winter snow

Joe Howell

# Cold Night-Hot Day

snow was blowing a white night  
sitting in my car, guarding more then  
against the cold, i fought the night

when my relief came, at midnight  
what is this? he had no car  
tempature reading four degrees

i offer him mine for the night,  
just dropp me home-not far,  
wake me up when you get off

he refused, said his wife would be by  
later with some food, so i left him, in  
the cold, winter white

Joe Howell

# Words

I'm looking at white paper, lined  
Pen in one hand, loaded gun in the other  
By the time of dawns gray  
Words or blood will spill

Thoughts butterfly thru my mind  
Words in abandonment elude  
Dictionary and word books confuse  
Words tear and rip my gray matter

A simple verse is all I ask  
The configuration of letters  
Is my Mecca. - May I rest my  
Weary head with a metaphor

Sunlight approaches and no  
Innuendo for my thirst  
In all that is and ever will be  
I have yet to receive these  
Two words-The end

Joe Howell

# Secret Words

words that bend mortal men  
creates universal haphazards,  
holds seconds in grasps of  
meager men that are stove up in  
looking glasses and hairpieces

words that poets scream for  
searching at midnight,  
looking under great oak trees  
walking red clay roads, driving convertibles  
calling radio stations, needing  
social interaction

the drink of bums with PhD's  
doctors that prescribe pain-  
killers for themselves, liquid  
abbreviations and adjectives

They are just words  
Written in Braille on the rings of halos

Joe Howell

# Standing Soldiers

marble soldiers lying is oblique  
diamondstone wheel to turn  
this workman's craft  
not enjoyed

granite structures standing in rolls  
scrollwork patterns to be  
applied to this  
cenotaph

large stones for small souls  
small ones to unknowns  
magnificent structures  
marking deaths  
attainment

Joe Howell

# Last Exhale

Brown grass, erasing into green  
Blacktop highway, rolling two lanes  
and standing beside it, for every sinner to see  
a wooden cross, standing three foot three

No words are written, no name to tell  
who's marrow this is  
nor the time of his last exhale

Joe Howell

## 7 Past Sunrise

the clock stops, it's 7 past sunrise  
rain clouds gather in widow's veil  
I am studdering your name, missing  
you to a North Carolina town

sunday comes, but brings no relief  
I find that if iI close my eyes I  
can see your silhouette, circled in blue  
lonleness pounds my door, rings my bell

I wonder if it would not be better  
if you found work closer to me  
rather than pluck my heart, perpetuity  
leaving bones of white nakedness

Joe Howell

# Heart Beats

there is a white water rapid  
in my heartbeat for you  
in your presence, it slows to  
bradycardia of love

in your arrhythmia, I ride to  
the head waters, feeling elated  
if you pause, i wish to breath  
a breath of adoration

in our valentine of rhythms  
we are inseparable, beat  
for beat, one united pulse

Joe Howell



# It Is

It's somewhere in your eyes  
not a speck of light  
nor a darkness, dread  
like i know, it is love

it's somewhere in the words you say  
not really a tone of voice  
nor a dreaded stormy night  
like i know, it is love

it's somewhere in your walk  
not a cockness, head held high  
nor a beat-downness  
like i know, it is love

it's somewhere in who you are  
my bride for so long  
not a house cleaner alone  
like i know, its you

Joe Howell

# Last Dance

if we could but hear the music  
dance that last time again  
let me sway into your mind  
and hold you with my hand

we could dance till dawn  
feet touching the floor  
rainbows leaping around us  
we would never close the door

if we could hear the music  
let it play just for us  
everyone looking, watching  
us moving in angel's dust

the years have come between us  
left it's crippling hold  
sunshine always reminds me  
my first love, so bold

Joe Howell

# Pulp Adiction

I am a simple minded man  
learning was by doing  
books have their pages  
but you are what i want to read

your pages are as much a mystery as  
those strange markings on cave walls  
your button nose, breathes pulp  
that i asperiate on, turning blue

the story line is never the same  
some days you project a novella  
luring me into wanton reading  
of lechery goosebumps.

i investigate, scarlet seams  
and leather bindings,  
as smoke & mirror incantations  
of flesh and lust

I am mystified as to how to quote  
your verse, for it flowes as the  
nile- a river heard of, never seen  
hopefully i can get to chapter two

Joe Howell

# Black Friday

Why, on such a sun-filled day  
would i awake, crying?  
did the sun not rise, for me  
to claim this day, make it into  
that which i choose?

Why must emotions run in transparent  
veins, returning to the heart and back  
to the tears that fell, leaving only  
an inner shell, that the outer knows not

I look upward to the sky, but it is black  
even with the sun staring at me, smiling  
a smirk, - maybe he can read emotions,  
let him be someone's else road map  
for today, i need rain to cover the tears

Joe Howell

# The Cup

the cup was old  
stained with years  
warmnig hearts  
calming fears

It's not the cup nor the tea  
that matters most  
but the years of love  
between you & me

Joe Howell

# When Bells Toll

when bells tolls, lies expire  
truth emerges into a right  
hate grows into liquid flow  
bigotry is swallowed

when bells tolls, i cry for  
memories of yesterday's light  
that shines no more, except  
when i forget, and call your name

when bells tolls, sadness is  
a cold shower, awaking corpuscles  
and sundown is whispered dread

Joe Howell

# Images

the man smiled at the thought  
visions of like named souls  
scents from long ago  
mists of flesh & life  
and sunshine in her hair

Joe Howell

# Purple Flower

It was just a purple flower  
pushing its head out of the  
red clay, looking around  
seeing clouds arranged in  
God's signature

Joe Howell



# Oh Death

Oh Death please come my way  
do not tarry nor delay

Unplug this machine, breathing for me  
hindering my leaving, can't you see?

I heard the nurse, they need this bed  
they will move me out, when Im dead

Take me in your icy hand  
lead me over to the promised land

Oh death don't run a way  
I can't wait another day

Joe Howell

## 22 Rifle

It was the summer that i turned 17  
I wanted a 22 cal. rifle for my birthday  
that was all i thought of, boy i shot a million  
invisible rounds at everything from cans  
to mountain tigers, being invisible too

The rifle i wanted cost fifty dollars  
and money was tight, but i knew  
that daddy worked overtime down  
at the sawmill, just out of town

When the day of my birth arrived  
i was up with the rooster, shouting  
to wake him from dreaming of pullets  
I had bought a box of ammo the day before

When Dad walked in with a small box,  
wrapped in white paper, i was in shock  
i tore off the top and saw the words  
HOLY BIBLE, i turned four shades of red

That was the day i left home-13 years ago  
not to return until his funeral last week  
today i have to clean out his desk before i  
leave to go home to where i ran before

In the bottom drawer i find that bible  
still wrapped in white paper, with the top  
tore. I sit and open it when a piece of paper  
falls to the floor. when I pick it up i see that it  
is a check for fifty dollars,  
and signed in  
love

Joe Howell