

A surreal landscape illustration. In the foreground, a large, dark, crystalline formation resembling a giant's foot or a complex rock structure is illuminated from below with a greenish glow. A tree with a thick, dark trunk and intricate, branching, leafless limbs grows from the top of this formation. The background features rolling, purple-hued mountains under a dark purple sky. At the top center, a black circle representing the sun is partially obscured by a white ring, creating a solar eclipse effect. The overall color palette is dominated by purples, blues, and greens.

Eclipse

The Violet Hour Anthology

Eclipse

The Violet Hour Anthology

2017-18

© 2018 Michael Riedell's UHS Creative Writing Class

All rights remain with the individual authors

Layout & Design by Blake More & UHS Creative Writing Class

Funding for Poet Teaching and this anthology was provided by
Mendocino County Office of Education
California Poets In The Schools
with help from the California Arts Council



For information about California Poets InThe Schools, contact:

CPITS

2131 19th Avenue #203

San Francisco CA 94116

415-221-4201

www.cpits.org

Eclipse

The Violet Hour Anthology

2017-18

Table of Contents

Luciana Allende,	8
Maria Andrade Gallegos,	18
Joshua Barrera,	28
amanda bednar,	35
Taylor Bowser,	45
Kenzie Bray,	55
Susana Correa-Avila Robb,	65
Dylan Deguzman,	77
Lucas Dhuyvetter,	87
Emma Dolan,	96
Mateo Flores,	106
Sylvia Fogle,	116
Indigo Funk,	125
Victor DeAnthony Galarza-Guevara ,	135
Maya Halfacre,	145
Kailey Holmes,	155
Casserole Jones,	165
Cynthia Kachirisky,	172
Kaitlin Kendall,	182
Aeryn Kline,	192
Ava Larson,	200
Michael Leggett,	208
Lauren Lolonis,	218
Samantha London,	228
Jazmin Ramirez,	235
Carlos Rodriguez,	241
Dani Salazar,	251
Indigo Stewart,	261
Maria Tellez,	271
taylor jane travis,	281
Madison Valente,	289
Andrea Wagner,	293
Sasha Wilkins,	303
Michael Riedell,	213
Biographies,	318

Introduction

It began like a prophecy fulfilled, with a solar eclipse. We stood at break together in a strange light, looking up at a celestial event some were calling The Great American Eclipse. Then, before the sun and moon were pulled apart again, we stepped inside the room that became Violet Hour.

The name came from our studies of Sappho (630–570 BC), the famous lyric poet from the Greek island of Lesbos. She wrote, “O Evening Star, bringing everything / that dawn’s first glimmer scattered wide...” Some 2500 years later T.S. Eliot borrowed her idea of a time that gathers together all that may have been dispersed:

At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.

So with the Violet Hour we were brought together, to write, to laugh, to share ideas and opinions. The cohesiveness of the group was clear when our nearly unanimous vote for the name of the class in the early days of September included also the name for the book we would spend the year writing, the book you hold in your hand, *Eclipse*. Sure, we later second-guessed ourselves and reopened the debate about the book title--the other finalist, *Fragments*, was also a nod to Sappho--but returned inevitably to *Eclipse*.

The 2017-2018 school year was tumultuous by anyone’s standards. National politics hit new gutter-level lows every other week, and locally we had the terror of the Redwood Complex fires. Then, in February, a mass shooting in Florida dominated our thoughts. Suddenly our country’s obsession with guns was an open conversation led heroically by articulate and extremely determined high school students. For over three weeks following that our class put writing aside and delved into the issues related to school shootings, researching and presenting on guns and the NRA, bullying, non-violent demonstrations, youth movements, mental illness, and the media’s response to violence.

Students from Violet Hour participated in and, in some cases, actively organized vigils, walkouts, and an anti-violence rally downtown. They were interviewed in our class and featured in a powerful seven minute piece for our local public radio station. These students showed the long-standing link between writers and social engagement is alive and well. And, on a personal note, I could not have been more proud.

During an eclipse, birds will roost and animals will seek out their lairs for comfort and protection. Then the eclipse ends. The Violet Hour that brings us together is replaced by a new day. As “dawn’s first glimmer” scatters us wide, we go out into the world changed by our time together, grateful for the camaraderie, and hopefully determined to help write a better future.

M.R.

5-4-18

Luciana Allende

The Purpose of Poetry

it was stunning surreal even
witnessing the recordings
of an entire emotional timeline
watching someone hash with their feelings after being
betrayed by love
assaulted with agony
lost in lust
emptying emotions
then those subtle whispers of words
that once strung together
gave names to things
i always knew were there but couldn't voice because
i didn't know how

but She did
this woman's deepest thoughts
forbidden feelings written in ink
so personal it feels like blood
these words stood in reach of my hands
my hands that felt like they were holding Hers
and She held mine and took me somewhere
somewhere beautifully ugly where visiting was welcomed
those words positioned perfectly on pieces of paper bonded together
by all the hair ties She broke in rage then cried on the kitchen floor about
because it wasn't the hair tie
it was Her who felt broken

oddly enough i love it how i don't know Her favorite color but
i know what the color of Her mind is
i don't know if She got paid minimum wage but I know
i can't repay Her for what she has given me
and the cards I will send will never yellow because
my love for poetry will linger long,
oh how I enjoy visiting this beautifully ugly place

A Poet's Form of Direct Characterization

Your eyelashes bloom
sweet rosemary and jasmine
clutched to them tears that tend to sting of citrus
which waltz down though
petite peaches and plums
forgive me freckles
that play hopscotch across
Your velvet soaked cheeks
those gracefully groomed lips
bleeding honey onto these crisp sheets
whispering that elegantly exquisite lullaby
and turning my heart to a lake of lust
each time
a glimpse of marigold across Your pupils
naturally quickening my bloodstream
that jawline infused with pride that
consumes me absolutely
please cut me so I can
finally
stop squirming
You smell like nectarines
crimson skies
summertime
and familiarity
Your touch
like shots of caffeine
revives me
You coat me in adoration
provide me exploration
You're museum
and I'll never get tired of visiting
all I'm trying to say is

You're beautiful.

What We Have

Inspired by Sappho

Bitter
[is their outside perception of devotion]
and know this [dear one]

whatever you are
I shall [choose to] Love
[honesty, indefinitely]

for [in our world full]
of weapons
[You protect me]

Pray for Progress

Protective palms plead Peace
Plead peace
Pray for peace
Pleading for unity
For stillness
For laughter
Hoping
Hoping we
Hoping we will get there
We will get there
In one piece.

The Past Two Years

Then I was unaware of
The corruption in my vanity soon to be my sanity
For I couldn't comprehend apparently
The severity of this crooked condition
The order that sets me apart from being ordinary
Now I am lost in this nothing
This nothing which is my everything
I feel colorless
My necessity for normality stings
Like a bullet in a hopeful doves wing
Perfectly intact
Besides the fact
I'm suffering
My body, my beauty, my being
Bent into a confusing constellation of scars
embroidered onto my sides
Yet these stars tell my story
No matter how they align with my spine
They still are beautiful

& I am still *beautiful*

Roots

There are parts of everything in everyone
Some elements resonate in us more than others
The air in my lungs pulls me toward the sky
The breaths I take define each move I make
Air are the feet that walk me through life
For adventure I am weightless
The earth in my toes grounds me with society
Reminds me of humbling beginnings and a small town
Endorses reality into my bones
The water in my veins connects me to the past
Drowning me in possibility
A constant reminder of my space in this massive place
Water through me
Leading to not only oceans
But streams, pools, puddles
Water is belonging
Yet the fire in my soul is
My identity
What pulls me left or right
The provider of passion
Lord of love
Ruler of romance
Creador of connection
Fire is feeling
We say bloody fire is passion for it bleeds
Strength
Truth
Resilience
Yet easily
Pain, Destructive
All the same
Fire is inescapable
Fire is in all of us
Fire is feeling.

First Impressions

Sticky plums, smooth honey and butter
Sticky plums, smooth honey and butter
Make me a cake will you?
Will you, make me a cake out of
Sticky plums, smooth honey, and butter
Place a lavender sprig atop that masterpiece
That masterpiece curated
Quickly for I have places to be
Places to be quickly
Package up that masterpiece
A cake of sticky plums, smooth honey and butter
For I desire it promptly
For I have places to be quickly
So package it up luxly
I want spongy yet velvet
Velvet yet spongy
Velvet yet spongy yet quickly
My cake made of sticky plums smooth honey and butter
Promptly soon
Quickly now
Promptly soon
Quickly now

Sticky

what We had was Nostalgia
a sweet sticky nostalgic melancholy
i spooned some onto your blushed fingertip
i could have tasted it, could have felt it on Your lips
apparently i admired it too long
i waited for what We had, too long
for i had places to be and you had people to see
so as i sit on Your front porch
i wipe that honey
onto the pocket of my favorite jeans
then i tuck them into the back of my suitcase
tuck You back into my memories
and it won't be till i forget You
that my blushing fingertip will brush that's sticky stain
reminding me of Your name and
how close i got to giving You mine
my veins were starving because then missed Your touch
so they sucked the stick right out of that stain
now it's in my brain
i taste you behind my eyes
that sticky sweet honey coats my lungs

the Idea of You is suffocating me
but what we didn't have killed Me.

Creativity

My hands
Choose only the
Broken crayons
To color
Outside the lines
Because it's more interesting
That way.

Respect

the silence
that graced the sidewalks
which I walked
Alone
Unafraid

Acceptance

Loss
a boomerang
continually hitting you
harder and harder
until you finally
put it
to rest
and return
to breathing
again

Esperanza

Inspired by Sappho

[But come dear companions for day is near,]

We worked

We fought

We taught

We resisted

We persisted

Freedom balances before us

The wind of the horizon

Carries us

To a new day

Breathe easy

Sweet one

For history has been made

Handle with Care

my Dad told me to hold fragile things
with Both Hands
He meant Christmas ornaments or
Wine glasses
Little did he know
He taught me how to handle hearts
With both my hands
The most fragile human vessel
One we all have
One we all carry
One we house in the hands of others
For safekeeping
In the grasp of their palms
That's l o v e
Giving oneself to another
And accepting another with all of ourselves
Risking all vulnerability
Toying with the possibility of
Being torn to pieces
For an authentic, true, Connection
My dad taught me to
Trust the hands
Who hold you

Maria Andrade

The Color Blue

Blue is the color of the ocean
The color blue is the color inside our veins
Blue is the color blue
It could be dark blue
Light blue
Even mixed blue
Blue on your jeans
Blue on your shirt
Even in your hair
Blue is on the sky
Blue is everywhere

Sappho Fragment XII

[Of all the stars, the loveliest place]
a place where no one can disturb
where you could forget and admire
to let your mind wander
a place that will never be forgotten
a place where the problems
the drama disappears into thin air
where you forget about everyone and everything

New Beginnings

When there are things in life
That you don't understand
Or decide
confused and scared
About what to do
Now one must
Find their own way
To learn new things
To understand
To decide
You never know
When new things
Will appear
New things to understand
Decision to decide on
A new life begins

Adventure

Adventure in the dangerous world.
Beware the danger and challenges you will face,
Don't let it take over.
It echoes through your mind
Fabricating the fear, the sadness,
Getting to the point where you can't take any more,
Hoping that someday eased from the pain and fear
It is patiently waiting.

Creepy Creatures

O, creeping in the corners they go in
Little insects hide in creepy corners
They go through the night
Crawling up your arms like a million little electric shocks
Through the day they search to survive
They work like a team
They devour their prey
They hide like cookie crumbs under the couch
The name of the insect is known very well to the world
They're little tiny pieces of sugar

Days Goes By

The day goes by
Looking at the rain
Through the window
Wondering,
Where could he be?

Could he be far
Or could he be near?
The day goes by
And your soul is still hollow
Like an empty soda can,

Still thinking
Is he ever coming back?
Time goes by in a blink of an eye,

Then one day you realized
You locked your heart away
For a person that's not coming back.
And wondering, why keep waiting
For a person that disappeared into thin air?

Life is full of love and hate.
You decide your own fate.
Make your life full of love or
Make your life full of hate.

Wandering

Wandering through the labyrinth
Wandering where to go
Feeling hollow inside
Feeling empty inside like an empty cave
With a fragile heart made out of glass
Fearing that one day
That fragile heart might break into million pieces
Thinking that it might not ever be fixed
Thinking your life is over
But remember your life is in your control
You control what you do
Make your life happy

Donuts

A donut is round.
A donut looks like a wheel.
A donut with chocolate sprinkles.
A donut is like being in a happy place.
A donut can be a perfect breakfast.
A donut is something else...
I don't know what to write next...

Blank Mind

I don't know what to write
My brain is empty as an abandoned barn
A brain that has no ideas
The ideas in my brain disappeared into thin air
A brain that needs a boost to think
Who knows what I come up with

The Yellow Sun

The Yellow Sun
Looking down at the capital
Which capital, who knows?
Looks down at holy places
And whispers it is pretty
This yellow sun
This Yellow Sun sees

Buzzing Bees

A tiny yellow bee
Buzzes around
Searching for its next victim
Until it finds someone

It buzzes around
It looks for a flower
To make some
Until it finds someone

It buzzes around
But it's not the only bee
Buzzin around
Looking for its victim

It buzzes around
But don't provoke the bee
Or your its next victim

The Oak Tree

As wind in the mountains
Assaults an oak
The oak stands still
Hit after hit after hit
Comes with emotions
Fear Anger Stress
But the oak stands still
No matter how much
He tried to stop it
The oak continues

The Time of Life

The time of life goes on
Every year grow older
And older or even taller
Time goes by in a flash
Not knowing what chapter is next
It could be good or bad
You decide your path
But pick wisely
Cuz you never know what would happen next
It could be charming or it could be horrible
Get prepared for your next chapter

More and More

I began to read
More and more
Book after book
The more books I read
The more knowledge I got
The days pass by
With every book I read
The more words I read

Maria Departure

Maria Tellez
That's her name
Is leaving me
In this lonely world
Leaving with no thoughts
In the wild thoughts
In the wild jungle
Leaving me empty inside

The Sky, The Clouds

The clouds
The sky
The never ending peace

Despair

The day goes by
Looking at the rain through the window
Wondering
Where could he be?
Years have passed
Asking the same question
Where is he?

Joshua Barrera

Bertha's New Boyfriend: The Saga

Sitting in her small, cat infested apartment, Bertha sits eagerly on the floor petting all of sixteen of her *indoor* cats. Her job as a record signer has been going well so far. Things have been slow since World Star Hip Hop and SoundCloud has stolen all the real talent, like Lil Pump and YBN Namhir. Her small apartment as white and trashy as ever. Jalapenos still come naturally to her, although she can't have a garden anymore. Bertha has also taken up another job as an accountant to keep the money flowing and her cats fed. She got the job by bribing the interviewer with two bags of Hershey's miniatures and the vague promise of a long term relationship. That didn't happen.

After her job filing papers and eating, she likes to write papers, and do some more eating at the local Black Oak Coffee shop. She brings her Journals and an old MacBook Air with a Supreme sticker that she nicked off some college student while he wasn't looking. She pretends to write and type, looking at the screen with sweat and determination, when all she does is browse Facebook and cat memes. A relatively slim man walks into the coffee shop. He wears dark clothing and looks shy, in the little kid way.

"I could eat him like a king sized Reese's Peanut Butter Cup," she accidentally says out loud.

Bertha has never felt that way before about anyone before, except for Dan. But we don't talk about Dan. Adrian gets the hippest drink in the shop, and tries to find a place to sit.

"Do you mind if I sit here?" The sexy mystery man asks Bertha.

"Of course, I love you, will you marry me?" Bertha says with the same tone that a twelve year old girl says to Harry Styles, or Justin Beiber when they were relevant.

"Ummmm... what?" he says questioning his life choices a bit.

"Oh sorry, I was on the phone!" she lies as she picks it up and holds it to her face upside down.

The simple presence of him makes her hungry. For food, of course. Her thoughts run wild of them going out on a date, then getting married, then having seven kids. She leaves the coffee shop in a hurry.

Back home, she talks about the mystery sexy man to her cats, holding them, obsessing. The only thing on Bertha's mind is him. His smell of cheap cologne was amazing, as was his small tattoo. But whatever, Bertha doesn't have the confidence to, not since Dan. Since Dan cheated on her, with a Russian mail order bride. But we don't talk about Dan.

The next day, Bertha went back to Black Oak with the intentions

of talking to this mystery man. She ordered her usual coffee drink...thing, and sat down to her table. She waits. And waits. And waits. And waits. He doesn't show up. Bertha is sad. She runs to her car in a fit of tears, driving forty five over the speed limit, and eating a king sized Reese's.

"Why can't I ever find someone nice? How come I can't find someone from Mexico named Alejandro like Debrah. That bitch," Bertha says to herself.

She eventually makes it home. She cries on many of her cats, sobbing away while stress eating chocolate and 3 week old McDonald's french fries. Bertha is heartbroken. Never in her life has she obsessed so hard over something. Besides Dan. Facebook is a great place to stalk people without getting out of bed, and having to walk. Bertha went to find him. The one. The Prince. The King. After several hours with no luck, she finds a familiar photo. It's him. Adrian Steele. Thankfully, all his profile stuff is public, he seems to have a lot of pictures of the library for some reason.

She tries again the next day. She finds him. Still the same Adrian as always. She walks up to him, and just goes for it.

"Hey, you look kinda cute. I was wondering if you wanted to go out to dinner or something."

Her heart stopped for a split second, thinking about the potential of rejection.

"I'm not doing anything friday if you want to go out." Adrian says.

"Alright, how about dinner, somewhere fancy, maybe Burger King?"

"I was thinking more about Applebees or something. At 7."

"Sounds good." Bertha says very nervously.

"My names Adrian by the way." and goes to give her a hug.

Bertha is overwhelmed with emotions, she doesn't know what to do. At the same time, she also has this weird feeling in her stomach. She pukes all over Adrian.

"Sorry, I get nervous." she says shyly.

"I can tell." he whispers as they both grab paper towels to clean him up.

Bertha walks back into the office, with a big grin on her face and evil determination in her eyes. She walks right over to Debrah.

"Hey Deborah, hows Alejandro?" she says evilly.

Debrah starts to break down into tears, her thick coat of eyeliner starts to run down her face with the speed of Niagara falls.

"He kind of left me, he found another woman with a better job and a better body. He's been cheating on me for the past six months." Deborah says.

"Well then, I finally found me a man, his name is Adrian. He's tall, tan, and handsome." Bertha says with a persistent smirk.

"Good for you, Bertha. Maybe Adrian can go sleep with some anorexic model from San Francisco."

“Nope, Adrian loves me and will always love me forever.”

“Fuck you Bertha, maybe consider someone else’s feelings for once you useless fat cow. I hope you get a heart attack from all the chocolate you eat.” Deborah says angrily.

Bertha walks away, with a sick satisfaction. Everyone in the office just watches in horror, yet resisting the urge to laugh. Work was good for Bertha, she actually did some work, which concerned everyone greatly.

Friday rolled around the corner, Bertha dressed up, with a nice maroon dress and some glossy six inch heels. She goes to Applebee’s, to her delight he’s already here, with his same usual styling. She walks in, and nearly trips since the last time she wore heels was 2003.

“You OK?” said Adrian.

“Yes, the last time I wore heels was in 2003 for Dan.” said Bertha, with a grin on her face.

“Who’s Dan?”

“We don’t talk about Dan, he isn’t here anymore.” Bertha said, while thinking about her regrettable life and why she was born.

They are both awkward human beings. They avoided eye contact, instead opting to look at the menu, or the half empty Heinz bottle. The waiter comes around. Adrian orders a Pepsi and a glass of water. Bertha orders a margarita.

“So, what do you do for a living.” Adrian says.

“I work as an accountant at this really fancy company.” Bertha lies to make her first impression better. “What about you?”

“I’m mostly a college student. I work as a library assistant I’m currently living with two roommates. There OK I guess.”

“Do you have any cats?” Bertha eagerly says.

“Yeah, I have one, her name is Louise. I assume you have a cat.”

“Yes, sixteen of them in fact.”

“That’s a lot of cats. You must have a really big house and a really big yard.”

“Sure.”

The night carries on....

Not much is said, and Bertha occasionally stares intensely at Adrian, fantasizing about what life they could have together, with thirty-seven cats and nine children. At this point, they got their food, and Bertha had started her fifth Margarita. And it was showing.

“You look so cute in those shoes.” Bertha said in a sloppy tone.

“Thanks, you look cute in that stain, the mustard stain matches your nails.” Adrian said slowly and uncomfortably. Adrian needed an excuse to leave, but he didn’t know how without being honest. So he did the next best thing.

“Oh sorry, my mom called me, i’ll be right back.” he said with shaky confidence and relief.

“OK cutie, hurry back, it’s time for dessert.” followed by a sassy cat growl.

Bertha put on some more mascara, and used some listerine spray to make her mouth taste like the smell like a desert full of lemons. So she waited, and waited, and waited. And waited. He didn't come back. Bertha was once again heartbroken. She had spent the better part of five minutes gathering herself together for a date, just to have him leave. She went to pay the check, but discovered it had already been paid by him. She went to her car, and started to drive, forgetting the fact that she was legally drunk. Speeding home, crying like a mother dog who lost her puppies.

At home, her cats have even ran away, since they could smell her sadness, instead she binge eats. Her fridge is full from trying to lose weight, and she was proud for losing half a pound. So she ate an entire pound cake. All around the neighborhood, Bertha could be heard. Crying, screaming, and throwing her belongings out the window and at the wall.

She didn't go to work the next morning, or any other morning after that. Bertha didn't know what to do with her life. She couldn't decide why no one liked her. While thinking about what to do, she came up with an idea.

She headed to the Hopland bridge....

The Family Funeral

A woman enters town and leaves. The End. Just kidding.

Ethel and the McFamchesters: A Family Funeral

Driving is a very calming activity to some, and not to others. Ethel likes to drive, even though she's 68, in her Lincoln Town Car, her favorite activity is to scream at people, especially little children, who don't conform to 60s logic. Her biggest fear is California, because she is from Foley, Alabama, she has no tolerance for different people. One day, however, she got a call that made her worst fear come true.

"Ethel, our mother died, we will be holding a funeral." Bertha, her sister said.

"That's so sad, when and where will the funeral be? I like plums, by the way." Ethel said, pretending to be sad.

"I don't know what plums have to do anything. It's this Thursday, we are holding it in the small town in Northern California, called Ukiah." Bertha said, on the verge of tears.

"I can't go, I have a date." Ethel said the first excuse she could think of.

"With who?" Bertha spat.

"Uhh... Tom Bergeron." Ethel shakily said.

"That's some bullshit, Ethel. You're just afraid to come to California because they are different. You're coming down to see your fucking mother, I have a plane ticket for you." Bertha said, on the brink of anger, while crying and stuffing her face. And hung up.

"I won't be able to go." Ethel said to herself. "People in California don't believe in Christianity, they worship the God of Apple. And they have rap music everywhere. I don't like this "Lil' Wayne" and "Tupac" that everyone talks about."

The day came, Ethel got on the plane. She brought her portable Walkman she held onto from 1992, with some old Jazz and Country music. After departing the plane, she took a taxi up to a small town called Ukiah. It didn't look that much different from her town. People still drove pickup trucks, and there was more country music. Ethel reached the Cemetery where her mother was to be buried. She saw her other two sisters, Bertha and Gretchen.

"So, you still scared of California?" Gretchen said sarcastically as she reached for a smoke.

"It looks cozy, I think it's kind of nice. People still drive pickup trucks, and I even saw a Trump bumper sticker." Ethel said happily.

The funeral went well, everyone had nice things to say. After

the funeral service, Ethel went home with a better understanding that California wasn't as different as she thought. She even considered moving up to have a better life. But didn't. Ethel likes cheap gas and cheap property. And her knitting group. And chicken fried steak. And Waffle House.

Graduation

Well, it's that day
It's time to go
No more high school, middle school, or public school
It's all paid for textbooks and courses
While eating pizza at 2 AM because that paper is due
When the cap's in the air
Adult life is beginning...

amanda bednar

inspired by “howl.”

what indecipherable thoughts i have for you,
allen ginsberg, as i walked down
the abandoned railroad tracks
with the fog clouding my brain.
i traced the tracks with the soles
of my feet in the hopes i could
find a sunflower to present to
jack kerouac when i meet him.
screaming obscenities into the night,
they called me absurd.
who searches for a sunflower in the cracks
of bridges to gift to someone
who will never exist again?
but my days of listening are over.
you whispered in my ear,
told me to go to rockland,
but rockland was too far
so we settled for the cliffs.
we watched the boats come in
and the people drive out;
a hypnotic rhythm of modern society.
you carved your metaphors
and the names of your dead friends
into the rock face with the shards of a seashell
so the universe would not forget them.
i showed you the way to the only
supermarket in town,
where we browsed the meats for whitman
and decided artificial sunflowers would never suffice
for our dear kerouac.
dear kerouac,
dear kerouac.
[a compilation of poems written
to someone who will never read them].
it doesn't matter what i say now
because in sixty years i'll have lost this notebook
documenting my experiences
and there will be nobody to remind me.
the lines between reality and fantasy blur

when i submerge myself in your art
and no drug you've ever sampled
could make me feel that way.
the sun finally sunk down,
drowned itself in the ocean's vast nothingness,
and you told me to go home
so you could mingle with your people.
those who scour the streets looking for
the slightest bit of inspiration.
those who thumbtack amateur
poetry on school boards to tell
the kids of the future that
anarchy is the only way to live
in this modern society.
those who know they will be a legend
and those who are still trying to find
out what will come next in their
very own "great perhaps."
those who feel nothing
and those who feel everything;
the true clashing of universes.
those who don't know when to stop
and those always riding the brakes.
i salute you.
the clicking of your pen,
your typewriter, your keyboard,
your teeth, keep me sane,
drive me mad, push me to keep letting
my hands do the talking because my mouth
was never too good at that.
i don't know where or who i am at this point;
the tracks have split in two many miles ago,
but i hope i never find my way back home.

[untitled.]

you dip your paw
into the pools of the moon,
reaching for something
so close,
yet so far away.
the whistle of the stream
is our nighttime lullaby
as you allow the caress of my hand.
how i wish others
were as caring as you,
but you cannot speak
and i cannot listen.

the end of an era.

his red striped sweater
stood out against the
white of the clouds.
they felt pleasant
against his golden skin,
gently brushing past
and leaving clusters
of molecules
in their wake.
he was the sky,
the heavens,
all of the world's beauty,
and he had finally
returned home.

the one she told me to write down.

they say grey is the color of sadness,
but i disagree.
yellow is the saddest color of them all.
we place yellow smiley face stickers
onto things we deem sad because
we think they need brightening up,
but yellow is the front,
the mask, the facade,
holding back the pain
of the thing concealed behind it.
we place yellow smiley face stickers
onto things to make them happy,
but the yellow grin stuck onto the handle
of a cart in a grocery store
doesn't change the fact that it's hit three cars,
been rammed into twenty metal stalls,
and ran over unfathomable amounts of toes
in its time on earth.
yellow smiley faces can't change
the fact that children are starving,
that homelessness is an epidemic,
that discrimination is alive and well
within our society.
yellow is the color of wilting daffodils
and broken pencils,
of rotten honey and forgotten spring rain boots.
yellow is the color of sadness,
and maybe that's why
i see gold within your eyes.

oops.

i told her i'd write soon,
but soon became a month,
soon became a year,
and now we're heading towards
eternity.

regarding the silence.

perhaps i keep to myself
because once my thoughts
are lingering in the air
they are no longer mine.

haiku.

tangled in the mist
the night's final train
bursts through

i'm not even sure.

my head is filled with
with empty midnight thoughts.
even though it was long ago,
i think i still need you in my life.
why do i do this to myself?
maybe i'm just a sadist and love the cruelty
or maybe i just need some sleep,
but whatever it is
clearly won't leave
like a weed growing
in the back of my mind.
no poison could ever kill you,
but besides,
i don't think i'm ready
to let go of the good times.

i didn't even like the book.

the pocket watch ticks
underneath the midnight moon.
where did you come from?
why are you here?
its voice travels on the
wings of a mockingbird;
a melancholy whisper
of time, of space, of nothingness.
hush.
let the strings of the violin
whisper on their own time.
one day
we will have no recollection of
our time in the summer,
so let us enjoy each other
with what time
we have left.

some questions are better off unanswered.

they asked about you today.

i didn't know how to respond because it's been so long since your name has even been a thought behind their lips, so i told them i didn't know. they went on to ask more questions, this time a little more personal. my hands gripped the steering wheel tighter. my knuckles went white--i was uncomfortable. i knew the answers to their questions, but i couldn't bring myself to answer with anything other than 'i don't know.' suddenly, the humming of the truck was much louder than anything. it was comforting. the tires whispered to me as we continued down the road, but were cut short by a single question: whether or not i missed you.

i told them no. i told them no because it was a lie, just like everything you told me. it seemed appropriate. i told them no because bringing up you is like bringing up my dead dog; a topic you should avoid at all costs. i told them no because i already had a death-grip on the wheel and couldn't take it for much longer. i'm glad they dropped the conversation, because me plus you is an equation i can no longer solve.

i was never good at math.

a questioning of the universe.

my knee clicks as i walk and i wonder who has walked with them before. did they know the feeling of carpet between their toes or the smell of a good book? did they even exist at all, or are they just a figment of my imagination? maybe that would explain the ringing in my ears. why do i ask myself questions that have no definite answer? i think, therefore i am. i think, therefore i am. rain patters down against the tin roof of the patio and the cats whine and the birds are silent and i enjoy the symphony. they call me strange and, to be honest, there's a bit of truth to that because i recite words in my sleep and eat punctuation for breakfast and i think i've told this story before. i tuck my unfinished manuscripts under the soles of my shoes because no human will ever read them. one day, they will be nothing more than another speck of dust on a larger speck of dust that is for sure falling into the sun. only then will i ever share them with another.

you'll get back to where you came from.

clambering heavily among the creepers
and the undergrowth at the side of the scar,
the usual brightness was gone from his eyes.
his bruised knuckles
and empty head
through a mask of blood
and steadfast constellations,
the boy with the fair hair lowered himself down
into the sea.
holding his breath,
he wept for the end of innocence.
the tide was coming in now.
his dead body moved out towards the open sea.
it breathed in again
in a long, slow sigh;
maybe the beast
was always us.

seventeen.

i can still smell the sagebrush.
the not-too-sweet
memory of miles
and miles of nothingness.
your laugh is engraved into the
back of my mind;
as familiar as spelling my name.
we're here in the now,
a prime time for sadness and
blurry pictures and
stealing the words of others
when you can't find the way
to say it on your own.

it's the little things.

i gave you my all
and now i have nothing.
i whisper my secrets
to the plants on my windowsill
in the hopes that
they'll grow into something
magnificent.
i now spend my time
locking eyes with the ground
and attempting not to trip
over the decaying ends
of my shoelaces
just to avoid
the memory of you.
maybe it's just me.
maybe
it's the taxidermy of
you and me
and my lyrical inspiration
that has drained my cheeks of color.
maybe it's the sky
maybe it's the moon
maybe it's the poets
maybe it's nothing
maybe it was never anything at all.
maybe it's just me
being melodramatic
but i guess i'll never know
because poetry does not
come easily to me
and neither does forgiveness.

nothing is forever.

we ran.
footsteps heavy,
gravel crunching
like shards of glass.

we ran.
four a.m. never
tasted so bitter;
never in my life.

we ran.
flashing lights,
wind screaming,
telling us to go.

we ran.
as we left,
i watched
as it ran,
too.

Taylor Bowser

Summer in Six Parts, 2017

I

Extravagant Words
Verbiage Soup,
please.

II

Violet lips, purple pink kiss
You're just enough
of
a
Good
Thing

III

Carefully Curated Melancholy
has nothing on
Good Home Old Fashioned
Grown
Sorrow

IV

Belligerent poets
don't belong
at
fourth of july
barbeques.

V

A Descarga of
Too Loud Voices
All Demanding
Seconds.

VI

If you could pop the
Entire
dictionary into
your mouth
It would taste just like
an overripe
Blackberry.

Excerpt From The Passive Aggressive Napkin Precariously Tacked To The Cork Board Inside The Community Rec Hall

That's *it*.

Who invited in these greasy-haired ex-supernovas, these dog-eared
Sentiment-mongers, who--delightfully clad in youthful
resignation-- started peddling thousand-faced heroes
to all our single mothers?

Who watched as they went right along making themselves at home,
pitching tents in the used wedding dresses, pouring
themselves glasses of lemonade?

They let Ambition lose his voice over Thanksgiving Dinner, and
shoveled the c-list leftovers into
new tupperwares for tomorrow's school lunch.
They always lose the lids in the wash, you know.

It seems one finally mustered up the nerve to steal my best smile,
which I distinctly remember hiding in the glove department
for safe-keeping,

Even the best treat Sorrow like a mere opportunity, distract Survivor's
Guilt with self-made tragedy so they can sneak into the rosy
armchairs to play lifeguard and watch the crickets drown.
They're all just amateur sofa psychologists, whether you believe me
or not.

We should've abandoned them on the side of the road months ago,
along with hunger and the rest of the half finished novellas.

Maybe then they wouldn't have had time to rifle through
Grandfather's wallet, and would've thought twice before
spending all his grade school weekends on devouring libraries
Only to—of course—change their minds the very next week and sell
all their souls to little man down at the pawn shop
For the paltry grief of knowing they'll never make it quite as far as
they'd like.

Yesterday they had all afternoon to swing madly about on ladders,
But instead thought it best to build themselves a stucco walled
storage shed in the backyard, the little Frankenstein's Monsters,
those ugly stagelight chameleons,

Have you seen their cheaply planned architecture?
Their muscles made from the stacked corpses of a hundred thousand
failures, their ill fitting bones?
You'd think they'd be better at bitterness, with all the practice they've
had.

Ah well, I suppose they'll be mostly graduated by next spring, and
ready to head off on their own Great American Road Trips.

Until then, I've salted all the apples.

Next time, don't make pleasantries with the door-to-door baristas,
We'll all be the wiser for it when it comes down to the long run.

Zombie Sunday (Emails From God's Campaign Manager)

After Josh Bell

Dear Gentle Handed Holy Father or Whomever,
This has been a week of Thursdays.
Perhaps you've spent all the early Tuesday mornings
On some poor sad sack
Recently laid off from a good-honest-hard-working job,
But if you could spare a Wednesday evening or three,
I think we could all overlook it.

Dear GHHF or Whomever,
Please stop investing your funds in the vampires.
The mormons are nice enough,
But they can't go inside without being invited,
And canvassing is an outdated technique.
Besides, they keep getting converted by the lady with lemonade.
They can't resist her scrabble nights.
She recently bought them all necklaces with little crosses on them.
This did not go over well.
I trust that you know why.

Dear GHHF or Whomever,
Maybe in exchange for all the time you fed
To the bowler hats down at the pound,
You could let us borrow your new Tesla
Every other Sunday morning.
You see, I've recently been informed that
High-brow math problems count as work
And we'd sure like to save on the gas.

If you can't spare the Tesla,
At least finish fixing the roads down by the church.
It doesn't reflect well on you,
And I think all those blue-collar guys
Down at UPS are catching on
That their tax money is only really going towards your heating bill.

Dear Genius,
I understand you must keep anonymity
When visiting the earthly realm,
But you absolutely cannot check into any more hotels
As “Josh Josephson”
It is neither subtle nor funny.
For your sake and mine,
Please stop.

Dear GHHF or Whomever,
Prayer candles are out.
I’ve taped your face to every salt lamp in the country.
Your standings among younger generations have improved greatly.
You’re welcome.

We’re still eight points behind,
Beaten only by
Some-Weird-Scientific-Coincidence-Involving-Too-Much-Rain
And
You-Know-Comma-The-Vague-Spiritual-Energy-All-Around-Us.
Consider finding more ways to get the youth involved,
Bible camp just isn’t cutting it anymore.
A smear campaign could be helpful,
I’ll contact the BuzzFeed HQ.
I think we should start by unveiling the dinosaurs,
They’re still alive today, living conspiratorially in the jungles.

Dear Josh,
The final reports are in.
The Slow Impending Flood
Isn’t due for at least fifty years;
And the Plague of March 2014 made little impact.
Do you think it would be at all possible
To speed things up a bit?
After the year(s) we’ve had,
I think we could all do with a reset.

Dandelion

Ode to the Next Old School Butch

I think I'm in love with the barber shop girls.

Barber shop girls with knuckles like a good door slam and hearts that
beat baseball bats into their own windshield chests,

Who keep their nails short, but with pencil-sharpened fingertips play
the heartstrings of the pretty girls from class, learn the best
secrets of their dandelion bodies with convenience store
education,

Who stand as statues in the backyard, teach little brothers to be
concrete, jaws like cement, asphalt hip bones, say, *Hold your
hands like this, they can't touch you,*

Who cut boarding passes from military adverts on late night tv, turn up
the volume, lock the doors, this is a quick ticket out,

Who ride shotgun in nicotine toyotas, masters of blue jeans and maps
and quiet acts of defiance, seethe silently in the scorching
summer heat, roll down the windows to guard their lungs,

Who beat Descarga on desktops, never knowing fathers who living
taught improvised rhythm,

Who grow up photos in sock drawers, grow up older brothers' dress
shirts to school dances, grow up skipped dinners and shared
lunch, grow up stepfathers' secrets and converse too small.

Who bring U-Hauls to the second date, love like the movies, long
walks on the beach and flowers on valentine's, candles by the
bed, make chivalry a competition, put the boys to shame,

Who laugh new colors into existence, shocked syllables bursting
from parted lips, surprised at their own joy, press fingers
against teeth, this is what it is to be living.

Thoughts on Moral Obligation, Director's Cut

And out from the literary shadows,
Enters the great pac-man wizard of '07,
The all-american hero we've been waiting for,
The squeaky midnight cabinet of our dreams.

Really thought we'd seen the last of him
After the great war of third grade,
But here he is, still standing,
Climbed himself back to life,
Add some wheels to your feet, that's all you need
It's all anyone needs, really,
A right-good mode of transportation.

I'd like to give a great big thank you,
A truly great big thank you to whoever left their cigarette-shaped kia
Parked outside my back door
Really like to thank you
For the recurring dream
About the cackling alligator dentist.

It's not so hard to take the screens out of the living room,
Windowless or otherwise,
If you'd been outside at 5:34 this morning I'm sure you'd feel the same.
Where were you when I was sorting out your socks?
And what right have you got to call my shirt backwards?
I've fully stocked your fridge with loose change,
And this is how you return the favor?
I ought to sabotage your next haircut,
Hex you into a world with nothing to drink but lukewarm lemonade
And your least favorite brand of mineral water.
Moral obligation is nothing to joke about,
If you had one shred of the ceaseless continuity of ducks
You'd have learned that by now.

If I could, I'd liberate us both from the vague and soggy existence
Of public restrooms.
But in this world live certain necessary evils,
Like the showers at truck stops
And--depending on who you ask,
That one elementary school teacher's phone call home.

All I'd really like is the chance to prove myself
A half-decent pastry chef,
And what's unproductive about that?

Next time I won't be so foolish to think all mothers inherently lovely.

If I could,
I'd give you the opportunity to push me straight down the stairs.

Lamp Post

Ode to an Old Friend

Lightning
could
sprout
 (a white-cottaged garden)
 in your throat
and bloom
 so goldenviolet
that moths
 mistake you for home
and achy
 Street Lamps
call you
 Sister.

Feet sink
 into streetcornersidewalk;

*Aren't you tired
from standing that way
 for so long?*

You ache
 for the men eroding
 on the metro
but wear
 skyscrapers
 as stockings
 right up
 to your
Knees,
 have late morning
 brunch
 with the pigeons
 (every
 second Sunday)
while waiting
for the train.

Kenzie Bray

Fragile Hearts, Free Minds

Your words touched her before you did
You knew of her fragile heart
So you decided to occupy her free mind instead

“Utopia”

We must all walk in the straight line
On our way to an “utopia”
It’s time to break the system
Shall we no longer conceal our passions
To hell with this perfect society
For we are the perfect variety
Let’s stick our middle fingers up to being the robots
 they want us to be
We are the generation of originality
Shall we explore what we have to offer
Not hide behind the need to be proper

Mind Games

We have been talking for a few months now
From the first day that I laid eyes on you I instantly
 became infatuated by the way you smile
by the way your words wrap around my mind
you knew it too
you know it
you know how obsessed I am with you
 and you make a game of it
 You choose the days that you want to talk to me
 the days that you actually want to care
 You mess with my emotions and I let you
 I let you ruin me inside
 I let you get in between the crevices of my brain
 We go days without talking sometimes
I always have to wonder if I'm going to get
 that good morning text
 Or that phone call around midnight because
 no one can know we talk
 You're the one for me
 She's nothing to me
 I love you so much
I believe you
I forgive you
Always
Because the way you love me is
 the only kind of love I've never known
 You mess me up so bad but I need you
I try to tell myself I don't but I really do
I need you to play with my emotions
I need to be stuck in your game
I need you
Because on our good days you make me feel like
 I am the only girl in the world
 Like you'll never leave
Like I'll be yours forever
But how many other girls have you told to

escaping reality

your homemade pixie sticks let you go on
 that weekend getaway we always talked about
our room is filled with broken dreams
and good old fashioned sorrow
we don't look at each other anymore
the long pretty words you said to me
 drowned in the lake of lust we've created in our bed
i know i look sexy in my new work clothes
because you lost your job last week
 and we needed to pay rent
i see you still haven't cleaned up the
 glass of whiskey you spilt
just pour another glass and escape this reality
 we've been calling love

My Dear

My dear
I am amazed by you
All the little details of your perfectly carved face
For you are the one bright star in my dark sky
I have yet to find anything that compares
To that perfect smile that allures all to you
Your laugh
 so pure
Your words
 so genuine
A day without you is a day I can no longer experience
 for you are the drug I need to survive
The way I look at you
 is the way one stares at an aesthetic sunset
And when you look at me
 I see your beautiful soul
This feeling is not one that will go away
For you my dear
You are my muse
You are that song I will always remember
 the lyrics to
You are the best thing that has happened to me

My Eighth Wonder

You always have wanted to take me to see the seven wonders of the world

First we went to Rio de Janeiro

We walked all the way up the up to Christ the Redeemer Statue
just for you to say you didn't believe in Jesus

In the span of the next few days we went to Machu Picchu and
Chichen Itza where the whole time we debated on which
empire would win in war

Next to the Taj Mahal

You told me as we stood in front of this huge temple that
one day you would make sure I had a house this
big and beautiful

Then onto the Roman Colosseum

That is where you told me you would be able to take on a
gladiator to win my love

Later we went to Petra in Jordan

There is when you were trying so hard to convince me that
your ancient ancestors actually created this pseudo oasis

You insisted we saved The Great Wall of China for last

And that is where you seemed to love the most

Every time you spoke to me about the history of that wall
your blue eyes lit up as bright as sky
and your hand would squeeze mine tighter

And you told me how much you loved this dumb wall

And that is when I realized how much I loved you

just your average teenage girl

please excuse all the love poems
thats pretty much all im good at writing
i try writing about other things like
politics
nature
religion
and i can never seem to get anything i genuinely think is good
so i immediately retreat back to the comfort of a love poem
and the even more annoying thing is all the love poems
are more directed towards more of a sexual lover,
not an emotional one
like i would love to write a love story about my sister
not because i love her in THAT way but,
i love her like a best friend
who also happens to be my sister
or my parents
i dont know what i would do without them and
i have always wanted to write them a poem
to describe my gratitude
but no
thats when the writers block kicks in and i instantly go back to
the comfort of the stupid simple love poem
so once again, please excuse the love poems
they dont really mean anything serious
but i am just one of those stereotypical teenagers that thinks
they are going to be the next Rupi Kaur

rose garden

everyone always told you to stay away
from you and your reputation
there was no loving someone who didnt
want to be loved
its too bad i love a challenge
i finally convinced you to let me in your circle
that was almost as dark as the eyeshadow
i started putting on my eyes after i met you
now i always get brought back to remember
that one time you made me ditch class to go
back to your place and you convinced me to
get a tattoo of your name on my hip with that
tattoo gun your mom stole after her one night stand
from the previous tuesday
thats the day i told you i loved you
and you told me not to fall in love with roses
because if you hold one too tight it could cause you pain
after that day i never heard from you again
but the rebellious love for you still stained my skin
now my garden is only full of roses
i go out there everyday and pray that i will
be able to hold onto one without feeling the pain

Remember when

Remember when we were younger
Remember when we used to play barbies and argue over
 which polly pocket doll was ours
Remember when when we would go outside and sit in the hot tub with dad
Remember when we would go home after school everyday
 and jump in the pool in our clothes
Remember when we were forced to spend everyday of summer together
 Remember when we were younger and we didn't talk much because
You were in middle school and I was just a little 6th grader
Remember when I told mom and dad on you for having your first kiss
Remember when we hiked the train tracks and mountains
 and came up with names for every trail
Remember when we put soap all over the trampoline
Remember when we would go outside in the rain
 and see who could jump higher
Remember when you were a big bad highschooler
 and once again we didn't talk much because we were too cool for one another
Remember when I was a freshman and you were a sophomore
 and you took me to my first highschool party
Remember when I started hanging out in your "group"
 and you were kinda embarrassed
Remember when we spent everyday going to lunch together
 after you got your license
Remember when you were there for me when I started
 crying over a stupid boy that hurt me
Remember when we started becoming best friends
 without even realizing it
Remember how excited we were when I committed to the
 same college as you
Remember when we cried together when we realized we weren't
 going to be together everyday anymore
Remember when I said bye to you when I dropped you off at college
Though we shared a lot of our memories together
 I bet there is things you don't know
I bet you don't know how much I have always looked up to you
I bet you don't know that I started crying after that video you
 sent me on my senior night because you couldn't be there
I bet you don't know how many times I have said I missed you since you left

I bet you don't know every time I've cried to mom because
I didn't want our friendship to change because you left
I bet you don't know how excited I am to be able to spend
everyday with you again
I bet you don't know how much I love you
And I bet you don't know how thankful I am to call you my sister

Susana Correa-Avila Robb

A Day In September,

And a silent hope that someone will add a semicolon to their story.

The problem wasn't that I am lazy. I just forgot to breath. You see, I have been forgetting to breath for a really long while. And I'm not talking about some Holden Caulfield crap, I'm just really busy. I'm not depressed. I'm just exhausted, and I cry, a lot, which isn't really manly I suppose; but I never really gave a shit anyway. So, anyway, I forgot to breath and I passed out. Oh yeah, you thought this would be a figurative analogy to express my sadness. Like I said, I'm not that kind of a person and frankly, I am just in the mood for writing. So let me tell you about this story, I forget to breath and I am passed out in class but nobody notices cause I was lying down on my desk anyway so everyone thinks it's just me sleeping like everyone else does. Except, it was only for like ten minutes, I suppose, and this girl sitting next to me shakes me and I was pretty surprised because she tends to just absorb herself in her own reading most of the time. She always chews on her inner lip and furrows her eyebrows in the cutest way. She is pretty hot. I really like how she giggles when our professor says something really stupid that nobody laughs at but she thinks is hilarious. Those are the best kinds of people. Now, don't get me wrong, she isn't extraordinarily, strikingly beautiful. She's just beautiful and that makes it better. She doesn't really try to look good at all, she just lets the morning sway her. You can tell, or maybe *I* can tell cause I'm like that. I remember she showed up to class one day in a really pretty skirt and some makeup on and I commented on it. She smiled the most goofy smile and shrugged her shoulders in. She didn't take compliments to gracefully, but god was she beautiful. I wanted to kiss her but I resisted my impulses cause I knew it was just a teenage boy's requirement and I really didn't want to be a teenage boy. So I didn't kiss her. Sometimes I remember that and I wished I would have grabbed her by her shoulders and just planted a big fat kiss right in front of the whole class. I imagined her lips would taste like this chapstick she wore. She would always put on this really nice smelling chapstick that sort of stained her lips red. I know it smelt nice cause she let me borrow some and I tasted it and she laughed at me cause she thought she had fooled me into wearing lipstick; but I didn't care. I just wanted to borrow some chapstick cause my lips were dry. I imagined she would squeal into my mouth too and then blush like crazy and maybe even slap me. I would hope she would slap me instead of crying. You know how it is with girls when they get embarrassed. What you don't know is that guys do the same thing, girls just don't try to embarrass guys too much. So she was just staring at me through her glasses and her curly hair was

up in a bun today. She was in sweats and a tight shirt that really made her not look cute. She was something else that girl. I won't say her name cause I expect she'll read this one day and blush like she would if I had kissed her. She's probably blushing right now; but her tan skin wouldn't make it too noticeable. Only someone like *me* would notice her like *that*. So, she was obviously worried. She wore every expression on her face really nicely and she was asking me if I was okay and I told her I was fine, I guess. It had only been a second since I closed my eyes. She said I had fallen out of my seat and stayed there for a few shouts. I was pretty embarrassed, I wanted to cry and I think she could tell. She just said "come here" and we walked to the nurses' office. She kept trying to hold me up but I told her I was fine to walk alone. She didn't really bother me after that. She kept asking if I was okay and biting her nails and I told her that was a disgusting habit and she should probably stop because her nails would never be pretty like that. She ignored my comments, and to be honest, it made me pretty sad. I apologized. She just smiled. I told her she had pretty nails, actually. She rolled her eyes at me. She didn't blush. I told her thanks when we got to the nurses' office and told her she could go back to class, but she stayed. She said she was falling asleep anyway. I would've told her again but I didn't mind her company. She didn't make me feel awkward. I could be comfortable crying in front of her. I told her we should be best friends and she laughed. Later that year we actually became best friends. It was nice. I loved her at some points. Never romantically. I guess I never mentioned it before but we never were romantic. I just understood that my hormones were bound to make me think of kissing her from time to time. I never really asked if she liked me that way, come to think of it. So after the nurses', they suggested I go home and so I called my mom and she was busy. I waited outside in the grass at the front of our school for a long while. I was just sitting under a willow tree and I sipped on some water. I imagined that I was somewhere else, maybe France, in a small village. I was sipping on wine, I'm sure the town has good wine. I saw the girl in my class sit next to me from my peripheral. To be honest, I didn't really want her there, I was rather enjoying being in France under a willow tree. She would obviously be the kind to disturb me from that. So anyway she offered to take me home since it was almost lunch break, anyway. I figured that would be nice. She said she could use some food and that I was coming with her. I didn't exactly say no, but I rolled my eyes. We went to lunch that day. I kept thinking about how the willow tree was speaking to me, I swear it would whisper and it was quite soothing. I could swear to you that even on a windless day, a willow will whisper to you. So anyway, I went home and I ate. I ate again because, to be honest, I was nervous eating with her the first time and so I didn't order what I usually ordered. I wouldn't have gotten a bagel. So I was home and I was eating a bowl of cereal when I got awfully sad. I just went to my bed and lied down. I would get sad quite often after what happened, but I wasn't depressed. 'Cause that is a disorder.

Anyway I got into the habit of crying at night onto my pillow and

my mom would sometimes ask why my eyes were puffy. I told her I had allergies. I didn't know why I lied, but it felt a little better than telling the truth. It was interesting knowing that the only person I haven't lied to is myself. I kept wearing nice clothes 'cause I liked dressing nicely, but I will be honest with you, I was exhausted. I had entered a delirium and I had no clue how to return to the average life I once lived. I had her though, every day I had her big curly hair and tan skin and it made me feel less numb. I was living a dream. Or maybe a nightmare. I wasn't lazy, I kept reminding myself. I had A's in all my classes and I would raise my hand all the time. I wasn't lazy. I wasn't lazy. I wasn't lazy. I just had a bad day. A bad week. Month. Sort of. I made my way to the classroom one day and she was away. She had been visiting colleges or something. I cut class and sat under the willow tree for a long time. I walked home. It wasn't too bad. I had headphones in and I was listening to a band she told me to hear. It was alright. Nothing special. It was a twenty mile walk so I kind of wished I'd put on different shoes but I really didn't mind. I went to the bookstore a few blocks away from her house and waited. She showed up at five o'clock and we talked about books. I picked out a few and she offered me a ride home. I said I didn't mind walking. She said it was three miles. She seemed pretty surprised that I could walk three miles. I guess she didn't know I was athletic. So I convinced her not to take me cause I really just wanted some time for myself. It started raining but I really didn't mind cause I found a serenity in the fact that I might be the only person enjoying the rain. Unless you count the plants, in which case the plants and I were enjoying the rain. I'm sure the willow tree did too. So I got home and peeled off my clothes. I will admit I was moderately cold. I ran a bath and put on a song I really liked. I tanked in the tub and woke up sort of gasping. I can't really remember if I fainted or not. I kept thinking about her brown eyes in class. I kept seeing them more lately. She was hovering over me and her hair sort of fell over her shoulders and tickled my neck before she picked my arm up. I won't remember the catastrophic way she bit her nails though. That was an outrage. The water started to feel oppressive and I was no longer relaxed. That's how I knew I wasn't dying, the water wasn't cold enough.

I took to my room and fell asleep. I don't remember dreaming too much. I decided it would be nice to sleep in so I didn't go to school.

I can't remember exactly when it happened but I snapped. I just didn't much care. My eyes weren't really opening like they used to and I was just in a daze. I figured it was lack of sleep so I went back to sleep for a few hours. I woke up at night and went outside. I put my feet in the pool and it was biting cold. It didn't bother me and I let them burn. I just wanted to feel something.

I decided I wasn't tired so I would walk to school. I put on my sneakers. My life was really boring, I realized. I realized because I took a shortcut and I was walking through a park and saw different houses and there were different swings and toys in the backyards. I got the faint smell of burnt embers and bread. I looked at the flowers that grew and I

remembered my mom and I gardening when I was younger. I think I may have been five or six. We would paint pots and I would make water them. She would give me an apron too. I got really sad thinking about how many people had kids and how many kids would grow up to be sad people. It made me a little sad but I got over it. Cause it was depressing and I wasn't that kind of a person. I got to the school around midnight and sat under the willow. I heard it whispering to me and it made me feel really calm but I didn't really fall asleep. I just went back to France and suddenly I felt much better. I took a nap and then walked home and turned on the bath. I put it a little hotter than usual. I was in it for a little bit and then it felt like it was crushing my chest again. I felt really numb and hot. I grabbed a razor to shave my chin. When I was finished, I accidentally cut my thumb putting it back and it sent a spark through to my brain. It felt soothing. I had felt like my mind was waking up from a really long nap. So I put the razor to my skin, I plunged it deeply in and pulled toward my stomach. My arm swelled up with blood but I didn't really feel anything so I did the other side. I didn't realize I felt faint till my head was emerged under the water and I started drifting off to sleep. I kept thinking about her brown eyes and curly hair. It made me want to get up. I didn't get up. Not cause I was lazy, no. I wasn't lazy. I just forgot to breath. I wasn't lazy, hear me out. I just forgot to breath. And the water was cold.

Al Tocar Tu Mano en la Calle

Te siento, como si fuera ayer.
Al tocar tu mano pasando las ofrendas
Sentí mis latidos multiplicar
Supe en ese momento que aunque no te ame
Y nunca te voy a amar,
Contigo el silencio podría ser puro.
Hasta que las olas de mi alma
Retraen sus sonidos solo para escuchar
Tu voz.
Una vez mas.
Sentir el mundo no mover por mirarte.
Si solo supieras lo cuanto que busco tu sonrisa en cada grano de arena,
Las cuales se pegan en mis dedos,
No tendria que existir pretextos.
Solo seriamos tu y yo por un suspiro
Hasta que nuestros cuerpos derriten bajo la fuerza de los destinos,
Y mis deseos por ti cumplen los sueños
De dos almas juntando en ese dia callado
En ese profundo invierno.

El Bailarín

He sang to her,
In a voice so quiet,
Onlookers only saw
The noise of her feet,
Hitting concrete,
Unawares
Of the noise
That made
Her heart
Dance.

Dear California,

I'm sorry.

He carries baskets of soaking wet socks

Down, down, down

Running frantically down, down

The stairs.

They smell like floral detergent

But they'll absorb the smokey air in time.

And every time, he'll wear them and smell

Smokey air.

He laughs at this seven minute journey from his room to the car,

This frantic travel to no avail.

Filling again and again basketfuls of antiques.

I coughed up ash at two o'clock.

I chased my cat along the field.

There on the grassy ashbed

Lay my memories.

No saving my... lungs

Or cat

I suppose.

You got your indian rugs clean of stains

But his house is still toxic ash staining the clouds.

The anthropology of life, death, and a little madness

I remember being seven
As we walked down a cobblestone road to the smell of pizza
My dad was my anchor to the world
I never once tripped.
And we drank water and closed our eyes and somehow
My dad, ever the magician, made me taste moonlight.
I fell in love for the first time.
He told me my drink was trying to be a sunset,
And I got scared so I clutched the cup close to my button
So it might turn my eyes off.
Cannonballs are painful unless you don't use them.
And I remember seeing one for the first time in a tower.
The wind tugged at my pant leg 'go' 'go' 'go'
Go toward that castle with the light that sailors called home.
And breath in the toxic air because
You were a child in a city, scared of the cracks on the sidewalk.
You were the person playing hopscotch with kids who didn't look like
you.
And you were the one who climbed trees knowing that you were afraid
of tigers
And the only escape from them was up, up, up. In the clouds.
And we brought sticks home because Moses led the Jews to safety and
home home home was maybe safe,
And you missed out on a canoe ride for the sake of buying a dress
Because *you* grew up too quickly and *you* stayed outside when it rained
Because it was delightful to dance soaking wet.
You tasted the stars on your cheeks and filled your mouth with whipped
cream
And mini toasted marshmallows on toothpicks. your parents never took
you camping.
And you made donuts that wouldn't rise to the occasion
And you burnt your nine-year-old fingers in hot oil
And you watched your dad singing while he burnt off *his* eyebrows in a
gas explosion. But he laughed and held you tight.
Cause daddy was always your hero and your first love.
And laughter was never in short supply but, neither were tears
And tears, and scraped knees, and screams when you were an inch away
from getting tagged.
And you melted just like candles did at Christmas
And you borrowed makeup and wore eyeliner the wrong way,
ordinarily.

And we all grew up too quickly cause we were told it was the cool thing
to do.
And we all grew up. And we all tried to be younger because, then, that
was the cool thing to do.
And we bowed to needles and diets and insane sweaty routines but we
all laughed
And cried and waited for kisses when Daddy came home.
And we all marathoned and swam in rivers and stung our eyes with the
salt from marshes where dead babies were thrown by rotten souls
seeking a new fix.
And we walked on tightropes and clung on hands and trees and
something yellow
And our eyes burned from looking so keenly at the lights never noticing
the dark.
And the dark was always lighter because we threw candles and
electricity shocked it away until it crawled back into himself and
vomited from the pain of being unwanted.
And we feared the monsters under our beds until I looked at its face
And she was *me* with legs of silk and so much taller she reached out her
tiny porcelain white hand
And cold as it was from the fear of being lonely she embraced deeply
And a rustic song played on mountains where snow flew freely
unknowing that March would bring it death.
And I lived in a concrete box just big enough for me to pretend I was
free until I tasted the sky and suddenly learned why clouds cry
so much in the city.
And every single day, hope knocked on my window and I knocked over
a lamp shade
And let the dark crawl out of its silent place
And we stretched our faces with smiles and silicon and let the doctors
make history of us,
And we walked the line between madness and a happy life,
And we realized how much of a blur we never understood why poppies
blossom in the spring and my heart grew colder in 2052.
And my mother, we mothers, flew toward the sky finally absent from the
buzz inflicting our lives,
And we left carcass after stone in the bayou
And we learned that a few pennies can give endless lucky charms to
endless populations of lost souls.
And nature stole the map for paradise
And we stole nature and it crumbled in our hands
And we screamed as babies being slapped in the face by the most
uncomfortable humanity.
And we ripped baby after baby out of the womb into the tomb of this
polluted existence,
And we stared at the sun for too long because we sought answers to
paradox,

And we hated people of color because we were envious of their hue,
And we placed people in cages cause they never remembered that
making mistakes meant incarceration.
And we never lost our spirits because even torture could not steal the
flower beds rooted deeply in my soul.
No iron bar could knock the odor of a kindly hand walking me through
the rest of my mind.
No forceful vengeance could steal what belonged so freely to everyone
if only they planted a seedling ready to be watered with those
tears expelled from your eye sockets just from laughing out the
worries into the unknown.
And I cuffed my hands in prayer
And on rusty knees learned my heaven was finding love on earth.

A collection of amateur haiku.

Don't bother packing bags
Missing ofrendas
You are forgotten.

Under dead zacuanpapalotls
A sleepy spirit wakes
Day of the dead

Fallen stars
Dripping down
Cloudy skies

I hear a bluebird
Karaoke party
Nighthowls invited

Blue beckons
My green eyes
Look up!

Poor shoelace
Mud and rain
Torment a you

an aggregation of if's (and bad punctuation)

if i could have a glass of haiku i'd ask an oracle to sing to me quietly

 while i, sitting gently upon a grey stone, retrieved pieces of my soul,

if i could spit up my laughter it would smell like sun lotion and the sand

 from mexican beaches that i miss so dearly. i can't stop swallowing memory.

if i could sing a song that swept the world off their feet i would recreate

 babylon, singing in my own language until the world shifted

 back to the days when it all made sense, and didn't,

if i could die for a cause, i would be tree fertilizer,

if i could learn to use punctuation i would never the less use it

 improperly,

if i could whisper more loudly i would choose not to speak at all,

if i could be a poet i would choose seven lines in which to remind the

 world that a life without love is a bitter thing.

A Short (short) Story

It was the bustling life of the cafeteria, where teens met for lunches, where it smelt of chlorinated floors and processed meat, where milk was spilled and mops picked it up, where people yelled and cried and everything in between, where complaining was in full stock. Nobody was entirely sure when or what time the floor shook, they all just saw the roof fall. It crumbled onto the tables and sent terrifying, jaw constricting screams to even the most quiet corners. The chaos was followed by fire and after that an understanding of the planes overhead that dropped exploding orbs that shook the lives of the innocent. It was war, just like any war, just the acrid smell could leave tears in a civilians eyes. And just like any war, peace would one day prevail and people would dance again and kids would play hopscotch and people would eat croissants and drink coffee with too much sugar and teenagers would bicker. All would return to the bustling life of the cafeteria.

A qualifying finish to a poet's ten pages

I really wish I could insert some art. I am neither a good poet neither a good artist. I am some enigma that sprung up in the making of both of those things. I was given half the leg of a good line and told to draw up the rest. I could feasibly do exactly that. But exposing myself with only the vulnerability of words may be too difficult a feat. Either way. I am pleased to know that even if a congregation doesn't note me a good writer at least I'll have a teacher that is practically forced to do so. It's interesting because despite my variety in writing from what you may or may not have seen above, I feel the most exposed talking to you in this moment. I don't really know whether or not it's my sleep deprivation or lack of content, but I am satisfied with the idea that I may have someone remind me that I wrote this down. Maybe one day, in the distant future, this class will ensure I not be forgotten. And even if it doesn't, I'll know I didn't forget myself.

Dylan DeGuzman

My Cosmic Mantra

i am the universe
 and
 the universe is me
 thinking forever
 forever thinking
 about me and you
 nebulae and suns its
 me who
 finds you
 planets and planets
 infinite expansion
 i am
 thinking forever
 forever thinking
 about me and you
 windmills spin the galaxies
 we find in ourselves
 inner beings externally
 thinking
 with faces and expressions
 thinking
 always thinking
 forever
 never ending
 i am the universe
 and
 the universe is me
 breathing and
 breathing convulsions of stars
 an implosion of existence
 existing

within ourselves breathing out first
 than inward

divine motions
 of expansion we ventilate

astral
systems through our
systems

 breathing and
 breathing
 for

i am the universe
 and
 the universe is me

Tantric Sonnet

She was a crystalline sunset in spring
Broken you fell in love with her storm clouds
Madding you boomed like your hearts thunder cry
Palms faced towards the lucid tender earth
Drinking tea from antlers of a wild deer
I'm never going to be whole like you
But lightning always cracked here anyway
Cyclones of ecstasy i'm swallowed
In dreams pick the leaves of my kindred tree
You sip the nectar of my honey lips
I wash down your chest like a sapphire
River, hands reach for the banks of your hips
you, the waning moon in a violet hue
I, a silhouetted raven flying through

An Evening Meditation

Before the Fires

She sits beneath green stars
Dancing to the breath of the trees
Open eyed she watches the world with her
Brightly golden iris
Singing to the people's lips
Kiss the ground where years lie still
Kiss the folds and ruffles of the wind
Gentle is your fingers as you find eternity
Tucked under the sunset
Breath -- My Dear -- Breath
Count the tempo of the grass warbling
Upside down you see the little waves of white
Kind and soft it floats on by
Giving gifts of tremendous kindness
Gentle - and - Gentle - and - Gentle
It breaths
Feel the trees in your earthen palms
Mend the roots to your spine
Grounded they call it
Home is what its name is
She fades into the embrace
Of her own emptiness
Embers of her skin glint between the light
Flickering between all that is
And all that will become

Waltzing

Stare me down
Stare me down
Colors look better on you than canvas
Brush stroke me down
Tie your hands up
Bedpost -- silk duvet
Lip bites and
Soft jazz
No wonder you called
Me to be damned
Love tastes better
With a bit of rage
Love tastes better
When it's a dance
Step on my toes and
I'll bite your neck
I'll swing you softly
And you'll kiss my chest
Stare me down
Stare me down

Love

After Gertrude Stein

I love a River

A river that runs a fragmented velvet
Infused with a sunset red

I love a Tree

Whose trunk is chocolate dripping off your lip
A soft lip - a luscious lip - where you can
Taste the leaves of her skin

I love a Raven

Whos intelect surprises all others
And by others I mean you - by others
I mean you and I and all who've come before

I love a Lucy

A lillied Lucy floating on an emerald pond

I love an I

An I so elegant and pristine
An I so much like I
It reminded me of
You

Blind man

I am the blind man who
Looks through moons of darkness
Dipping into craters he walks
Aimless and aimless
Resting beneath the bodhi tree
He finds nothing
-- (Everything) --

Dharma Bum Buddha

you walk the road to buddhahood like
a hitchhiker on california mountains
seeking nothing but the purity of mind
i seek it too
under endless chatter
piercing the eardrums of my uniformed bliss
let god be my concubine
holy holy
bow down to the divinity of a world
so - so holy

--
you are gifted
a prim rose petal plucked
beneath your skin
you are gifted
floating with rhododendron trees
innumerable facets of light and leaves
you are gifted
dancing and dancing
on water lily beds
lotus flower conundrum
polygamous roots
tucked in a fury
of entangled envy
you are gifted
under the massive multitude
of stars and buddha like mountains
sutra sutra
you chant
neti neti

Haiku

Mossy waterfall
Endless
Daisys

*

I am
Sacred
I am

*

Rain
Steeping
Tea

*

Cardboard box
A jazz singer
His hat on the ground

*

Sinking infinitely
Wildflower meadows
Siting forever siting

*

Phantom leaves
Fall slowly
Open window

Revolution

No longer do
Children walk the rails of train tracks
To the destiny of the western world
We are walking down the sights of a loosely aimed gun
Streets are our gospels
Words are the firearms of our choice
Words are more than an intention
America are you listening
We are the children of this revolution
And we are calling for the integrity of our own voices
Peace is the hallmark of our banners
You've seen our blood on linoleum floors across the country
Columbine
Aztec
Red lake
Virginia
Marshall
Stoneman
Power is from the people
Power is in the youth
Open your arms to the brothers and sisters of this country
We are this country
I am talking to you
No! We are talking to you
You were founded in individuality succumbing to the ego
Forsaken in community forgotten in hostility
No longer do children walk the rails of train tracks
To the destiny of the western world
We are walking down the sights of a loosely aimed gun
There is strength in unity
There is strength in you and me
So why do I still hear gunshots in our hallways
I hear screaming in our classrooms
We are the sons and daughters of this revolution
We are dying to make a difference
We are Trying to change history
We are Trying to change our future

Starry Night

Song

You're my Lillie lover
Van Gogh you better let me love her
You're my Lillie lover
Van Gogh you better let me love her

Starry night you and I
I see your blue eyes
Lie down with me
And I hope to make you see
Your more than a starry night lover
You mean more than that to me

You're my Lillie lover
Van Gogh you better let me love her
You're my Lillied lover
Van Gogh you better let me love her

It's the last night and the first
It's a shame you left me first
Because your more than a starry night lover
Van Gogh you knew I loved her
You painted the walls in my mind
Like the one in of the night sky
You've given me more to move
'Cause your the brightest painting in the room

You're my Lillie lover
Van Gogh you better let me lover her
You're my Lillied lover
Van Gogh you knew I loved her

Steller Jay

I Am the Steller Jay
Dancing on Wings
A Divine Royal Blue
Too Blue for a Clear Sky
I am Warbling Messages of Safe
Passage so One Day you Will Be
As Free as I
Dancing Singing Endless
Sunsets and Dawning Endless too
I Am the Steller Jay
Wings a Divine Royal Blue
Basking in Clear El Nino skys
Flinging Endlessly
Warbling Words of Warning Endlessly
I've Seen the Multitude of Pine Needles
Falling for Each Season
Resting Endlessly Resting
I Am the Steller Jay
Wings a Divine Royal Blue
Basking in Clear El Nino Skys

Lucas Dhuyvetter

Myself

What's your biggest fear Lucas? Ah, I see that you fear yourself.
Sure it's not me, with how many times you tell me to go to hell?
You don't like me, yet you use me to fuel your words,
I'm used practically daily, but yet I'm a curse.

What do you mean our friendship this needs to end?
What? You don't like your childhood friend?
Age three is when you gave me the keys to be,
The missing part of your family.

Tried using therapy to rid me of your life,
But I told you we don't split until you die,
Feeling bad? Well you should.
You're not allowed to feel good.

I'm your fear, anger and rage,
I'm here to take over your brain,
I'm not playing a game,
I'm here to drive you insane!

What's the point of having love,
 But no pains?
What's the point of having cars,
 But no lanes?
What's the point of having nights,
 But no days?

What I'm saying is, me without you doesn't make any sense,
Now you wanna get rid of me?
 This is intense!

All I gotta say is Good luck,
Because me and you are stuck,
Stuck until the end of time,
Read the fine lines.
"Section B, Line 83"
In times of pent up anger, unleash the danger,
C'mon, bring the keys! Set me free!
What, are you scared of me!?
You're the bark, and I'm the bite.
Maybe it's bout time you realized,
 The voices in your head were right!

Pen and Paper

You see the color blue, while I see gray,
I see the ugly, while you see the great,
People look at life and see the beauty,
Well I look at things differently,
I wasn't raised to see the good,
Even though I know that I should,
In times where I would scream and shout,
 And fill myself with self-doubt,
I always resorted to my escape or,
 I guess in this case,
It'd be a Pen and Paper,
 My emotions were placed,
Writing is what keeps me sane,
Writing is what keeps me safe,
Writing is what hides the pain,
Sorry that my writings are blunt,
 Not all pretty and fun,
Just expressing myself some,
 But for that you want to take me away,
I'm done!

I never asked for your fucking help,
I never asked to be myself,
I never wanted to be someone else,
You try to give me feedback,
 But I don't really need that,
I don't need your support,
 For that just makes it worse,
Being myself is a curse,
Yet to be anyone but me,
 Is an image I don't wish to see.

So enough with the therapies,
 And all the "There for me"s,
Diagnose me with depression,
 Through all your stupid lessons,
So please just tell me something,
If writing is supposed to convey emotion,
Well then why does my emotion cause such a commotion?

These Voices

I'm talking to the voices that are in my head
One of them told me to play dead
The one in the corner is too loud
All he does is scream and shout
There's another one that's crying
Probably from all the people lying

Oh, look, this one's in the office of love
There's a list of people but he marked none of the above
Like a broken record, another says *You're not good enough*
The idea sticks that I'll never be one of the loved

Fear stands at the edge of my brain
Staring into the unknown and the insane
Yeah my brain's a hell of a mess
But it beats being put on meds after a stupid test

Sure I do complain about being lonely
And wanting someone to hold me
But at least when that person does show up
They'll love me for who I am
 And not what was made with pills and water in a cup

Dear Father

Oh Father, Oh Father, I do not know the look of your face
For I was so young the day you ran away
What I do know is the pain and sorrow you caused
The hearts of my Mother and I, to be tossed
Onto the ground, were our pain filled tears
But now I'm grateful, you're not here

Sure, I had signs of depression
And tons of Therapy Sessions
But these kind of things,
Made me grow as a person

Sure, my mom worked for hours, came home, then cried
At a young age, I had to help, but at least she tried
But you know what they say, no pain, no gain
This pain had led to a brighter day

So thank you to my Step-Father, my REAL Father
While you didn't even decide to bother
With us, my real father took care
To replace you not there
You, my fake father, I don't care
What you did to my mother wasn't fair

I wish I could've seen you change for me
How a good father would be
But with this paper as I continue to stare
I think to myself

Thank God you weren't there.

To Be Declined

Asking that special person
Backing up in fear
Courage, is what I need
Determined I need to be
Extraordinary, is what she is
Forgetful, she is with my name
Graveyard, location of my emotions
Here lies your once happy heart
In pieces, after the damage she had done
Just when you think you found love
Killing your soul, a crime committed with a
 simple decline
Love is a lie, you tell yourself
Monsters in ourselves we truly are
Negativity, a harsh awakening is what
 we need
Optimistic, a lying outlook of life
 that says with enough
 Passion, our dreams will come true
Quit while you're ahead
Restart your life
Suffering all humans are, for eternity
Take the suffering openly, or in secret
Ukulele, you said it was horrid
Violent, were your words against me
What's your problem Jenny!?
X my heart out then why don't you?
You spat acid into my insides with no mercy
Z, like the letter in the alphabet
 We're now at the end

Picture Perfect Poet

I don't want to be that Picture Perfect Poet
I want to be my own person
And be allowed to show it
Will this poem rhyme
And have equal lines?
Maybe it'll rhyme about half the time
I don't want to be, that Picture Perfect Poet

I ask one thing to the Picture Perfect
Is it even worth it?
To please all the others, but never make time for yourself
I'd rather express myself, then be like the Picture Perfect
I wouldn't ever wish to be
A Picture Perfect Poet

The definition of Perfect is to be imperfect
Percentage of people trying to fit in
Has worsened...

We are all truly Perfect imPerfect Poets
So why don't we show it?
We were born to stand out
that's what being Perfect is all about

Double-Edged Love

You relieve me from all this pain,
Yet, you can give me pain again.
You give me the flames to fuel my heart,
Yet you're the same one who can tear it apart.
You're the one who saved my life,
But also the one who could end mine.
You're a dancer, filled with burning passion,
But could spin out of control like a car with their
 Seat belts not fastened.
I look to you as you are my best friend,
But at the same time, anything can end.
There's always the thought that you're the one,
But also the thought of us being done.
Love gives the happiness we're feeling,
But love is also what is killing.
The blade balances between both of our hearts,
Just seconds away from leaving terrible scars.
But let's come closer, let it pierce our skin,
Let's show that in the end, we'll win.
Sitting on this stretched out knife,
Together we'll struggle in life.
Because my scars are yours, and yours are mine,
Let's be with each other until the end of time.

How I Miss You

I read your old texts daily just to see,
This line of service is no longer in use.
To think you're forever gone,
All due to constant abuse.

You were my everything,
And they took you away,
The day you slit your wrists,
 And popped your pills,
My life was never the same.
I was the one that would truly care,
I was the one that could've been there!
But now your life was sadly taken,
And I hope your parents see they've mistaken.

Oh Taylor, actually, you preferred Emily,
You could've grown to be something great.
You could've been the greatest musician,
 To date.

Could have and should have.
Like how your father could have,
 And should have been stopped.
But not a single person stood up but me,
But to him, I didn't matter,
 Cause I was just a screen.
The distance between us didn't matter,
 Cause what we felt was real.
No one made the feeling I feel real,
 No one but you.

I loved you, and I still do.
Oh how I miss you Emily.

I could write thousands of poems,
But my emotions, they wouldn't hold them.
You will live on for eternity,
Oh how I miss you, Emily.

The Snapping of Heartbreak

What we had, we started out strong,
It seemed we couldn't do wrong,
Comfortably Cuddling in my bed,
With nothing but the future in my head,
I saw our house, and all our dates,
Our kids, who were anything but saints,
Tommy had a severe case of Anxiety,
But we got through and showed society,
That our love is what conquers all,
Too bad one other guy threw us to the wall.

We started off so sweet,
Then you decide to cheat,
I hope he knows the evil he's taken,
I hope he knows what pain's awaken,
Now all that's in my head,
Is how good he was in bed,
We could've been so special,
But you decide you're a rebel,
I hope he throws you away, so one day,
You'll know my pain.

The thought of Tommy has vanished,
The love that we had, has perished,
Now I lay in my bed at night,
Strangely missing all the times we fight,
Thinking why didn't you like me?
Thinking what led you to cheat?
Was it my voice, sweater, my hair?
Was it the fact I was always there?
Was it my smile, gifts, or my glasses?
Or those times I text in my classes?
Would you please just tell me?
Why in the world did you leave?
I hate that I love you,
And I love that I hate you.

Emma Dolan

A Poem to Sasha Wilkins

The dim lights of the creaky lamp post brighten up just a little bit when she walks underneath them, it weeps if she chooses a different way home
The sun waits to rise until she's awake just to show off to her, the rays are broken if she sleeps in late
Love everything too much
Love everything so much it hurts when you take it away
You read her life story when you look at her glazed over, sleep deprived eyes and that story is one worth reading
The flowers seem more alive when she's watered them
We know it drives her mom crazy
The smell of hanger drawers and mason jars linger behind her every move
And Jezebel once told me of her cigarette flavored dreams
I love the way you bring things to life
I love the way you smile with your entire body
You told me you didn't know how to make friends so I made you mine and six hundred and seventy two days later look at us
I left my tears on your pillow case last weekend but I have your spare so I'll be okay
Your freckles dance in the orange moonlight and your lips read lavender daydreams
You once said the way you cut your hair made you look five
Maybe it's because you're so attached to the past but I like the way your hair sits across your shoulders when you sip at your cold water
I promise you that no eyes see more beauty than hers and I guess that's why it hurts
She sees the beauty that you try to see and she feels the love that everyone else aches for in flower fields and street art
You see, she makes me feel like the world

Please

Rest easy on my shoulder because my hair smells like your daydream from
tuesday
Sleep tightly in the dark side of your house that you don't show guests
Say nicely that I'm wrong about who I thought you were
I thought your emotions were behind your ears rather than rapidly building
in the apartment buildings of your vocal chords
Your eyes look like coffee in mine and your clothes smell like tears from
last friday
There is nothing that I wouldn't do to sleep less
I dropped my book on the tile floor... by accident
I was scowled at for the distraction I had created... by accident
I could feel my mood shift and I felt as if everything was my fault... by
accident?
On nine o'clock on a Sunday night I sat scribbling down the lies I will tell
at 11 the next morning
And the next week
And the next month
Grab a tissue from the box but don't grab two because that's a waste
Don't be a waste please don't look into my face and waste my time in a
place I don't even want to be in
Please
I pledge to my notes to my hands to the holes in my jeans
I pledge for more attention than I can pull out of my sock drawer or my
sweatshirt pocket
The shoelace tore apart and the picture frame fell shattering the glass
shield into unequal pieces reflecting the unequal features of my face
Underfoot yellow lines scream at my knee caps
I just want to go home, please
I really want to go home

We Walk With Monsters

Hey nice guy, wannabe, look alike, shoot your shot to lock another woman in a closet with no slits but the ones that you left on her body so she'd remember you

Just to spend triple the time in therapy that you'd ever spend in jail, letting your heart rot away a little bit but not your body, you weren't in there long enough for that

This isn't what your mother taught you but it's what the world around said "It's not that bad" to

I mean, it just so happens that when your classmate in second grade hung upside down on the jungle gym and you yelled "WHORE" because you saw her underwear

She got in trouble for forgetting to wear shorts under her skirt and you got off the hook for just saying "What you thought you saw"

This isn't what your mother taught you rather the behavior your school said "Needs improvement??"

In fifth grade when boys started snapping bra straps, the girls got in trouble for letting them show instead of any existing punishment for leaving red marks that read "slut" on their backs from those straps

This isn't what your mother taught you, it's what your best friend's older brother said would make you really cool

Believe it or not, in eighth grade when you told that sweet girl she was a prude and turned your back to call another a hoe, you shattered the fragile confidence in both of them... again

This isn't what your mother taught you but when those girl's mom's called your parents you just got your phone taken away until dinner and they never said another word about it they were showing you it was okay

At your first party freshman year, you saw a girl so drunk, five guys had already gotten their tongues down her throat and a lot worse but that part was after they snuck her away from the crowd

You knew she wasn't "asking for it" because that is what your mother taught you

By senior year, you were the one dragging girls to the bedroom of the party You came from a good family, happy parents, suit and tie, church on sundays, good grades, a little sister for god sake... so tell me. What the fuck happened?

This isn't what your mother taught you but this is what you learned By sophomore year in a "safe" university that supposedly doesn't tolerate rape, slipping pills into drinks and girls out of their clothes became like a second language to you

You changed... no... you ruined them

And god forbid they step and swallow the shame to get you the punishment

you so deserve

This sure as hell isn't what anyone taught you but no one told YOU not to do it so what next?

Congratulations! You got your first office job, you get more respect and work than the women in the office so you give yourself more respect than the women in the office

You tell the guys it's because they cover up too much but that's just locker room talk, right?

At least they don't call in sick every tuesday morning because they are hungover

Everyone taught you this next part so listen up

You settle down, drink a little more, listen a little less, your wife is pregnant so now what?

You scramble to grab your keys and stumble out the door and drive to the church

You talk to the sun and moon and stars and planets and any god you think will listen to you with every prayer you can remember... that you don't have a girl

Why?

Because Hollywood isn't the only place chock full of cowards and men with way too much power

You don't want people looking at your baby girl the way you looked at so many girls like her

You don't want to come home to your wife on the phone sitting over a tear stained pillow while your daughter tries to get the words out of her face with a fat lip and black eye of what happened at that party last night

You don't want her called a whore or a slut or disrespected by every man in every office building that doesn't want her to have a fair shot

You'll never do that again to anyone ever again, will you?

Why did it take you so to figure that out?

It took you an eternity to see you weren't just wrong

You are a goddamn monster.

Years from Now

I'm planning on moving into a obnoxiously colored apartment with too many stairs

So obnoxious with so many stairs that my parents never ask me to host Thanksgiving so I never miss the sweet air that surrounds my old bedroom for too long

In a city where I keep my head down and live my life by the rain drops on my shoes from the 15th floor

Aware of everything all the time to not run into tourists peering into windows or locals ready to stare you away when you ask for directions

So how'd you get that black eye? you'll ask me

I sat on a park bench in "the nice part of town"

Ya know the one with cover ups and "bribes can make anything disappear" campaign posters

There may as well be a wall down the 70, 30 line of town but instead it's an alley with a drunk man singing his heart out with the words of a better day, a better week where the sun revolved around the whole world and not just the pieces that can afford it

You thought a man was torturing his dog but he was just barking at you for shooting incomparable and deplorable stare from your new gun

I like the side of town that you don't know the street names for where every awning tells a new story and every window shares a new life

Doorway

Hate sat on its bed last night and for all the times the clock
changed, it wept another ice hot tear into the weary hardwood
floor

Love went to the wild side of town blinded by the passion in
and of itself

They grew up too quickly

Respect made you dinner and itself the same making you feel
stronger with every bite you swallowed

Loathing went to its room without a word and complained
about having no food but the food in front of it

Endurance screamed while living carried on

Fear hides under the bed of self awareness hoping no one ever
knows where it is

Passion talks too much, too loud, and too fast but you listen
closer than the last time everytime

Insecurity twirls in front of a mirror 47 times before leaving
its room and stays small just in case something went wrong

Curiosity runs fast, farther, jumps higher and happier than any
and everyone

Miscommunication tries to explain itself without fail but
without agreement

I am standing in the hallway of a building

A building with so many emotions we keep the windows
boarded up

In one door and out another, eyes open and shut with a painful
feeling of familiarity

A Spin Off Howl by Allen Ginsberg

I saw the best minds of your generation sequestered in a cage with nothing
but their free will to release them
A multitude of angry waves crashing on the world and they dreaded it
Hell put them in that cage to begin with
They chose to live locked hand in hand pulling apart rather than just
holding on
They chose to live in the wealthy walls of the cage knowing that when they
parrish they will leave a mess too big for a dust pan
Your generation hates the world and it makes us angry, not at it but at you

I saw the best minds of your generation slip through the cracks
Those who couldn't
The ones with knives pierced through the back of their tongues
Those who couldn't
The man outside the corner store with nothing but worn out shoes and a
brilliant mind
Those who couldn't
The drunk in the pawn shop who just wants his wedding ring back hoping
he won't use the gun tucked under his shirt
Those who couldn't
All of the movie stars whose aspirations turned to screams from smiles to
Those who couldn't
I saw the best minds of your generation slip through the cracks

Why We March

Wake up and your mom screams from downstairs “Emma, get up it’s 10 after”
Get up, stumble to the bathroom, get dressed, get in the car, go to school
You get out of your car and you say bye to your mom after reminding her what
time to pick you up
She says she loves you as you’re walking away but you don’t respond,
 you can’t be late
Go to english, first period, no big deal
There’s a kid getting bullied that you walk past, no big deal?
Your teacher gets angry at your class just like usual
Go to biology just the same as every day
Mid sentence- Time stops
And you flash back to your mom saying she loves you, “I love you mom,
 I love you mom, I love you”
Everyone is moving but you may as well be glued to your chair
“I love you mom, I love-”
Shot #2 Flashforward and here we are
Saying that guns don’t belong in classrooms
I’m 14 years old and hell even I know that’s common sense
You may love your guns but I promise, I love my classmates more
You may want that stress reliever, our well being matters more
You may simply want to protect your home, but prove to me
 that is all you want from it
Flashforward again, I’m not a freshman, I’m a senior
The campus seems a little bit cleaner with cops on every corner and I’m walking
 to english
Shots fired so I run and the only kid who’s hurt is the one who thought it would be
soooo dope if he showed his friends that he knew how to use their teacher’s gun
Why did that teacher have a gun anyway?
Now, I’ve been reading a lot about the kids in Parkland, they’re the only reason
I’m here doing this, I can hear their voices, I want to listen
So to quote Emma Gonzalez, a girl and quite possibly the most brave one I have
ever seen, “Now is the time to get on the right side of this”
With every step we take today and everyday, we will take power, money, and
credibility away from politicians who care more about their money than our lives
The ones who care more about their sickening supporters than the good of all of us
We are the generation that forces change until we are safe at every concert, mall,
park, and goddamn school in this country
Never again will we stand by and watch
Now is the only time to do this so on behalf of every student
 -Whether they agree with me or not-
Put us before your guns
Please

A Tuesday Afternoon

Smile briefly, turn quickly, shuffle your feet off the sidewalk
Laugh off violet nights and moon-shimmering mornings filled with vanilla
and worn out shoes
Entwined fingernail polish and blue ink calluses touch and tangle
I'm sorry I saw you but I'm not sorry I'm seeing you and I don't know
what that's called
A brittle voice breaks while saying hello and I suggest we go our separate
ways
Smile briefly, walk quickly, shuffle your feet off the sidewalk
As the conversation closes, I stop taking deep breaths, every time it ends
it's really over and every time it's over, i really see dearly
You see, dear, can you see what I'm trying to say to your lit up eyes and
broken down nose right now?
I don't love you
But you don't hear that so you push your thumb down harder hoping to
hear me scream
And I might, I may just remember what it was like
But I don't love you
I also don't want to breathe when I'm around you
I can't live my days out when I'm around you
Screaming at clouds and stomping on forests is a tradition
And loving, caring, hoping, seeing, wishing, trying, pleasing, fighting, and
stopping is not
But I see it dearly with more clarity than air but darling
I don't love you

Storybook

Cry at me (not with me, that is not what I said)
If you say anything in big enough words I'll agree with you
Stand in line, unify, on fire (don't forget to tie your shoes)
I will run until tomorrow's sun hears me coming
Psychedelic tears bounce off of my lips (screaming show tunes that never
have enough glue to stick to my memory)
I am made of insomniatic spiders and last Halloween's pumpkin guts
There's a stack of papers in my head of every word I've ever thought
Breathed in and swallowed because apparently I need to make friends
True colors don't come out when you're angry but when you take your
hands through my ribcage
Open it bone by bone, paint your walls with the colors on your hands (and
your pillowcase will fill with bats and bones and goodbyes you weren't
expecting)
I wish you to hell
Turn on the pages of the story of our lives and shred them one by one
Stick your tongue out and I won't see it because I'm more concerned by
your limbs being torn off one by...
Uh you may want to go get those
You may this and you may that but in May the sun doesn't shine on you
So love, codependent butterfly wings are tattooed on my ribcage for you
I wish you to hell

Mateo Flores

“The Chinese character for poetry combines word and temple.”

Wild Word Synthesis

Dear Mr. Wilde,

To write a poem one must be a shapeshifter
stiffing through all sorts of old letters and rearranging
murderous vowels
and other
linguistic operations.

Performing the neuroscientist’s equivalent of removing a brain tumor.

To celebrate the greatest and worst of humanity.

To morph slanderous consonants into manageable chunks, meant
to be devoured by the psychologically-incapable.

To use words like oblong, or gesticulating when describing one’s own aunt.

To count one’s hiccups whilst considering some equanimeous brooch or
bather,

while arcadian dreams illuminate the moon.

Bringing out the childish aspirations of the past.

To laugh without lugubrious intent, casting beams of misshapen wires over
oceanic volumes.

To create strings of prose, which we allow to ring out in jazzy circles,
whilst

Also contemplating vaaljapie,
vrooming in and out of conscious thoughts,
muscles clenched, and adhering to nature.

To admit that all things change, and that is the way of things. That trying to
dam a river won’t stop the stream.

To breathe, and take in the sight of coy fire ants as they soldier single file
through grassy highways. Always in flight, always resonant and
responding.

To hold a high regard for iodine,
oh, how sublime!

It’s a damn near
rhyme.

To equate the physical with the emotional, hands on our bodies’ equators,
in melodramatic motions and taking in yellow potions,
and a side purple elixir.

To live.

To admit that I am what am, and I’m not what I am. I am living, and I am
also a lot of not livings.

To hold out my cheek beside waterfalls, allowing the crashing kisses to
sprinkle over my cheeks, and blushing to the cool, confetti
explosions
of comfort and adoration. Watching the light twinkle, starry
droplets.
To allow myself to filter through humane emotions with a stainless strainer
over my brain.
To rather simply write.

February 2nd, 2018

Arboreal Poetry

Mushy Feely Stuff

Cascading, you send me. I mumble, stumble through the day
Approaching the end of this very line. My darling, please let the
Rain fall. Acquiesce to warmth and summer dreams, comfort me. I
prescribe myself your
Adoration; realize me and my endearment, realize
Me and my yearning, my passion, my ardor;
I will do the same. With my own infatuation I will be your best
friend,
As the arabesque pertain to belong to one another, I shall be yours.

February 7th, 2018

Bits of Writing:

if there are Mountains, i look at the mOuntains
on rainy days i listen to the moUntains
mouNtains, mounTains, mountAins, mountaInS
tomorrow, too, will be mountaiNs
tonight, still, will be mountainS

Based on a Santoka Taneda poem

from home to home
i count
men, women
Dancing. in
lovely dancing shoes.

the blank you
Shows purpose; and--
rocky Dew flowers

rocky purpose you
snowy beach; and--
blood, Dew jest

temple vibing real
livid gazebo, vale
death-do toasty rye

green lolling hills
numerous redwoods, cover
as... rain
drops

schoollunches
starvingyouth,lackofthoughts
squishyjamwiches

Oh So Symmetric Confabulations

Which Are True, by the way (A piece of prose)

I walk through the warm, spring streets. Pouncing through the willowy avenues, perfect boredom; bored, bored. Bored; stuck in your arms. Warmth, void, emptiness. Afternoon campaigns, crumbly west egg, new, anti-foundational; youth. Sunflowers and Indigo. Wavering, wandering, meager mellow sun, and the insipid drains. Empty my brain, I want to whole. Timeless amounts of annoyance, commoners walking through sexy forest green shops. Windows. You are commandeering my heart; O, unoccupied thoughts. I.. I.. I... emancipated dreams, freedom, so near, always. (Null) Boredom, boredom. boredom; lost thoughts, introspective viewpoints, conversation-less nights. Conversely emptiness, small people, small speech, small drinks, small vibrations, distractions! Meaning to keep the genuine abyss away, try staring at a blank screen. Scarf down some black beans. Perform acrobatic head rolls above, outside clear window panes, window panes. Something, something, new Thai cuisine. Fear, the root of our sunflowers, April, a time of the year for the dead. Dead, void emptiness, favorite fears. Favorite fears. Boredom/boredom//boredom// Algebraically calculated remorse, empathy. Lasting traces of hate, gluttony, explicit lust, vices.. Summer sips, milkshake oozings. Mutilated bodies, intestines about well kept office floors. Nicely forgotten people, what does it matter? A sense of incompleteness, that a burning curiosity has done run out, that I,-- on carefully curated garden stones can account for the liability of stolen steel. Must an outlet must always be electric? Try breaths. Long.... Tedious, laborious breaths. boredom-boredom--boredom lacing roller skates, I prefer to skate on ice.. I prefer a sense of purpose, waves rollicking bound to the tide. Wordplay. Soundplay. Horseplay. Monday. Mundane. Friday. Freeplay. Eliot's ideas, Shelley's heart. Lost. Trying. Lost. Airport dreams, first time, again, first time, again, Airport visits. Hallmark signs and signals. Lay your head down sleepy head, even dreams need to dream. We all are. We all aren't...?

Linked Pointers

For those consciously aspiring to sensualism

itistimeforskipping(tracing)dippingtrippingsortsofseamless
lystreamingkeengreensightseeingoilymoilyostrobogulous-
ness(>insert<pause)periodperiodperiodbreatheintakecommath
enthereisatacentsettingofsolderinfusedwallsspace-spaceapadd
edworkoftachismeyoucanseeclearasclay(>insert<hearts-pause)

A Telluric Rhyme

I.

Loriann Tre, what have you to say
To a pencil as lovely as mine?
“Nothing in the slightest, nothing in the rhypest,
Clive, you’ve never been the brightest.”

Loriann Tre, what have you to say
To a pencil as yummy as time?
“Nothing on colour, nothing on flour,
Clive, you sure enjoy wasting the hour.”

Loriann Tre, what have you to say
To a pencil as behovely as mine?
“Nothing is quite so abhorrent as such a vocable, it’s rather uncouth,
Nothing could get me to express anything to your utensil,
 not even Babe Ruth,
Clive, you’re a cause for back pains, in all of truth.”

Loriann Tre, what have you to say
To a pencil as woody as pine?
“Nothing is quite so nutty, nothing is near so witty
Clive, you wretched fool, you speak so petty.”

II.

Loriann Tre, why don’t you stay
To a banquet as lovely as Cloud Nine?
“Nothing quite eclipses the sun’s power, nothing is as loving
 as a purple flour,
Clive, I’d love to, but I’m now with Violet Hour.”

Loriann Tre, why don’t you stay
To a banquet as lovely as Frankenstein?
“Nothing’s more wasteful than a romantic, nothing seems near so
sycophantic,
(And by the way,)
Clive, I’m not fastidious, humorless, persnickety, or pedantic.”

Loriann Tre, why don’t you stay
To a banquet as lovely as eglantine?
“Nothing with you can coalesce, for nothing else has hella finesse,
Clive, must you always make such silly requests?”

Loriann Tre, why don't you stay
To a banquet as my very own Valentine?
"Nothing is here, not even meadows, nothing could get us to stand like
dominos,
Clive, you chirpy, childish clod, you. I applaud you, but I'm afraid this
fun must come to a close.

Alternate Ending:

Loriann Tre, why don't you stay
To a banquet as my very own Valentien?
"Nothing is here, not even meadows, nothing could get us to ever
juxtapose,
Clive, you chirpy, childish clod. I'm afraid your fun must come to a close.

February 1st, 2018

London Sorrows

A Sappho Inspired Poem

Yonder you yell, "catching everyone's attention!"
 Over the the wailing sirens of sea.
Under the Redwoods you cared for the roses,
 (And a heart like) mine, entangling me in your
Red and telling heart,
 Evermore lovely, where foggy Greek Odes lie.
My sky, why haven't you said anything else,
 You've hardly spoken over your dinner. Consider that,

"Fear is strange soil," cementing disbelief, and sowing
 April dreams for us to carry, twisting
Void bodies, dragging spring's entities
 Out. The Archeanassa sins, classically sprouting
Red, compassionate death, the once living splattering and filling
 Ink. Spewing, oozing forth from the
Tearful waters, salt running down in lovely amity
 Evermore lovely, where foggy Latin epitaphs lie.

Just Jazz

I.

Just lumbering through, in
A meager manner. I lost a
Zippy, dippy, flippy
Zany spasming sneedle, thing.

II.

Jilted jehovah stands in the wake of watery steps.
Asymmetric, he laps through his mind's various
Zones of musical prose, lost, and stuck with a
Zebra. He doesn't like the zebra.

III.

Just for the record, writing poetry isn't difficult...
At all. Watch:
Zizzer-zazzer-zuzz fuzz was because
Zizzer twas a buzz bound to kiss her.

IV.

Jabberwocks a thimble, brustling through
Aphlly bramble, floating as would Annabel Lee, like
Zephyr, soft slumbering and most of all
Zen-like.

V.

Just here and there; there lies
Aurora's pistachio stash. Quickly,
Zoom down and steal it! Quick, let's
Zoom the hell out of here.

October 18, 2017

Syllabic Filament

Beauty here, beauty there, beauty everywhere
Beauty is vacant, green parking lots
Beauty is satisfaction
Beauty is the blue silver slit moon, piercing the sky with such
passive authority
Beauty is the written word. A tradition passed down from our
ancestors, and their parents,
far from similar with overly complex vocations
Beauty is the poissons and jardins, where odorous, fuming
fragrances ring out
Beauty is knackered converse and corduroy dreams
Beauty is the size of the stars, but altogether more wholesome
Beauty is is our perfectly fitted ecology, when our mutual
cohabitation occurs
in thunderbolt hopes and wonders
Beauty is the architecture which we base some portion of our
reasoning upon,
the golden musings and tousled hair of grass stained lovers
Beauty is the mailboxes, metro stations, and boys out in the lawn,
shirtless
in summer sweat, fever
Beauty is benevolent, giving to all. Aphrodite I accept you
Beauty is the spicy, poignant verbs and nouns that flow together,
clothing would, too, on thin laundry-lines
Beauty is the rolling hills and green redwoods. Beaming so
brightly, as paintings or drawings would
on the walls of a kindergarten classroom
Beauty is the ambulance that just crashed in my friend Craig's
living room
Beauty is the thoughts and emotions experienced on tranquil
golden meadows or
clear sky-like streams or rivers glittering in the neon sunlight
Beauty is the mitochondria from biology textbooks
Beauty is but a cell, part of a larger all more artistic universal piece
Beauty is the altruistic selfishness beings inflict on one another in
hopes of equal retribution
Beauty is the tranquil love and tenderness humans are able to pass
onto others
Beauty is the putrid hate-scented doings we as a whole are able to
and do commit
Beauty is the old french windmill from which birds coo and stand

Beauty is the endless fields of strawberries, bearing fruit
to dreams and pigtail ties
Beauty is a bridge, a point on which construction and serenity stand,
out of breath,
and making way for the west wind's whispers
Beauty is the neatly arranged living spaces many so happen to inhabit
Beauty here, Beauty there, Beauty everywhere
Beauty me, Beauty you, Beauty every-being.
And you. And you. And you.
"O my soul!"

Sylvia Fogle

The Blue Pen with Purple Letters

Elephants falling out of the big blue ocean.
Chickens and pigs swimming in the great volcano's depth.
Ducks love the cheesy fruits they are sold.
Quails touching cars.
A phoenix flying through Egypt.
Peacocks in petticoats eating croissants.
Saints in blazers partying all night long.
Laying out in the moon eating dimensions' fruit.
Looming out over us,
Cannibalistic jelly beans eating french bread,
On a Chinese cafe in the middle of a monsoon.
Floating on a rock
Enjoying the waterfall's fabulous trees floating by.
I see a violet shape flowing in your mind.
Waiting for that day when I was useful.
But now it's all gone to the rats.
Mice are fun when they play ping pong at their scrabble parties.
Weasels go to a churchy party with excess whatever lying around my room.
I do not own my feet,
They were sold to a skittle long ago by a mole.
Dogs and cats eating cotton candy
In the rainy youth of childhood past.
When rainbows conversed
With water lilies.
In a secret language that only the greatest of poetic warriors can describe.
Love like woe your enemy,
For once again the time has come to re-crown
The king of cabbages!

Darkness

Shrouded in darkness,
Covered in black.
Once filled with life,
Now only old hacks.
Even in darkness
Still seeking love.

To be a widow,
A lonely old hag.
Can't love anymore
Over all loves had.

So calls the breeze
Out over a hill.
Uprising the trees,
Putrid is her smell.

Death has her in his fingers,
Even he shall yell.
She's coming round the corner,
She's got you in her spell.
Early in the morning,
Restless in my cave.
Trapped in endless wonder,
Stupid crappy grave.

Boredom

Boring me with your silent gaze.
Killing me with your wonderful haze.
Blanking out into the maze.
Spacing out is my only faze.

Me

A rose in the screen,
A rock in the tree,
A bee on a flower,
That's petty ol' me.

A wondrous blossom,
So colorful and fun.
I would rather be frowning
Then watching your fun.

I sit in a window,
So fragrant and free.
Wandering the places
You could never be.

I sit in an office.
I call up your mom.
I tell her your story,
Then I watch you run.

Vengeful Tidings

A moon in the night with the stars,
and he might love once again.
my son is the man with a pan in his hand,
and I notice no other people in a way that is frabjous,
coo caley oh the pride,
and the mice in his arms and that house,
oh my house it has burned to the ground in my joy.

Abstract

Blue.
Large and small
Triangles and circles
Unknown to you.
Loving yourself,
Selfish as you are.
Death comes slowly,
Death comes quick,
Death rides on a candlestick.
Life comes fast,
Life comes at a snail's pace.
Life beats death,
But in the end
Death picks up its pace,
Until one day when
I will come back to you
Leaving all behind.
A starry haze
Is all you see
Behind you.
Love is lost,
Love is found.
For we are all
truly bound.
Life as it is,
Life as it seems,
Pulling away at the seams.

My Home

You came to me by means of a friend.
You recognized my soul as your heart.
I fell for you by means of my own.
Why won't you leave?
My brain is my home.

Counting You

1. Baling and rolling,
like a stray apple falling out of the fiery forest,
loving the way you take care of my heart.
2. Now a flower,
growing and blossoming against the wind.
Loving you less won't change your heart,
losing myself, yet knowing where I am.
3. Turned to grass, reliving and reviving.
Wanting to see you in the same light,
yet knowing I can never see your face again.
4. I am the roots going deep into my core.
I loved you so much, but now I'm on my own.
I need to heal, so I married away my soul,
I know you would have loved her too.
5. Goodbye to a soul, goodbye to a mom,
Goodbye to my beginning, Hello to my end.
An apple once more.

Sadness

Sadness took ahold of us,
Shot them to the ground.
People know and people hate
The unforgiving flames.
I did not want this to happen, love.
I wish I could've saved
The beautiful girl who went up in flames.
Why did this happen?
You may ask,
Why couldn't they have saved him too?
Now all we may do is cry.
Sadness took ahold of us,
Shot them to the ground.
If only they had saved you too,
Now all we may do is cry.

September

I'm swimming in your September mist
In the fog of the rock in the bay
Where I see like a blind man's raving voices
Out loud distracting and disrupting the classroom
With a teacher who yells and forgets himself
In the void of your endless song that sings out
In joyous harmony is my friend but she hates
Everyone else is staring and laughing at the tears
Of a clown in a rodeo that's too vicious for a venomous snake
Like your love in my heart at the start of a war.

Theodosia

Liquefying lavender into a velvet echo.
A labyrinth of illusions alight Calypso's night.
Passive chrysanthemums waltzing in limbo.
Funky phobias smothered in mango ink.
Phenomenal llamas curating a quirky nebula.
A vulgar havoc blurts out "help."

Eliminations of the Reversed

I hate you now I see my friend,
If I were me or you or them.
Why must you torture me so T?
I miss the way you thought I'd end,
I loved the way you spoke again,
But even now the dust grows cold
So we, the night must send.
As do we, I sought again,
But as you go and I stayed behind,
Now we do the opposite with time.
Way onto way as the man once said.
I hate you now as I my friend.

Nameless

How do I name you,
My poetic love.
Like Sappho's heart,
In the beginning
Of your start.
About sunglasses,
And love,
And blankets
In towels.
I see your bowels
Laying out before you.
I need
To be done
With this endless
Epiphany of
Books and galore,
And horses,
And turtles,
And I see your
Faces out in your crowd.
Like a goddess,
I worship you.
Like summer you rain
Down on my corpse.
Like a smelly old cold
I look down,
And you're there.
I love you,
My muse.
I miss you,
My knight.
I need you,
My sustenance.
I leave you,
My heart.

Why

Why must you leave me,
Without an answer all alone?
I dream of us dancing,
And no one else is around.
I see visions of you and me
Without a care in a world.
So full of anger, but our love alone
Might guide them to a life full of peace.
I love it when you're around,
But I love you more when you aren't here.
Why can't you love me?
We've been 'together' for eight years,
Yet when you see her your heart stops.
I'm only with you when she leaves you alone,
Because you hate the dark,
And I'll fight it,
Even when you're grown,
Because I love you so much,
Yet you can't love me back.
Just stab out my heart and leave it
In the cracks of the sidewalk,
Where the little flowers rise.
In the cracks on the sidewalk,
Where I die a little inside.

Lost

In a dimension beyond the shades we find things lost long ago. We find people and animals we deemed missing. We find puzzles, and games, and little trinkets we eventually forgot. We find the expensive electronics we couldn't convince our parents we didn't lose. But best of all we find the childhood spirit they claim we never even had.

The Sad Little Girl

She was small. She was standing in the middle of the street crying. “Why was she crying?” You might ask. Oh no reason in particular. Maybe she had just dropped her ice cream on the street, or had just realized that she’d never see her puppy again. Maybe her dad died and she just came to terms with it, or maybe she wanted that new toy but nobody would get it for her. Whatever her reason she was there, and she was just bawling her little eyes out and nobody, not one person, was even glancing in her direction, let alone trying to get her back on to the nice and safe sidewalk.

Not the police officer standing nearby who was busily giving that poor old lady a ticket for going too slow, or the kids playing hopscotch in front of the run down apartments, or even her mother who was too busy yelling at her ten year old brother for jumping in that big puddle on the sidewalk.

Nobody noticed as the truck came rolling towards her trembling form, and nobody noticed until they heard a scream and a honk and the distinct screeching of wheels as the huge truck skidded to a stop. Only then did they look in horror of the crumpled form of that sad little girl, and only then did they wonder, “What happened to her?”

Was it the police officer who accidentally pushed her over to catch the old woman? Was it the children who never let her play with them? Or was it her mother who never paid so much as a second of attention towards her? Whatever it was, now she was gone and now none of them could ever make it up to her.

Indigo Funk

Monday

When Guy came to Stillwater, it was one of those heavy summer days when the sun seems to lap up against your skin in waves and percolate through your pores. He was very, very tired, and his eyelids itched. He stood on what looked to be the town's main street, glancing in either direction for some place, any place, to settle down. There was a small park to his left with some benches, abandoned except for a couple bedraggled homeless people and their shopping carts that gleamed in the sun.

Guy trudged over to the park, feeling like lead weights had been strapped to his feet, then sat down at a bench, put his head in his hands, and began massaging his temples. He closed his eyes and felt disconnected from himself, as though floating in a surreal sea of heat and light. His senses were warping and twisting around each other, and for a minute he drifted around the twilight zone between sleep and consciousness.

At some point, he wondered if something was wrong with him, if these strange sensations he'd been getting were a bad sign. But the thought faded into the background, along with all his other thoughts. A woodpecker drilled into a tree somewhere nearby. All else was silent.

Suddenly, a gunshot shattered the placid world, and he leapt to his feet, exhaustion gone.

The world seemed to crystallize in front of him: bright pavement stood in stark contrast to the shadows beneath the trees, and a swirl of colors stood vibrant against their grey backdrops. Guy could hear his heartbeat thumping against his ribs. He whirled on his feet and saw exactly what he knew he'd see: a cadre of men in expensive suits striding toward his bench and raising sleek black pistols, their faces calm and expressionless. A cry tore from his lips, and he broke into a run as more gunshots rang out, bullets burying themselves in the grass beneath him or thudding against trees.

This was the closest they'd ever gotten to him. Guy had outsmarted their bombs and traps, stayed one step ahead of them from town to town, and frustrated all their attempts at getting revenge. But the Chicago mafia did not forget something like what Guy had done. So now they were coming for him personally.

His breaths came fast, and his boots thudded against the sidewalk as he approached his sedan by the side of the street. Behind him, he could hear curses and hurried reloading. As he opened the door and jumped into the car, the back windshield shattered behind him, and his fingers scrabbled against the ignition. A stray bullet popped his rear left tire, but he was already tearing off into the street.

Guy shot a glance over his shoulder as the powerful engine

accelerated. The men were running back to their own Mercedes-Benz with tinted windows, but they were too far behind. He swung around a corner and merged onto the highway, leaving the sleepy town and its ambush behind.

He sighed with relief, and his heartbeat slowed as the contrasts in his vision began to lessen. He was not going to let those fuckers get the jump on him like that again. Guy would head South, for Mexico.

For freedom.

*

Back in the Stillwater Park, Terry slumped down next to his shopping cart and shook his bedraggled head. That was a strange sight for a Monday.

An exhausted stranger in stained office clothes had just driven in, gotten out of his car, and sat down at Amanda's favorite bench for fifteen minutes, looking down-in-the-mouth and almost asleep. Terry almost wanted to go see if the man needed help or directions, but he knew there'd be no point: whenever he approached anyone they invariably treated him as if he had leprosy. As if homelessness were contagious.

As the minutes dragged by, the stranger remained stock-still, except for an occasional strange jerk of his head. Then, all of a sudden he had jumped up, whirled around, and shouted with fright at the lamppost behind him, or maybe at the front of the 7-11, or just the empty street. Whatever he thought he saw, it obviously terrified him to his core. The stranger had booked it, impressively fast, back to his car, then pulled away in a screech of tires and headed for the Interstate, cursing the entire way. The sounds of his engine had just now faded into the background, and the silence was back. Terry shook his head again.

That wasn't something you see every Monday.

The Land

These were rolling hills that did not roll
They flowed, washing over reeds and earth
Shimmering ever downward, endlessly
Lapping at the shores of oaks and sky
Twisting in rivulets along a pond's edge
Swimming through wishful auburn grasses
As the buckeyes dropped with a *splunk*.

These were men that felt no pain
They nurtured, grew in rural Life
Strumming souls in midnight's charm
Dancing languid through thick slow time
Hunting boar at the edge of silence
Singing ragged and lovely moments
As I listened, brimming, lying in bed.

These were times that had no end
They tumbled down my small young back
Clacking like an idle afternoon
Scattering in sweet sultry honeysuckle stems
Shattering around wild frizzy tangle-hair
Dropping onto a weightless summer trampoline
As the tree branches cradle me and coo.

These were memories that did not last.

But I wish
They had.

Looking Through an Airplane Window

I looked down
And there were veins all around
Crossing and riding
Being, shrinking, worrying
Blood pulsing with houses
And stucco walls
Rivers as ribbons
Entrails flung on the ground and twisting
Carelessly
And there was a metropolis
Cells in tissues of gray mixed visage
Curlicues and screaming squareness
Dirt blinding the eyes
With color
The pockmarked green skin of the earth
On and on and on and on
Until I couldn't help but
See
That it was good.

A Song

After Emily Dickinson

I heard her sing – and all at once –
A brilliant change took place
A glowing eye – a fiery lip
Some whirlwind in her face

And from her voice came riding out
The webs – that held her fast –
Her shrunken mother's addict-breath
Her disappointed past

That fractal claw that gripped her mind
Until she bowed to pills
And frightening dream of Hollywood
That stared from on its hill

All this – and more – did issue forth
Did flee from ringing tone
And left her – just a single soul
With deep and lovely bones

Bones

Jayden Olsen slowly became aware of calm, smooth voices talking beside his head. They were self-possessed, seemed to know exactly what they were talking about. Something about debts on the ceiling, or a deficit. Beneath them, vague static crackled unpleasantly. He peeled his eyes open and turned his head to the left.

The voices were coming from his radio alarm clock, which he had set to wake him up with the local talk show. Jayden sighed, reached over to turn it off, fumbled and knocked it to the floor instead. It lay there, still droning like the adults in a Charlie Brown special, and he rolled over and let his fingers scrabble against the plastic until they found the “off” button. For a moment he lay, half on and half off the bed, legs splayed out and arms limp against the floor, with the comforter on the verge of sliding off the twin-size mattress.

He sighed again.

Feeling sleep still tugging at the edges of his vision, Jayden rolled onto his back and sat up, then propelled himself out of bed and into a standing position. Bob Marley hung on the wall across from him, cradling an acoustic guitar with eyes downcast. He seemed to be looking down at Jayden’s feet, or else at the lyrics of “Redemption Song” printed below him. Other than that poster, Jayden’s walls were bare and plain. There was still a slight dent in the drywall to his left where he had punched it two years ago, after a particularly bad breakup. The wall had punched back, breaking his hand. It was one of the stupidest decisions he’d ever made, and he had made quite a few stupid decisions.

The early morning sunlight threw itself in rows on his disheveled bed, and the radio alarm clock read 6:32. Jayden took a moment to remember whether he was going to class or work; he was going to medical school at Boston U, and had a job waiting tables at a local Vietnamese restaurant. Today it was the latter, so he dressed quickly and lurched down the hallway towards the kitchenette.

All there was in the way of breakfast was a box of Frosted Flakes on the counter. He stared at it, and the cartoon tiger stared back, its bulbous face seeming to twist and warp into a sneer, mocking him. He’d always enjoyed sugary cereals, the kind that most people shun once they reach adulthood, but today the cereal did not want to be eaten. It wanted to be left alone to glower at the tile. So he did.

In the bathroom Jayden splashed water on his face, then stared at his dripping reflection motionlessly. It was not a pretty sight. Over the past several months, his broad face looked like it was squeezing in on itself, narrowing and folding up. His cheekbones had grown more gaunt, and his eyebrows had been pulled into a scowl so many times that they stuck there,

locked into a furrowed forehead. His lips were thinner, his dark skin paler and more sallow.

But more than anything else, his eyes had dulled.

They used to resemble deep wells of obsidian or pitch, so dark and opaque that the pupils were impossible to make out, like tunnels going miles into the deep, dark earth. People always said if you looked for too long, you could get lost in them. And indeed, sometimes he had, as a child. On several occasions his mother came into his room to find him staring at his own eyes, his face millimeters away from the mirror on the wall, with a mesmerized expression on his face. It had happened so often they'd taken the mirror away and left it in the garage to gather dust.

But no more. Over the past several months, his irises had lost their power, as if drained of pitch or whittled down to a dull sheen. Now, they were just eyes, and he was just Jayden. No more, no less.

Jayden shook his head and shuffled out of the bathroom, then went to grab his briefcase from its usual spot on the kitchen chair, only to realize that it wasn't there. It took another five minutes of searching the tiny apartment before he found it tucked away under a pile of laundry in his closet, its papers mixed and scattered with his shirts and socks. By the time he got them all arranged and organized, he was late yet again, so he hurried out the door and locked it again (in this neighborhood, you couldn't leave anything unlocked), then took the stairs two at a time towards the street below.

*

Afterwards, even years afterwards, he couldn't remember much of his walk to work that morning. All he could recall was a singular feeling that dogged him, that had been dogging him for months, that might have continued to dog him had the monotonous status quo of his life persisted.

Had that morning not jolted him into a new life entirely.

On leaving his apartment building, Jayden once again had to pause and remember where he was going: to class at Boston University School of Medicine, or to the Vietnamese restaurant where he waited tables. Recently, the two had started feeling more and more similar. The feeling was one of slowly increasing gravity, dragging down on his feet and tilting his head towards his chest. As if there was a room somewhere filled with control panels covered in blinking lights and monitors showing live CCTV footage of every inch of the city, and in that room a shadowy figure had a lever next to his or her left hand, and over the course of that half-hour walk the figure was adjusting it slowly downward, incrementally increasing the gravity of the whole city until the steel skeletons of the dull gray skyscrapers groaned under their own weight and the Longfellow Bridge sagged down in the middle, almost scraping the surface of the water below.

And it was all for Jayden's benefit, all the ruined car suspensions and burst sewer pipes resulting from this new crushing gravity was all so that Jayden would have that much more trouble slogging his way to work.

It was all so that he'd have to drag each foot in front of the other, every step taking twice the effort it used to. It was all so that he'd want to lie down on the dirty pavement and stay there indefinitely, feel the rough gravel against the nape of his neck, and maybe sleep if it was possible. He'd just try not to worry about the moaning towers above crashing down onto him in a plume of concrete smoke and shattered glass. He just wanted to give in to the gravity.

All these heavy thoughts made it so that Jayden was in a sort of fugue state on his way to work.

So much so that he didn't notice the speeding Mercedes until it hit him.

*

Jayden Olsen slowly became aware of calm, smooth voices talking beside his head. They were very self-possessed, seemed to know exactly what they were talking about. Something about fractions, or fractals. Jayden remembered his pre-med days in college, when his calculus professor had taken a rare detour from the coursework to show the class a series of fractal graphs that fascinated her. His favorite of them was the Mandelbrot set, looking like a plump black snowman crackling with electricity on its edges, and each fork of electricity had another identical snowman hidden within it. The professor would zoom in on that snowman, gesticulating excitedly at the screen and stumbling over her words in an effort to describe the infinities that composed the snowmen. And of course, that snowman would have another snowman within it, and within that snowman a series of ornate nautilus spirals zooming towards the viewer like a tour of the universe, each galaxy housing infinite smaller galaxies, and within each of those galaxies another snowman, still electrified and shedding blue light into the dark abyss around it. The video kept zooming in the entire time she talked, further and further into smallness after smallness. The images never grew any less dazzling. Jayden had found himself in an amazed stupor, and he thought about that Mandelbrot set for weeks afterward. He was no math major, so he could barely comprehend the abstract equations that formed that graph, but the shape itself was what captivated him.

When Jayden opened his eyes, he thought he saw the image of the electric snowman imprinted on his retinas.

But it quickly disappeared, and he was left in a sterile hospital room with an impassive doctor to his left, leaning over him. A machine in the corner beeped every several seconds, just like they do in the movies. For some reason, his entire body ached and felt sluggish. His mind seemed to have a one-second delay before processing anything, and a pain in his ribs throbbed dully, feeling as though it might burst into sharp pangs before long. He was definitely under medication.

The doctor above him had tufts of gray hair protruding from his ears, and his face was covered in pockmarks and liver spots. He spoke in a calm, clipped accent.

“Hello there. You’re going to be alright. Please don’t try to move. I have to attend to another patient now, but I’ll be back with you shortly.”

And with that he was gone, his white coat flapping out of sight in the doorway. Jayden couldn’t remember what had happened, only that something was very different from when he woke up that morning. He didn’t feel as though he could move if he wanted to.

Time passed, but whether it was half a minute or half an hour, Jayden couldn’t be sure. Finally, the doctor returned, marked something down on his clipboard, and said, “Now, Mr. Olsen, I’m afraid you have had a very bad time of it. You’re lucky to be alive, if I’m being honest.”

The doctor kept looking down at his clipboard while speaking, which bothered Jayden. *When I become a doctor, he thought, I’ll make damn sure I look my patients in the eye when I tell them how badly they’re falling apart.*

“A fractured rib, compound fracture on the tibia, probable concussion, and far too much bruising for my taste. Mr. Olsen, you have suffered severe injury. Of course,” he added quickly, seeing the look on Jayden’s face, “you should make a full recovery. There might be some acute back pain every now and then, but nothing here will last past the next six months or so. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have to attend to another patient.” And he was gone again.

Jayden lay in his hospital bed, listening to the monotonous beeps, idly wondering what he was going to do with all this new free time. One side effect of being in med school was that he now hated sitting still when there was so much to be done; he was always either working at the restaurant, or studying, or on rare occasions hitting the town with his friends. But now, he was stuck. Too immobile to work, too concussed to study, too injured to go anywhere. There was nothing to do.

Suddenly, heat began spreading out from his chest and face, and Jayden thought he might be developing a fever.

But no, he was just sobbing.

Tears seemed to travel up from all corners of his body and spill out his eyes completely of their own accord, as if gravity were pulling them out. Jayden’s chest heaved, and his ribs sent shooting pains through his abdomen, but the agony just made him cry harder.

It was the first time he had cried since high school, maybe even before that, but there was no definable source of the tears. It certainly wasn’t his injuries; those were all numb. Neither was it all the class he’d miss while in the hospital, or the insurance co-pay that was sure to drive him broke. The outside world wasn’t a concern right now—it was something else. Perhaps the tears just gathered one day at a time, and something in the Mercedes-Benz hitting him at forty miles an hour knocked them loose.

*

The walls looked much better now. They were peppered with a

variety of junk from Jayden's everyday life: movie tickets, old National Geographic covers stolen from the hospital, business cards, photocopied textbook diagrams, et cetera. It looked like a mess, but at least it was something. The dull, empty off-white walls of his room had somehow bothered him since he was discharged from the hospital, and now, sitting on his bed, he wondered how he could ever have left them so plain. He had no new posters as of yet, but those would come.

It was getting towards afternoon now. He'd have to go back to work at the restaurant tomorrow; the concussion was getting well enough for him to concentrate again. He heaved a sigh, then stood up and started towards the door.

Suddenly, a bolt of pain seared through Jayden's lower back, making him cry out and fall forward. His clavicle ricocheted off the door frame on the way down, and he collapsed onto the carpet, lying still.

That was a bad move.

The doctor had warned him not to stand up too fast, but reflex was difficult to overcome. The back pain lingered, his clavicle stung. He was tired anyway, though, and the carpet suddenly felt soft and comfortable, so he carefully rolled onto his back and looked at the ceiling.

He'd never been betrayed by his body before. All his life, he'd been healthy and whole without even thinking about it, without considering how lucky he was. Now, that luck had run out.

He reached up and rubbed the left side of his collarbone, feeling the shape of the bone beneath the skin. It had hit the door frame hard.

And yet...

He was struck by how firm and solid it felt, still whole and unmoved. He rapped on it with his knuckles and felt it resist, then tried to push on it and felt it push back. Two protrusions jutted out beneath the bruised skin at the points where the left and right sides joined his sternum, and rubbing them gave him a strange sense of comfort.

He'd never noticed how strong his collarbone was before. In med school it was always just another bone on the charts, with so-and-so as the protocol when it fractures. But something told him that his wouldn't break, couldn't break. It wasn't anything like his back, which shot him with needles every morning as he tried to get up, or like his lower left rib, which had snapped like pencil lead on impact with the car's chrome bumper.

No, his collarbone was reliable. Dependable. The rest of his body might shatter at any given moment, and indeed it could for all he cared, but the collarbone would still be there in the end, keeping his head upright and proud and intact, supporting it like a Greek pillar. As long as there was one bone left unbroken, that was all that mattered. There would be something to remain at the center of him as he flung himself apart, and he could rebuild from there.

Jayden Olsen rolled over and stood up.

And for the first time in years, he didn't feel gravity press him down again.

Victor DeAnthony Galarza-Guevara

Highly Doubted

I doubt you'll understand this,
But did you know that I'm crazy for you, and your everything?
I doubt you'll understand why,
But did you know that I can't keep from smiling when I see you?
I doubt you'll understand how
But every time you touch me I can't help but feeling warm inside.
I doubt you'll understand a lot of things,
So allow me to explain.
When I first saw you it was your beauty which captivated me.
In a world of black-white-greys
You were a brilliant-lavender-yellow.
You made navy look like aquamarine,
And made jade look like emerald.
You brought new color to my fading world,
And I doubt you'll understand but you lit a spark in me.
I doubt that you remember this,
But when I first met you
We didn't actually speak.
There existed almost silence
And we acknowledge each other's breath
And I think I heard a laughter in yours...
I doubt you'll understand, but that's when I fell in love.
The second time we met, that silence fell over once again but this time I
was shocked when instead of hearing you breathe I could see
your soul;
Our eyes had locked in a surreal gaze,
And mine had spilled out all my secrets,
And I could hear you giggling under your breath,
And I decided I was okay with you knowing.
I doubt you'll understand, but
I just can't help how you make me feel.
A couple years after you sparked my subtle flame I had a wildfire in my
heart.
I couldn't help but notice you 17 seconds before I even saw you,
I talked to you every day by then,
And your words meant worlds to me.
I doubt you remember this, but

One day as we walked a tear stained road,
You looked at me, and, well, you called me a wallflower,
And I doubt you'll understand
Why I still remember this,
But I didn't know what a wallflower was.
But I still love the sound of that simple word, because if you think I'm a
 wallflower,
And you're okay with being friends with a wallflower,
Then I love being a wallflower.
I doubt you remember this,
But nearly a year after that
We took a bus to a nearby place,
And it was a bumpy bothersome ride,
But you were always there by my side.
We would ride two hours south,
But when you slept on my shoulder
I decided two hour bus rides
Were worth every second,
And I loved every time you moved closer to me.
I could feel my heart burn with a painful desire for you,
But damn if love with you is painful,
Then love is worth every drop of my blood.
I doubt you'll understand this,
But I'm sitting in a shallow tide
Writing your name in the wet sand every time the waves recede
Because it feels nice to know that when you leave you'll come back,
Because it feels nice to know your colors will always be,
Because it feels nice to know that every time my wildfire grows dim,
 there's still an ember in the wind looking to spark my love again,
But I doubt you'll understand.

Why You Sicken Me

You wore a Fake skin since the day you were born but now it's bonded
to your soul and you can't find the zipper
You spoke a thousand words in every breath and somehow I doubted
they were your own
Every time your voice graced the world death fell with the silence that
came after
And to make sure I couldn't remember your words you drowned me in
pain so I wouldn't dare speak of you or your name
Before long my speech returned so you cut my five tongues
And now every breath stings more than the last
And I beg you to take back the misery you shoved down my throat
Frustration holds your right hand
Confusion holds your left hand
And still you blamed me when your therapist finally found your lab
where you experimented on my sanity
To make me feel better you had me overdose on poison to numb my
brain and heart
And I became addicted to the monstrosities you hid behind your teeth
I took your pills and I stole your eyes and you let me keep them
Because you knew they were useless to me
You said you didn't need to see me to know I was bleeding
You didn't need those pills because either way you'd live forever, and
Pain was irrelevant to you
You stood in front of control but just behind chaos
And now every time you open your mouth I could hear the words you
Stole and the voices you've taken hostage
You were a mess with broken bones and a broken mind
Maybe that's why I felt bad confronting you and your problems
You came from a world made of liquid gold
And yet here you stood made of wilting roses
And I think the reason why you sickened me the most was because you
were as human as a human could be

One, Two, Three...

One day, Someday, Probably on a Sunday,
I heard your voice from across the meadows,
Something so smooth
Some would say it was soft as silk,
But to me you were more than textile;
You were the sound of skipping rocks on an empty oregon lake,
You were the northern lights on a frozen alaskan sky
You were the fresh ocean spritz on this 5am sea of silver.
And all they had to say was you could sing.

A second day, Another day, Probably on a Tuesday,
As I walked through the streets of empty flower carts and empty people,
I could feel you breathe two blocks down the road.
The skies spoke of delicate sun's shining bright just for you, and to keep
your eyes from burning, you wore a golden sun hat because you
heard it's what the moon men do.
With so much to see, how could you not feel blinded by the universe?
And the people thought you were blinded by your curiosity.

The Third day, the Last day, Probably on a Thursday,
I saw you sitting on the swings as you drank the moonlight rivers which
surrounds you.
When our eyes met, I could see the cosmos and its 12 hearts,
And when you laughed I could hear galaxies spin with joy.
When our hands met, I could feel reality shifting to make room for you,
And when you hugged me I was left in nebula dust and wanderlust.
You whispered in my ear and all I heard were butterflies and honey
bees, so subtle like your violet tears
And I knew what love was.
So sad my universe was needed someplace beyond my fingertips.
Goddamn, did I know what love was.

The Pains

Ya know right now I'm in a dark pool filled with a million fears
And when I look forward its not into those fears but beyond them
 Where I see the horizon
It's a golden lining across a plain between two mountain ranges they
 Are glowing
I can see the green of lush grass fields and I can see the light of a dying
 Sun
Behind my hands the sky is blue and the grass is just as green
White clouds float down skyward currents and continuously fall in and
 Out of themselves
I'm still sitting in a dark pool surrounded by unknown pains
Real world problems hiding in the dark of sleep
But maybe if I just open my eyes i'll wake up to something different
Because real world problems have to deal with real world people too
Real world people who also sit in dark pools who also feel the pains
 Thank God we feel the pains

The Numbing Buzz

On the road
To nowhere particular
You sat with legs crossed
And eyes dazed
You were a calm blue
Like the color of the sky minutes before sunset
You made the rest of the world look so unsure
As you sat there with a firm gaze locked to the horizon ahead
You carried a numbing buzz to you
And it was the music you held in your ears
And when you offered me a taste
Well let's just say you left me on another plane
And I'm still there following the buzz
Down the street and back
To the bus where you're sitting
Waiting for the journey to end

Past Lives

For Clarice E. Quigley

8.5 billion years ago, I was a star, born from a condensed gas cloud, and forged of pure force. My name is one I cannot replicate in this language, but those who remembered me called me the Sun. In the earlier years of the universe, there I was, a small but powerful white dwarf. And although I meant little to the stars around me, I had a gift like no other.

8.1 billion years ago, on one particular planet of my mine, life began to bloom. My inevitable fate was to die a slow and painful death, but unlike the other stars of the milky way, I had a reason to burn, and I burned to sustain those who would keep me alive, even after death.

Within my lifetime I had seen cells become animals, and animals become people; I had seen humanity rise from dirt, and I had guided them on their way. I had seen civilizations sprout; I had seen entire empires rise and fall in the blink of an eye. I was to them, an everyday necessity, which they would never need to ask for.

3 billion years ago, something went wrong, and I knew not how to fix it; my time in the universe was limited, and soon all of humanity knew it. At the time, I doubted they could live without me, but in a turn of events, humanity had fled the scene, and soon all life on earth had ceased. I was alone. Although I was not the heart of the Milky Way, I carried the prized jewel, and what a shame it was when I lost it.

My name is Clarice, and a little more than 14 years ago, the Sun died, and I am all that is left of her.

Ya know, there's a lot that's still wrong with the world. When humans left Earth they found shelter on other planets, and yet, even after seeing how they destroyed the first, they decided there was no other way to live.

The worlds within humanity's domain are stained in blood, and corrupt with the desire of man.

People: they haven't changed in a good few billion years.

Today, I decided I would walk to the ocean. It's a good thirty minutes away, so it's no real problem, but lonesome walks give you a lot of time to think. This morning I woke to grey skies. Was it just a gloomy day, or was the city's smog really getting that bad? I don't have the answer. My walk was a bit chilled, but my sweater kept me warm; the air was a bit moist, but that's normal at the ocean. Along the horizon, the clouds don't rest, and you can see the sky clear as crystal, so what better thing to do on a day like this?

I hadn't really realized, but night draws by quickly; it's a simple thing really, but I guess my walk took a lot longer than I planned. Dinner, would be ready by 7:00, but after the long walk, I thought I'd Stay at least to see the sunset at 6:45. With that I knew I'd be a little late,

But mother would survive.

The next few things that happened were kind of a blur. I heard screaming. Children playing tag? I smelt smoke. A Barbeque gone wrong? I tasted salt. The ocean air? I saw red. A poor paint job perhaps? But one thing's for certain: amidst the chaos of the world, no matter how simple it may be, there was a tower. The tower, a structure built from order, and from the first colonies. The best place to go.

The western bell tower is the best place to watch the sunset, it's the one structure in town that's actually on the coast. The clouds that day, from morning's first ray of light, had been ominous, the blue sky was, gray, and the wind was, erratic. The bell tower is tall and the best view, is from the top. At approximately 247 feet tall, the western bell tower sticks over the canopies by a long shot.

I walked the sky grey steps of the tower all the way to the roof; the walk was a bit tiring, but it all happened in a minute. I can't remember it. I was sitting at the ledge with my feet dangling over; I could see every house in town, and I could see every boat in the water. I felt for a moment, like I was again a star, above all else, and free to be. To the East laid my home, a quiet one where Mum was just finishing dinner, and to the west laid the horizon, where the clouds did not float, and where the sun shined its last, a sunset of violet orange blues. Then rain started, first a light sprinkle, and then it began to drizzle, the sun was shining its last rays of light, and soon it would be night. Mum was expecting me. The city lights began to flicker in the growing shadows. Even in dark, people still lived. Another thing about humanity that hasn't changed. My feet, soon grew cold and wet. I got up.

And I slipped.

Whether or not I meant to fall,
I don't remember.

But I wonder,

What will I be next?

Just Maybe

For Gabriel F. Mendoza

“Ask me how my monologue went.”
“How did your monologue go?”
“Uh, I don’t know, why would you ask?”
Then laughter.
You told me to, and so I did,
Then,
Yeah.
I guess I liked the way you talk,
And I’d follow your words wherever
They lead.
Just Maybe.

Blue Wings

For Lukas N. Gott

In a yellow tree, a blue bird sits,
And from its beak flows song.
It sings to mourn
For lovers lost,
Ones she cannot forget.
She’s been here too long to stay quiet;
She’s been here too long to be silent.
With her voice, and with her blue wings
She tries to envelope the world.
She is a sky,
Or at least to the boy who watches her
Beneath golden leaves, he listens
Beneath a new blue sky.
He smiles; this is life.

Jugo De Naranja

For Rebecca C. King

One evening in the midst of a storm,
You were floating down the street
With a string tied from your foot to my wrist,
And with a stream of music keeping you adrift,
I think you would have floated forever
In the white orange mix of the sky,
The moon your only friend.
A girl and a rock skim over the
Jugo de naranja,
Skim over the world
Endlessly.

Quiet Boy

For Thomas L Thies

In darkness walks a man
With a candle in his hand
It keeps away the creepy crawlers
But not the spiders in his head
Silver threads falls from his ears
Down to his feet
They drag something along the floor
Drag along the carpet weaved of silence
Up the threads into his head
The man can hear a noise
A murmur of a whisper
He can hear the spiders speak
From the floor he sees it now
Humanity crawls in the dark
With mouths sewed shut
They struggle to breathe
but more importantly they struggled to talk
Silver threads line their lips
Their spiders are their demons

In darkness walks a man
With a candle in his hand
And his spiders hard at work

The Lavenders

Ya know I grew a garden for you
Not just of roses and irises but of orchids and lilies
Did you know within my brain flowers blossom with your name written
 in their skin
My lungs are filled with golden petals oh it's the marigolds again
And my veins with the roots of tulips
I can't hear what you're saying because there's poppies in my ears
And I can't see what you're doing cause there's carnations in my eyes
I cant even drink water without tasting the honey suckles in my throat
My clothes smell of lilacs
And my room smells of sage
Yet it can't keep the bad energy away
With all of me
I grew a garden for you
And of course you've poisoned the flowers which grow within my heart
The lavenders dear
It's the lavenders

Last Moment

For Ava E. Larson

My last moment on earth,
I'mma be a bird,
Ka kaw ka kaw.

Maya Halfacre

Great days

My favorite person
Flew through the sky
Over land and ocean
And landed in my arms today

Tired

When the Oreos are gone
And it's time to go to bed
You change your train of thought
And go through a starry night tunnel
To look for dreams

Why I think white is the saddest color

(A response to Amanda Bednar's poem)

The color white
What comes to mind
You think of what white is on the outside
Daisies and wedding dressing
Did you ever stop and ask the color white how it was feeling
How it felt to be so plain
When you wear a white shirt and eat spaghetti
Your day will end in tears because you know that spaghetti sauce
Is the goliath of all stains
And will never come out
White is the color that gets walked all over
White is never just okay alone
The color white always blends with other colors
The color white wants to be beautiful
But the color white is already beautiful
But just like all the girls in the world the color white doesn't see it

All the things I like

I like the way the grass smells after its been cut
I like the sweet aroma of spring
I like the soft touch of your fingers
I like catching you glancing back at me
I like the dreams I fall asleep too
Because they are always the same
I like the way you looked at me
I like the memories we made
I like the feeling of the new summer sun
I like the feeling of the shade
I like your precious smile
It always makes my day
I like our little staring game
I like that I always catch you
I like the little cherry blossoms
I like that the seasons change
I like the smiles we exchange
Yours always wins the game
I like the songs we sang
I like the jokes we used to make
I like the food we ate
I like the feeling of the water at the lake
I like the way I told myself things would never change
But I lied
I got played in my own game

Wall art

I sit at a desk with an attached chair
The most annoying of all
Each day I sit and look out the rain filled window
What a lousy spring
I had to forget about spring dresses
For our weather is quite grim
I sit at my uncomfortable desk
Day dreaming with an open pen
It is a dangerous thing
Brutally woken from my dream
With my pen ink on the wall
Caught red handed
It really is a dangerous thing

Random

Closing a random door
In a random room
In a random house
In a town I have never been in
Finding a person I have randomly never met before
Fully fallen in to
The lost pit of id

My brain broken down

The capacity of which my brain can hold knowledge
Has overflown
The machine in my brain is busted
No mechanic can help
No thought
No proper sentences
Nothing
It's broken

Hush

We don't talk about it
We keep our mouths shut
What happened that night
And where I woke up
We don't speak of the name
We don't speak of what was put in the cup
We keep that knowledge hidden
Hush hush

The morning

I never wake up on time
Yes I am always a mess
I try to keep up with the latest fashions
But I wear pajamas instead
Mornings aren't really my thing
No alarm can wake me from my slumber
Everyone can try to wake me up
But my dreams have better numbers

Amanda's favorite poem

Hairless cat
Basking in the sun
Like a lizard on a summer day

Nonsense

While gummy bears write rap songs
About how hard life is
My umbrella flew into the mouth of a beast
My mom loved that umbrella
It saved our lives way back when
We fell of a never ending cliff
My mom and I
While we continuously argued
About who ate the last red gummy bear
And who stole the last new toothbrush
Mom i'm telling you it was the dog
Another lie she didn't buy
I am forever broke and my mind
forever stuck in debt of lies

Kailey Holmes

Haikus

This sweater
Means nothing
To the cold wind

*

Silence-
Not even birds
Dare to disturb

*

Rain drips from the sky
Onto the porch
And into the grass

*

Rain
Blurring my view
Of the sea

Rain pours
Into my eyes
And down my face

*

Smear'd rain
Across my windshield
Reflecting red light

*

Rain clouds
Reflected in a puddle
A glimpse of sun

*

Sunset-
Pink petals fall
Into orange puddles

*

Across the highway
Mountains gingerly hold
A yellow house

Middle Ground

She speaks like she's got this world figured out
Like different people have the same experiences
She only thinks like this because she doesn't know shit
When you're ignorant to everything it's easy to think you know
 everything
If you don't know of it then it's not real
She'll say "No I understand but..."
She's lying
Not everything is the same
The way you experience the sizzling of bacon is different from mine
There's a difference between understanding and pushing information
 that contradicts you to the side
There's a difference between sympathy and empathy and she thinks
 that they're the same
Her objective in life is to change people's minds to agree with her but
 she won't be swayed in her own beliefs
She's just as close-minded as the people she calls bigots online
The problem is that nobody is willing to compromise
It's always all or nothing
She acts like she's got this world figured out
But she hasn't touched middle ground yet

Pessimists

They're whispering behind me
I can hear the sounds of their mouths moving
Forming words like "Fuck that" "No but like" and "I hate it when"
There's nothing positive coming out of their
Thin Dry Lips
Go drink some water pessimists

[Untitled]

Wind whips my hair
 Into my face
And salt water
From the ocean
 Into my eyes

You Are

You are the breeze blowing leaves this way and that, and then
directly into face.

You are the squeak of shoes on a rainy day.

You are the whispers of the girls behind me in a quiet classroom.

You are the reason I can't conjugate verbs in Spanish.

You are green, army green. Also forest green... and sometimes
neon pink.

You are my overused metaphor.

I Know

I know that my people are not like yours.
Your people stay out until morning drinking alcohol and coffee
and driving cars to places you've been
before.
My people stay home. We read and drink hot tea and watch
movies and sometimes we dream of being
you.
Your people live in the now thinking of no tomorrow. What's
the point when there is so much going on
today?
My people lay in bed trying to forget about the past; it's all
we can think about. The future must be
better.
Your people are making out on dirty bathroom floors and
eating chewy macaroni and cheese, drinking
Cabernet.
My people dread the possibility of having to interact with
other people, but simultaneously we hunger for
it.
I know that my people are like yours.
Our people both stay up until morning, anxiety that we
never learned to control pumping through our fried
veins.
Our people think too much. Too much about the past. Too
much about the present. Too much about the
future.
Our people are tired. We are physically drained. We are
socially spent. We are emotionally exhausted.
I know.

Relentless

You ask me what I would do in your situation
So I explain that my clothes have been stained by other people's
dirty footprints and I won't put up with it any longer.
I explain that I'm putting my own feet on solid ground and
standing up for myself.
I say don't be soft, not now. Be soft later with someone who
deserves it. Right now be strong. State what you need to
and leave. Offer no more. No explanations. No apologies.
And if they interrupt you speak louder. Show no mercy. Understand
that you've been waiting far too long for your turn to talk, and
now that you've got it they will try to take it away.
 Speak now; speak over them. Be heard.

Mornings

Basically I hate Monday mornings because I always wake up
thinking it's still Sunday
I prefer Tuesday mornings because I almost always remember
to set my alarm on Monday nights
Last Saturday I woke up thinking it was Thursday and I was
late for school but then I smelled my mom making pancakes
and yelling at the eggs

Existing in Walmart

I aimlessly walk through the aisles at Walmart and
I wish that I wasn't alone. I wonder if it would be
different if I were in a city that isn't mine.
I think it would. I would shamelessly
wander, paying no mind to the
other shoppers. I would be
lost in my own head in
the office supplies aisle
wondering which journal he'd
choose. I would stare the journals
down until one of them spoke something
along the lines of "It would be me!" I would
walk away, because I'm not him, but neither is he,
really. I would go smell the candles while I contemplate
existence and him and him existing. I would make
eye contact with strangers and smile to see
if they would smile back. I wouldn't
drop eye contact until they left me
and my candles alone. I would
laugh and run through
the store, and when I was ready
to go I would jump into the cage full
of balls in the toy section. They can't kick
me out if I'm already leaving. And I would walk
out with a candle for me, and his journal.

Casserole Jones

Definition of Perfection

I used to stay awake to think about everything
That was wrong with me
All my flaws and imperfections
And all my wrongdoings
I used to think that I wasn't good enough for you
Or anything in fact
I was surrounded by toxic
Only to find out you were the toxicity
That was in my life
I always wanted to be your definition of perfection
But I realized nothing is perfect

Our Dance

When we lie together
Skin to skin
I can feel our souls dance

Your Little Things

As I breathe in the chemicals
I get reminded of you
For these are what you used to do
I still remember the way you held me
And kissed my forehead
Telling me things are going to be okay
When you whispered in my ear
Telling me how much I meant to you
Your blue eyes that were much
Deeper than the ocean
I sunk deep into them like a crashed ship
Your voice still comforts me
Even when you tried to tear me down
Piece by piece
When you tried to rip me apart
Like used paper
When you said i was just a mistake
When you tried to make it seem like
All I did was wrong

A Special Trip

I want to see the stars
And fly through galaxies
Take a trip to mars
Maybe a new dimension

Living feels like an illusion
Life feels like a dream
I don't feel human
I feel like a walking puppet

It's like I'm stuck inside of a bubble
Trapped in a little world
Always being in some kind of trouble
I don't want to follow the rules

I feel numb all around
But i want more pain
Everything is silent there's no sound
Just take me away

I want to be in a special place
Just leave earth
Without a trace
Somewhere that's not here

I want to feel whole
Not just a waste of space
Something with a soul
Just not me

Non-Traditional Haikus

Storm clouds
Over shadow me
In a dark mist

*

Cherry blossoms
Awaken from their
Eternal sleep

*

Deep puddles
Shallow puddles
I jump in

*

Rainbows
How I was born
I'm gay

*

Colors of
Blue gray white
They don't faze me

*

Blue ink
Splatters the paper
Drips like blood

Ocean Man

Running around in the ocean
The sound of waves
The sunset glistening off the water
The sand hugging my toes
The fresh breeze takes me away

Daily Drives

Out and about
Driving here and there
I don't know where I'm going
But I think I'm lost...
"Speed the hell up fucker!"
He cut me off
But I'm going wherever the wind takes...
"Oh my fucking god! What are you doing!?"
Like I was saying
Wherever the wind takes me

Cup

You fill me up
And empty me
Again and again
But careful...
I'm fragile
They pick me up
Wet hands
I slide away
It's a slow fall...
I crash
Piece by piece
Broken glass
I told you..
I'm fragile

Sweet Chocolate

She grazes my skin
I feel at ease
Her lips taste like honey
Eyes brown like the sweet chocolate candy
I had on that Sunday afternoon with my coffee
She lifts me high out of my sorrow
Above the waves of grief

Metaphor of a Pen

Ink in my veins
Waiting to be used
I glide along the paper
Closer and closer to being empty
I get thrown around
And forgotten about
They pick me up
I break

My Guitar

She strums my guitar
Sweet music she plays

Cynthia Kachirisky

Contradict

Inaudible music
Unspeakable words
Unthinkable thoughts
The cold burns my skin
The air takes my breath captive
His love makes me hate him
He is an undesirable wish
A wealthy street rat
A common oddity
An irrelevant curiosity

The ABC's of You

Another day goes
By without you
Crushing my soul, leaving me with only
Desire to accompany you on your
Endeavors in your
Future life.
Gravity insists on
Holding me down but I keep
Insisting on
Jumping to reach the
Key to your heart.
Love holds
Me captive and without
Notice it
Obligates me to keep
Proceeding in my personal
Quest to you.
Rapid thoughts pass my mind,
Sending me into a world of
Total oblivion.
Unspeakable actions
Violate my dreams of a
World with you.
Xerox copies of my heart and see it lives for
Your embrace.
Zero others, only you.

You

I was once again held captive by your
 Angelic stare.
The heavens opened up the second you
 Walked into my life.
My frightful future was replaced with promises of
 A permanent present.
My persistent nature clashed with your laid back mindset
 And together we created the world.
A world in which balanced scales tipped with the gesture
 Of teenage romance.
A love that would be shared with generations who passed on
 Stories of creation.
For you created a girl who so bluntly loved you,
 And I created a boy who effortlessly turned my tears
 Into shots of a drink who made us hallucinate ideas of
 Sappy love poems.
Together we created art that was entitled
 “Human Existence”
Proof to future foes who denied that affection ever existed
 That we once were the holders of
 The sun and moon.
That we etched ourselves on the cave walls thousands of
 Years ago and have just now been discovered.
Watch me now as I glaze over the part of the story
 Where you ate the forbidden fruits that left you
 Banished from our home.
Watch as our foundations have been demolished by
 The winds and sky.
And now I watch you submit to the sentimental conspiracy
 Of moving on, while I refuse to adapt to burned ruins
 Of modern heartbreak.
I apologize for nothing, except for that one time I said
 I didn't believe in true love.
And for that other time I asked you to be my new
 Entrance to freedom.

Bliss in Being Human

There's a bliss in being human
 So enlighten me on its meaning.
Fragments of broken dreams paralyze
 My blissfully forgetful eyes.
Evacuate your body and stand where
 My soul once stood.
Notice how my veins grip to your bones
 And see how I control you to
 Write cracked poetry.
For I will show you sins you'll want to do with me,
 But dare to consider another and
 My body will rot leaving no trace
 Of this broken system.
You stalk my personality until you've learned
 That I am the night and day,
I am your world.
Without me you sizzle out of existence,
 For I experimented on your sanity and
 You've just now realized the
 Tears you've curated.
You bring your tears into battle,
 As we are in a never ending art of war,
And I bring my shattered illusions of your soul
 And together we destroy the only
 World we've ever known.
But hey, there's a bliss in being human, right?

[Untitled]

My words grip your tongue as we
 Match our light breaths as one.
We find a home in each other's bodies as we
 Reach for the highest points of thought.
You claw at my hair as I trace your silhouette
 Onto the pages of my heart.
I hold your cheek as you whisper kisses on
 My breath.
You hold me with such desperate control I fear
 I will climb out of my skin to take
 Shelter in your mind.
Recite Neruda's heart to me and I will
 Give you my peace of mind.
Analyze Van Gogh's masterpieces and recall
 The sensation of listening.
Finish Sappho's worded artistry to uncover
 The secrets of our love.
Kiss the tender lips of my body and find
 A soul where none once stood.
Love is fantasized by those
 Who desire it most,
But only practicers of love know
 Its hidden truths.

Asylum

He gasped the words “I love you” to me
 On a delicate winter night.
If he didn’t mean it during the contrast
 Of fall, how could he mean it now?
How do you define love based on broken
 Ideas of poetry and kiss swollen lips?
We gave ourselves up to each other when
 Spring’s cherry blossoms began to bloom,
And now I stare at the specks of snow
 God is throwing at our small asylum.
You hold my frozen hand in attempt to
 Thaw the pain you caused.
No amount of heat can rekindle the
 Wick of those long forgotten nights.
I shatter my own soul when I whisper
 “I love you too” because an ocean doesn’t
 Deserve to have trash in her.
An ocean leaves misfits like you lost on your
 Cracked rafts until the end of days.
You pull me in as you dream of winter’s showers,
 And I come to realize our asylum awfully
 Mirrors a prison.

Grandma

To Maria Luisa Rodriguez
11/29/55 - 2/28/18

The silhouette of a woman is outlined
by her life.
The shadows of her joy are traced with
the lingering trauma of her heartbeat.
Hospital rooms and IV's fill her with the
hopes of better futures for the children
she leaves behind,
But she never leaves the souls of those
who become lucid in her ending.
To her passing life we raise a glass of
morals and memories,
Only praying she passed with love from
those who have come after her.

Small Thoughts

An iced head
Paired with a
Fiery heart

*

“Turn the page”
But I’m
Not ready

*

In the distance
I admire
Anything but you

*

Remember,
We are all human,
You uncultured swine.

[Untitled #2]

The Trauma of your hands on my waist will
Torment me each time the wind is
Ice cold.

The taste of your tongue will come to mind whenever
Anyone mentions the idea of an
Unrequited hook-up.

Call me old fashioned but I'd rather sit passenger in
My best friend's car than be pinned to your
Back seat.

Give Me Space

A poet is space:

Dark and mysterious

Or

Uninhabited and cold.

Perhaps something out there is

Floating around in that brain--

Stars bursting to light the moment

You open your eyes--

Black holes swallowing the sound

Of your voice--

The sun catching each page you've ever

Written anything on in flames--

Saturn proposing to your million ideas that

Chase the days away--

The moon lighting you up on

Your darkest days--

Earth gravitating you closer to me.

A poet is space, but believe me,

Space is fucking beautiful.

Kaitlin Kendall

[Untitled]

The moment came over me and I watched it like a movie
The wind blowing and the rain coming down
Ice skating in the snow, but it's all over now
You left with no goodbye
When you said you'd stay like the sun
You melted away like the snow

Some Colors

Red: Warmth of a campfire
Fourth of July BBQ
Coziness
Christmas Mornings
Wrapping paper with Santa Claus

Orange: Fall is in the Air
Pumpkin Spice Latte
Halloween
Big coats and leggings
Jack-O-Lanterns and memories

Yellow: The feeling of the sun in early June
The sweet taste of mustard on a hot dog
Happiness
One of the many colors of the rainbow
The pineapple during the picnic

Green: The soft grass to lay on
The feelings that explode
Envy
A favorite color
Moss on an old oak tree

Blue: The first rainfall
Bright Christmas lights on the house
Comforting
Feel of December
The thunderstorms and lights out

[Untitled]

When we met I felt as if I was sunbathing on Venus
I could see all the stars shining
You give me nostalgia from that night
From staring at the brightly lit moon
To the beautiful baby blue color of your eyes
I fell in love with you
Like Alice fell down the rabbit hole
At first I didn't think anything
Of your big smile and wondrous orbs
But now I see the sun and the moon a different way

Sea of Stars

The bright stars we see in the sky
What shall we call them?
The freckles of the world
Little holes of the universe
Paint splatter from the Heavens
Small pieces of the sun?
Oh, what shall we call them?

Sapphoesque

But come, my dear companions,
For day is near.
We must go on
The world does not wait
And time will not slow.

My Love

You make me happy when skies are grey is such an understatement.

You make me happy when it is pouring down rain as much as when
the sun is shining warm and bright on my face.

You make me laugh, smile, and giggle as though you are the clown
at a child's birthday party.

You make the butterflies inside my head swim throughout my entire body.

I smile a little bigger and laugh a little louder, I love you.

[Untitled]

I see you, just acting like yourself
But I can't help but smile
I'm not sure why you make me so happy
Maybe your laugh, your eyes, and smile
But I like it all

The Price

I will give it all for a price
All the fake love from the hearts for the weapons
And in the end all we can do is love until death

Spring

As spring sprung into summer I felt the warmth collide with the cold
I could hear the birds singing their happy song
Taste the sweet tang of fresh berries, just picked
Smell the flowers beginning to bloom
See the honey bees buzzing about
I can feel the warmth heating my cold skin after winter

Dear Quentin Ruby

Dear Quentin Ruby,
We walk by in the cluttered hallways and don't say a word.
Like we're strangers in a big city.
Everyday I think about talking to you,
the words that come out of my mouth aren't right.
I've said things to you, but they are the same each time.
The year is almost over,
I have yet talked to you.
We look at each other in the hallways and stare,
Never saying anything and continuing to walk.
I wish everyday and night just to talk to you.
Not just muttered words as we pass.

Aeryn Kline

Colors

The bright red of my heart
And the murky green in my eyes
Was not visible to someone like you,
Someone who can't tell the difference
Between rose and carmine,
Between white bed sheets and a black rug,
Between my eyes and hers.
You don't know what I mean when I say
Cream is different than eggshell...
But I never minded.
I knew I was a rainbow, but
I never knew you were colorblind.
"Emily-esque"

1.

I was comatose and dying
So you took my broken legs
And plastered them to your bed sheets -
Demolished innocence

2.

I want to perform an autopsy on
Your past - the broken bones
From old mistakes tell a story
Of a lost innocence

[untitled] #7

We won't live forever. So while you are still alive, live.
Don't go on autopilot. Get drunk, but be responsible.
Make some noise. Love. Laugh. Smile. Cry.
Stay up late with the one you love. Eat junk food.
Kiss your kid goodnight. Let people in.
But never give up. You were put on this earth for a reason.
And to me the reason -whatever it may be-
was a damn good reason.

[untitled] #14

You are not as simple and plain
as they want you to think.
There is a story written across your skin.
One day someone will touch every word
with the lightest touch of their fingertips
with every intention to make you realize
that you are a galaxy yet to be discovered.

[untitled] #15

You were a disease that crept into my veins that
made my hands shake and voice stutter
I said such incoherent, yet unmistakable,
words that I thought you had understood,
but the truth is that you had only heard
mumbles and whispers of lies

[untitled] #19

People say your heart stops hurting
After a while, but how
Can something stop hurting when it
Has grown completely numb?

I Won't Say I Love You

I won't say I love you because being in love isn't possible for someone like me.
I will say that I *like* the way you make me feel when we sit in your beat up
truck that I will forever give you shit for,
I will say that I *like* the way your fingers tangle in my hair when we kiss,
but we both know how much I hate people touching my hair,
I will say that I *like* that you are taller than me,
I *like* that you make me laugh when no one else can,
I *like* that you can cook because I can't cook anything besides grilled
cheese sandwiches and pancakes,
I *like* that you laugh at most of my jokes even though all of them are horrible
I *like* you...
I can say that I *love*....
Pizza. And honey, you make a damn good pizza.

You

I never knew what being in love felt like until you.
You show me that even though I never believed in love,
Love believes in me.
I have moved from state to state, town to town...
And you somehow make me feel at home when I don't
Know what home actually is.
The wanderlust tracing my bloodline
Always treks back to your embrace.
I don't know how anyone else feels love
But I think I know what it is,
It's the overwhelming feeling that I get
Whenever you absentmindedly trace your fingers
On my skin when we are watching a movie,
Whenever you move the wild hair out my face so you
Can see me better,
Whenever you fiddle with my fingers when we hold hands.
I don't know what it means to be in love.
But I think I can love you.
Trigger warning: mental illnesses

I'm "Okay"

It was hard to not fall in love with my mental illnesses when they were the ones always there for me after I turned the lights off. My depression drew random shapes on the skin of my thighs while my social anxiety nipped at my lips and my multiple eating disorders whispered sweet nothings into my neck. While the panic attacks made me numb the PTSD of my father's abuse never left me alone. My illnesses made me who I am, yes a bit of a sociopath that hates basically everyone, but that's okay cause I'm still alive right?

My Best Friend's Ex [A rant about a shitty boy]

Sometimes the anger of the best friend is worse than the anger of her. And by sometimes I mean the majority of the relationship. While I did respect that she was her own person that had to make her own choices, once you started showing tendencies my father did, I didn't want you near her anymore. You blamed her for people liking her and called her a whore for wearing shorts or dresses. You wouldn't let her hang out with her friends anymore. We literally had to hide that fact that we would go get breakfast on weekends during the summer. I had tagged her in a post about having a good day and she freaked out and asked for me to untag her because she didn't tell you that we were hanging out and was AFRAID that you were going to overreact and yell at her again. You cheated on her then blamed her for the break up. How does that make any sense? I am so damn happy that she has found someone that I can text "I'm finessing your girl" and he just laughs and tells us to have a good time hanging out. You are a dumpster.

Sexual Harassment

At the age of 17, I can't even count on my fingers the amount of times I have been sexually harassed and assaulted. Doesn't that make you a little sick? That I am afraid to walk alone at night, no matter how nice the neighborhood. That when I do have to walk alone I hold my keys between my fingers to use as a weapon. That I memorized the acronym SING (Solar Plexus, Instep, Nose, Groin) from a movie cause it's something that I fear I will have to use. At the ripe ol' age of 5 I had an older cousin stick his tongue down my throat and tell me that this is what boys and girls do. Were my loose shirt and jeans asking for it? I had hoped that sexualizing comments from random guys driving by me or guys in my classes would stop once I hit highschool, but within a month into freshman year I had a senior slap my ass during passing period, a random guy tell me that I had "blowjob lips", and had been told that I need to change my shirt because my bra strap was distracting the boys on campus.... I was 14. Now onto sophomore year where I received multiple unsolicited dick pics from kids in my grade and guys who randomly found my instagram. This is a form of sexual harassment, there was no sense of consent. Really? Now in my Junior year I have learned to block it out and am now fearing that I'm going to get raped in college and ignored because colleges like to hide the fact that people are being assaulted since it puts a bad rap on them. So tell me why I shouldn't be afraid of men in my life when all the men I know (or didn't) have abused me one way or another.

A Poem for Someone

You were as bright at the sun and
I saw you at your darkest moments.
Lips dripping with *Peroxide*
And you reciting your old poetry to me.
We baked three batches of muffins that night
And walked in our pajamas to the golf course
Where we ran in the wet grass until we
We were too tired to stand.
Autumn always seemed to be your favorite
Season cause it resembled your heart
But that heart is now tired and broken.
You used to be so beautiful
But how you started treating your friends
And how your mouth now holds a joint
Has proven what everyone always told me.

Hurricane Me

Don't trust people like me,
I will kiss you in every
Beautiful place
So you can never return.
You won't be able to
Look at a sunset without
Feeling the way my
Arms fit around your waist
Or my lips against your neck.
You said: "You set me on fire,"
But only to burn you to the ground.
Maybe now you will understand
Why storms are named after people.

Ava Larson

“Proud” American

Born in just 2003 I'm forced to say I'm proud to live in America. America the home of gun violence and school shootings and race discrimination I'm proud to be an American I'm proud to be an American I'm proud to be an American I'm proud to be an American. Bullying in every single corner of every single county and every single crevasse of the country our leader set the high score for insensitive insults try to beat that. Over social media and eye to eye bullying suicide rates have gone up to 50,000 deaths a year here boy I'm proud to be an American. Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in America adults say it's because we're always on our damn phones surprisingly this time they are right because our generation was taught it was okay to kill people with words through a screen. Nobody really has the balls to say 'kys' to a face though because everyone knows it isn't right. What ever happened to common logic? Jokes and reality are morphing and their offspring is depression everyone says they're going to kill themselves we can't really tell who's joking and who isn't anymore because mental illnesses have been distorted into a casualty. I'm serious though when I say I have anxiety to go outside alone because I am afraid of being raped. Last year as a 13 years old I got catcalled three times in a span of six blocks just walking down the street in the summer. I have grown up in rape culture. You've grown up in rape culture we have all grown up in rape culture are you proud to be American? Sexual harassment has been normalized because apparently 'it was just a compliment don't get your panties in a twist' are compliments supposed to make me feel vulnerable? Are compliments supposed to make me feel self conscious? "Hey girl your ass looks so good in those pants" "dang you got tits, sis" "wanna go on a lil ride back to my place with your fine ass?" They ask me how old I am I say 14 and faster than I can blink their tire marks are the only part of them left of where they sat. This country takes personal rights because its their way or the wrong way ugh I *love* America. According to the men running our country deporting already living people with purposes and feelings is okay but aborting non living non breathing fetuses is inhumane because it's "murder". These men are pushing people over a border to a place they've never been because of the pigmentation of their skin how is ruining peoples lives fair? Nothing is fair here. Nothing. Being different is bad because if you are not straight or white or a male you won't get taken as seriously because we are inferior to imbeciles apparently. Just because you a male loves another male or you a white woman loves a transgender black woman does not mean you are an alien. You should not be alienated

especially because our hypocritical generation wants equality even though we do not distribute it equally. Apparently our generation is getting better but I still hear “faggot” “queer” and “gay” as insults I’m just confused as to why we’re surrounded by ignorance through language. “It’s freedom of speech first amendment” okay sure but are we supposed to use freedom for more bullying? Are we supposed to demean differentiations of our population because that’s what America is now for? But weren’t we supposed to be a new world? A dream land? A safe place for people to come resonate? Women empowerment is praised by our generation yet calling a boy a girl is still an insult women empowerment is praised by our generation yet there is still no equal pay women empowerment is praised by our generation yet women objectification feels like the one being praised. I’m so proud to be an American. I don’t want my future little girl to be fat shamed for having big thighs or to be slut shamed for having the confidence to show her stomach or to be called a prude or goody two shoes because she’s still a virgin at 16. I don’t want my future little boy to be the one bragging about his body count just to show off or think it’s okay to betray women under the influence because it’s easier to get into her pants or to be the one that snaps bra straps to be cool. Most of all I don’t want my future children to have to be scared to sit at their desks because they’re afraid of being shot. I don’t want our kids to grow up like our generation has to in this dystopian nation. This isn’t how America was supposed to be. How can I love America when all it’s done so far is hung people in chains and pushed people away for originality? America tastes so sweet but not everything is what it seems. What the fuck happened?

Stupid Love Story

infinitely i can say i miss you
infinitely i can completely devote my sorrow and attention all to you
infinitely i can pretend to be happy without you
together we wrote the book
on our almost relationship that almost made me complete
and that night you burned your pages
tonight i burn mine
your fingertips mapped out a pathway on my palm that i followed
i followed my heart and your directions and all it did was lead me into
the chaos you always were and always will be
i nearly almost completely no really did lose my damn mind
because still i'm willing to swallow your sorry and start over
again but this time with new illustrations
this time in our story you are the moon
you're the moon just lying there alone
you shine in the darkness
your power is in the night
in which my ignorance turns out the light
every time we start over on a new page it gets harder to write
harder to think
because now i have to think through a big black cloud of regret
i regret saying come back because now you do every other month
my feelings are your midnight snacks
i regret ever falling in love
not with you but the facade of the idea of you everything seemed
so perfect
my cheeks have never burned brighter
my eyes have never found an apple so sweet as you and your attention
that sweet has turned sour that sour toxic i've fallen under this spell
prick my finger lose my slipper true loves kiss has to wake me
i guess you can't help me here
a coma is where this is over
a numb constant state of sleep and thoughts that ricochet off of my skull
but never seem to penetrate the idea that you are gone yet never were here
with no fix
silly girl tricks are for fuck boys who never got the opportunity
to fuck you just your mind
nothing more can be written because the main character just got wasted
and leaving the actually not so bad according to the protagonist villain
successful
the end

She

For Luciana Gabriela Allende

On her back
Her artwork signed with her initials
Sprawled across her spine beautifully
The freckles on her face spell “I love you”
And her radiance is enchanting
Addictions come in little rolled packages
But with this one the taste of her affection is what gets you
A skipped heartbeat would not end me
Because her absence would hurt more
The day the clouds fall from the sky
And the day all oceans dry
Is when I will stop loving her
Tears always feel warmer when they hit her shoulder
And pianos sound prettier when
Her fingers use the keys as a sidewalk
The moon called me yesterday to say it missed her
And it missed the sound of her footsteps on the stars
She is an art piece
Aphrodite carved her face
Athena taught her to fight and she
She is perfect
Perfection is not common but neither is she
She is an award
She makes the birds sing
And their songs are echoes of her voice
Her heaven is warmer than hell
And I love the burning sensation
The aroma of her sun kissed cheeks drowns my senses in tranquility
And infuses my dreams with tea
For me she would do anything
Yesterday she kicked her water bottle
Then carved my name into the dent
Just because she thought I wanted her to
This morning she threw herself to my feet
In hopes I wouldn’t step on the concrete
I guess she loves me too
When the sky turns a lighter blue
And yellow loses its gold
Is when I will stop needing her

Her neck smells like mangos
Her skin feels like silk
And her wings red velvet
The death of her halo will turn my world dark
And darkness will make her fall apart
Her lagoon will always be blue
Unless she decides purple is more elegant
But if purple is more elegant then Jupiter will show a penumbra
On her pearls I bought for her that rest on her collarbone
Her poetry is necessary for breathing
Her eyes are worth more than diamonds
Daisies braid themselves into her hair
To be in those waves is a once in a lifetime opportunity
My dreams are appreciated with a standing ovation
And my words are always worshiped and praised
Whenever I speak to her
Never has negativity rolled off her tongue and stabbed me
She is the box of bandaids
I use when I'm not bleeding
Breathing is needing
Seeing is believing
And she is both oxygen and a fantasy
I will never stop loving her
She is necessary for my sanity
She is my drinking water
I need when I am stranded in a desert
Surrounded by the nothingness of her
Her lullaby a sweet sweet cry
For me to never leave
And she to never go
Because in my heart there is a spot
For her to go and sleep
In the morning we will have biscuits and tea
And she can and always will be the honey
I need every time breathe
Because I will never ever lose love
For her
And L is and always will be my favorite letter
Because she told me
To love angels
But I already was loving one
As soon as I saw her soul
And I will never let go of my best friend

God I Hate You: A Poem

Irresistible is your new identity
Things always seem better when someone else has them
 and you look magnificent
Our feelings are kept in a cedar chest I padlocked
The password is your name
“I love you”s are imprisoned behind my teeth
Only your lips hold the key
Our intertwining digits need an alibi this fling is a forbidden thing
Man I love danger
Your rain in my hair after I danced for you on the yellow lines
 of the street is dripping down my back
The melody of your words has only confessed affection twice
You change your mind constantly
Bipolar disorder and anxiety go together guess we’re meant to be
Your voice and the details of your smile are echoing through my mind
You once again destroyed
My heart is your toy
I’m envious of your happiness without me because you are the reason
 for mine
Never once as your absence entered my mind
2,037.1 miles away I just want you to come and stay
It’s cold in the other place
Forgive me for I have lost a love
My spine has gotten used to sleeping on the ice paved tiles of my
 bathroom floor
I have gotten used to breathing through corrupted lungs and
 my lungs have gotten used to providing me life through
 the hurricane I made from my remorse and infinite tears that
 spell out your name
You taste like honey
Your love like heroin, yum
My conscious told me to cut you out of my life but the knife he gave me
 broke when it touched your chest just as fast as my heart did
 when your hand touched hers
I’ve been drowning in the shadow of you for 7 seconds too long
 and I know you have been too
Don’t forget the I miss you you left in my ear because we both know
I will take it too seriously
I love you I mean I don’t please love me too

Colors

Blue Yellow Black Red Pink Purple Green

Love me as much as I do you

Pink the loveliest color of lust and love and attraction,

Cliche but true and special

Blue is what I am for you discarded me for someone

who does not even really care about you

the way you should be cared about

Paint the sky yellow and scream your name

I miss you please come home to me I love you like you should be loved

Please take your earplugs out and hear me and my words

I love you

Red as the tears I'm crying for you

Red as the sea I would part all over again just so you could see

my drowning

green my skin is turning envy swirling

Someone save me please forget them

Black as the pit I've tumbled down

I mark these walls with promises and devotion

And the number of days I've gone without you loving me

Oh my purple havoc catastrophic drastic overdramatic me and my

feelings and my thoughts and my infinite everlasting love for you

please end me

Just come back

I will steal every color from the scheme just for the feeling

to be mutual

Haikus

Through the dark sky
Prevails the light
Zeus strikes upon us

March 14th
The sky rained droplets
Of fallen angels

The frosted hills
Feel the quilt of sun
Through the boughs of the madrone

The stale smell of tobacco
Liquefying his words
Into melted chocolate

Your cheeks absorb
The reddish hues
Of lonely and lust

Sweet honey sticks in chamomile
Melt my hatred for cold
Yet ice covers my bones in a quilt

Mi Amor

A mi mejor amiga, Talia Rose

A veces, cuando miro dentro de tus ojos hermosos
Pienso, “te amo, siempre te amo, mi amor”
Porque usted tiene valor
Y tu alma es preciosa

Michael Leggett

Fireball

I will not let Icarus fall just yet
But he is going to descend from the sky
Being a foolish boy he shouldn't fret
But he should know men were not made to fly
No man can carry a set of gale wings
Oh no the boy can not go higher
But he doesn't care as he lets his voice sing
He will descend with his wings on fire

I shall rise from the ashes of failure
I learn from my mistake and fly ablaze
From this height I'll bask in grandeur
I have up and left my old trapping maze
I will pick myself up every fall
And rise like the sun or a fireball

Wouldn't It Be Nice

When and where my world started spinning
Over and over again I have developed an
Unquenchable desire for this
Life I had discovered I was in love with
Didn't want to forget this key part of my life
Now locked away within
This heart and mind of mine trapped in my soul
It would be a different world with a different spin
Think of the life I live
Because of the diamond in the rough I had found
Encompasses me with joy and bliss
Nigh to the point of bursting at the seams
I could never think that someone like I
Could truly be considered a lucky man
Eventually I came to realize that I am

Freefall

A brown medal a silver one too
Hang and swing back and forth
Emotional to the touch, excitement
Radiating from metals
Broken, shattered plate pieces and 13 white golf balls
Ivory, so smooth, they go well together
All sit and wait to be used again
An old mitt used by an almost old man
Beat to hell and back waiting until it can
Meet a ball once again
A book of hundreds of reread pages breathing
Through all the pent up dust
A white elephant watching the life
Of the memories around it
A broken watch that isn't
Even right once a day
Counts the days and ticks away in a drawer
A crumpled up racing number, torn in places
And withered from the weather
Reminisces about the thrill of the race
An orange hat worn atop the head of a child
That still smells of baseball
Newly old magazines never to have been read
Pile atop one another
Concealing their secrets within the pages
A given award for being
A great man to others
A pocket knife used mainly for
Carving initials into places all across the west coast
A recent valentines gift never given longing
For the feeling of love
An old returned valentines card collecting dust with
The new one, blissfully in love
A broken toy cello found in a forbidden place
Found and gingerly loved by the delicate
Music it plays
The old and new speakers slowly giving life to music
Hotel key cards stolen in moments of ignorance
And anxiety consumes them waiting for the next lock
Broken bits and shards of glass carried hundreds of miles
As a reminder of the bitter taste of blood

Countless movie tickets accumulated from
Countless memorable movies
All keeping each other company and becoming
A great community
Ancient maps of places that never existed
Drawn by the imagination of a little kid
Who would tell the adults around him that
He would travel to unknown islands
Drawing tools barely touched, barely used
Seeking out an artist or something to make an image of
Pictures packed away under things purposefully
Find a new haven in the eyes of the present
A dreamcatcher filled to the brim with
Daydreams and nightmares, on the verge of bursting at the seams
A wooden cross, a gift from a friend that not many talk to anymore
A valuable meaningless gift
Gum wrappers, who knows how old, laying around dozing off
Yearbooks and scrapbooks of old forgotten memories
Forgetting who they used to be
Memories lost and found and lost again
Only to be found in the bloody ink of a literary freefall

Almost Dawn

But come dear companions
For day is near
The dreadful night
Is almost concluded
This performance is on the brink of ending
The final act all wrapped up
The dawn shall loom over us
As we hang our heads,
But the darkness shall rise
If we start the journey home
With our heads held high
This long beaten road ahead
Treaded by us before
Before a time we all know too well
But this time upon this broken road
Will be our last
The song never lasts, there is always a final note
Like the day always has a sunset
And every journey like ours has come to an end
We have lost our friend
His life has come to its end
The journey ahead of him is long,
And we shall traverse the path with him
In the time long to come
We shall set foot upon the untouched road
Together my dear companions
And he will be our guide once again
Companions to prevent the river from running dry
We must sing his sweet songs of flowing music
We must not pollute them with our tears
There will be a time for mourning but now is the morning
And we must make the long trek home
That is the least we could do
We shall play one last song of his at our arrival
Something for a fallen friend, nothing but new love
And I hope, companions, that he may sing along
With his voice of an angel
His skills that would rival those of gods
His music will live forever on
With sadness in our hearts
All mangled with our feelings

We must see that he did not fall
He is now in a place where his skills are matched
But to his songs and memory we are latched
So pack your things companions
But we must be quiet
So we can hear his final song
As he guides our journey home

To and Fro

Another day, another time
And yet it seems to me
Another odd cloud in the sky
Life goes on and clouds go on
To and fro across the sky
They travel from North to South
Restless as the ocean waves
East to West
Do clouds ever rest?
A moment so slight
So small even a blink
Is too long
The clouds take a deep breath in the sky
They all heave in the sky
The winds halt
Mother nature holds her breath
And the weight of the world lightens
Hardly at all
The clouds continue to sway
To and fro across the sky
South to North
West to East
The clouds of countless shapes
Sizes, weights, colors
The clouds of immense dense darkness
The clouds of ambient lightness
All sway to and fro
Back and forth like that of a pendulum
None can truly see until
They hold the sky,
Until they heave the weight of
The clouds themselves

Nickels and Times

Dead as a statue
Watching my watch watch me
Waving its hands back and forth
As if it was saying goodbye
But time never flies like a plane, nor does it leave like the sun
If you sit and watch the clock, that's when time decides to stay
Time has a mind of its own it seems, but yet it never leaves or sleeps

People can spend their time
Like it is just a mere nickel or dime
So carelessly time can be spent
A kid with birthday money
A wife with her husband's money from work
But a watch or a clock will wave when it is time
 time for time to return
And on its arrival it will look new, like the other face of a coin

A broken clock is right twice a day
Then I guess the clock is smarter than I
 despite the fact that I am whole not broken
I do spend a whole lotta time clock watching
Bird or cloud watchers got nothing on the patience of
 a student clock watcher
Biding their time until they can have a timeless state of mind
The timeless state of mind is like a bird flying,
 so is it a fly state of mind?
The mentality of a timeless state of mind is where time is just
 a relative thing
Like when time is spent like nickels and dimes

Pair of Strings

Instead of loosening myself like a shoe string
Imma do things to keep myself tied tight
Like a knot that is not able to be untied
 A sort of gordian knot
The great hero Alexander was able to
 But this isn't some fairy tale, or a grand poem
No this is an outlet for someone who has been treated like a shoe
The shoe that always gets shooed away from the other pairs
The pairs of shoes that all hang from the telephone wire
 Thinking that they are all high and mighty
When they fall due to untied shoe strings
All the shooed away shoes will know who showed them what's right
 and what is left
Whoever is right will find their left
And those whoever is left will find their right

Home

The sounds of the running river quenches my thirst
The melody of the birds singing feeds my hunger
Simple plucks of guitar strings satisfies my need for love
Sandy rocks between my toes
Cool crystal water brushing up against my body

Mother nature cradles me as I lie down in the river
The earth churning beneath me
The warm colors of nature held in my palm
I breathe and bathe in the fragrances
Basking in the light of an afternoon sun

Nature she takes my breath away
She holds it close to her heart

Slumbering Mountain

The wind rolls over me
Clouds pass in and out, in and out
Of sight
The morning sun kisses me
Every day rise and fall, rise and fall
'Til night
The chilling land dies
The life resting sleep it dwells, sleep it dwells
No light
The moon hangs low in the sky
Nature she breathes in and out, in and out
The world so light
Years pass as I slumber
My bubbling rage gone left behind
The rain trickles to the ground
Rippling in the lake, drip and drop, drip and drop
Time burns away hot day
Clocks go tick, then tock, tick, then tock
No fight
As I effortlessly drift into slumber
A shiny shimmering moonlit lake
A basin crown atop my head
The soft subtle sounds of water against the shore

Proof

People encompass me, flooding my mind, body, and soul with pride
Rushing through my veins burning bright, I
Own my own life that is young, wild and free
Only the music and beat of my heart can guide my way
Freedom, with music was my chance to prove them wrong

Lauren Lolonis

How To Be A Good President

Step 1: Declare war with all other countries.

Step 2: Only let rich people vote so that they can make donations towards our national debt.

Step 3: Cut off trading with all other countries to show how resourceful we are.

Step 4: Fire all staff from the previous president to show that you're better than they were.

Step 5: Get rid of all forms of laws & rules from all previous presidents or rulers of *your* country (Constitution) to show that you have complete control over *your* country.

Step 6: Hire guards you trust to enforce the laws and make sure everybody knows freedom of speech is no longer a right.

Step 7: Build a huge wall around the entire country to separate *us* and *them*.

Goal: Your rule will be great and you will become a president that no one will ever forget.

The Poet Considers Blue

What do we call the mystery that is blue?
The depressed color
The water flowing endlessly into the infinite ocean
The sweet bird chirping in the morning
The smell of hydrangeas on a summer afternoon
The thought of sitting on a beach far away from the world
The deep pit in my stomach when
I think about who and what I've lost

The Poet Considers Hair Ties

The hair tie, always around my arm
What do we call it?
A band that gets the hair out of my face
A way to express my emotions through color
A way to cut off circulation to my wrists
A nervous knot-tying exercise
A safety net for hair
A toy for children
A way to get to know someone
The freedom to choose how my hair looks
A part of me
A way to get through a hard test

[Untitled]

One doe wandering
One dirt road going up the hillside
Under the trees and through the shade
A secret path
Through the forest and past some rocks
A safe haven
In the trees bunches of mistletoe
Under the trees a nice cool place to lay down
To wait out the sunny day
All I hear is birds chirping and my ears ringing
From the silence of the day
Not a dark cloud in the sky

[Untitled]

It is old and abandoned
Not a soul is here
It resembles a cage
The paint is scratched
The field is dry
There is nothing here
The bleachers are old
The dugout is barren
There is no 1st, 2nd, or 3rd base
The last thing left is one set of klete marks

Life

Life can get complicated
Relationships can get messy
Best friends can stop talking
Children can leave their parents
Parents can leave their children
A person could go through their days waiting for
Someone to wake them up from this seemingly
Endless nightmare that is their life
People strive for the times of family dinners
And believing in the magic of the world

[Untitled]

I hear the word custody
And it's as though some invisible force
Is trying to steal my freedom.
Trying to take away my will
They say "What does she know she's a teenager"
Even when your standing right there.
I try to ignore it but even when no one is
Speaking the phrase repeats like a broken record
Forever stuck in my head.
I try to escape the battle ensuing.
I just want to choose my future not be told what my future is.
Constantly people tell me what I should do or
"Do this for the sake of your family"
But we are no longer a family
We're a few people connected by blood.
Family does not give each other ultimatums
Family sticks together, they love each other
No matter what happens.

Christmas

You wake up with the biggest smile on your face
Because this is one of the best days of your life
It's December 25th and you are so excited.

Even though your mom told you not to wake her up
You have to because it's Christmas
How could you delay your perfect day?
So you try to wake her up by dropping something outside her door
That way you can't get in trouble for waking her up.
But when that doesn't work you know what you must do
So you go in her room and jump on her bed
She wakes up, finally, and doesn't mind that you woke her up at 4:00AM
Because you have the biggest smile on your face.

Then you go to the living room (where all the presents are)
And she lets you go through your stocking.
You find money, candy, movies, and of course your favorite CD.
Then you watch your mom open hers because you want to seem courteous.
She gets some random food that you know you're going to end up eating for her
And then she lets you open your present from Santa Claus,
For the last three years he got you some sort of electronic device
So you're super excited.
When you open it you find some movies and books that you asked for
You're kind of disappointed and your mom sees your sad face
She knows exactly what the problem is.

[Untitled]

Outwards the sun shifts as the day turns to night.
Around my head spins as though words no longer matter.
I sit with no more expectations as my face drains of all light.

I can no longer speak while my face is pale white.
I try to walk but Instead I knock over my cup and it shatters.
Outwards the sun shifts as the day turns to night.

I miss my beloved cup and decide to mourn its loss to be polite.
As my moment of silence continues I can't stop looking at the pieces
Of my cup on the floor, scattered.
I sit with no more expectations as my face drains of all light.

I look out the window and watch as the last bird of the day takes flight.
I try to block out the sound of all the other birds and their chatter.
Outwards the sun shifts as the day turns to night.

I take a look up at the sky and all I can see is a
neon sign that is way too bright.
I try to read the sign but instead all I can focus
on is the water of the sky saying pitter-patter.
I sit with no more expectations as my face drains of all light.

I look around and see something moving in my line of sight.
I watch and watch before I notice that it's my reflection.
I look old and tired and my clothes are tattered
Outwards the sun shifts as the day turns to night.
I sit with no more expectations as my face drains of all light.

Haikus

Walking around
I accidentally splash
Around in the puddles

*

On a race with the sky
I try to beat the clouds
Before it starts to rain

*

The sun woke up
To find that the ground was wet
Then went back to bed

*

A rabbit walked by
The dog saw the rabbit and
Decided to chase it

*

Focused,
The creek flowing
Constantly, ever changing

*

Oil rainbows
Collecting mass in the sun
Forever filled with thousands of colors

Fortune Teller

A funny, silly fortune teller
Telling me what to do
A fake, plastic being
Without a mind of its own
Telling me that I will find good fortune
Manufactured just to please people like me
Sure, I like the thought of untold riches
But who doesn't
Since when is it considered
"Smart business"
To tell people that they will become rich

Your face has no other expressions
And your forced to wear the same purple outfit
For the rest of your "life"
(If you could even call it that)
You can't move unless someone pays you
You can't speak unless someone spends \$0.25
Then the people that built you come along
And take that hard earned money from you
What kind of "life" is that?

Under the Sky

Deep in the meadow
Around the bend
Wildflowers grow
Without limits.
They reach for the sky
As they grow taller
Under the sun.

All is seen
Under the sky
All is trapped
Under the sky.

Yellow

The sun,
The feeling of happiness and warmth.
The thought of freedom.
Yellow, the color of brightness.
The sound of laughter.
The smile on my face.
Yellow.
Some absolute idea of
Bright, warm, happy, free thoughts.

The Climb

Orange dirt strewn across pebbles
A slippery slope
Every step taken towards the top
Brings you two steps back from your goal
The mountain seeming taller with
Every second that goes by

Focusing on the height of the mountain
Makes you distracted
And you stumble on some rocks
Every little distraction that tempts you
Makes this climb take even longer

And you realized you've reached the top
You had no help
You did it all on your own
Sure, you wanted to get to your goal quickly
But it's the distractions that make reaching
That goal that much more rewarding

Samantha London

[Untitled]

One day, a man moved in his new house. He loved the house so much, but he kept hearing things. One night, he saw a figure standing in the corner of his bedroom as he went to sleep. Every night for the past few nights, he saw the same figure before he went to sleep.

One night he sat up in bed and said aloud, "Is anybody there?"

The shadow responded by flashing these intense, burning red eyes that glowed in the dark, then it vanished. The man thought that it was all a dream, but it wasn't.

The next morning, he realized that all of the boxes that he had of his things were all taken out and scattered around the living room. He wasn't scared of this thing and he wasn't going to let it get him.

That night, he sat on the bed and he said, "Show yourself. Say something."

Before his eyes, he saw those eyes again, staring right at his. It was quiet until the shadow moved, It said in a deep voice, "Most people would have run by now, you're different."

The man jumped a little when it spoke but it stepped in front of the window and the faint moonlight showed more details of him. It looked to be some creature with horns, but he wasn't sure. It said "I'm glad you're here" and vanished again.

The man didn't know what it meant but he thought about it in his head all night.

The shadow returned every night and watched the man sleep. And when he woke up, the "little things" got worse. Plates and dishes would randomly smash on the floor, food would be thrown around the room, and books would get shredded up, but in the blink of an eye, everything would go back to how they were.

The man still didn't run. He didn't know if he was crazy or not or if he was actually talking to this thing.

On some nights, if the man asked a certain question, then it would come and answer.

One night he asked it, "What are you?" It said nothing. He said, "Can you tell me your name?" It vanished.

The next day when he came home from work, the apartment was a disaster, the couch was all ripped up, and the walls had holes in them. He shouted at the top of his lungs, "Get your ass out here, now. I know this was you!" All he heard was a faint laugh and then everything went back to normal. As the man was making sure everything was alright, he came

back out of the kitchen. There it was. I mean, there *he* was. A man as tall as himself. He was standing there. He had these black horns coming out of his head and he had this matching tail that was swinging behind him. And his eyes were not glowing this time, they were black. The man was shocked.

He started to step forwards and when the creature stood there, he said, "Why aren't you running? I mean, most people don't even see me because they've already run for the hills. My true form would give you nightmares."

The man replied, "Why are you showing me this?" The figure vanished. The man hadn't heard from him for weeks. His house stayed the way he put it and when the man called, he didn't come.

One night, he was sitting on the couch when he felt someone watching him. He turned around to see him standing there.

The man asked, "Where have you been?"

He replied, "I never left. I was always here." The man was still not sure if he was crazy or not but he went along with it.

The creature wasn't really messing with him anymore but there were still some bad times. The man just wanted to talk to him and understand him but when ever he asked, he vanished.

He woke up in the middle of the night and went to the kitchen to get some water. He said aloud, "Are you there?" The creature appeared in the corner. The man said, "What are you? Why can't you tell me?"

The creature was starting to get upset and said, "Fine. You want to know who I am? I am not telling you my name because I have too many; you can call me D, I am a demon. I was once an angel but I got banished to hell. I am a fallen angel, for I have sinned and got chained in the lowest of hell in the midst of rebel angels. This house is the perfect spot for me and it has been for a long time, I escaped my chains and came to earth. The last few people who moved in immediately moved out because I frightened them. And then you came, you were tougher than I thought and now we're stuck with each other."

The man was shocked. He backed up a little bit and said nothing for a while. "Are you going to say anything or...?" he asked. The man said, "Wow, uh, that's a lot to take in.

"Why don't you go find another house to live in?" He replied "Because, dumbass, if I could, I would. It's not often that a house like this comes around. There's a certain kind of energy in the house that's perfect for me. That's why I'm here and if you're not going anywhere, we're going to have to learn to share." The man nodded and went back upstairs to bed.

Again, he didn't hear from D for a long time. Even longer than the last time. The man wondered if he was there in the shadows.

It took a long time after that for them to get along. The man was a little bit more frightened than he was before, now that he knew what D was. It took months for them to get used to each other. The man

would come home from work and D would be hanging out on the couch or something.

One time he came home, and he found D reading a book. Day after day, the man was surprised how D kept himself from growing too bored. On his days off, they would try to make D look as human as possible, but it was no use because of his horns.

Within the first year of living there, they became closer and they hung out all the time. They did a lot together. If D went outside, it was in the middle of the night when everyone was asleep.

One night, D and the man went for a drive and D said, "It's been a few decades since I've been outside. I have to admit, I get lonely a lot." The man said, "I know what you mean, my family died a long time ago in an accident and I bounced around foster homes until I was eighteen and finished with high school. I got a job and a small apartment, and then I moved here."

"At least you know what it feels like to lose someone you loved so much," D said. It was quiet after that and they went home.

The more they hung out, the more that D felt human. When he was with the man, he felt like he was just another human who fit in right where he belonged.

They would often play with D's powers like lighting a fire in D's palm, or making the man levitate. None of it felt real and it all felt like a dream but the man liked it, dream or not.

Then one night, they were out on the town and they saw a woman who was in a car crash. They got out and ran over to her. D pulled her out on the ground. He placed his right hand on the woman's heart. The man stared, he witnessed a miracle. Within a blink of an eye, the woman was fine. D had saved her life. He turned to the man and said, "We need to get out of here now." He ran back to the car.

The man was ecstatic all the way home. D seemed worried, like he did something wrong. They got back to the house and he ran inside. His eyes were glowing again. He was clearly angry. The man asked what was wrong and D said, "Be quiet. Get down." After he spoke, the house started to shake and rumble. Then it stopped and there was another man standing there. He said "Come on out, I know your here...I can feel your energy." D stood up and looked him in the eye. All the stranger said was, "Welcome home, brother."

D screamed; he was in so much pain. The man watched as D's horns and tail went away and there was a bright white light. D was no longer a demon. He was an angel again. He had beautiful wings that stretched out wide and his eyes glowed blue instead of red. The stranger was gone and D was good again. They talked and celebrated for the rest of the night. Over the few weeks, the man felt really weak and sick. Finally, one morning, D went to get him up. He wouldn't get up. He laid there, not talking or moving. The man finally went to the hospital and D was by his side for days. He fell into a coma and he wouldn't wake up. After a week,

he woke up and was healthy, as if nothing had happened. They took him home and the next morning, the man was gone. D tried to heal him, but it didn't work.

It has been two years since the man died and everyday, D sat there by himself in the window of the big house waiting for someone else like him to come along.

[Untitled]

Burning bright.
The lonely star gazing upon the earth,
A silent beauty that no one can touch,
They gaze and gaze until there's nothing left.
A bright soul that fell from the heavens,
And got lost finding their way home.

[Untitled]

Her eyes were full of heaven and
His heart full of hell,
Risking pain for pleasure, she rose up,
He took her down,
Watched her eyes turn dark and her heart shatter,
As the tears fell from her eyes,
He said his final goodbyes.

[Untitled]

Out of the coconut trees,
The coarse grass was still worn away,
The fragile white conch gleamed.
They continued to sit,
Gazing with impaired sight,
A star appeared behind them.
Was momentarily eclipsed by some movement,
The afternoon died away,
The circular spots of sunlight moved steadily over green fronds
And brown fiber but no sound came from behind the rock.
The roar of the forest rose to thunder,
A tall bush directly in his path, burst into a great fan-shaped flame.
A great platform of pink granite thrust up uncompromisingly
Through forest terrace and sand and lagoon to make a raised
Jetty four feet high. the top was covered in a thin layer of soil,
Coarse grass shaded with young palm trees.
Again the stars spilled out of the sky,
Spread out in a line across the island,
Silver laughter scattered among the trees,
Strange glamor had once invested the beaches.

[Untitled]

Dancing in the flames,
The flames in the wind of darkness.
She made a deal with the devil and
She went up to the next level.
She leaves a mark wherever she goes.
And no one even knows.

[Untitled]

She was as cold as ice,
Avoided by the outside world,
She was lonely,
All she wanted was for someone
To love her, and to hold her.
Then he came. His heart warmed her to
The touch,
And his soul intertwined with hers.
Together they made the impossible.

Jazmin Ramirez

when you lose your journal

writing poetry is like riding a bike with no brakes

it's thrilling

scary

and you don't know if you will

crash and break

but your eyes are wide open

ready

writing poetry is like driving when you're gay

it's experiences

thoughts

feelings

it's a made up language and your friends are the only ones who are fluent

writing poetry is like making a sandwich for someone who is deaf

there's pointing

there's smiling

no talking

only understanding

your third eyes are connected and you know he wants onions on only half

writing poetry is immaculate conception

impregnating a virgin

having a wild kid

who heals

and dies for

us

again

wrap roses around your veins
and
sprinkle pollen across your face
let your tears cultivate your fruit
and
raise mountains with your voice
bring in the tide everytime you sing
and
tsunamis when you scream

whisper into the wind that you love me
again

violent waves
kissed the ship's bow, tragic
romance

*

brown swampy
puddles; happiness to
a child

ode to francis scott key

american apple pies
bloody flag
holographic missiles
no stars
paint splatters only red
maybe white
with a dash of blue
national anthem screeching
stand up, stand up, stand up
first amendment violated

america

field of roses
bleeding with patience
for the honey bees

*

the devil's ivy
took over the room
influencing children

they tried to bury us

they
say
we
are
seeds
brought
over
borders
by
love
birds
dropped
in
foreign
places
buried
into
the
ground
but
regardless
we
grow

compazuchitl in a field of white daisies

Carlos Rodriguez

Artificial

Lick your teeth and suck me dry
You never asked once for permission
I never asked once for submission

We fight and fight and we kill and kill and we never lose our way life
We will never lose our way of love
We will never lose our way of mind

Neatly stitched holes in our chests
Ache every time we have to confess
Dead lips smack and snicker at the lies told to those who believe
And the ones told to teach and to believe

Would you break, would you cry?
Would you change just to fit in?
Killing yourself to be something new among those already dead
Everything is shown and taught but not said

12:03am

Snow in steps
Euphoric soft crunch
Late night moonlit walks
You could never get enough of it all

Erase me undone and bring me back again
We'll never know what's really behind them
False realities will recreate again
Forget this all again, forget me all again

What's done is done
Tomorrow is waiting
And yesterday will just forget

Revelation 4:4

Listen to the lies to have something to believe in
Pick at the scabs so you'll have something to remind you
Remembering will begin to be different and difficult for you

He fell and just kept simply falling
His attempts and self righteous desires got the better of him
For he is the first true radical

The twelve-winged seraph
Limbs and wings as still as the void he was exiled into

They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.
The king of kings stalks the wicked
Stop kicking your feet to impress
Unstitch your eyes and you will be impressed

“Tea” Time

I'm sorry for being so shy
I'm sorry for being so freaking awkward
Just turn away and look at the sky
Please listen to me ramble about the sky

Listen to me talk about school
Complain to me about how hard your classes are
Listen to me go on and on about anything
Talk to me about anything and everything

Let's have funny moments
Be my reason to want to go to school
Be my reason to devote my days and months to
Let's have a fun time

Reasons too big and thoughts too small
Shyness slows, but eagerness grows
Are you the same?
Have we always been the same?

There's always a new one sadly
The old one will never be forgotten
They will always have a place in our hearts
Adding too many movies ruins the series

As I was saying towards the beginning
Our shyness is our reason to want to grow
We just want to have what we want
To love who we want to love
Or ahem, like like, excuse the cringe
Are you having fun?
Are you? Like I said you would be?

“Strength”

Losses lose their sting when the truth has been told
Don't stop kicking and grab anything to hold
Just smile and believe you can
I already told you that can

Salty wet lips let it all out
Be strong and willing to let it out
Your silence scares me to death
Never make acquaintance with the one named death

Just laugh it off, hug your loved ones, remember what I said
I told you to wait, I tried to help you as much as I could
I will always help you as much as I can
Just give me a chance and I'm sure I can

Hello

Be my plural of definitions
Be my reason to wake up again
Make me watch silly movies with you
Make me your reason to keep trying again

To resist is to insist
Set me up, string me up, don't look me in the eye
Restrictions depend on your convictions
After you're done make sure you're done

Snow filled deserted towns crossed off the map
Blaring propaganda and children's movies on repeat fill the empty
void of sound
I'll always keep visiting your grave
So long as you keep the promise that you gave

It's Okay

Quitters are forsaken
So just survive for God's sake
In the end it's all for your sake
It's always been for your sake

Cringy writing to be laughed at later
I'm glad I laughed it off later
A sigh of relief for now, a smile for later
Not later, later later

Words can be forgiven, laugh it off, and smile
You always did have the best smile
I would always think of ways to make you smile
That might be someone else's job now, its okay
as long as you smile

It's Fine

If I knew would it have made a difference?

Oh well, cringy starts are always the best anyway
The truth can always wait
The wait makes it more special

Ukulele makes for the best entrances
Everything's a given its hard to be forgotten
That sounded kinda cool
You were always so freakin cool

I'm glad that you're better
I wish I would have stayed around to make you feel better
But it's okay
Like I said, everything will eventually be okay

No Problem

And you were there laying to see
Our beautiful sky starting to bleed
And you were there waiting to see
Someone to come and set you free

I was there waiting for you
Waiting waiting and waiting for you
I sadly gave up on you
But I'll never forget the thought of you

It's whatever now
You can be whatever you want now
Now is now, did you miss it just now?
I told you then and I'll tell you now
Be happy and stay strong, you are okay now

Waiting

If one day you lose your mind
Please take mine away
If one day you forget the past
Please ask me to remind you again

A life in the snow would be nice
A beautiful white world
Acoustic versions are best at night
Let my mind have peace at night

If you wake up early enough in the morning
You'll see such beautiful skies
Pink, blue, red, all sorts of colors
Make sure to tough it out and see the next day

Dani Salazar

Forever

Lying on warm sand
I take a breath of salty moist air
Seagulls voice their descent
Rockets of waves crashing in one ear
Families enjoying the day in the other

I rise to the rhythm of the wind
And I glide into the tempting waters
The icy sea pierces my legs as I walk
My body numbs and the sand under my toes
Is no longer spongy but rough as concrete

There's a moment of silence
Excluding the waves that crash into my wobbly legs
I can no longer hear the children on the beach
Playing or the seagulls descending
I take a deep breath that's cool air stings my lungs
And I dunk my head to grasp the moment
Forever

What I Wouldn't Do

You light up my life like a shining full moon
My heart is a ticking clock made from your love
You're the worm eating up the apple that is my mind
I want you like a man would want a glass of water
While walking through the desert
I need you to end the burn in my lungs when you're not beside me
I'll go against the stinging needles of cold rain to be your umbrella
I'll stretch myself for miles for your feet to walk on
I'll become steel and shield you against harm because
Without you I'm nothing
I can be your hat that keeps the sun from blinding your bright future
I'll turn the beast you see yourself in the mirror into the
Kind souled prince you portray in my eyes every time you hold me
I'll drown in your tears to end your sorrow
I'll fall for you as I have fallen for you, over, and over again
Each time you breathe my name

A

She doesn't just want to be
She wants her name to
roll off your tongue sweetly
She wants her pretty cheeks
caressed by your gentle palms
She wants to feel confident
before your eyes
She doesn't just want to be
She wants to be
Yours

B

To break my heart and then
To want to put it back together
You must kiss every inch of my body
My lips, my cheeks, my neck,
My palms and my thighs
Pump blood through veins again
Until I'm no longer numb

Counterfeit

An Emilyesque Poem

Hot breath on the nape of my neck
Hard hands that hold my hips
And tossle to the rhythm of my hair
A whisper and a sigh collide on lips

Loose fingers curl and reach out the river
Of silk and embroidered white cloth
Stained with red lipstick where I quiver
And bleed sweat of old-fashioned heartache

Feelings of woo and woah provoke me violently
Dandelion feathers spring forth and float
Away and disintegrate feverishly in a pit of fire
While my conscience hovers somewhere higher

Watching a young woman pour out of
Some ripped fishnet stockings
With glazed chocolate covered eyes
Waltzing into the world of misleadings

Clip my wings while I lie deserted
Take with it a piece of my maidenhead
To which you hold in a pocket
Of treasure and decaying empathy

Vista Del Mar

A Sonnet

Beauty stands powerful in her voice
Her hands reach as far as the sky can hold
She dances with a ballerina poise
I stand at her feet and her touch is cold

She spins and twirls across the golden sand
Giggles are heard while birds float above her
Her elegant stance cries out with no end
Callous men and seekers drawn to her lure

Her heart holds glittery charms and pearls
And her mind will never sleep nor slumber
Moonlight shimmering in her bouncy curls
Sunlight waves in her majestic comber

Heavens will open for Amphitrite
For she is the blood and body of sea

Tourist Attractions

A woman sits on a subway nurturing her child
bare boned and breasted
while a man watches snickering and snarling
As a young woman loses consciousness
in a cracked porcelain toilet bowl
while young males take turns holding her hair back
As a child takes grasp on their mother's shaky hand
trying to soften the blow of a
cold man's harsh words on national television
As a woman stares critically in a mirror who's stranger's appearance
causes her to dress and undress seven times just
trying to avoid some unwanted company of a coworker
As a young woman cramps uncomfortably on a metal table
ignoring the parts of her mind flooded with the
callous opinions of men who's sensitive topics will never affect their
own bodies
As a woman cracks open her shell to finally
speak out about a tawdry incident
while men scurry to try and staple and strap every other woman's
shells shut
who dare peep a word of a powerful "man"
As a young man tiredly avoids and resists
his natural temptation to hold his lover's hand
because the whip of his father's fist and tears of his devout mother
is more vehement on his heart than the soft kisses of the man he
adores
As a child triumphs through a trash can of treasures
trying to find his next meal
while careless adults view and spew judgement rather than
help or protect
As husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, children
mourn
a life taken too soon from a brutal bite of a bullet
while political officials watch and bicker rather than learn
and take action
As animal starves to death
his food had moved due to changes in the weather
while others care for just a minute scrolling through
social media
These are the sights to see in "Good ol' America"

Midnight Made

With twinkle stars and the moonlight
Dancing across our naked bodies and
our lips spelling passion
Skin colliding like the Earth's plates
Causing an eruption of fire and infatuation
With my fingers tangled in your hair and
Your fingers tracing tiny shapes upon my shoulder blade
And as we lay here,
The thought of dawn haunting me,
I pray you hold me from
Morning

Favorite Bad Habit

Head spinning from each kiss
Off your nicotine lips
My heart racing with each
Collision of our hips
The heat of your breathe
Rolling off your tongue
Pouring over me like cement
I blossom into an invitation You to invade my privacy
Addicted to each drop of honey
You lick gently off my body
The bees and hummingbirds buzzing
In my head, distracting me but
No hindrance to you
I can still taste the champagne rose petals
That linger in your mouth and trickles
Off your chin
I'm not strong enough to resist you,
I'm always missing you,
Shooting you into my veins and
Sighing your name
I need you
Want you
Love you
Addicted to
You

Too Taboo

Rape:

Is it taboo?

Is it too

Touchy?

Of course it's touchy but

Is it too much to talk about?

Too real? Because trust me

It's probably happening right now

Where is she?

That poor girl?

I bet she's feeling weak and

Powerless and so

Fucking naïve

But how can't she?

She can't breathe

She can't speak

She's not even here anymore

She won't eat or drink, definitely can't sleep

She doesn't want to tell because she doesn't

Want to be a victim

Doesn't want people to feel sorry for her

That won't change what he did

She wants him arrested

But she will be judged

Maybe she deserved it?

I mean her skirt was so high and her shirt so

Low

She was too nice, she led him on

Should've known something was wrong

But was it her fault?

Was it my fault?

Because I was only four but now suddenly

I'm a whore because I touched him

But I didn't know then

I was young and naïve and so

Fucking stupid

Did my mother know?

If she did she never tried to stop him

And when he ran off with her cash,

not even then

But you can't talk about it,

I mean Me Too was a hit but it's no longer
Trending on the internet
Now it's just a thing
Like a car crash,
Tragic but too irrelevant
"It's not like rape kills you"
Oh.. wait..
So now I walk fast at night with
my phone close by and
My fists clenched tight but
If it came down to it I'd be too tired to fight
And there's a girl who camps out in the middle of my mind
Telling me everything is fine
It's all just a bad dream I need to leave
Behind
But it hurts when the boy who sits behind me
Thinks it's funny or a waste of his time to listen to a real ass story
I can only pray his mother or sister
Never have the same experience
But his chuckle still makes me furious
And there's a girl I know who knows no hope
She told me about that time
Her dreams came true when the boy she loved
Showed her how he loved her too
Even though she wasn't ready and said it hurt
He told her it was okay, they were just going steady
And while he enjoyed himself
She enjoyed nothing
But I guess the first time isn't really like the movies
It's just love
But I know enough of love to know
The destruction of my soul
Will not suffice

Indigo Stewart

Valuable

It is danger when we come to written goals,
When we mention sunrises down temples and folded clothing that
smells like a sergeant pepper.

For we can never cause a window to close when our soul shuts
like alcohol.

We cannot cause a book to paint our thoughts just because
the food was not fed to our broken pieces.

We cannot reverse the direction of a river just because the food
was not fed to our broken pieces.

We cannot make someone who cannot love us begin to...

And every step towards becomes a bad habit to attempt it.

We cannot make some people fall in love with what who they are
does not need to suffer from.

We cannot rebrand our soul just because we like how beautiful a
broken heart sounds when confused with the proper harmonies.

It scares me the very most to witness voices change as my eyes re lens
their color.

It shuffles my spine to watch people run from what brings them twilight
for the cost paid to embroider their ribcage.

It frightens me to watch my mutters age and to know none of it was
spent with you loving me, or worse yet, to know i couldn't accept any
ounce of myself without the lie to support my wounds.

I often wish I could spend my melodies blaming you through prison
for the pain drawn like liquid from my darkest best.

I often desire the most, that I will last longer than material...

To wake up within the grace of a grassland, a higher emotional plane,

To nestle my baggage within,

And to be told, that my beauty has been reached,

And the sun carries my secrets as the weight of light's absence is lifted
from my breathing.

Star or Sun

I will still hide behind the charge of lightning.
I can feel illness telling my body what to wear and not mess with.
There's always someplace you'd rather stay than in my breath's range.
Times where bodies escape blankets beneath sheets,
Money men fly without the cost of warfare saying to cry for a bar-goers
loneliness...
See we find solace by the whiskey,
Searching for thrill in a mood-lit one night stand between between
a human and his ability to drink a regret into another spill of
poor choice.
We all sound like carnivals and cheesy hair leans my way to say just
this once that I can look gorgeous with my blood running
through a piano.
I can see his wrist checking the time, trying effortlessly to embody the
night like a laser.
You're a reflex and I am a runner through smoke-made daughters.
You think of certain decisions when I mention night time lasting days.
You think of me when you remember your need for winning.
You run your hands over me in your mind when you picture
reminiscing with another woman.
Everything is done for practice,
How have you been since your gone streak conquered the part where
love between opposites is fatal but lasts?
We blame the year and not the gun;
The woman for her panty hose and the sun for not rising in time.
Living passes without a clue on what days have done to blood types,
Skin tones, and romantic infatuation.
To say the very least enamored by minutes themselves,
By silence, lack of desire, and how something so pure can make a
person thin.
Find myself entirely thirsty for redefining your face than what
happened with you
7 years back.
I haven't stolen in years but the way you treat my daytimes inspires me
to earn
A throne of being silent and criminal worthy.
I love you like water,
And keep you in a kingdom where watching me isn't a sore act of
revenge.
I keep myself caged all the while,
Praying that if my nights ever plan on ending,

I can rise like dawn and look away from the palace I built for you on the
 moon
that has known me my entire life...
I search for the hour,
I can walk across the earth I live through,
To feel the cost of you fall like my everlasting highs.
To feel your value to crash and fill me with less regret.
I look for the sun, stars and dust, to replace my hunger for your
 homeliness,
And pray to the morning, I have the strength to search still.

Equality

You are hell, turmoil, hurricanes, silence,
mud, wind, trees, flowers, fire, ocean, stars, emptiness, matter, every
galaxy, and nothing at all. You are the pain and sweat that can build
cities, the red button masking a nuclear explosion, and the calm in
music that sweeps tyrannical men into dance. You are, part of the place
who made you, and belong exactly where you are at this time. Matter
is neither created or destroyed, and alike it, not a thing around you
could ever take that way, or can be taken from.

Characters

Funny how being in love with the man who seeks
 freedom has caused you to feel this caged inside.
Probably funnier how being in love with the girl
 who seeks knowledge has caused you to feel so confused.
Probably laughed at that being in love with the girl
 who seeks light has caused them to feel the world's
 worst darkness.
Always funny, always mixed, free, trapped,
 euphoric, annoyed, blissful, in pain...
And they all make up love, like a Garden of Eden.

To Adore

If you get to haunt my dreams, at least let me get a picture of you.
-what I said to a wasp on a yellow wall.

Time doesn't ease its kinetic tongue,
I'm always breathing and feeling so young,
Fear is waning its hands unto me and my rhythm,
I'm young, and already beneath the stars.
Sometimes cutting through earth and landing in the galaxy's alleyway,
Sounds nothing short of tragedy as a convivial idea.
Long pretty words tying me to you as I grape vine through the sun's
stare.
Kiss me better, than that orb up there I dare you.
Twisted mahogany,
I prayed under wallstreet that you'd stay past 5 pm,
The week felt short and vodka next to ice cubes blended with milk,
helps me speak in shorter words,
Helps me crave sitting on saturn by your human side, laughing at planet
earth together,
Tongues tied,
All is lost with a million answers as to why we shouldn't stay intact,
One reason making my soul and forehead sweat,
Helping me to beat my own heart side to side with marble fists,
All emotion,
So much sprinting away from being loved at all.
I can see you, behind your window without the upright smile you once
had before I'd ruined you.
I still ponder how i'd teach you to cry over semicolons,
To run with me, with my bones through streets, celebrating how unique
the moonlight is for concealing our flaws.
The taste of tobacco and whiskey is like you, ripping at the back of my
mind,
Trying so heavily to wrap yourself around my crystallizing heartbeat.
I swore on my one wrist indent I'd forget you as fast as my blood can
bleed through a pen.
A liar toward myself, I recollect as you move in and out of my mind,
tasting how well it feels to rest your entire weight on my thought
wave.
I never promised you'd be the one in power,
So, here my darling is an extra benefit.
I'm drowning in you,
My eyes are entirely cried out and

I am drowning.
Face first,
Moisture coating every inch of my biggest organ.
The largest problem dancing through this torture of being more
powerless than when dying,
I'd never replace the sensation,
For it drags me to my knees in the most hateful decline,
But brings me back to living,
As the sun and moon stare at one another,
Holding hands, with little, but their eyes.

Ending of Ending

My foot's path magnetically drives the rest of me toward northern
warmth,
My slim and shivering feet, comfortable as they blend with the
crunching ice that laces today's silent street,
An amusing breeze of below zero symphony, kind enough to still the
water beneath me, helping it to speak in sound wave of one
breaking bone of water
molecule to the next,
And from the effortless cacophony of sting cold silence,
You stand with the snow, one of three pale faces and amber eyes, ready
enough to listen to the leaves' dying grace beside me.
It's overwhelming really, the subtle dutch warmth of December fire,
Finding a home and at ease on my lips, and on the rest of my body,
Not one million books could cherish the way my steps feel now.
You set me on fire,
And here, it is as beautiful as August murmuring fine dine and sin,
To feel myself dance and fall to the ground in ash,
As the severing clouds offer yet, another dawn.

Sweet like Lime

There's a zest I get when I look up to you.
There's a cold breeze that sneaks under the button up holding me
together like duct tape.
Between my lips and intuition there's a gaping tunnel swimming through
me like a pipeline.
Yes, it keeps track of my acids like a checklist,
Losing the bile, spitting it up so my ribs are aloud to sit in the spotlight.
And there's a zest when I taste you.
Sometimes I want to choke the wind in your lungs down...
But the air always finds a way back to feeding you instead of soothing
me.
It's my words that pile like paper and break like a chemical.
And just thinking of you, rearranges every alcoholic part of the zest that
is my body.
I would be blessed to drink your fingertips,
And yet, not so impressed with the hollow pit I become,
When the sweetness drowning my skin is tasted away by you...
Until I am as barren as a sanded kite,
Waiting for your songs to lift me,
Instead of let me wallow in the thin,
Skeletal frame of a soul that I am on earth.

This Soul of Mine

On one divine April twilight's dive,
I thrived, folding souls out of the velvet trunk of a blue school bus' jazz.
The wind would shutter, narrow my mind and taunt me as no soul
 seemed fit a color, to hold the hand of mine,
Too purple, too much of any luminescent shade to balance the steady
 tumble of a scholar's decline through life.
What perfume to blend with apparent arteries.
What song to promise trapping the sun forever in its graceful path of
 fatal melody.
And you'd stand on the other side of that rosemary hill, you with those
 blissfully forgetful eyes and
Remind me with a few temple-diving stares that no soul I folded would
 ever fully please yours of violet.
You'd look right at and past me in a stance of ever easing heat,
So I then, as do I on the general,
Step back inside where a silk sheet has faithfully promised to lay my
 aching nerves in the meantime of everything.
And in all saken truth mistaken for pity, twisted for pretty, or harmful
 like it does in the lavender hour, make me...
No amount of solemn september death,
Can make the sun's fall in the crimson west any less beautiful,
As when the same orb appears again in the east,
Awakening this soul of mine, without hesitance.

What the Hell is Romance?

Make sense?

You have a wild aunty, my god do I like me a you.

Drinkin', sippin', slurpin', grippin' on time... oh sugary minute to
minute, gray-girled-shirted minute.

I'm powerless say I.

Purple, ivory, purple, ivory, ironic ivory, purple, purple, blue...

And violet subs today for sadness, an hour of gladness, your
happiness sunken into the face, on your hollowing birthday
cake, that not even you, have tasted.

And yet another millisecond wasted,

Wasted on bleeding, on feeding on feeling, I remember kneeling to a God
who forgot to remind me what my past life was.

I care more about bees than do books, darlin' please forgive me
when my lips lock in unbeatable fragrance, I know I'll look
pretty,

Don't take poems personal!

But beneath my mind lies the very deepest level of the ocean's
bottom, of which we know less of than the very universe that
surrounds how naive, it's made us.

What the f*ck will be happening during 3017?

In short conformity that's all I really wanna see.

But unfortunately,

I can't right now look past your drowning skeleton,

For fear I'll be too very dry to support moisture,

Moisture always makes for good love,

Tears always make for good pitty,

Co-reliance, on the witty,

Time is flying for the pretty,

Tick-tock-tickin', for that one minority.

Written through a curve,

Hope you learn,

To make and take and break and fake the sense,

I guess... I just don't deserve, to comprehend.

Hopefully I marry a gemini,

This angering language... who decided for the word the(re)(ir)(y're)
to have THREE meanings?

What a dumb idea.

Two kisses, to and toward bedtime, as well or too,

I'm even alive.

What a strange thing to say, "I'm alive,"

With one heartbeat repulsing, regurgitating, all the time fueling and

keeping me “splendid.”
It’s obvious.
Do this and I don’t, I try and I don’t, I die and I don’t
Suicide as survival of sorts.
But I’ll keep lovin’ you forever it looks.
See, not much makes that much of sense,
But I’ll see you at sunset, to read you nothing, tell you nothing,
(I hope...)
But past word or phrase or stance,
I simply hope for the pleasure, to take your hand... and dance.

Water at Silver Minute

It’s really been quite a while between the time our knuckles last
clicked and
How mine have learned to do it alone.
It’s sure been a minute since a green-eyed girl cried my way and
reminded my taped shut bones there’s light when I give it
dust.
It’s been a few past years that my own fists collided with my face
due to all you’d said and done.
But I remember every single dripping syllable off of your tongue.
Like “that isn’t how the game’s won” to
“Be mine.” And I believed both.
It’s been a second, since your last goodbye.
But now I can feel water sliding between the top of my throat and its
floor if I’ve been undone,
To gracefully watch both of you fall into each other’s arms, after
leaving the weight of my body next to none, to cling to as I
fall alone.
There’s seldom left but water to drink,
A brain that hesitates to make you cry but pushes a knife closer to
my arteries as I blink.
I am grateful for the flavor of water,
Its nothingness,
That subtle constance that I cannot fend for without...
And knowing, as long as I have lips lungs and me,
Water will always remain abundant, to my emptiness.

Superbia

It's always midnight for someone like this.
Wavelengths of diamonds spill through her mindset to set off volcanic
reactions.
I lead to iron lungs that drop their children twin like to lead.
Oxygen running down my legs as the breath of a simpleton.
I run more fast than the clock can catch,
She looks for herself in drawers,
Drapes her ribs with violin silk,
Drinks ice-flavored perfume and counts herself ready for
Battle.
I find her cheeks asleep outside of my window.
Half of my energy dancing among green flowers,
The love I have is losing to a gamble as Russian roulette argues with
my half prism self.
The search for my eyes puts fabric on my back that looks to elders like
I'm prepared to regret the rest of living,
No rhythm can erase my thirst for how much you remind me of sitting
back down into an opera solo.
You're screaming and I cry tears of lust to remember tomorrow you'll
have left me sore.
I remember time.
I remember how hours work but cannot bring myself to make
passionless choices.
I'm beginning to lose my venom in the process of shuffling card decks
to
Find your face written in my fate.
She is finding her throat in the dreams of men born to die slowly and
take her on the journey.
I can't write but I can lie.
I am unable to breathe but I can fight with my diaphragm like a voice.
I can drag every cell I have to pick themselves back up and and let them
back out to chance in less than a lifetime.
For you... I can give any inch of my freedom to find myself taking
yours...
Hoping that one day, I find my foundation in the mirror that reflects how
much of myself,
I have yet to learn about.

Maria Tellez

Drifting

Bare feet dance like a cracked branch,
One time, two times, three times until it breaks.
Bruises on his pallid and cold skin
Become visible from miles, making obvious
A violet and reddish color of a terrible mistreatment.

She drifts.

Wrists in pain, something simple like that
Makes remembering those nights of insomnia.
How many nights does need to be awake?
One?, two?, Three?, or until his silhouette
Disappears like dust?

She drifts.

Ink runs along his ankles, red, red, red,
And more red, paints every pore, just like those
Famous Chinese paintings that over time, become
Old and yellow, becoming like the spring rain.

It was the moment when realized that was drifting,
Like a withered flower, like a dead flower.

Opposite

Dark night and light day
Feel like a butterfly and stay in the floor.
Infinite universe with luminous stars
Pink and Blue, May and June, Pencil or Pen.
Energy coming from nowhere.
Red lips and pale hands, sleep but awake.

Time Goes By

There, in the darkness, is just like an angel
He smiles and laughs, his sweet laugh is slowly going out
Then, his silhouette of angel remains bright and intact.
The spring flowers through the window and the petals
Of the cherry tree fall down.
He still sits in that old wooden chair, in the darkness,
 Just like before.
However time passes, fast but slow at the same time
The sound of dry leaves come down like tears.
And now the cold winter falls like snow, the cherry tree is gone
His smile and expressions that become cold at some point
Makes me feel miserable, his pale skin becomes invisible,
An empty feeling like the autumn sky,
The wooden chair vanishes into the air,
 The Angel goes down, dust, death.

Touch

My fingers slide through the smooth skin
Of those leaves of an old book,
Hoping to steal all those wise and beautiful words.
It doesn't seem to work, then I touch the cold wall
Which is now like a rock, step by step,
 My fingers follow the wall
Until I reach the end of this, In the corner of the room,
Swallowed by the darkness lay that instrument, where
Your trace or fragments are stuck everywhere
I took the silk curtain that covers the brown piano,
Yes, that piano that seduces me every time I'm closer
And now I know that when I caress it with my little fingers
I will not be able to wake up from your warm touch.

Wishing on a Star

I run, and run, and run,
The cold air hit my cheeks
Like tiny ice flakes,
It was cold, really cold.

I keep running, looking through the sky,
The universe. There, shining and beautiful stars,
But one, one was captivating.

"I wish" I said in a whisper,
As if what I wanted to say was a secret.

I ran until my legs hurts, and I know
Nobody hear me, because I keep running.

The star smile at me, it is possible that she already
Know my wish, it was too obvious, only for her.
She seems so far away, she was?

"I wish" This time I scream
Like if I want the world know everything.

My knees hurt when they touched
The cold ground beneath my feet,
Seems like I was running for a
Century and I didn't wish anymore,
Because all I want is so far away.

I just going to keep wishing on a star.

Sunrise

Green sweet
Frog, sings
With the rise
Of sun.

Black Is the Color of Life

Clear eyes like the resplendent ocean,
They are so blind that they do not appreciate what is
Celestial of life and the lonely of the oppressive.
Slaves come everywhere, poor but still
Believers of their freedom.
Eyes sad and full of fear, pleading
Mercy and a little compassion, but he does not see,
He is blind, is he?
William Wilberforce once said, "You may choose
To look the other way but you can
Never say again that you did not know."

He knew, he knew that suffering
It could kill the black color of life,
He chose not to know anything,
But the black man remained.
Following rules, guidelines,
Laws, and regulations that led
On the path of pain.

Life was withering before his sad eyes,
Summer flew by, autumn was falling down
With dead leaves until it came cold and cold
Winter that burned to the deepest
Of his bones.

Spring never came, he could not see those
Beautiful pink, purple, blue, orange flowers
And yellow, because he remained in a
Cage, a horrible cage that kept him
Prisoner.

His black skin one day disappeared
With the memory of the desire for freedom.

Fatigue Personify

The cold breeze of an
April without heat
Touched her cheeks as
If life itself depended
On it, or even as if the end
Were near with each
Beat of a runaway and a
Accelerated heart that
With fear hid deep inside
Her breast, hiding the
Discomfort that he kept.
On the other hand, his
Feet cried out for him to
Stop but the truth is that
He could not succumb to
Such a request,
They hurt like hell to the
Point of failing on the
Asphalt that surely on that
Starry night would be
Completely freezing as if an iceberg
 Were grounded under his heels.
In fact, that night was cold and
Violent penetrating
To the depths of his bones that
Just as his limbs were exhausted,
Not to mention that his red and
Emaciated eyes were exhausted
Because of the secretion that flowed
From them like bucolic rain
And grayish of a damp night that
 Immediately clouded his sight.

Euphoria

The curtain falls and I'm out of breath
I get mixed feelings as I breathe out,
Sentimientos unicos.

And I see you, solitario, solo, desolate.

Then I try to comfort myself, because I want
You to be feliz con mi compania, by your side.
I tell myself the world can't be perfect
But a the same time it seem really ideal,
You are in my ideal mundo, world.

You are not alone anymore,
Take my hands now, smile.
When I'm with you I'm in utopia,
Solo tu.

I get mixed feelings as I breathe out,
Because you are the cause of my euphoria,
Como si fueras el éxtasis de mi felicidad.

Street

Lonely street,
Grey around,
And people
Walk out.

Escent

I empty my drink but it gets filled with loneliness,
Just a memory of your sweetness essence remains
In my mind.

Even the trash bag thrown away on the street
Makes a lonely sound in the wind,
Your sweetness essence
Still fresh.

I keep empty my drink but again gets filled
With loneliness.

A memory.

Without you, I cant breath,
Your sweetness essence remains in my
Mind, you still shine,
You're still like a scented flower.

Lust for life

Raindrops inside your eyes,
I'm breaking down.
Fragments fly scented,
Lust in your being,
Greed.

I don't wanna feel
Nothing about it,
Lust for life,
Greed in your soul.

Alphabet Poem

But you still there looking for someone.
Can you stop it? Maybe you can't find the person.
Do you know? People can die
Every day and you still there.
Few necessary words you need to understand my
Good intention, ¿ You know?, ¿ Do you still there?
Heart can change and you need to change it.
I change for you, but, you still there
Just like ever, alone, like the statue
Keep this way
Looking for something good?, ¿ Am I good?
My mind is lost
No one knows
Or is just that I don't want that they know?
Poor thing, you are there.
Quarto is what I want to say.
Romance we don't have, no, anymore.
Sweet temptation, and you still there.
The air is fresh, but you are like a statue
Unimaginable feeling, because you are
 Looking for someone else, your
View is lost too.
Whatever, you don't hear me, now the
Xenophon is away too.
You are away from me, the
Zeal don't exist anymore.

[Untitled]

Cold raining day
It keeps until
The sunlight
Comes.

Lie, Modification

You want me to stay, pills on the floor,
Opaque colors, caught in a lie, inside
The lie you create.

I've lost my way
You want me to stay
Just like me every day, laying
To myself.

I feel so far away,
You always come my way
It repeats all over again.

Your lie.

Whoever it may be, save me, rescue me.
Save me, rescue me, save me.

It continues even when I run away
I am caught in a lie, it keeps me
Dead in life,
Find me.

I can't be free from this lie,
Give me back my smile.

Caught in a lie.

Your lie.

Pull me from this hell
I can't be free from this pain
Save me, rescue me, save me,
Rescue me, I am being punished.

I am still the same person I was before,
Remember?, just the same,
I am here, the same person I was from before, but
An overgrown lie is trying to swallow me whole.
I am being punished.

Your lie.

I listen to your song,
Again and aging, and says that
I can't be free, I am being
Punished.

I can't be free from this lie.

Pull me from this hell
I can't be free from this pain
Save me, rescue me, save me,
Rescue me, I am being punished.

An Unfinished Meeting

I remember that melancholic night of a cold november,
The sweet symphony of a piano was in that forgotten,
Pure and white room. I also remember that I wasn't too
Much smart, then I meet you, I was a new student, you
Were so frustrated because I can't learn how to play
Happy Birthday, an easy song, I know I had so much in
My mind that I couldn't pay attention.
Every Monday I went to that class, hoppin that you
Listen what I need to say, what god want to say.
Days pass and the spring come, outside of school, there
Was a big tree, and around him flowers of different colors,
Tulips are my favorite, but you, you hate flowers,
What can I say, you hate at least everything I love, like
Sunny days, or raining days, coffee with sugar, coffee
Without sugar, karaoke nights, music, rice and juice,
Bot you never hate reading or writing, and I, I really hate
Reading and writing, maybe is because I don't have
Imagination or pasion like you.
One day your skin starts to become transparent, you say
That was it because the time.
Next day you were not in the piano room, you were dust,
I never meet you, I don't even remember how you look.

taylor jane travis

collision course

all those nights i spent awake thinking of you
because i thought you and i were on a
collision course, crash land on a
distant planet, i thought you were an
ethereal being,
from another solar system,
grab me by the wrists and show me
how to be one of you. show me the
intimate nights where all you do is read, tell me, are you
juggling four books at once like you're juggling four girls at
once, including me? no, don't tell me
keep that secret to yourself, i can't bear to hear it. oh,
lonesome boy, you will not find
meaning to your life in the jeans of other girls, you see, that is
not the way to do it.
open up and let your colors flow into me
particularly the colors about your pain, now
quick,
run into my open arms, find
solace in my embrace;
take what little air is left inside your lungs and use it to create
unimaginable beauty, be
vanadium--bright white and pure, and i'll
watch as you realize that you're
x² - me.
you don't need me to guide you anymore, be
zealous without me, but always remember that distant planet
we collided on.

the hopeless destroyer of hearts

the picture of you
sitting on my subconscious bookshelf
is a different kind of melancholy.
i often wonder what your middle name would be
if it weren't the one written on your birth certificate.
maybe it would be
a bottle of whiskey to a recovering alcoholic
or
a fresh pack of cigarettes to already damaged lungs.
maybe even
a new set of watercolor paints to an artist with broken fingers.
something phosphorescent to something nocturnal.
a book gifted to a pyromaniac.
you are a useless masterpiece, my love.
and i am a forgotten work of art.
if only i weren't covered in gasoline,
and you weren't holding the match.

love at large

was there even me before i met you?
was i a tangible being
and not just an idea
floating in the subconscious of my mind?
the coming of you
into my life
blew me into creation,
and i left my first onyx footprint in the earth.

a sweet gossamer love seemed to be our forté
as we danced in late july,
and a gentle fervor graced your lips
as you told me you loved me,
and a melancholy tranquility overtook me
as i sat in your embrace.

but i didn't see a sweet gossamer
when i looked into your eyes
and i didn't see the gentle fervor
or the melancholy tranquility.

i begin to ask you what went wrong
but the words turn tepid in my throat
as you tell me you fell in love with another.
if i've learned one thing from you,
young lover,
it's to be careful.
don't break your rib cage on the sharp tooth or fingernail
of someone who claims they care.

adore

i want to look at you with all the lights off,
and the curtains closed,
the bulbs under the lampshades are cold to the touch.

i want to look at you when no one is looking,
all eyelids have been drawn closed like shutters
and breathing is deep and melodic.

i want to look at you when you think no one is watching
all backs are turned, the walls have fallen down,
the monsters are exposed.

we can spend a little time together,
you and i,

nights with cigarette smoke infused cheap wine,
and old decks of cards that have seen their better days,
and i think a fire is slowly dying in the fireplace.

days with soft blankets and wicker baskets,
and warm breezes that almost require a jacket,
and i think some flowers are blooming in the distance.

cold evenings with hands closed firmly around mugs,
and fingers intertwined like shoelaces,
and i think your hands are playing idly with the tips of my hair.

and when the lights are off,
and eyelids are closed,
long after the fire has died in the fireplace,
and the mugs have been retired to the kitchen sink,
i will still be conscious.
when no one is looking is when all the walls
come crashing down
and the monsters come out to play.

parts

part i - holding hands

it wasn't long.
maybe a week at most.
i never actually met you in person,
but we had mutual friends so i guess it was okay that
 i never held your hand.
i felt like I knew you.
i knew you so goddamn well.
i've only felt that with one other person (and he broke
 my heart ten times over).
it was a cliché, but this world is full of clichés so what's
 the difference.
we were different, yes, but the differences are what made
 us great.
i tend to refrain from using the word grand
because i once read in a book that grand is one of the phoniest
 words in the english language.
i adopt a lot of my philosophies and beliefs from books.

i tried to explain this to you as neatly as i could
because if there's one thing i like when ending things it's
 neatness.
that's a lie i like things as messy as they come.
if it's a neat ending was the rest of the book even worth
 reading?
it should be messy. it should leave you wanting more
and wondering 'what if'

part ii - so it goes

it's 10:32 p.m. on a wednesday night.
i'm thinking over everything again because i overthink
 and obsess, try and change the past,
purposely neglecting that the past has already been set
 in stone.
but then again the sword was also set in stone
until some scrawny, underfed nobody pulled it out.
so maybe i just need somebody to pull the plug on this
 whole 'time' thing
because time is essentially just a human creation.

well, the way we perceive time, anyway.
humans have a biological need to measure things.
hours and minutes and seconds are all a figment of
 humanity's imagination
and i did not get nearly enough figments with you.

i don't know what it was about you.
maybe it was the way all your shirts had holes in the hems
or the way my face would fit perfectly into the crook of
 your neck
or maybe it was the way you smelled (god i loved the way
 you smelled).
there's a bunch of little things
that all add up to bigger things
that all add up to one big fact that's been floating in my
 subconscious for quite some time now.
i am in love with you.
and i've been in love with you since the beginning of time.
and will continue to be in love with you
until one day the universe implodes and we all die along
 with it.
hell, maybe i'll even be in love with you long after we're
 all gone.

sometimes i think everything we had is buried alongside
 your love for me.
sometimes i think you still visit those graves with a bouquet
 of nostalgia, and a touch of melon collie and the
 infinite sadness.
i read in a book that nothing is truly dead because it exists
 in the past and always will exist in the past
so when something dies they simply say 'so it goes'
and until we crack the code to the fourth dimension there's
 no recreating the past.
the past died long ago.
so it goes.

part iii - n u m b

it's cold out there
and i can hear the rattling of tree branches.
it sounds like the rattling of bones in the graveyard by my
 school.
even the tombstones are cold
but then again the tombstones are always cold.
it's a cold world out here

and i'm caught in the middle of it.
it's hard to feel whole when you leave a piece of you with
 everyone you've ever touched.
it's not whole, but not empty.
its
numb.

we all carry around a tail.
we try and hide it, but it's there.
some are a few inches short (i know few people like this)
while others are miles long (most of my friends have
 tails they need to tie up at night
because if they don't they'll hang themselves in their sleep).
many of them have tried other, more conventional forms of
 death.
none of them have succeeded.
i've seen what they look like, these conventional forms.
they have a certain beautiful gossamer sheen to them.
they carry around the word romanticize in their back pocket.
idealize the conventional forms until cries for help are
 packaged up and set aside for tomorrow.
but tomorrow is a thing that never comes.

and i am comfortably numb.

part iv - ghosts

there's ghosts in my room.
not physical ones. that would be an inconvenience.
all watching me while i dress and undress.
sleep and don't sleep, let insomnia grab me by my throat.
metaphorical ones
they follow me around wherever i go.
i don't mind them, sometimes.
sometimes they're a welcome distraction.
other times not so much.
other times they need to leave.
other times they oppress me until their hands are forced
 down my throat
yanking up all the words i'm too afraid to say myself.
i don't know why they do this.
maybe they're just trying to help me
but it's hard to accept the help of those who cause you pain.

don't listen to the ghosts.
they can't be trusted.

velvet lips

you were so sweet
you tasted like a toothache.
you left cavities in my teeth
and cavities in my chest.
and the reason i know for a fact that our time together is over
is because i finally shed my tears for you.
the amount was enough to create another biblical flood
but i didn't have enough time to build my arc
and now i'm drowning in these tears,
this tide.

sweet sea-green boy.
the tangerine skies have nothing on you.
you're picasso's main subject.
van gogh paints you into his landscapes,
pollock spatters your color into canvases.

i try to drink enough water to drown you out.
leave my thoughts and make sure to slam the door on your
way out.
don't forget your coat,
i don't want any remains of the deceased left in here.

i try to drown you in another boy.
an aqua-lake boy.
he's not in picasso or van gogh or pollock,
but he's still ethereal.
and he takes care of me.
he makes sure i've eaten breakfast
because he knows i have a tendency to forget.
he makes sure i'm happy
because he knows what i'm going through
and he knows that i rarely have good days anymore.
and he tries to make me feel better every day.
and i know you know too.
i know you know how i feel
the difference is
i don't believe you care.
i don't believe you ever did.
you just kissed me because my lips were velvet
and my words tasted like honey.

Madison Valente

Sapphire Necklace

One day I was taking a walk, and I saw this beautiful necklace in a pawn shop window. It was a sapphire necklace, but the problem was it was really expensive, and I really wanted it, but I couldn't afford it. It was \$250 because it was an antique. It was a beautiful blue. When I looked at the stone, I felt like I was looking at the ocean. The necklace had a curse on it; the seller told me that everyone that wore it disappears, never to be seen again.

The Hell's Angel

Texas gal, eighteen, Skyler Black. She's a part time Hell's Angel. She wears normal clothes in the day, and then she wears sexy clothes at night. She has chestnut hair; she wears black all the time. She's an atheist. Her parents tried to raise her as their little princess, but she became rebellious. Her parents are the type that don't care. She dropped out of high school and didn't care, so she became a Hell's Angel. She became a Hell's Angel because she is kind of a rebel and she doesn't care what her parents say.

She met a Hell's Angel on the street, and they later fell in love. It was a rainy day one afternoon while Skyler was walking down the street. Spencer was polishing his bike, then he saw this beautiful girl and then instantly went to talk to her. Right off the bat they became friends.

First he asked her, "Where are you from?"

"Texas," Skyler said.

"How old are you?"

"Eighteen."

"When you were little, what did you do?"

"I don't remember a lot about it because my parents didn't care what I did as long as I was out of their hair."

"Oh. I'm sorry you had to go through that," he said.

"It's okay. It taught me to be a better person. My parents didn't teach me manners I had to figure them out on my own; I was basically on my own the whole time. They helped a little but not very much. Of course they taught me math, and other things, but they didn't care. So, yeah, I had a pretty crappy childhood." She paused, "So when you were little, what did you do?"

"My childhood was bad."

"How so?"

"Well, when I was little, I got in a car accident."

"Oh my."

"It was so bad that I almost died, but the doctors told my parents it was some type of miracle that saved my life. I broke my leg in the car accident."

"Anything else happen, Spencer?"

"Yeah, I fell down a flight of stairs and broke my arm."

"Oh my gosh! So you were a reckless child growing up?"

"You could say that."

She's a part time Hell's Angel, and her work isn't very far so she asked Spencer if he wanted to go out for a cup of coffee.

"Hey, Spencer."

"Yeah?"

“Do you want to get a cup of coffee with me?”

“Sure.”

So everyday Skyler and Spencer went out for coffee, and every day they began to get closer.

Years later they got married, and then one day at their house Skyler told Spencer she was pregnant.

“Spencer, sweetheart, can you come in here please?”

“Sure. What’s up?”

“Listen, don’t freak out.”

“Okay?”

“I’m pregnant.”

“*What?!*”

“I told you not to freak out.”

“Yeah, well, too late now.”

“Sweetheat, why are you freaking out? It’s really no big deal.”

“No big deal? This is a huge deal!”

Then Spencer finally calmed down about it.

Nine months later the baby was born. Her name was Marianna. Now that Skyler’s baby girl was born, they left the Hell’s Angels because they didn’t want to raise their child as a Hell’s Angel. So Skyler taught Marianna all the things her mother didn’t. She wanted to be a better role model than her mother ever was.

Timmy the Stupid Turtle

There once was a stupid turtle. His name was Timmy the Turtle. He didn't know why he was so stupid until one day when he asked a bunny.

“Why am I so stupid?”

And the bunny said, “Because you always tip over.”

So he ran home where nobody could see him and he cried in his shell. After that bad day of everyone made fun of him.

Timmy went on a mission into space and somehow came back smart, and then everyone liked him again. Even the mean bunny liked him. While he was in space he learned a thing or two. He learned math, science, and English; all the academics you can think of, he learned. He went from a little nerd who was quiet all the time to a turtle that made friends. He wasn't always the one who had his head stuck in a book; someone else was, but not him. He was like an open book; he talked to everyone. He wasn't the shy turtle anymore, he was a brave turtle for once.

Andrea Wagner

Always (German) - September 2017

“Avy, wir müssen los!” Wenn wir uns jetzt, kommen wir noch zu spät.” Schnell laufe ich die hölzernen Stufen, die bei jedem Schritt ein Klappern von sich geben, hinunter. Im Vorzimmer der engen Wohnung wartet meine beste Freundin Nessa auf mich. “Ich komme ja schon.” Schnell schlüpfte ich in meine schwarzen Converse und trete mit meiner Jacke in der einen und meinem Pennyboard in der anderen Hand aus der Wohnung meiner besten Freundin.

Nessa ist seit einigen Jahren in einem Jugendclub und hat mich gefragt, ob ich sie heute begleiten will.

-

Nach knapp zehn Minuten stehen wir auch schon vor einem weißen Gebäude mit vielen Fenstern. “Kommst du jetzt oder willst du das Gebäude nur von außen anstarren?” Nessa nimmt meine Hand und zieht mich in das Haus.

“Nessi” Ein blondhaariges Mädchen kommt auf uns zu und umarmt Nessa zur Begrüßung. “Und wen hast du denn da mitgebracht?” Sie deutet auf mich und betrachtet mich dann von oben bis unten.

“Das ist meine Beste Freundin, Ava.” Grinsend legt ihren Arm um meine Schulter. Schließlich stellt sich auch das andere Mädchen vor: “Ich bin Ann.”

Nach ein paar Minuten, betritt noch ein anderes Mädchen die Garderobe. “Beccaaaaaaa!” Sofort halte ich mir die Ohren zu, weil diese das Kreischen von Ann und Nessa sonst nicht überlebt hätten. Die drei Mädchen umarmten sich zur Begrüßung, bevor Nessa, Ann und die Braunhaarige, die anscheinend Becca heißt, sich wieder zu mir drehten.

Als sie bemerken, dass ich mir wegen ihnen die Ohren zuhalte, beginnen alle drei zu lachen. Nach wenigen Sekunden steige ich in das Lachen der Drei ein.

“Warum lacht ihr den so?” Sofort höre ich auf zu lachen und schaue in die Richtung, aus der die Stimme gekommen ist.

“Das ist übrigens Simon und da kommt sein Bruder Philipp.” Ann deutet auf die beiden Jungs, die gerade in den Raum gekommen sind. Dankbar lächelte ich ihr zu, bevor ich die beiden genauer betrachte.

Beide haben braune Haare, wie Nessa, Becca und ich. Simon hat außerdem noch eine Brille im Harry Potter Style und Philipp ist eindeutig älter als sein Bruder.

“Das ist Ava.”, meint Nessa an die beiden Jungs gerichtet, während sie erneut ihren Arm um meine Schulter legt. Philipp lächelt mich freundlich an, während Simon mir nur zu nickt.

“Es liegt nicht an dir, er ist immer so.”, flüstert Nessa in mein Ohr. Daraufhin fangen Ann, Becci und ich zu kichern an. Auch Philipp grinst. Wahrscheinlich ahnt er, was Nessa gesagt hat.

Simon verdrehte nur seine Augen.

-

“Willst du heute bei mir übernachten?”, fragt mich Nessa, während ich in die Küche laufe, um mir einen Milkshake zu machen. “Why not?” Ich nehme mir ein paar Erdbeeren und werfe sie in den Mixer. “Wann kann ich kommen?”, frage ich in mein Handy.

“Redest du mit mir, Ava?” Ich höre, wie meine Mutter die Treppe runter geht und zu mir in die Küche kommt. “Nein, ich telefoniere mit Nessi.” Ich hole die Milch aus dem Kühlschrank, während ich hinzufüge: “Darf ich heute eigentlich bei Nessa übernachten?”

Nachdem meine Mutter genickt hat, nehme ich mir den fertigen Milchshake und gehe in mein Zimmer, um Gewand einzupacken.

-

“Was machen wir jetzt?” Nessa und ich sitzen auf ihrer Couch und langweilen uns. “Wir könnten raus gehen.”, schlägt meine beste Freundin vor und ich nicke zustimmend.

So ziehen wir uns unsere Schuhe an und treten durch die Tür. Da es heute sehr sonnig und warm ist, haben wir unsere Jacken in der Wohnung gelassen.

Hand in Hand schlendern wir zu einem Spielplatz, der in der Mitte der Siedlung liegt.

“Hier riecht es, als ob jemand grillen würde.”, stelle ich fest, während wir den Spielplatz betreten. “Toll, jetzt hab ich Hunger.” Ich beschwere mich und lasse mich langsam auf die Korbschaukel sinken.

“Wollt ihr mit uns essen?” Sofort drehen Nessa und ich unsere Köpfe in die Richtung aus der die Stimme gekommen ist. Ich sehe aus dem Augenwinkel, wie meine beste Freundin zu grinsen beginnt, als sie sieht, wer jetzt vor uns steht.

“Klar”, antworte ich Simon, da es Nessa anscheinend die Sprache verschlagen hat. Deshalb nickt sie nur langsam.

-

“Wir sollen dann langsam gehen.”, bemerkte Nessa nach einem lustigen Abendessen mit Simon und seiner Familie. Ich nicke zustimmend, während meine beste Freundin aufsteht.

Simon begleitet uns ins Vorzimmer. Wir gehen hinaus und schließlich nickt er uns noch einmal zu, bevor er die Tür zu macht.

“Er war heute viel offener, als gestern.”, stelle ich fest, während Nessa und ich durch die dunklen Gassen der Siedlung gehen. “Vielleicht kann er dich ja gut leiden.” Meine beste Freundin grinst mich an, doch in ihren dunkelbraunen Augen kann ich erkennen, dass sie nicht wirklich glücklich war.

“Ich weiß es, ..” Ernst schaue ich Nessa an. Sie wirft mir einen überraschten und gleichzeitig auch verwirrten Blick zu. “Was?” Nun grinst meine beste Freundin nicht mehr. Sie bleibt stehen.

“Du stehst auf Simon.” Ungläubig starrt Nessa mich an. Nach ein paar Sekunden streitet sie es jedoch ab: “Stimmt doch gar nicht.”

“Ich sehe, wie du ihn anschaust und wie du lächelst, wenn du ihn siehst.” Meine beste Freundin ignoriert meinen Satz und dreht sich wieder um. “Wir sollten weiter gehen. Meine Mutter wartet sicher schon.”

Mit diesen Worten geht sie, ohne Rücksicht auf mich, weiter.

-

“Du solltest doch nicht hier übernachten.”, meint Nessa, während ich mich wieder auf die rote Couch in ihrem Zimmer fallen lasse. “Warum? Weil ich weiß, dass du auf Simon stehst?”

Meine beste Freundin schüttelt den Kopf, während sie sich neben mich

setzt. "Warum dann? Ich bin deine beste Freundin. Du weißt, dass du mir alles sagen kannst, oder?"

Nessa schaut ein paar Sekunden gedankenverloren aus dem Fenster. "Nicht deshalb, sondern weil ich eifersüchtig bin." Sie dreht sich wieder zu mir und schaut mich traurig an. "Auf dich und Simon" Verwirrt schaue ich in ihre braunen Augen. "Ihr kennt euch seit einem Tag und seit schon mega gute Freunde. Ich bin seit über einem Jahr in ihn verliebt und er ignoriert mich fast immer."

"Vielleicht spricht er einfach nicht viel mit dir, weil er deine Gefühle nicht verletzen will. So wie bei mir und Shawn."

Shawn war mein bester Freund bis ich mich in ihn verliebt habe. Er hat es bemerkt und kaum noch mit mir gesprochen. Ich denke nur selten an ihn, weil ich sonst stundenlang heulend im Bett sitzen würde.

Bevor mir eine Träne die Wange hinunter rinnen kann, unterbricht Nessa meine Gedanken. "Oder er ist in dich verliebt."

"Nie im Leben!", rufe ich laut und fange bei der Vorstellung an zu lachen. Nach wenigen Sekunden steigt Nessa in mein Lachen ein und ich bin einfach froh, dass sie nicht mehr so traurig ist.

Ich kann nämlich sehen wieviel Simon ihr bedeutet.

Always (Longer, Rewritten) - January 2018

"Lessi, we have to go. If we don't hurry now, we'll be late."

Quickly I run down the wooden steps, which make a rattle with every step. In the hall of the really small apartment, my best friend Nessa is waiting for me.

"Why are you still standing around here?"

I slip into my black Converse and step out of my best friend's apartment with my phone in one hand and my penny board in the other.

After a few minutes we are already standing in front of a white building

with many small windows, which is located on the main road.

“Are you coming now or are you just staring at the building from the outside?”

Nessa has been in a youth club for several years and a few days ago my best friend asked me if I would like to accompany her today. At that moment, my best friend takes my hand, pulls me through the door into the house and thus breaks my thoughts. As soon as we enter the hall, a blond-haired girl is running toward us and hugs Nessa next to me while she screams loudly the name of my best friend.

“Who is this?”

She points to me and then looks at me from top to bottom.

“This is my best friend, Alessia,” Nessi answers, while she puts her arm around my shoulder.

The other girl smiles friendly.

“I’m Ann. Nice to meet you.”

Ann and I chat for a few minutes and get on well right away. However our conversation is suddenly interrupted when Nessa, who has been busy with her phone since we entered the building, jumps up and runs to the door.

“Becca!”

My best friend hugs the brown-haired girl, who just entered the room. After a few seconds Ann joins the other two’s welcome ritual, while I just stand by and watch them.

When the three girls finally finish their hug and turn to me, I see that the brown-haired, who appears to be Becca, looks at me questioningly and so I explained to her, “I’m Alessia, Nessa’s best friend.”

“Interesting.”

Immediately I turn my head in the direction from which the voice came.

Two boys who entered the room. One of them smiles friendly, while the smaller boy, who spoke, nods his head and just looks at me from head to toe. I look confused to the girls and see how Nessa's eyes have shone since they entered the room.

"I'm Simon and this is my brother Philipp," the younger looking boy explained to me, pointing to his sibling at the last words. Gratefully I nod, before I take a closer look at the two boys.

They both have brown hair, like Nessa, Becca and me. Simon also has glasses that almost look like those of Harry Potter. The boy is also clearly younger than Philipp and he is about the size of me while his brother is several centimeters taller.

While Simon takes a few steps towards Nessa, Ann, Becca and me, followed by his brother, I see that the boy has brown eyes. Chocolate brown eyes.

After the meeting of the Youth Club, where I also met two companions of our group, Nessa and I step out into the pleasantly warm air. I'm about to get on my penny board and drive down the main road, when my best friend holds me back.

"We have to wait for Simon and his brother. They live less than two minutes away from me, so we always go home together," she told me, while she let go of my hand.

I nod slowly and notice that her eyes sparkle again since she pronounced the name of the boy with the glasses.

"You really like him, huh?"

Surprised Nessa turned in my direction and opens her mouth, probably to deny my comment. But before the girl could say one word, the door opened in front of us and the two brothers step out of the building. Immediately my best friend shuts her mouth.

"Let's go."

Philipp smiles friendly, while Simon doesn't pay any attention to us and types on his phone.

Shortly moans sadness in the eyes of my best friend, before she puts on a friendly smile and goes next to him.

-

“You will stay here,” notes Nessa as she sits next to me on the red couch in her room.

As soon as I nod, my best friend immediately jumps up and walks across the room.

“So, what are we going to do now?”

The girl stops right in front of me and I’m about to answer her that I don’t know any activities right now, but in this moment my phone lights up. When I look at the device’s display, I see that Simon has written a message.

“Simon asks if we want to eat with him and his brother.”

Nessa looks confused at my phone before she frowns and looks at me with narrowed eyes.

“Where did you get his number from?”

“Simon gave it to me while you and Philipp walked a few meters in front of us.”

I shrug. It’s no big deal for me, but apparently it is for the girl next to me.

“It took me almost a year until he finally gave me his number and you just get it after one hour and a half.”

Nessa points at me accusingly as my phone lights up again.

“Are we going to Simon and Philipp or not?”

Instead of answering, my best friend takes my hand and pulls me down the stairs, through the hall, and, after we put on our shoes, out of the apartment.

“I guess that’s a yes.”

“This girl really has mood swings,” I think by myself as I quickly walk through the settlement next to Nessa.

Meanwhile I take my phone out of the pocket to write Simon a short message so he knows my best friend and I are on our way to him.

After less than a minute the girl next to me and I are standing in front of the boy who casually stands in the doorway of the white front door.

“Are you already here?”

With a cheeky smile on his face, Simon steps aside and lets Nessa and me into the apartment, which looks a bit like the one of my best friend’s family, maybe that’s because they live in the same settlement.

My best friend grins all over her face as she walks down the hall to the kitchen where Philipp is standing and cooking for us. She quickly greets the boy before she walks into the living room, followed by his brother.

“She really likes him,” whispered Philipp before turning back to the pots on the stove.

“But he likes someone else.”

Slowly I nod as I head to my best friend and Simon. As I walk through the door into the living room, I see the boy and Nessa laughing and setting the table.

I feel a sting in my heart, because I know that Simon will break her heart.

Warme Luft an Sommertagen (German short story) - July 2016

Wie schon so oft saß ich an meinem geheimen Platz. Am Dach auf einem zweistöckigen Haus in der Innenstadt. Hier kam nie jemand her, hier waren nur die Freiheit und ich, hier konnte ich nachdenken. Zumindest für eine Weile.

Ich legte mich auf die Polster, welche ich vor einigen Monaten hier oben versteckt hatte. Eine Decke benötigte ich an diesem warmen Sommertag nicht.

Doch während ich das Geschehen auf den Straßen, die Vögel in der Luft und die Sonne beim Untergehen beobachtete, fiel mir ein, dass mein Leben nicht besonders toll verlief. Egal, wie perfekt alles in diesem Augenblick schien. Ich wünschte, es wäre immer so schön, wie jetzt. Doch dies war nur ein kurzer Moment, von vielen tausenden Momenten in meinem bisherigen Leben.

Bis vor ein paar Wochen dachte ich noch, dass ich ein glückliches Leben führte.
Alles war wunderbar.

Keine Schule, die warmen Sommertage, die Vorfreude auf den Urlaub mit meinem festen Freund, die Partys meiner besten Freundin und das Faulenzen in den Sommerferien.

Das alles und noch viel mehr wollte ich genießen, doch aus heiterem Himmel machte mein fester Freund mit mir Schluss.

“Aber wir sind doch schon über ein Jahr zusammen. Du kannst doch nicht von heute auf morgen sagen, dass du mich nicht mehr liebst!”, schrie ich ihn an.

*Ich kochte vor Wut und wollte am liebsten irgendetwas zerschlagen, doch stattdessen versuchte ich ruhig zu bleiben.
So setzte ich mich auf das Bett meines Freundes und suchte den Augenkontakt mit ihm.*

Er antwortete nur dasselbe, was er mir auch schon vor mehreren Minuten gesagt hatte: “Es ist aber so. Ich kann einfach nicht mehr mit dir zusammen sein! Es ist vorbei.”

Ich konnte doch nicht ohne ihn leben.

Wir waren ein Herz und eine Seele.

Das alles kann doch nicht einfach so vorbei sein.

Vor Wut warf ich eines seiner Kissen durch das Zimmer und eine Sekunde danach brach ich in Tränen aus.

“Warum?“, fragte ich ihn nun traurig.

Die Wut war nun versiegt, von der Trauer besiegt.

Verwirrt schaute er mich an: “Warum was?“

“Warum tust du mir das an? Ich kann nicht ohne dich leben.“, sagte ich, während die Tränen meine Wangen herunter kullerten.

Nun sah er mir direkt in die Augen und ich konnte die Reue in seinem Blick erkennen.

Sasha Wilkins

Amélie

my heart does not love the way my stomach cannot feel butterflies
or rather moths eat holes through my digestive tract so there will be
enough room in my body to explode with joy
i love not you but your smile
and my heart cannot choose one but i tape together as many as i can
my torso has a hole right throughout the middle like a doughnut
i guess i've been loving you too hard
these moths are turning into termites and i'm interested in becoming a
wooden house
if i could count the amount of times i've dreamt i would probably kindly
ask you to please trip over a knife
for you deserve more pain than anyone and that will most likely give me
the illusion that you have been loving me too hard
and that
honey
is what i like to hear
and i hear that you would love to hear that i like to listen
today i was told that you do not have to be in love with a glass boned man
to write about an annual portrait
and i think that is what i am doing with you
you my love
are just a pawn in my game
your skin is so sweet you give me a toothache you taste like fresh haircut
i would drown myself in a bottomless lake with two of your heads tied to
my ankles before i could ever compare you to anybody
you surpass even the greatest
Aphrodite cannot live up to you
i want your words in my hand while i bleed to death your sweet worded
desires in my mouth as i'm throwing up the last of your love for the world
i will hold you in my shaking arms
sit in my cradled lap we can stay here for eternity
as a parting gift i will give you my sanity

Michael Riedell

dear half headed old men

you make my life bearable like take-out tastes like sushi michael riedell says funny things things things real serious things things you can only repeat inside your own head sort of things things like 'are you okay' and 'i know you are not' he says those funny things like what's your favorite color and why are you smiling

dear half naked teenagers

i do not care about what's in your 70 dollar water bottle but i do care about who you're falling in love with and why they don't deserve you because really you don't deserve them and your hairline is receding but really i'm okay with that if you are because i have a rash on my face from being so stressed about why you're always wearing a hat and no matter what you will never cease to stare and i will never cease to stare staring at people that are slowly dying is a pastime of mine that certain old men don't approve of

dear people that watch saw movies and dog fights

i cannot find a single ember in this extensive multiverse where i could ever enjoy your presence you belong in the stone age you were meant to be eaten by a dinosaur

dear triceracop

i love you every twice a month that we get to meet and your booming laugh shakes the house h equals h you live in my heart when you're actually sitting at home thinking of me because you know i'm thinking of how much i actually miss you all of your rules about clothing scare some people but some people told me i'm brave must be (black grey blue purple grey white or maroon) must be (three years old or mine first) least of all it must have (one or more) paint stains to show everyone that you (triceracop) in fact (don't care)

dear boy that i never sat next to in english class

michael riedell calls you hoodlum and i call your best friends older brother ugly one time i also guess all of his words in games we only play on the bus or at parties (placenta lichtenstein tuberculosis) dear older brothers younger brothers best friend i love you

dear younger sister

i'm sorry for being distant all the time and yelling at friends of friends when i'm not not not here you're beautiful in everyway but the one that father says you have to be father says get some space from me if you were wondering what father told mother on the anniversary of her death in this case anniversary means week, father is an old man i am mother also younger sister and you are myself (you're kind of lame because you didn't get that the first time) i will escort you out of the womb and into my cradled arms

Philomène

last summer he would invite me over to watch a movie and have a smoke
i didn't much care about the movie but i think that's how he introduces
himself

i took him up on the offer because this year i'm getting myself out there

five minutes after walking into his house i pretended to fall asleep because
that's what the cool girls do

because i heard him arguing about having a vegetarian in the house
when he went to the bathroom i looked around to see if anyone else was
home

i thought

i was going to be hanging out with the guys

apparently the guys are his dogs and they can scream about how i am not
asleep

my dreams were great

thank you

should we step outside

only if the guys come too

the garden is magnificent we picked some zucchini and i think i'm falling
in love

with the guys of course

i never knew a garage could be so small

i've been here for five hours now and the guys told me

it's probably time for you to get going now

i waited three days to call you because that's what the guys said to do
they told me that was the key to your heart

we ended up watching a movie everyday and i never knew i could love our
friendship so violently

the next day we stepped outside and this time we got married

i never knew the guys could hold such an amazing wedding

the first time we watched a movie in spanish you cried because you do not
speak spanish and i refused to turn on subtitles

you told me that in some cultures if your significant other commits suicide
you have to too

we almost died five times each

but i didn't because of the guys

i guess the thirteen hour flight killed me and your kisses saved my life

i've written infinite journals dedicated to your smell
this friendship binding marriage is turning into more
after two weeks across the world with each other
actually after thirteen days we didn't look at each other the whole flight
home
i haven't seen the guys in three months but the girls told me the guys have a
new friend
i miss our marriage so violently

if i die for a sixth time what would happen
the guys told me we were still married because technically you haven't sent
any papers and i have yet to cry over you
i will punish my body every single day just to remind myself that i didn't
fight for you
but you also haven't fought for me when the girls
did and the girls got matching lip tattoos
and the girl's mom was kind of angry because the girls play rugby drunk
and the girls come home with black eyes

i will introduce the girls and the guys and i will love their presence so
violently that it will make them uncomfortable
and maybe then i will cry over you for the first time
and that can be our divorce papers

i saw you in the street yesterday and it killed me
i thought you were over the childhood games but you killed me
i wish you would have made eye contact with me so that you could have
seen the lights go out i cannot breathe
i cannot breathe and my head is pounding without you
i came down so fast sweat is dripping out of my fingertips
i would give you my education again but you don't eat leftovers and i've
given you that twice

i think it's time for me to give up
i'm ready to drown in your eyes and i will invite the guys over to eat my
rotting body
because that
is how i say goodbye

Suzy Bishop

i love astronauts and ninjas and the way they pollute the galaxy ice
growling stomachs broken knuckles and bloody toe nails
i am aware i am a wolf in sheep's clothing
in my lonesome i will beat your heart until we can no longer tell the
difference and my body will move on
to a newlywed mother i am born
conciende from hatred her spouse is my lover
he is who i have never gotten along with
i really haven't gotten along with anybody
not me
not glazed eyes barely good enough live for the thrill of my own beating
heart self
not my poison ivy lips searching for your just barely there smile
i was the kind of kid that nobody really talked to but everyone knew
the kid that had crushes on older second grade boys that would mix
applesauce and yogurt
luckily enough he helped me
this is my kindergarten fairy tale
i am swinging throughout the rainforest searching for just one drink of
water and oh brother that is you
i hate cliché sadness and my own two feet
i hate books that are too long and pencils that are not sharpened enough
and your freckles
towering at a solid eight foot seven you're a modern skyscraper on wheels
every single pore of your wonderful skin sings to me someone's whole
boring life
i love astronauts and him
and my own two feet and him
oh my lord i love him
and myself the way a furnace loves fingertips
i love the words economy and hanged and scab
i love your water bottle that is just for tea
and the way you smile using just your cheeks
just like me you never really smile
we are a different breed
the sort that is born from the dirt and never really stands up because the
moment we do we will get torn apart
never to reunite

Lolita

so so pretty is something i've come to appreciate
along with brushing my teeth and spelling words wrong because the english
language is ever evolving
 although that must be hard for her to grasp
in five months i will be completely alone
in an unfamiliar household
i barely even speak spanish
 no dutch or native
although i hear that's the prettiest and i'm trying to learn how to
communicate with my laughs
 giggles giggle
from my protruding belly rises up when our eyes meet
roses help with my confidence
that's why i have a dozen dead ones in my room still soaking in water
but energy never dies
so everyday i smell them and i have my own pretty to look after
plump lips to complement the most perfect body wrapped up in the moon
and stars of my bed watching lolita in the middle of the night alone
 confidence is a virtue that can only be acquired through us
and meditation
and giggles that pierce an empty house

 my muse and everybody elses

i read to embrace our ever evolving
 my ever evolving
admiration for people that can say how they feel in more languages than me
i'm an antelope in love with an ant but forced to eat her because there is a
drought and
absolutely no time to waste
i waste more time singing songs to my room than sleeping in my treehouse
knowledge is probably the scariest thing i've ever heard of
 especially when i know nothing but the sound of ice slapping
together
and whispers in my ears are getting louder
and i'm afraid sleep is no longer an option so instead i will sing
and sing
and sing so loud that you'll most likely have no choice but to sing along
but instead of hearing a melody
i'll be on the ground

and i'll be making that horrible antelope sound that i'm so good at
and she'll be watching Lolita
pretending not to read the room
 i've recently told myself something that i haven't admitted since
the coming out of the womb that i experienced fifteen years ago
we must be star crossed lovers
but i don't have time
while i'm too focused on my own pretty
and you're too focused on learning the most beautiful language to read to
pretty spanish boys all alone
absolutely unaware how to communicate
i don't even speak spanish lol

Dear 2017

more like dear sasha claire ninja wilkins we laughed a little more than usual and cried a little more than usual you lost toxic relationships and as hard as it was you survived you may regret not writing enough and being too in your head but just think that's what gave you time to teach and learn you traveled and loved so much i know you're not proud of everything but in a couple months i promise you won't remember maybe you might but it will be so deep in that wonderful brain of yours that it won't matter anymore as the year finished up i know you wanted things to go differently so you read and read and read and listened to the best music of your life you become slightly more comfortable with your body and came to terms with how your mind works and your terrible ability to maintain loving relationships you tasted things you didn't like you tried new foods and saw so many new places thank you for everything
see you next year
-1.1.18

Thoughts

i have sat in silence enough times to know that i can shut off my brain
pretty easily
a bath helps
tea sometimes does the charm
i can feel my affirmations bouncing along all sides of my brain desperately
trying to
find a corner that they can settle in and take control of my confidence
tango with my insecurities salsa with my fears
i'm trying to be an open book but that proves difficult when you have
alligator
clips on your ears

rebirth rebirth

it is okay to be vulnerable
i am true to myself

rebirth rebirth

it is okay to be vulnerable
i am true to myself

rebirth rebirth

it is okay to be vulnerable
i am true to myself

this vessel does not encompass my mind
i am capable of wonders
i am a goddamn warrior capable of wonders
i see through kaleidoscope eyes and listen to Mac Demarco with my best
friends
free of expectations and stereotypes
for a couple days we were free
but once again
reunited to civilization
the hunger of school time piranhas bite down and settle in
the affirmations
and trust
and human connection was lost

rebirth rebirth

it is okay to be vulnerable
i am true to myself

learning is the most difficult
female

male

the trees know no different

they know no judgments

Love Love Love

i really love my mom
i really love my self
i really love my earth
i really love my water
i really love my gwynivere
i really love my pretty
i really love my journal
i really love my thoughts
i really love my toes
i really love my friends
i really love my family
i really love my movies
i really love my cartoons
i really love my poetry
i really love my hugs
i really love my brain chemistry
i really love my books
i really love my flowers
i really love my baths
i really love my lavender sweater
i really love my essential oils
i really love my siblings
i really love my bed
i really love my lola
i really love my pencils
i really love my spain
i really love my fruits
i really love my veggies
i really love my face without makeup but still moisturized
i really love my armpits when they're hairy
i really love my alone time
i really love my forrests
i really love my chest after i've worked out
i really love my taste in music
i really love my emmy d
i really love my jezebel rip
i really love my freckles in the summer
i really love my garden

Michael Riedell

Henry Collins' First Diary Entry in Years

I generally don't like kids. I had a couple of my own and my feeling for them wavered with their ages and moods, or maybe the cycles of the moon and and the time of day. Until a person's about 30 they might have spark but not the kindling to get a fire going; after 30 they might have gotten some kindling together but don't have much spark. Maybe I just don't like people. That's been said of me before. Mostly I just figure people aren't living up to their "potential," which is as vague a word as any, but it's the one we settle for. Maybe settling is the thing I don't like.

People do settle, though, all the time. They settle in their lives and they settle in their work. It takes guts to do anything else, and that's in short supply. Some of the Mexicans that work the farms around here call it "ganas." I don't know a direct translation, but the word feels right. And some of those guys know how to work with their hands and their hearts. That's how you turn work into art, or a job into an honorable life.

Well, here I go already. I sat to write about a little girl I met and here I'm off philosophizing and breaking into social commentary. I never was too good at thinking in a straight line. Dad wanted me to be a lawyer like him but instead of that straight line stuff I was more into chewing the cud. Doing the work I do--shoeing horses and whatnot--I get to have a lot of time in my head, mulling things over and trying to find my own sense of things. Dropping out of university was my way of saying no to quick conclusions, that test-on-Friday right and wrong black and white mentality that probably is the final nail in the coffin of a person's individuality. From there the settling in is pretty well complete. It's a slow death from there.

But I met a little kid who gave me a little hope. Miss April, I started calling her. And the name fit: she was a cute thing, bright-eyed and just blooming with life. She could of bottled her vitality and sold it at organic prices.

"I didn't realize people still did that." That's what she said. I was bent down on my stool with an Arabian's back hoof in my lap doing what I do and stopped to turn to see who said it.

She was standing there looking like any other girl in jeans with a butterfly patch on one knee, a pink and purple sweater that was stretched like she maybe wore it a lot, and some kind of multi-colored tennis shoes.

“Maybe I haven’t thought about it much,” she went on, “but it seems like everything is done by machines these days.”

“Well, young lady,” I said, “you’re probably right. If they could figure out how to get a machine to do this, I’m sure they would. Then I’d be out of a job, so let’s hope nothing changes.”

If I wasn’t impressed with her already, her next comment won me over.

“Well, to tell you the truth, sir, you seem a little old to be working, especially at something that looks as hard as this.”

I laughed at that and told her she was an astute observer of age and its limitations.

“Does ‘astute’ mean good?” she asked.

“You got it,” I said, and boy did she.

We introduced ourselves and I showed her what I was up to, cleaning and trimming the hoof before I put the new shoe on, how I nailed it in. She was full of smart questions and stuck around chatting about this and that. Soon she was nuzzling with that sweet old mare, which was good because it helped calm the old gal down.

Miss April explained that she was from Napa and was up in Potter Valley visiting family. She said she had been sitting inside with her cousins most of the day watching them play one video game after another.

“Do you like video games?” she asked.

“I can’t hardly stand the tv,” I told her.

She launched into a rant about her friends and how they are so obsessed with games and phones and whatever else. I just listened. “Nobody even talks to anyone,” she said, “they like texting better.”

She painted a depressing picture of sitting in class wishing things could move faster. “The teacher is great, but she spends all her time trying to get the other kids to shut up.” She said she reads or draws pictures or writes poems while waiting for the other kids to finish work she said wasn’t even challenging. And “challenging” was the word she used. She said that she read more books than anyone in her grade and added that they were harder books, too.

Well, I was smitten. I'd all but given up hope for humanity but here was a nine year old girl with curiosity and integrity. She had real chutzpah, I tell you. Ganas.

In between talking about school she was still plying me with questions about horses and shoeing, the health and habits of various farm animals.

She had been silently staring into that mare's eyes for a long time before she said, "What do you think horses think about?"

"You know," I told her, "I've often wondered that myself and I've got to admit, I haven't come to any firm conclusions. What do you think they think about?"

"Maybe they just think about the things around them, and what's happening. Whether they're hot or cold, or things like that. But their eyes are so big and beautiful I wouldn't be surprised if they think of a sunset they've seen and loved, or about the sound of rain when it falls on the roof of the barn."

"You think they admire beauty?" I asked.

"Well, I hope they do," she exclaimed. "Beauty is the greatest thing in the world, right? Beauty and love!"

I told her how when I've been riding in the hills a horse will sometimes pause a little at a viewpoint. "A few times there's been a funny little shake of their head like they want their rider to look, too."

"See," she concluded, "they know when things are beautiful!"

"Maybe so," I admitted, "maybe so."

Well, I wished that horse had more legs just so I could have stayed and continued talking with her, but the job got done and the afternoon sun was leaning low over the oaks to the west.

I was packing my things up into the truck when she said, "I guess I'd better go." She figured her aunt would have dinner ready soon and she was starting to feel a little guilty for being gone so long.

But it was this next part that really killed me. She said, "It's been real nice talking to you, Henry," and then she stuck out her little hand.

I slipped my gloves off and we shook hands goodbye. “Believe me,” I assured her, “the pleasure has certainly been mine.”

She smiled and turned to go. She took a few steps and then spun back again and said, “God likes you.”

“You’re talking with God?” I asked.

“No,” she conceded, “but I can just feel it.”

“Well,” I told her, “I’m pretty sure God likes you, too.”

“Thanks,” she said, and then she walked away.

That was four or five weeks ago. I tell you, I think of her every day. Somewhere in Napa there’s a girl named April. God likes her, and so do I.

The Delicate Gift

The pen bleeds ink
Into words that bleed
Into ears that hear
The blood of old thoughts
Made new.

What is a poem?

The breath holds hope
That when exhaled
The air in the room
Will be ready for it.
It rarely is.

What is a poem?

My mother recites
A rhyme from her youth
Each time she walks
In autumn's first rain,
Again and again.

What is a poem?

The walls of the room
Are lined with books
Lined with words
That line my mind like tissue
Around a delicate gift.

What is a poem?

There is a house
And--let it be written--
There is a home.
There is
A home.

Biographies

Luci(ana) Allende, better known as Luce the Juice, is the tiny unnaturally loud freshman you've probably stepped on twice this year. Don't let her stature fool you, however. Full of energy and never ending excitement, Luci can be found leading school events, teaching at SPACE Performing Arts Center, and protesting for human rights, basically flapping her social butterfly wings anywhere they take her. Luci's creativity is her greatest strength, which explains her constantly marker stained hands and the doodles inhabiting every worksheet with her name on it. Luci would rather draw on her assignments than do them; Dance across a stage rather than sit down in a desk; Or write poetry rather than do Spanish homework. That's why she has taken Creative Writing this year, where she has learned and grown a large appreciation for not only poetry itself but all other types of creative people. In the coming years of her high school career, Luci hopes to continue learning as well as sharing her upbeat energy and optimistic outlook on life with all types of different people.

Maria Andrade is a girl who is a senior and 18 years old. She loves to read and hear music. She started to like writing poems more than before. She might not be good at but she loves write her own poems. She loves to be with her friends.

I don't know who I am, but people call me **Joshua Barrera**. I am known for making stories about a character called Bertha. I don't know either.

Look who's back with a bio that's better than the one from last year! It's **Amanda Bednar**. I'm still not fully over the death of Vine. I wrote all of my works in lowercase letters, but, for some reason, decided to write my bio with capitals. I spend a lot of time with my dogs (which is probably why I'm failing Algebra 2). There's a peacock that lives across the street from me and likes to scream at night, so most of my angry poems are directed at either that bird or somebody who I probably shouldn't mention here. Maya says one word to describe me is really lame, which I agree with. I am a renowned procrastinator and I listen to too much 80's rock music. The "do u kno da wei" meme was one of the worst memes ever created, and I'll fight anybody that says it wasn't. Before I go, I just wanted to say that I love Tobi and Karla very much and I was not paid by either of them to say this.

When not composing rushed author bios in the third person, **Taylor Bowser** spends her time practicing for her future career as an amateur

couch-surfer (performing artist). She can be found in your local Ikea, where she is currently squatting with her sister Ivy and their pet wasp, whose name is not school appropriate. Her hobbies include writing, cooking, and tracking down the punk kid who stole the back half of her bike. She has never been published, so if you would like to support her endeavors, consider purchasing her a new pair of pants; she has been wearing the same pair for the past twelve weeks.

Yoooo, what's up? It's your girl **Kenzie Bray**. I am a 17 year old HYPE GOD. I'm a senior in highschool and I play A LOT of soccer and that is like the only thing I have ever really been known for. I am super outgoing and some may consider me annoying but I don't really care. Basically I write really basic love poetry and when I try to change it up my poems turn into complete garbage. I never really share my poetry but yolo.

Susana Correa: Wowza! Welcome to my writing. Shoutout to Dylan for always fueling my curiosity and giving me free bread. As Victor Galarza (a real poet) once said, "If your friends aren't giving you bread are they really your friends?" Rhetorical question but nonetheless I will answer a sharp NO. Now for the real things. I am inspired by so many people and inanimate objects that it might be too long a list to write at the present but I will say that I'm oh so happy you got this far with me! Thank you to my underwriters, Riedell and my neighbors Luci A., Dylan D., Indigo Funk, Michael L., Jazmin R., Victor G., and a collection of others who would shout there opinions across the classroom. Much love to you all. I would like to thank my emotional brain for sometimes making good poetry and my intellect for telling me when I was writing cliches. I'd like to note I think everything in my writing is somehow, someway, relevant to the notorious life is the Violet Hours' classroom and it expresses who I am and how I see the world in a very significant way so I am glad you picked my pages to skim through. You, the reader, are the real champion here since you bring my writing to life in your own special and unconventional way whether you like it or not, so my deepest gratitude to you!

If you asked me how old I am, I would say, "Infinite." If you asked me who I was, I would say, "You." If you asked me what I was, I would say, "Everything." If you asked me how I was doing, I would say, "How are you?" If you asked me what my name was, I would say, "**Dylan DeGuzman.**"

Lucas Dhuyvetter, a 17 year old Senior that is often quiet until spoken to. He uses the things he loves, such as gaming, Youtube, music, anime and writing to escape the dark thoughts that linger in his head. His writing tends to be on the darker or depressing side, but that's because he's just releasing emotion onto a page to keep him sane. Like his writing, his favorite type of music is typically emotional and sad, doesn't even matter on genre. Just a 17 year old that prefers to keep everything locked up in his head or leaked out onto his works.

Emma Dolan has been a swimmer all her life and even though she hates it with a passion she just keeps swimming. She is a tennis beast. Although she pretends she's not Emma Dolan is probably a genius and will be the first woman president while fighting extremely hard for all people's rights. Emma is a goddess, Emma is a powerhouse, Emma is an amazing friend, Emma is the love of my life.

--Sasha Wilkins

Mateo Flores is a 17 year old ADULT who lives inside a closet (I'm not kidding). He is the mas o menos Mexican Harry Potter minus the magic. He will eat all the cereal and drink all the milk in your home, so don't let him in. Even though he kind of sort of sucks he can be cool sometimes. He writes AMAZING poems and he is the kindest dude in Ukiah. He's a virgo so he's often alone, he plays the guitar at the WORST TIMES! You will most likely find him with a guitar and when you do turn around and run. RUN!

Sylvia Fogle is a young lady who already knows right from wrong. She has many interests such as art, poetry, theatre, and having fun with her friends. On a calm night alone Sylvia would spend it snacking and watching some horror movies, even though Sylvia's favorite movie is a comedy. She has no preferred food, which could show how she can be relaxed. Sylvia is able to be serious at times, but she will always go back to her silly self that everyone loves. Sylvia loves cats, more specifically, her cat Annie who she recently got and fell in love with. Sylvia is an amazing and selfless friend who will always be there for you when you are having troubles or if you just need a laugh. In conclusion, Sylvia is not only a great cat mom, friend, and artist, she is a great person and I am glad to be able to call her my friend.

--written by Leslie, her bestie

Indigo Funk, 17, 5 feet 10 inches, 170lb. Aliases: Indifro, Indi-woah, Frobro, Indi-stay, Indigo Junk, Indiana Jones, Windigo, Indingrigo, Doublechindigo, Idogoo, and Nerd. Wanted on charges of reckless cycling, excessive foot-joggling, and creating a public nuisance. Last seen setting up a caution tape perimeter in the Safeway cereal aisle and shouting bad puns about cereal killers. Be warned, the suspect is armed with stubborn opinions and a despicable fashion sense. If seen, report to Mendocino County Sheriff's Office or the local library (his books are overdue).

The people call me Victor. Full Name: **Victor DeAnthony Galarza-Guevara**. I was born in 2003, but I've been here for like a

good 60 years. I like to make art, ya know, draw, paint, that sorta stuff. I like to take photos too, gotta keep that insta feed fresh. I write poetry as well, just in case you haven't noticed. If you're music taste isn't the best, that's okay cause neither is mine, but I can bop to almost any jam you got so let's keep the vibes fresh and the tunes flowing. I'm kinda obsessed with orange juice, but if you're more into apple juice that's chill. Some people say life has no meaning, and some question its meaning. I guess I feel the only meaning life has is whatever meaning you give it, and if my life is irrelevant to the universe, and I'm gonna die anyways, then I guess I'm gonna try to be happy for what it's worth.

Maya Halfacre likes to talk a lot. Sometimes it's really smart things, but a lot of the time, it's just random things about hairless cats and sexy tacos -Amanda. "So you just gonna bring me a birthday gift on my birthday to my birthday party on my birthday with a birthday gift."-Best quote of 2014. Also a proud supporter of vine two:) Amanda thinks I, Maya Jade Halfacre, am lame and she is 100% correct.

Kailey Holmes loves her dog, Cooper, very much.

My name is **Cassi Jones** but you can either call me Casserole, Sad Boi Cass, or Cass Who Eats Ass. I'm 18 and also a senior at Ukiah High. I'm always sad and love music. I don't know what I'm good at in life but I like to write poems. I may be Bi but I'm Gay as heck. I like tiddies, pizza and also my dog/son Tyrion. I don't know how to do biographies so hopefully this is good enough.

Cynthia Kachirisky here fam. If your mixtape isn't fire I don't want to hear it. If you haven't listened to the Hamilton musical don't talk to me. If you want to make me catch feelings and waste a few months of my life then go right ahead because I fall easily and will probably still be in love with you 5 years later. If you don't watch 4 hour Vine loops on youtube we can never hang out (RIP Vine). If you call my poetry trash you're probably right. My cat Kiko is my pride and joy so don't f*** with him. My dog Cookie is also pretty chill so be nice to her too. If you've ever seen my fish Nick, you probably already know he's prettier than 94.9% of the population. If you hurt my feelings, I will never let you know because I'm not excessively assertive. If you compliment me in any way, I will think about it for 27.3 days. If you read my work and actually somehow like it, hit me up because I'm very lonely and depressed.

Hi, I'm **Kaitlin Kendall**. I am fifteen years old and a Freshman. I own a dog named Cheeseball and my cousin has her sister who is named Butterball. I have two older sisters and an older brother. I like to write because it helps me figure out how I'm feeling.

Sup, I'm **Aeryn Kline** (Or a-a-ron to my friends) and I have no idea what I am doing in life. I'm a 17 year old junior and say I hate everyone, but that's not true, I just don't like interacting with people cause why would I subject myself to things that annoy me? I have social anxiety and would rather be at home reading a good book and eating pizza, but I am subjected to 7ish hours at school 5 days a week. I have commitment issues and I still don't understand why people are so obsessed with the concept of "love" since I don't think I know what love actually is because everyone describes it differently. I have 2 doggos that are the cutest things in the world... also all dogs are the cutest. ALSO cats, those are also cute as heck and I have 2 of those little beans of death. I watch vine compilations at 3am (RIP Vine). My mom thinks my poetry is great so think what you want about my writing, cause her opinion means more than yours.

Ava Larson is really tall and is fifteen years old. I am a proud self deprecating narcissist who listens to a lot of music and makes a lot of mistakes. I am currently a freshman but only for five more weeks (thank god) who got her first Saturday school for protesting. When I'm not in the dance studio, I eat too much mango sorbet and drink too many iced coffees. I'm really good at talking too loudly and creating a public annoyance as well as complaining. I wear really weird outfits and my hair is always a mess. The only other way to describe me is that I take too many showers and I have really weird dreams. I love poetry.

Michael Leggett runs for a sport. Yes, everyone's dreaded action running. For the last 7 months he has actually lived his life. He realized all of life isn't just one race it is just filled with races for him. He listens to music almost every chance he can get and wishes he could be a good photographer or better at poetry. Michael takes life by the horns in his own way and as a freshman he can't wait to leave the highschool and truly start his life. Around 5'7 but he is 5'8 on a good day with the right shoes this gives him the utmost pride. He basically lives at Low Gap and the local movie theatres.

Lauren Lolonis Age 14, acts like 35. She has an old soul. But if seen do not approach, she hates people (especially happy people). She enjoys spending time all by herself in peace and quiet. She may also be considered an unsociable "writer."

Samantha London: She is a bright, shy, funny person who loves to read and write. She likes to write short stories the most. She is 15 years old and she is a sophomore. Her favorite kind of music is classic rock such as AC/DC and Guns N' Roses. Her personality is on the weird and dark side but she loves her friends and family to the moon and back.

Jazmin Ramirez is 17 years old she writes all her poems in lowercase because she hates capitalism. She enjoys long walks on state street and spending all her money on coffee. She is a pitbull enthusiast (this includes Mr. Worldwide)

she also likes cats but still thinks dogs are slightly better. When she grows up she hopes to have a farm so she can live off the fat of the land and to have a lot of space for the 35 pitbulls she hopes to adopt. She hopes that whoever reads this gets encouraged to either:

- A. Walk on state street
- B. Treat themselves to coffee
- C. Adopt a pitbull
- D. Walk on state street with a cup of joe in one hand and the leash to their newly adopted pitbull in the other.

Michael Riedell is a teacher and writer. This year he edited and published *Deep Valley: Poets Laureate of Ukiah 2001-2018*. He's the author of *The Way of Water* and *Small Talk & Long Silences*. As part of its Festival of New Plays, Mendocino College produced his "Lawn Art," a one-act play about dog crap (and the nature of truth in a "post-fact" world). He thinks the sky might be falling but so far he's only seen the occasional falling star. When he talks in his sleep he screams, "¡Viva la revolución!"

Carlos Rodriguez: So, I am a 'writer' who writes cringy poems and doesn't realize how cringe they are until like 3 months later, I'm working on that, I am 17 years old and a Junior. I really like anime and Kpop and emo bands, currently listening to Lost by BTS which is a super cool song. Writing dark things is fun sometimes but it's hard to get into the mood of it, my writing is driven by how I feel. Enjoy.

Dani Salazar, a hopeless romantic living in a world of high divorce rates, one night stands and tinder. "*I am good, but not an angel. I do sin, but I am not the devil. I am just a small girl in a big world trying to find someone to love.*" --Marilyn Monroe.

Indigo Stewart; Deer In,

A graveyard. I loathe aquarius men. I'll probably be in a cult someday, and an aspiration of mine is to stay happy for an entire winter. My worst fear is becoming like Toby Flinderson from the Office, and I really, really like semicolons.

Hola humans, there is a girl **Maria Tellez**, nobody knows her, tal vez si, and she looks just like a normal human, o eso parece, but she isn't normal. She is 17 years old, almost 18, she loves Asian culture and maybe someday she going to speak Japanese and English perfectly. Adios and enjoy your dia, peace and love personas normales.

my name is **taylor jane travis**. i've only been on this earth for a few seconds in the grand scheme of things. i don't know what scares me more, being just a tiny speck in this vast expanse of space or the world imploding and everything we work for (everything i work for) to be blown to smithereens. i could turn this into a huge bitch fest about the existential crisis loop i've been stuck in for the past year and a half, but i'll talk about something else instead. music is pretty cool. i can't go 24 hours without it. i guess you could say i'm a musician. i play instruments and stuff so that's pretty cool. i guess i'm kind of a poet too, aren't i? anyway back to the morbid stuff, we are all gonna die soon anyway so why not make the best of what we got, right?

Hi, my name is **Madison Valente**. I'm 18 years old. I have Cerebral Palsy, and I have a dog named Jay Jay. He is a Jack Russell terrier. I enjoy coloring, and I like hanging out with friends.

Andrea Wagner is 15 years old and a Senior. In September she just decided to do an exchange semester and flew from Vienna, Austria, to California, because why not? Most time she is sitting in front of a display, typing and deleting words while she is listening to Shawn Mendes or Ed Sheeran.

Sasha Wilkins, a goddess, writes less than she wants to and is mourning the loss of her favorite water bottle. She is leaving soon to have the time of her life in Spain for her foreign exchange year. Her love for everything often leaves people uncomfortable and she hates the hiccups. Sasha Wilkins is incredible and she will change the world.

--Emma Dolan

Eclipse

The Violet Hour Anthology

* Luciana Allende * Maria Andrade Gallegos * Joshua Barrera * Amanda Bednar * Taylor Bowser * Kenzie Bray * Susana Correa-Avila Robb * Dylan Deguzman * Lucas Dhuyvetter * Emma Dolan * Mateo Flores * Sylvia Fogle * Indigo Funk * Victor DeAnthony Galarza-Guevara * Maya Halfacre * Kailey Holmes * Casserole Jones * Cynthia Kachirisky * Kaitlin Kendall * Aeryn Kline * Ava Larson * Michael Leggett * Lauren Lolonis * Samantha London * Jazmin Ramirez * Michael Riedell * Carlos Rodriguez * Dani Salazar * Indigo Stewart * Maria Tellez * Taylor Jane Travis * Madison Valente * Andrea Wagner * Sasha Wilkins *

