

# Gravity on the moon

*poems by- Matthew Johnston*

A coffee table book  
Published by Metamorphic Productions & Eyeball Images  
Cincinnati, Ohio, 1993

Contents

[Linear Progression](#)

[On the Creek Bed](#)

[Tattered](#)

[The Holy Sacrament](#)

[To Fictionalize your Character](#)

[Triumphant Metamorphosis](#)

[Would it help if I juggled?](#)

[Contents of the Complete Book](#)

---

## RELEASE NOTES

This book is ART. Most characters, names, places, and incidents are imagined, exaggerated, or used fictitiously. Any resemblance between scenarios described herein and reality are entirely coincidental. Any references to family members are strictly made up.

Copyright, 1994 by Matthew Johnston

All rights reserved including the right of reproduction in any form without written consent of the author.

Email the author at [mattjohnston@wa.freei.net](mailto:mattjohnston@wa.freei.net)

Thanks to John, Darren, Craig, Jason, Matt, Cara, Montana, Cincinnati (for being such a good city to poke fun at), mom, dad, Dave, Heather, Heidi, John Drury, Andrew Hudgins, Heather McHugh, James, Christine, Kathie, and everyone else who made this book possible.

First Coffee Table Printing, December 1993

First eBook printing, July, 2000

Published by Metamorphic productions book division

Cover and Illustrations by Eyeball Images

Created in the United States of America

Cover price 7.00

### General Release Notes:

This freeware version is available to all downloads. You may redistribute this document in any way, as long as ALL MATERIAL REMAINS UNCHANGED. All poems in this document have been copyrighted under United States law.

To obtain a copy of the full book, you may purchase it from either Palmgear or memoware at the following links:

## Linear progression

In a stream of water, one drop of ink  
will form a line in the direction of the flow.

A Chevy Impala, if you turn it on,  
will move in a line till it runs out of gas.

One day in lecture will follow the path  
of the day before, a superhighway of re-education.

In Auschwitz, naked men stood in line  
waiting to be checked for crabs, then burned.

In the American Revolution, the British  
advanced in a line, only to be shot by colonists in trees.

A line in space, if it approaches a star,  
will be looped by the gravity,  
and bent into a circle.

Linear progression. Did all these people have to die  
so that South Africans would have the right to vote?

## On the Creek Bed

Remember our first kiss? our only kiss?  
Red Maples hurled their leaves at us, locked fast,  
invoking shells chucked down by angry squirrels,  
uptight about our innocent intrusion.

Remember Sven, your orange-brown Calico?  
We'd roll her though your dormer, all in fun,  
onto the rosethorns below. Attempting  
to stuff her with popcorn was a bad idea.

Do you remember sitting up all night,  
just watching (talking above) old movies,  
trash, scavenged from the seventies,  
or blowing bubbles at your mom's dog?

Perhaps we should have took off long ago,  
(the headlines read "ELOPED AT AGE FIFTEEN")  
created lives of teenaged grandeur,  
rejuvenations for a damaged race.

But Whiskey sours made us sit at home.  
Remember swinging drunk, and flying  
over a ridge of glacial till, into  
the hanging valley below, then rolling  
over bottles, and dying in Mill creek?

Your two-dimensional eyes still stare at me.  
Your laugh still hangs in my ear like a ring,  
and our first kiss, our only kiss,  
still lies in the creek, on the red moss.

## Tattered

Remove this image, please! A battered man  
standing, outlined by fire, with two gold teeth.  
He cries, "Help me," in staggered, desperate words.

Tired drivers slow, the mountain air grows bright.  
Smoke, stinging gray, filters through the pickup's air:  
silhouette image, the battered man standing,

alone in the rain- praying, begging-  
wrapped in a wet charred coat begging,  
"Help me," in staggered, muddled words.

Green flames engulf the charred skeleton,  
a dying 4-runner's frame, and wash out  
the image of a battered man, standing

cold and alone beside his molten heap

of slag- the outline of a glowing man.  
"Help me," he cries, in staggered, punctured words.

I wipe the clot of blood from a scabbed face,  
which I would fear on Brooklyn's crowded streets,  
then cut the image of a battered man  
standing, crying, "Help me," in blood-filled words.

the holy sacrament

John came up to me today and said,  
"I'm off to meet the holy sacrament." again?  
You were just with that mangy critter yesterday.  
"I know, I know," he said, "but my girlfriend  
has a poodle fetish. What can I do?"  
And he was off. I never thought  
a poodle could be a holy sacrament,  
or even as goo as a lowly critter before today,  
but I've been wrong before.  
It happens to the worst of us.

My sister says it is wrong  
to call such a pawn of Satan holy sacrament,  
but she worships Progressive Architecture  
and homemade pasta so what does she know anyway?

The coroner's report said the poodle was shot.  
It never got published.

to Fictionalize your Character

It's about the extremes,  
stealing ice from a glacier  
to chill beer, running barefoot  
in a Texan dawn, holding hands  
as cold toes sink in dew.

On the phone, we never talked about desire.  
Never talked about anything, really.  
But we were both lonely.  
My jealous imagination dug me a hole-  
six feet by six feet. perfect size.  
I can keep my hat and shoes.

It's always been about extremes.  
Living on the edge of a nylon sofa,  
glazed eyes searching for a focus.  
staggering naked from the bathroom,  
to the couch, back to the leaky fridge.

I must find a way to fictionalize your character,  
and send it air mail to Madagascar. Last week  
my obsolete dependencies followed my cat  
out the window and down the street.  
My fax machine gave me a cartoon  
of a woman, eating pizza with chopsticks.

It's about peering through the peephole  
and seeing nothing but a lost kitten crying  
and an empty bag of Cheetos  
drag racing the wind.

## Triumphant Metamorphosis

She had the nose, like an abandoned jeep trail,  
mashed by migratory tumbleweed. The sun  
lingers, doesn't want to rise. I laugh,  
for I know how hard it is to fight  
the rain and leave behind warm blankets.

I cross the field between us slowly,  
plucking paths through reeds, puddles,  
and glass. Her hair converses with the wind.  
arguing politics. It floats-  
in time with a brown leaf falling-  
triumphant metamorphosis from grace.  
My mother told me once that somebody's God  
was punishing the leaf. "It was evil,"  
she told me, "Soon it will be brown, then burn."  
Her prejudice recurs. I stop.

I wait. I feel unsure. My feet begin  
to sink. like walking on sand. The ground  
is soft, and slurping in my shoes.  
I falter up to higher ground and steal a glance.  
Did she see me? For if she did,  
I'm just another silly boy.

would it help if I juggled

evolutionary pigeons shit on the sidewalk  
in the trees on my head on my way  
to interview with the CEO of Proctor & Gamble  
I cannot turn back now  
by the time I'm home and changed and back  
he'll be home and changed and eating spaghetti  
with his wife and 2point3 children  
Ferrari parked out back Datsun in the trash  
with empty mountain dew cans  
he's rich doesn't need to recycle  
doesn't need to watch TV he owns  
a discount cinema in the woods behind Norwood  
but i'll never get the job  
got birdshit on my head  
dripping down  
on my new blue suit,

but here I am to face a laughing Bellman,  
laughing secretary, laughing CEO  
his eyes glow black from years colon cancer.  
"I never hired a man with birdshit on his head before."  
"Would it help if I juggled?"  
He says "I love to juggle,"  
so we get the six bottles of maddog,  
and toss them back and forth between our mouths  
our hands, the oriental rug  
and hardwood floor, then jump into his  
Datsun and ride up to see the band  
and wash T-shirts at Sudsy's. they're a thrash band  
and he moshes better than me  
I wonder what kind of a job I just got  
but I'm getting drunk I guess  
I'll clean my suit on Tuesday after work  
at donna's cleaners in university plaza  
I can browse at blockbuster while I wait  
Midnight Dragon 7 just came out, and we party  
till dawn when the crimson stomach fever,  
so well known to winos on Vine Street,  
begins to creep down through our small intestines  
and into our bowels preparing us for a greasy-Dawn-Dishsoap day at the office.

---end

Book contents (complete)

Linear Progression	Herding Sheep
On the Creek Bed	I want to be a Hermit
Tattered	I'd Better turn back now
The Holy Sacrament	If I were a Coiled Cephalopod
To Fictionalize your Character	Ignorance on the Homefront
Triumphant Metamorphosis	Iraq Congress Quote
Would it help if I juggled	Nikki used to Sew with Quills
9pm on the eve of summer	Monongahela
a witch's hand....	Mr. Cromwell
And tell me the wolves	Mutant Slugs
ARABICA- poem for Tony	My Temple
Brainwaves and energy	Of Cold Winter Mornings
Elusion of the fly	Pasted to the Walls
Escape from the Owl Creek Power Plant	Pasteled Fashion Colors
Feeding habits of a moth under metal-sulfide	Philosophy in Rocky River Metroparks
Fox Hunting	Psychotic
Geology is not an exact Science	Rejection Notice
Gravel Roads	Sparrows
Gravity on the Moon	Thursday Night on the Town
Haikus	Torn between shrubs and streetlights
Hailstorm	Weekly Specials
Hand me your Eyes	Why should Tonight
	Writing for the sake of money (a satire)

To order, use [www.palmgear.com](http://www.palmgear.com).