

For Bissett fans: this is the title of his latest book published by Talonbooks (2007), some 144 pages of bissetry just B cuz.

Bissett's publisher-transcribed introduction to the book, that quotes Bissett, reads: "I call you again over a vast linguistic valley. The brain is a soft flower, tremulous in its aspecting, and wanting to trust, we lose what we seek and find what finds us. This is earth. these are people."

The man is a walking legend who walks like a hobo under a baseball cap and behaves like a bum at the food counter. One of the veteran organizers at the conference where I was a food counter volunteer and Bissett one of nine presentors in a writers' workshop for young people, said to him:

"Now Bill... Bill, are you listening to me? Look at me, Bill! Keep looking at me! I put two washable felt pens under the white board in your room. One is red, one is blue. Do not use any other pen. Do you understand me? Please nod if you heard me!"

Later I asked her: "Is this guy for real or is he putting on an act?"

"Yes," she replied, then catching my questioning look she said: "Both."

Indeed, Bissett is a performance artist one is not likely to forget. He has all the trappings of a hippie dropout of a bygone age, but the man is really just an incorrigible lateral thinker, perpetually seeking wonder even as, aging, he is now drawing long blanks demarkated by blinks and yawns between his thinking. A man forever lost and found.

The book reads like a traveler's journey as Bissett records the events as dreams and his dreams as events. In an entry entitled Bonding with being, subtitled sum wher on th road, he writes:

along th rivr ontobee
ium eeting th sun
bonding with being
lost beautiful magik

stone leanne gave me lost magik bells from kyoto
frend gave me first meeting on boat passage
2 victoria hot sunnee summr day on deck
brite sparkling reel watr all ovr my bodee
drying in th toasting rays breking nite fast
film flin flon arabesque in petes cornr uv george n brock seeing th
changes in the nu book ium working on last 2 years
sew far peterborough august 02 herd angus finnan
excellent singr songwitr his words n vois sew fine
iuv been travelling 4a whil now happy 4 myself

As a lecturer he is absently stimulating as he kept his bright young audience reading their own work, offering one word comments of "cool" and/or "excellent," asking other youngsters what they thought of the poem between yawns he did not attempt to hide, now and again offering a few lines of poems from Coleridge's Kubla Khan. Pressed to contribute his own, he offered a two-liner.

"That's not a poem, that's a pun!" exclaimed a twelve year old girl who was reciting Robert Luis Stevenson by heart at some length earlier. Bissett was unfazed.

A line repeated three times in **Bonding with being** came to mind:

Bill Bissett: ths is ertth thees ar peopul

Written by Bill Bissett

i want 2 b long sumwher n ium alredee heer
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