

1. OFF TO THE RACES

**palpable anticipation
the warmups are almost all done
there'll be no more preparation
poised for the sound of the gun**

**she's had 'em in her sights so long
she's trained 'er heart to be so strong
all of 'em lined up in a row
and now it's time to go
now it's time to go**

**off to the races – no sense in starting slow
off to the races – now it's time to go**

**there've been races run and lost and won
as long as we've raced round the sun
and every one and every one's
... the big one
till the next one comes, we know
and now it's time to go
now it's time to go**

**off to the races – time to start the show
off to the races – now it's time to go**

**palpable anticipation
awaiting the rising of the sun
there can be no trepidation
poised for the crack of the gun**

2. LAST DAYS OF LEDEN

**All our folks moved down to Florida
But we like it here fine
When we learn to read the constellations
When our planets all align
When our deeds fulfill the prophecies
They will send a sign
They will send a sign**

**And ice will melt as winter fades away
And the ice will melt from year to year
And they will feel it down in Sarasota
The older that you get, the less you have to fear
And we won't see the south so tantalizing
As the end starts to appear**

**Marie Curie in the laboratory
Fascinated by the glow
Lighting up the mild winter nights in Paris
Remembering deep fields of snow
On the patient road to Warsaw
Toward a resting place in Sceaux**

**There'll be lots of time for lamentations
Elegies for all we hold so dear
Fill the air with songs in February
The more you sing along, the less you have to hear
When we don't find the truth so tantalizing
Tomorrows tantamount to tears
And we won't find the south so tantalizing
With the endgame drawing near**

3. JOURNAL ENTRY

**Cold Sunday morning streets of Brno
Most of the stores are closed
I don't want beer but I'm looking for a bar
iamb iamb Seeking signals near and far**

**Near and far away in South Victoria
The crowd at Rod Laver starts to cheer
All the marbles, all the marbles
Two Turkish coffees and a Staropramen beer**

**Herna bar on Masarykova
Barkeep's lonely on her phone texting her friends
Writing the first 2 songs of February
A little more when each point ends**

**Two tiebreakers, two and a half hours
And then the tide suddenly turns
Foregone conclusions slowly play themselves out
The 5-time champion returns**

**Back on the snowy streets by Freedom Square
Trying to inhabit every time zone
The games back home are far far west of here
iamb iamb awaiting transmissions far and near**

**Things kick off after midnight
In the John Galt Hostel I turn out the light
Out the half-moon window, a single shining star
iamb iamb awaiting transmissions near and far**

4. SPELLING IT OUT

First verse: There are problems in the world.

Chorus: How will it all be OK?

Second verse: Some of the problems belong to me.

Chorus: How will it all go away?

Third verse: I'm sure you've got your share.

Chorus: IQ alone won't suffice.

Penultimate/Fourth verse: At least we're not Barack Obama.

Chorus: Our existence is imperiled.

Last verse: Exactly the same as the first.

Chorus: How will it all be OK?

F-I-R-S-T

V-E-R-S-E

T-H-E...R-E...A-R-E-P...R-O-B...L-E

M-S-I-N-T-H-E...W-O-R-L-D

C-H-O-R-U

S ... I-Q

A-L-O-N-E...W-O-N-T

S-U-F-F-I-C-E

C-H-O-R-U

S-H-O-W

W-I-L-L-I-T-A

L-L-B-E-O-K

F-O-U-R-T

H-V-E-R-S-E

A-T...L-E...A-S-T...W-E...R-E...N-O-T

B-A...R-A...C-K...O-B-A...M-A

S-E-C-O-N-D

V-E-R-S-E

S-O-M-E...O-F-T...H-E-P...R-O-B...L-E

M-S-B-E...L-O-N-G...T-O-M-E

C-H-O-R-U-S

O-U-R...E-X

I-S-T...E-N-C-E

I-M-P-E...R-I-L-E-D

C-H-O-R-U

S-H-O-W

W-I-L-L-I

T-A-L-L-G-O-A-W-A-Y

L-A-S-T

V-E-R-S-E

E-X-A-C-T...L-Y-T-H-E...S-A-M-E

A-S-T-H-E...F-I-R-S-T

T-H-I-R-D

V-E-R-S-E

I-M-S...U-R-E...Y-O-U...V-E

G-O-T...Y-O-U-R...S-H-A-R-E

C-H-O-R-U

S-H-O-W

W-I-L-L-I-T-A

L-L-B-E-O-K

5. Answering the Call

Jitka called this morning to tell me that she's leaving.

Petr said he saw it coming long ago, since that time

Michaela threw that party down in Old Town at the brewery.

**Jan had too much slivovice and he passed out in the woodshed with
Marketa, who was also wasted – started drinking early.**

Andrej came late to the party, and he couldn't find his zhizhi.

Mariana tried to cover, said she'd gone to Bratislava.

Karel offered up his Skoda for a joyride to Slovakia.

Milan said not to drive solo, so they headed off together.

Martin was a hitchhiker, standing by the Svratka.

Jenda was his buddy, gave 'em contraband and booty.

Pavel at the border took a bribe and let 'em back through.

Vladimir had to find someone that he could pass the pills to.

Lenka gave a few to Jitka, and they fixed her aphrodisia.

Jitka called this morning to tell me that she's leaving.

6. Down at the Square

**He's got a head of thick black hair that falls across his face
as he steps out of the trolley car and feels the windy chill.
She's unlikely to pass by this way on any given winter day
except when she's got lots of time to kill.**

**And they catch each other's eye and for a moment time stands still.
And they would have ugly babies if fate led them there –
If they ever meet again down at the square.**

**Down at Mendelovo Náměstí
The possible, the probable, fertile infinity
Hide and seek and heel and toe
Round and round and round we go
Down at Mendelovo Náměstí**

**She's been working at the pekařství since school let out last year –
The pre-dawn early morning shift, almost every day.
He was never one for morningfood, just heading straight to work.
Now he always stops for donuts and coffee on the way.
And if she ever asks him, he'll blow off work and stay.
And they'd have clever but unhealthy babies, if the donuts lead anywhere –
If they keep these meetings up down at the square**

**Down at Mendelovo Náměstí
The possible, the probable, combinatorially
Hide and seek and stop and spin
Round and round and round again
Down at Mendelovo Náměstí**

**Here comes the sunset orange hair underneath a coal-black hat.
Seven minutes to walk all the way from the abbey to the train.
At the same time every evening just before the clock tower chimes,
Like clockwork like sunrise like zero chance of rain.
And there's a random little lyric in every new refrain.
And we would have beautiful babies, I'm saying a little prayer.
Would you meet me tonight down at the square?**

**Down at Mendelovo Náměstí
The possible, the probable, fertile infinity
Hide and seek and up and down
Round and round and round and round
Down at Mendelovo Náměstí**

7. BAYONETS

**I think I saw this in a movie once.
Dark road by a river. Fog rolling in.
Some toes got stepped on... for pretty good reason
But it ended up here to atone for the sin.
Dark road by a river. Fog rolling in.**

**I think I heard this on the news one time.
Boat full of escapees adrift on the sea.
Fleeing from killers in a lawless country
Pursued in their unlikely bid to be free.
Boat full of escapees adrift on the sea.**

**We try to live the maxim – All things in moderation
Circumstance builds up gauntlets to force a man through
Desperation may lead to revelation
But in the meantime we do what we gotta do**

**I think I read this in a textbook one time.
The crux of the battle – one chance to stem the tide.
On top of a little hill, a small backwoods regiment
Charged to hold the left flank, keep the enemies outside.
The crux of the battle – one chance to stem the tide.**

8. TIGHTROPE (The Chorus at the Chasm)

What led here...

**Yesterday the sun was brighter, the world was wider, there was no end
To the pathways I might travel, watch 'em unravel and come back again.**

All the waters from all this weather flow down together down toward the sea.

**All the waters from all this weather mingle together as tributaries meet
From every corner the streams deliver one mighty river down to the sea...**

**There's a chasm that I'm crossing
There's a highwire that I'm on
There's a moment and there's a juncture
There's the darkness and there's the dawn
There's a lifetime full of choices
Right now there's only one choice that I've got
Like the circus freaks always tell you
Best not get up here if you only trust one knot**

What leads away... rays, shards, glimmers... magus, shaman, wise man

**Yeah, I've been singing and telling stories of future glories and strands of hope
I've got a vision of wide horizons and new suns rising at the far end of the rope
Beyond the narrows I will head out as pathways spread out far and wide
And like a shaman I will wander to every corner under an open sky...**

**There's a chasm that I'm crossing
There's a highwire that I'm on
There's a moment and there's a juncture
There's the darkness and there's the dawn
I made so many preparations
Saw the wire stretched out across a gap so wide
Like the circus folks always tell you
Sometimes you gotta trust the man/knot on the far/other side**

**There's a chasm that I'm crossing
There's a highwire that I'm on
There's a moment and there's a juncture
There's the darkness and there's the dawn**

9. PSYCHOMETER

**Plague sweeps down from the steppes of San Fernando
Fear grips the masses at the mall
There's looting and youtubing down around the Yum Yum
The forecast is anguish for us all**

**Someone call the PSYCHOMETER!!!
He will reckon the atmosphere!!!
He can solve all our problems here!!!
He is called the PSYCHOMETER!!!**

**Everyone has been hit by enormous waves of ennui
There is a statewide shortage of BBQ sauce
A furious tapping of phones to find some salvation
Black Friday afternoon is a total loss**

**Someone call the PSYCHOMETER!!!
He will reckon the atmosphere!!!
He can solve all our problems here!!!
He is called the PSYCHOMETER!!!**

**Look to the sky!
Is he here?
Is he near?
Can he fly?
I don't know...**

Someone please save the BARBECUE!

10. THE RIDGE

I'm walking the ridge right now

A stone spine sticking out from the land

Down off the cliffsides → valleys and farms

In all but two directions from the place where I stand

Mother nature built up a grand wall

Separating the world into two

And I am up here on the ramparts

Looking down and enjoying the view

The ridge before me heads to the skyline

I don't know how far it might go

Sooner or later I'll need water

And I'll head down to the valley below

I'm walking the ridge right now

The ridge of perfect buzzedness

Between sobriety and sickness

I'm on the ridge and I don't wanna come down

But this is the highland with lowland all around

And every trail has gotta come down

11. Côte d'Ivoire

**Four groups of four in the group stage
Four teams went 0 – 3 – 0
Two of those teams were Guinea and Mali
And they had to draw lots to see who'd go
On to the quarterfinals
Of the African Cup of Nations
In the year 2015
In Equatorial Guinea!**

**Cape Verde, with a population of half a million inhabitants,
Went 0 – 3 – 0 and were able combatants...
But they lost out on total goals scored.**

**In Bata, the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Defeated the other Republic of the Congo.
In Malabo, Algeria played Côte d'Ivoire
And lost by the score de une à trois.
Guinea got into the quarters by lots,
And in Malabo, they had to play Ghana, and lost.
And in Bata, things hit rock bottom...
Tunisia played Equatorial Guinea and thought that they got 'em,
But leading one-nothing at the end of the regulation,
A lame PK and overtime took them out of the equation.**

**Morocco wasn't there, they bailed as host nation.
Egypt wasn't there, they have their own conflagration.**

**On to the semifinals! Perhaps things will be pretty quiet!
When the hosts lost to Ghana in Malabo, the home fans started to riot.
And in Bata, the Elephants of Côte d'Ivoire
Beat the Democratic Republic of the Congo de une à trois.
And so from the original 16 teams, the field had narrowed to two.
Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana would play in the finals, just like in '92.
And just like they did 23 years ago, Côte d'Ivoire came through.
After 120 minutes and a nailbiting shootout where the keepers had to kick, too.**

**So hooray for the mighty Elephants! Trumpet it near and foire!
So hooray for the mighty Elephants! The Elephants of Côte d'Ivoire!**

12. POHLED Z PRAHY

**Dear Juliet, I send this note for you
From Old Bohemia on the wiled coast
Of Vltava with waters blackish blue
And history since back when dirt was new
The auld days when the tallest tales were true**

**The sky is black on this midwinter night
The footworn cobbled roads are tourist-filled
And up on Wenceslas a snow falls light
Chequering all the paths and streets with white
The castle 'cross the water lumined bright**

**The castle, thrice as old as Shakespeare's pomes,
The edifice predates the brave New World,
The Magna Carta, the starriest flags back home,
A constant while like wandering stars we roam,
The cosmic dances of the chromosomes.**

**On this midwinter night the sky is black...
Just three nights more, then Mannahatta bound!
And tho' I have no fear of going back,
I can abide no more the beaten track
Upon the which just beaten spoils are found.**

14. THE OLD SIDE OF THE OCEAN

**Before the sunshine, there was darkness.
There was vastness without light.
Before the water, things were rocky.
There was a coldness in the night.
Before the ocean, there were mountains.
There was vastness in between.
Before the blooming, there was brownness.
There were endless dreams of green.
Before the explosion, things were lonely.
There was vastness between everyone.
Before the flooding, things got crowded.
There was culling to be done.**

**And I am flying across the ocean
From the old side back to the new.
And I am crossing some kind of boundary.
And I am straining to catch the view.**

**After Adam, there was the apple.
There were questions, there were hopes.
After the atom, there were the bosons.
And bigger bombs and telescopes.
After the iPhone, things got confusing.
There were machines smarter than me.
After the robots, came the decision
Between cyborg and legacy.**

**And I am flying across the ocean
From the old side back to the new.
And I am crossing some kind of boundary
And I am straining to catch the view.**