

Stir

By M. Price

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Beginning

I was once told to remember
but thoughts will never find me there,
words will never do justice,
warmth only does not shield the cold.
Put together
the emotions
stir
so that I may remember.

The heart takes a stand

I found myself lost in blood tea and sleep,
a sleep so strong that it would overtake me without warning.
It would not bring dreams,
just a body rush of paralysis that held me terrified and drifting.
The tea my only escape, drank deep to the chest,
a seconds relief in a day of endless hours.

Revolt - my heart cried - revolt,
for the moment is at hand, it has always been at hand,
but all too often you have let it pass you by,
and I will not stand for it anymore.
So I bless you to the sleep,
may it command you now.
Solitary will find you dear boy,
and no tea in the world will truly help you,
only allow time for basic nourishment and regret.
Dreamless and deadly,
I will drag you under and pull the oxygen from your lungs
strip you bare and starve the life out of you,
beaten and bloody.
Welcome to sleep, dear boy, you have earned this,
and you will not be released until you have learned
I am not one to toy with,
and I will not stand for your shit anymore.

October, Autumn

black hair draped on bare skin
thoughts whispered softly
she was desire wrapped in devil's sheets
her breath lulled,
a struggle to calm my heart,
I could not turn away

autumn leaves underfoot
her hand a beacon to a place secret and magical
existing only when time agrees

there is no right or wrong
no good or bad
there is only love
desire
Running, running
half-stoned on fascination

She turned, smiled
spoke words my mind never heard
but my soul remembers
my first breath hers
drawn deep and sweet,
to never forget the first moment
I felt alive

And now I am forever lost
searching for a cornfield, 3 a.m., October
her breath that was mine,
one sweet night that will never end

Ride

I shake people to the core.
There is nothing better to me than destroying someone's center,
making them shift into dangerous waters,
forcing them to deal with a new world without their normal armor.
I feed off the looks of disbelief and amazement in their eyes,
from the first second they feel the rush of energy and ecstasy,
to the point where the roller coaster has crested and taken them too far.
I am no magician, there is no slight of hand here,
no trapdoor.
You know the danger, you sense it,
but I draw you still.
And I will have you. I always get what I want.
Take my hand little one,
You will not be disappointed.
It's a hell of a ride.

Set

Behind the precious words lie malicious thoughts,
thoughts so impure that it scares me to think them,
let alone ponder the actions.

So I carry on blindly, lead by instinct alone.

From the betrayed stems the betrayer,
from the prey stems the beast,
ravenous, not by hunger,
but by revenge.

Eyes set

I have learned my lessons well,
and I am coming for her.

Not to threaten,
but to be sweet to her.

To speak the words and bring her to such need,
to the point of addiction.

To leave her cold and shivering, crying for my touch.

To leave her loving me
the way that I loved her._

Whirlwind

When it ends she is a whirlwind
cleaning up her house
as if she is cleaning her soul.
Old clothes that she wore
before and after they made love,
sweet notes,
refrigerator magnets,
holiday decorations they bought together,
now gone.
Gone like the one she thought she loved.
It has only been three days,
but we can never seem to purge fast enough in times
like these,
times we find ourselves searching faster and faster
for who we are as single entities.
To bring the basis down to one,
the constant denominator of one.

But what remains now is a whirlwind,
hair tied back,
spinning,
throwing pieces of herself and her past two years
across the room at an open trash bag.
She has thoughts of mailing it to him,
just to let him know that she is one again,
not two,
not with him,
the cheating, lying bastard.
That she is over him, over his pieces,
that his soul and her soul
were never in the same room together,
let alone tangled in a
whirlwind.

-
Brightest star

Brighter stars don't hang here.
They're a million miles east to ocean,
in bars where they move in elaborate circles of friends and hipsters.
They write me to say I'm not there,
that I should be,
where the days drift and fade between whiskey and uppers,
where the harsh sun punishes the sinners of the night before.
But we are all sinners here, they write,
in one way or another,
and the sun dies a panoramic death each night at our hands,
crashing between hills where only the richest live,
igniting the sky in intoxicating glory.
Come to L.A. they beg,
let us rescue you from your tired town.
Your destiny awaits,
you may be the brightest star of all

Grace

The wind came today.
Over three years now you have not graced my sky.
Day after day watching, I wondered where you were.
But today, today you found yourself to my north,
home again,
blowing down cool and crisp.
It's all the same, I know you so well.
Oh how you deserted me,
left me desolate and still,
only to come back now to the same season
that holds countless associations with you.
You bring me back, remind me,
give me no choice but to listen and
remember.

North wind against my back as I rant and rave at 2 a.m.,
her on the stairs, smiling,
watching me wave my cigarette around as I swear to you
that I love her with my heart, my soul.
You remembered that promise, even now,
I can still feel it in the way you blow through me,
and I can still taste every goddamn word that came out of my mouth
because you whisper it over and over.
I was different then, more alive and more beautiful in a way.
Her wrapped in a blanket, me walking the stones of her porch,
I spread my arms and felt you crawl my back,
pacing back and forth trying to make sense of situations
and something inside of myself that I couldn't understand.
And later, lost in her antique bed,
I held her tightly as you shook the trees outside the window,
moonlight and leaves slamming against the frame,
proclaiming our love.

Oh old wind, I know you well,
bittersweet but wonderful nonetheless.
I only pray that you find her someday too,
and in you she hears my voice once again,
hears my promise that you hold,
and that she too remembers
a night of north wind and proclamation.

Tick

9:23

stare at the clock to keep my eyes somewhere,
anywhere.

Prayers for this moment to be over.

All neon and low light,
the bar was half full,
empty pint glasses and smoke that hung in the air.
The last remains of the noon crowd had just emptied,
old and drunken, full of sleep,
here past their prime.
I do not recall what was on the jukebox.

Some sounds don't belong in certain places,
even at their quietest form,
bathed in frequencies by the millions.
They twist, turn.

Escape.

At 9:18 there was a jailbreak.
Not escaped convicts, not dangerous criminals,
but a sound, a sound that will not escape my head
as it did from the frequencies.
Since then I have stared.

It's interesting how the numbers are illuminated,
how the hand creeps around the face so slow,
a turtle in a race
while prayers for a rabbit.
He won't stop screaming.
The hair on the back of my neck at attention
and nobody is moving.
Why won't someone do something,
say something?
But I am not the only one staring at the clock,
praying for a rabbit.

I can feel him only feet from me,
standing in a puddle of beer on the floor.
There is blood on the table
and somewhere underneath his voice are her sobs,
sobs of terror.
Natural human reaction is to turn away
to not get involved.

9:23

and I can't stand to watch the hands crawl around the clock,
to hear the ticking mixed with his drunken anger.

Years later as I sit in this cell,
the sound of the blow he dealt is still in my ears.
The way her head hit the wall,
escaping from the frequencies and into my head.
I never knew the beginnings, only the ending.
Snapping,
blinding white rage,
spinning him around, words, movement
steel going into soft flesh,
my hand covered with blood,
the way the neon shined off the metal
that had taken residence between his ribs.
I swore he was reaching behind him,
gun, knife, something.
I stabbed an unarmed man,
an abuser,
a scar on the face of this earth,
but an unarmed man nonetheless.
Self-defense, but that's not what was decided.

So it's 9:23

stare at the clock to keep my eyes somewhere,
anywhere.

Prayers for this moment to be over
from the corner of my cell,
so that the ticking may stop
and the minute may finally pass.

A thousand cigarettes

She serves bad coffee
and she never remembers my name
but I still come to sit and write
forever waiting for someone to come through the door,
someone I haven't met who is supposed to find me.
The lights here are darker now,
and I can't help to think
I was asleep the night someone came through the door,
not really searching for me,
just following an inner
pull
a yearning?

but I still come for coffee
five years gone
fate that I can't let go,
even after it has passed me by.

Pure white skin

Will you be my
addiction
be the heroin that rushes through my veins
so deadly yet so sweet,
fading eyes drift to ecstasy
To overtake my heart, my veins
white with crashing waves of pleasure
black with the darkest need

Do you want me to crave
to scratch
to itch
to be lost between love and
addiction
desire and destruction?

Be that needle
prick skin so white,
so pure
draw the first blood
be the beauty that corrupts as it caresses

Like honey

She always knocked on my door very quietly.
At the beginning I did not understand this
and would often wonder about it,
but sometimes foreshadowing is meant to be just that.

She told me her name but I never believed her.
It wasn't the way she said it,
but the fact her eyes refused to meet mine when she spoke.
She was beautiful and articulate, but oddly silent.
Over time the words came less and less,
replaced only with an uncomfortable smile.
Her only solace was the dark,
and I was happy to oblige,
for in the black her voice would find the air,
and her words were sweet and slow like honey.
I craved every syllable, every movement
of her lips wrapped around a voice so innocent
yet so seductive,
only inches from my ear.

And as I sit here now,
I realize I have made a mistake.
In the end I pushed her away,
for I never understood the delicate balance
of her absence in the light
and her presence in the dark.
She was not mine to unravel and bring to my world,
not mine to break.
She had her own world,
and there was magic in that mystery.
I never stopped to taste the beauty
in a quiet knock
and sweet words like honey.

Opiate

the bed where you lay only hours before
and never again
the haunting smell of your perfume
rising
as if worn only to stalk me later
an exclamation point
surprise
lost in stabbing pain
something screams
wake up fool
but I choose to lie down
to sleep bathed in her smell
and the last comfort from her that I will find

Explanation at midnight

Somehow I got lost.

You were asleep in the seat beside me,
I got lost in Beethoven and thoughts of first kisses.
Not that tonight I would know the latter,
but I could hope.

I have never seen anyone look so beautiful sleeping before,
I just couldn't stop myself from looking over
and seeing you curled up and smiling.

Of course, I can't tell you this,
not yet at least.

It just makes it all the more difficult to explain
why we are in Mentor,
which is 60 miles from Kent.

Epoch

Devastation tears at the forest.
Trees that once reached to sky,
now roots that know the sun.
Fire spreads,
a fire that has waited too many years to burn,
held back by its own forethoughts.
Now rich and full of oxygen,
the perfect fuel,
once exhaled by the trees,
now their ultimate destruction.
It is the height of the cycle,
from birth comes destruction,
from devastation comes new life once again.
The forest burns inside of me,
fresh land for new beginnings,
fertile from ash scattered in the wind.

Too late

2 am, no sleep
feeding time
change the diaper
rock
forever rock
sleeping child, crook of my arm
so beautiful

kindergarten, crying as the bus pulls away
first baseball game
I never jumped so high when a run was scored
now I know how my father felt
fishing, Saturday morning, 6 am
I rented a boat
cartoons were on, we went home
chicken pox
bedtime stories, nightlights

but this will never happen
not 6 more months
just a doctor's bill
and she didn't tell me
until it was too late

Soup

She brought me soup when I was sick.
I was running a fever,
she stopped at the local drug store
and picked up some aspirin for me.
She also surprised me with a video I wanted to see,
so that I could have something to do while I was
lying on the couch between naps.
She checked on me in the morning before she went to work
to make sure I had everything I needed
and I was ok.

She brought me soup when I was sick
and I still haven't figured out the way to tell her
that I am in love with her.

Heads

This isn't going to be easy.
I had just passed the sign for exit 133.
I felt a click, and fear.
my window cracked, a taste of the air.
the humidity hung there like the lover waiting,
waiting like you were.
At exit 133 a thought had occurred,
racing through my mind and building.

I don't want to head down that highway,
I want to turn back,
I know you are waiting there,
sitting on my couch,
counting the minutes until I come through the door.
Something isn't right, something I can't put my finger on.
How come our bodies fit together,
your hands my hands,
your kiss my addiction?
Run, please run,
something so good can never be true.
don't get hurt, take charge.
and staring at the exit 133 sign,
lost in thought,
I ran.

This isn't going to be easy,
for the next three days you'll know something is wrong,
ask me time and time again and I'll deny it.
You'll feel the moment coming,
the moment where I say those sick words,
the words that cause the sink.
I watch your face fall,
Please understand, there aren't words.
They don't exist, I can't make this easy,
I hurt you even if I don't mean to.
I don't want to.
I say this over and over while you cry,
but it doesn't make one damn bit of difference.
try to reach out to comfort you,
but that right is gone now.

To the words we promised,
to the way you pull away from me,
to the way your tears roll down your cheek
and I long to touch them,
to wipe them away,
please know this isn't easy.
If I could do this without hurting you,
if there were words.
Please please know this isn't easy,
I can't tell you how I am protecting myself,
how I am falling in love with you,
how I am scared of being hurt.
She speaks.

Tails

It smells like him, she ponders,
or maybe it's the incense he always burns.
She drapes herself over the couch,
breathes deep into the pillow.
God how I long to see him.
To miss his touch is to miss a breath,
to miss a beat of my heart.
Hunger for the next caress,
walls down and waiting.

She can't remember the last time she let herself fall.
Somewhere between lovers and loss ran her jaded thoughts,
until he came along.
Arms wrapped around, she grew to trust again,
grew to look forward to paths she had abandoned,
paths which now bloomed in morning sun
and nighttime desire.
Oh to feel alive again, to know sweetness,
to be at her most beautiful.
He will be here soon.

And that night in his arms there was a
poke
a small ball in her chest,
a brief leap of her heart.
Something off,
something refrained.
It's just my head, she thinks,
I just got scared for a second.
Old habits die hard, especially ones that
existence is based around for so long.
Fall, she tells her body, fall for him and be in love.
Give yourself, bear your neck,
your hands are his hands,
his kiss is your addiction.

For the next three days,
refrained runs through her head,
over and over again,
no matter how many times she screams fall.
And the sink comes quick and painful,
four little words worse than knives,
words we all know and dread to hear.
we
(oh god no no)
need
(please don't look at me like)
to
(I gave you my hea..)
the rest is lost.
The next minutes that follow are a wash,
blinding pain and tears.
don't try to comfort me, she screams
quit saying easy.
don't you dare touch me.

she speaks.

We are two sides of a coin, she cries,
now opposites,
but still the same coin.
Forged together in fire,
your hands my hands,
your kiss my addiction.
Never to meet again,
only to exist back to back,
entwined.
I let myself fall for you,
I let you in.
I bared my neck.
Run, she commands,
but now he is crying, crying hard tears,
realizing what he has done,
realizing he has no choice but to run now,
they have become a coin,
back to back yet entwined.

Flip

Three days, seven hours, twenty-three minutes.
He's been counting hours,
it seems to make the pain in his chest subside.
He can't recall breathing once in this time,
he just stares at the clock,
watching the hands roll around.
His thoughts aren't with the clock though,
his thoughts are with her,
back to back yet entwined.

He thinks of the perfection,
of her at her most beautiful.
of how he threw it all away at exit 133.
of how he ran.

She hasn't left her bed yet,
just stares at the ceiling,
memorizing the lines.
It seems to help.
Thoughts leap in her head,
she can push most of them away.
She remembers the couch, the smell of him.
The little things,
they brings the tears.

Three days, nine hours, twenty-one minutes.
He doesn't care how he looks,
doesn't bother to comb his hair,
red eyes and day-old clothes.
He snaps,
panicked and crying.
Car keys, still on the table for three days.
Her door can't come soon enough,
but he has something to do first.

A silent prayer for her to answer.
It is more than just need now,
the fire has burned out of control.
Please oh please let her be here.
This isn't going to be easy,
he thinks.
The door opens,
and for one moment they are a mirror image,
two sides of a coin that have seen each other,
the impossible possible.

He is holding a sign,
a sign that reads "exit 133".
This is my fear, he says,
I am giving it to you.
I love you uncontrollably.
I was so afraid you would hurt me,
that this was too good to be true.
I ran not because I don't love you,
but because I love you too much.
This sign is my fear, my doubt,
my walls.
I don't want them anymore,
I only want you.
I want to burn day and night with you,
to get lost in your hands that are my hands,
your kiss that is my addiction.

The door closes.
Outside in the dumpster is a token,
a grand gesture of love,
placed there by not one person,
but two,
hand in hand and crying,
entwined.

Celeste

The car stalls,
the dust rises around.
I am five hundred miles from home,
lost in the great American desert.
Steam rolls out of my hood,
the warmth of the sand beneath the car
now tempted by true baking heat,
a heat that has stopped me in my tracks.
No cars pass, no buses.
I am on my own here,
free from everything but the sun itself.
But the sun will not last,
and before long my tired shoulders will be quenched
with the cool desert air.
The sky reaches in all directions,
forever sky,
conquering the horizon point,
swallowing the land.

The sun set an eternity tonight,
then one last sliver blinked over the horizon,
a final flash of red across the desert floor.

I closed my eyes, felt the day steal away.
It has been so long since I have slowed down,
I forgot again.
The warmth of the roof under my back,
and pure silence all around.
Tomorrow I will be in Vegas,
half-drunk and gambling,
walking in Babylon itself,
a brief layover to my final destination.
Tonight though,
I shall watch a million stars capture the night,
cast their light down and watch over me,
as I sleep under their desert sky.

Drop

It was 3 a.m., I in my drunken stupor,
her thousands of miles away,
asleep.

The drop came bold and final,
taking away my innocence.
The alcohol has tricked me,
offering solace yet ripping the blinders from my eyes.
I lay on the floor,
knocked there by finality and desire run rampant,
trying with all my might to dream her into my arms.

The drop came nonetheless,
and no matter my struggle,
it severed the cord which has tied us together.
I never wanted to realize,
I wanted to bury my head and push away what has happened.
She can't really be gone, she has always come back.
But not this time.
Denial escapes me mockingly,
never a gentle master.

The drop came,
and for the first time I opened my eyes and accepted a fate so cruel.
Love letters and photo albums surrounding me,
I collapsed inside,
trying to push away thoughts of new houses and children,
of pets and cars and holidays.
I stumbled to bed, scared to wake up tomorrow,
and more alone than I have ever been.
I was once two,
and now I am one.

Ladder

Electricity jumps a Jacobs ladder
arcs between us
lost in the sound of pool balls and bad music
cannot want you
should not want you
corner of her eyes watch
judge the distance so not to draw close,
not to feel the skin you know
as you wish,
when you close your eyes to sleep
only to drift to dream next to another,
grown stale with time

oh to feel that fire again
but there is safety in the familiar breath
still she cannot forget the Jacobs ladder.

Thirst

She tried to drink bleach when she was 17.
No thirst for water,
but thirst nonetheless.
Bleach to wine, wine to smoke, smoke to touch.
She dreamt to live inside the skin of another,
to burn day and night,
writhing and wrapped in twisted sheets.
She thinks this will fill her,
will bring the rain to cool the shoulders
and quiet the mind.
To suck them dry is never enough,
flesh never quenches the fire of our souls.

Once I gave her what she desired,
or so she thought.
She prayed for the end of the fire
but it was only the beginning,
for I knew her thirst well,
still it was not my place to tell her.
Now her voice upon my machine years later,
ravenous and drooling,
begging for the way it once was,
for something so close to the cure,
never knowing what she was truly thirsty for.

Morning haze

In my dream I had the impossible.
You, simple perfect you,
one I cannot have,
reached out and took my hands,
then wrapped your arms around.
Your lips to mine,
I found myself home and
knew
knew you were the one.
The dream dissolved,
and in the morning haze I could still taste you.

Later in my car you rode,
but there was something more.
For in your eyes I could see
the impossible, for now, remained,
yet I was not the only one who dreamed
or had found themselves home,
wrapped in perfection and
morning haze.

Anger and receiver

She collapsed crying against the payphone
only ten feet from me.
Propped against the wall,
the phone dangling underneath,
she tried to retrieve her quarter
as if it were the last possible chance
of a salvation quickly slipping from her grasp.
“You won't take anymore from me.” she screamed,
slamming the coin release down over and over.
“Give me back my time, my love.”
The phone now him, and he would not release her.
Anger poured into the dial tone,
into the coin box
into the receiver.

In the end she sat underneath,
defeated by the phone company
and him.

MD

So evil, this one
but my passion none the less
I long to taste the lips, the fire
to run my hands through endless
red
to take this perfect creature
and make her mine.
Boundless love for our betrayers
for those we know will break our hearts,
shedding endless tears
not for being betrayed,
but for missing the sound of their voice
seeing their smile
feeling them breathe as they sleep.
So close to being an angel,
as I lie wrapped in purest bliss,
for she is asleep in my arms.

I can't change her,
so I shall hold her while time allows,
bowing its head for a split second
as I trace her body,
and wish for the moment to never end.

Next door

sometimes I laugh
because I can't bring the relief
regret has become a friend that lives next door
that bangs on the walls when I sleep
and reminds me of his presence every time
I want to be alone and move on

to feel something
anything
but I keep finding my head in my hands
feel the frustration pour out
so I make comments about getting back to how I
used to be
and I refuse to trust anyone

I am tired of hiding away
where have I gone

A brief definition of love, II

Love is phone calls.
simple as that,
love is the amount of phone calls one makes when the other isn't home.
This, of course, is dependent on the other having an answering machine.
It isn't checking up on the other person at all,
it is knowing they won't be there and having to hear their voice,
forever enshrined on a minuscule tape,
electrons and protons that dance in the form of her voice,
that capture her inflection and her silly little laugh,
the laugh that drives you crazy and sets a smile upon your face,
even when the world has decided to slide-tackle you in the middle of your day.
There's just something about the static,
the hiss that surrounds.
The 10 seconds of knowing the one you love
has touched this machine,
blessed it with her presence,
and blessed you with her thoughts.
Love is a phone call.

Love is also knowing when to hang up before the beep,
love doesn't dig hang-up messages.

3:32

He sits down to a double cheeseburger and fries,
knowing he is crossing his diet.
He doesn't want to be fat.
He wants to be attractive, to be loved,
But food is his substitute,
and he is so hungry.
It is 3:31,
And the world moves on.

He sits in his classroom.
Math makes him feel stupid,
equations he never understands.
He stares out the window,
wishing for thunderstorms or war,
something more than this mundane life.
It is 3:31,
And the world moves on.

She kisses him wide-mouthed
as he lets her off at her drive.
Five minutes pass until her phone rings,
another shows up at her door.
She ponders love or frequency,
kissing wide-mouthed once again.
It is 3:31,
And the world moves on.

In the parking lot he is walking between cars,
trying door handles.
Hoping to get lucky,
hoping not to be seen.
Maybe a laptop today, or a nice stereo.
It is 3:31,
And the world moves on.

The shower keeps running,
must be clean again.
He touched six doorknobs
and had to use the bathroom at that horrible building.
So many germs,
he doesn't even want to go outside.
It is 3:31,
and the world moves on.

A single autumn leaf falls to her feet
and she thinks
how can something so beautiful be dying?
I surely messed up there.
It slips from her hand.
It is 3:32,
And she sighs.
Time to start over again,
and with the wave of her hand the world is no more.

Of Her

I initially tried filling the gap with alcohol
but whiskey refuses to be moonlight.
And no matter how much Bach I play,
no matter how many times I light the candles around my house,
or sit on the porch and watch the night take the day,
the gap remains.

I have binged and purged on our essence,
and no matter the downpour or the drought,
the pieces do not fit.
And it's not a matter of you,
so stop feeling so damn self-important.
It's the fact that during the time you were here,
while we were here,
something inside of me came alive,
and I refuse now to let that piece die.

So come sundown, come moonlight,
I pray a silent prayer to you tonight
that I may fill this gap that steals my sense
of taste, my sense of smell,
of joy and wonder,
and that the thought lingering in the back of my mind
isn't true.
That it's not just a matter
of her.

White again

With a word I remembered.

Perpetrators,
he called them perpetrators
as if they broke into a house, stole a television
I'm blindingly white now,
a white the perfect opposite of the darkest night,
of pitch black
but not pure,
not by a long shot
closer to the darkest night than I ever wished to venture
Can't feel my legs
my hands
no
not me
I can't get into the car, I'm crying too hard
and my chest is collapsing now
heaving in and out
later drowning in the middle of my room
a new weight, hauntingly familiar
a weight that has known me for years somewhere hidden
and not shown its face till today
but this room will change
the months will pass
I'll walk down the concrete, staring at the lines
when out of nowhere questions
questions about myself
and the suffocation in my chest
people stare, but they might as well be staring through me
for I am white again
and there is nothing else around

Two things

god I have almost let her in.
Have I crossed myself, my promises,
or have I given the one I have burned for
another chance at my soul?
This brief opening,
enough faith to let her get through,
or enough to fit the knife,
the knife that she so carefully has driven into me,
time and time again?
All is not lost, not yet,
and this battle persists.

How can her kiss lie,
my heart argues,
did you not feel the euphoria?
Do you not remember October?
she was your plans,
you called her your girl.
She cannot forget you, after the years that have passed,
and you roll over and tear at the sheets,
confused without her there beside you,
even now.
Let her in, let her close, she will come back,
she always does.
You know this.
And if not a lover, a friend, a casual kiss.
at least she would be close.

Fool. Stupid, stupid fool,
my mind exclaims,
how can she be a mere friend?
You have burned for her, felt her writhe,
counted seconds to hours for her touch.
tasted the sweat from her body,
hungry mouths and hands locked.
You have studied her shadow as she slept from lovemaking,
set against candles which burnt out so long ago.
Love this deep does not fade,
and she would not be a friend for long.
She would become your lover, your confidant,
you would know her taste again.
She will come back,
yes she will,
I agree with this.
But this is only one of the two things you know for sure.

the other,
she will go again.

Mother night

The night holds none but those true to its presence,
the rest are poisoned with sleep and age.
Never to know the hourless conversations and adventures,
destined to be stories that never grow old,
that burn in our memories and in our tales for years to come.
The night allows us a brief taste of our youth,
to feel alive again,
to hold on even when we are weary from the years that have passed
to defy true age and taste the cool night air.
We are merely a blink of the eye in eternity,
but mother night wraps us like an infant in her grasp
and gives us the greatest gift of all,
to hold back time and recount our lives and those past,
to bathe in her curiosity,
and have a split second chance of escaping our
passing,
if only till day overtakes her once more.

Depth, concrete

I felt the snap, cold and dry.

I was driving the road I have grown to know,
and somewhere in the depths of my thoughts,
I felt the snap.

I knew suddenly where I was supposed to be,
but I was hundreds, no thousands, of miles from there tonight.

In the depths, it was a mixed bag of
question marks and a lucidity I could not reach.

But the answers, the answers were at hand

I sped faster, and somehow the distance inside myself
had merged with the road to a place I had all but forgotten.

Can a lifetime's forgiveness be contained in mere blacktop and concrete?

and no matter how the air rushes through

I cannot breathe, not in this car, not in these thoughts,
not with this distance.

My solace simple white lines away,
but thousands through the depths,

I drive still, hell-bent and frantic.

For the answers, the answers are at hand.

Sometimes

Sometimes people notice a look, a feeling inside someone,
not over the air, but through some inner channel that
carries only the most important and powerful message.
It creates a tremor inside the receiver,
a question mark and exclamation point joined in perfect matrimony.
For some people it scares them.
For others it's a dose of intrigue,
wondering what runs through the core of another,
what has carried itself inside and taken residence.
Their eyes hold that brief spark,
that piece that is kept hidden away,
so different and alien to us, but amazing nonetheless.
Those pieces that hide away, they seem to sneak out and take a look around,
flashing the crowd,
almost as the drunk girl at the bar flashes her breasts,
just as embarrassed,
and just as curious to every onlooker who happened
to be looking the right way at the right time.
For the people that let this slip, they are at their most beautiful
and most vulnerable.
Blessed are those that find these people and hold on,
to look into their eyes is to be swept away into the deepest ocean,
a thousand times terrifying,
yet a thousand times beautiful.
When the door is open and those pieces escape, the dam has burst, the city is lost,
and we are swept away.

Produce

Did my mortal being
DNA wrapped around DNA
breath of life and beauty birth
prepare me for a life of
unloading produce from a truck?

A brief definition of love, III

So I'm sitting there in a smoky bar,
half-finished pint of beer in front of me.
It's been another night of bad music,
stupid DJ songs where bass is the backdrop to unknown faces on a dance floor,
people I don't know and don't care to.
My table is in the corner, away from said dance floor.
The lights are low.
My friends surround me, we laugh, tell jokes.
The song changes, and the world stops.
Soft and sweet piano,
I swear I can smell your distant perfume.
I close my eyes and the bar fades away.
There you are, and we are young again,
Deck the halls, it's you again, it's you again.
It is a simpler time,
days I never wished to pass.
I am taken by you, more than you know at this moment.
You sing the words to me, feel your breath on my neck
and your lips against my ear.
I wrap my arm around your waist, feeling them sway to the
piano, soft and slow.
It's you again you sing, and I lose myself in the waves crashing.
For one moment we are perfect.
Nothing that happens in the next few months matters,
nothing corrupts my memory of you.
I sit there in the bar, and feel that rush, feel your words.
That sweetness once again.
It doesn't matter you aren't here right now,
it doesn't matter we didn't make it.
Just because love doesn't last, doesn't mean it wasn't true,
I heard this once in another song.
Deck the halls I sing, eyes closed with a smile.
Deck the halls indeed.

Island

I walked to the middle of the island and drew a line.
Frank looked at me, and I told him that this side was mine.
I stopped hanging around the middle so much,
Frank sat on the line for a while and just looked sad.
Finally he went to his side of the island, and I didn't hear from him.
Within three years Frank and I were at war because I was stealing
from one of his trees.
Right before I killed him, he looked up at me with sad eyes and said
"I sure miss the times we would sit around and play chess."

Awakening

For nine months' time I have slept,
finally awakening in September to the final thralls of summer.
To night air cool and curious,
the harvest moon orange and magnificent above.
Three short months to be every piece of myself
three short months
And at the end to sleep again,
to wish forever autumn.

But now is not the time to wish,
now is the time to burn.
It is September,
and as I wipe the sleep from my eyes,
breathe the bonfire air,
warm and rich,
I find myself awake again.

Freight Train

she moans
the rush is near,
the rush is near.
Her back arches to him,
she bites her lip and sways, forever sways.
Fingernails that leave a bittersweet reminder find fresh skin,
in a world where pain holds no recognition in pleasure's constant.
Thin grooves line angel wings,
five delicate tracks on either side as the rush overtakes her,
a freight train blinding and breathtaking
out of control.

Of Caffeine and Cocaine

It was a day of too much coffee.

I found myself in the midst of what I thought
were new friends and an old face,
a face full of new possibilities.
I saw her at the cafe,
recognizing her from a past life I once lived.
She invited me to join their table,
introductions were made,
we played board games and smoked cigarettes.
An invitation, and I accepted.
To the bar we went.

I quickly learned that some people are better at disguising
their neurosis, their dark little secrets,
than others.
I stumbled into a hornet's nest of deceit and carnal desires,
the little girl I had once known had been replaced
with leather and cocaine.
I was already skittish from nine hours of coffee,
which I now realize was my savior and the key
to me fitting in enough to observe.
I watched them writhe on the dance floor,
twisting and turning in spectrums of light and sound.
I pondered what had brought her to this point,
this underworld of dark bars and multi-spectrums
providing Technicolor to sin,
and what had taken her from caffeine
to cocaine.

Duality

I have decided to not be me anymore,
to live outside of myself.
It is a much more interesting prospect
to be someone else,
to react differently to situations.
To be the opposite of what I am used to,
only to have my real self somewhere back,
hiding.
It is a good study of people,
watching their reactions to different stimuli.

Maybe a new city would suit me also.
I'll meet all new people,
guinea pigs if you choose to call them that.
Push them and pull them,
human chess of sorts.
Is this life but not a game anyway,
where the best player finds himself with the winning hand,
or capturing someone else's King?

Those who get ahead, they know this game well.
Some may cry foul, but I see nothing wrong with
learning the ins and outs of situations,
situations I cannot experience in this being.
Is it bad to want to know what makes people tick?
To know how people will react?
To know how I could react?
An interesting duality
may just fit.

Vampire

I never meant to be a vampire,
never realized until it was too late
that my actions were so impure,
that my fangs were so sharp.
somewhere in the back of my mind the killer instinct lives,
slowly guiding me while I sleep,
searching for those rich with energy and life.
Sucking them dry for my own gain,
for my own hunger,
sweet blood, life energy to feed me,
to make my belly warm.
All they see is sweetness
and all I show is sweetness,
until the sun is down and the night has taken control once again.
It's too late to escape,
forever a creature of the shadows
from first taste.

a hornet

she looks down at her ring
as if a bug has landed on her finger
but three years are impossible to crush
and don't just fly away
sometimes she fancies a hornet
something more than this god-forsaken coal that has been crushed
in ice ages of pressure,
yet no more than the pressure she feels now

she fancies a hornet
inside a sting
come pain that will dull with ice
but eventually go away

three children
and a god-forsaken rock

she fancies a hornet

The mouths of wolves

Your room an altar to fire through candlelight,
I saw the chance and made my choice.
As I took you hard and slow you made reference to shooting stars,
stared into my eyes and bared your neck.
I drank deeply that night,
for the thirst of loneliness is thirst nonetheless.
And afterwards you saw me lick my lips and you knew,
knew that sweet words can be spoken through the mouths of wolves.

Autopilot

Call me on the phone,
come over,
it's all automatic anymore,
anyway
My voice isn't even mine,
I tell you to come and I don't want you here.
autopilot
I'm on autopilot.
I've never heard my own voice and thoughts so separate before,
my stupid rogue voice, betraying my decisions.
I must be on autopilot,
the captain had to use the latrine,
the airplane is fine.
No need for panic.
Please ignore the large mountain ahead,
it will only hurt for a second.

Shake

So I don't know the signs anymore, and bitterness has become jade and formed a pool. I can swim, but I always fall in when I try to move (wait something's wrong dirt, dark) ahead. I don't like this pool, the water is warm here but never comforting, and it takes me from new roads. Too much time spent treading water while industrial bulldozers knock over entrances to highways under afternoon sun, blocking my way. I am helpless only to watch, keep my head above the (ground where am I this isn't right..help m) water and watch. (wait, what was that, what is)

The signs, the signs. I can't read them, covered in symbols which once meant something but now escape me, strange patterns. Greek? Latin? The symbols host a tickle of familiarity, mocking (where am I what is) me and laughing. Read me, they scream, you know the language, you used to use it all the time. Have you forgotten? Too much time spent in the garden, prognosis poor. Congratulations little (roses I can smell roses) one, you are successful in your destruction, thank you for helping me. So sweet of you.

Naked, lying in the road. Waterlogged and weary, beautiful in a way...

Crying a puddle of tears, they well up around him,
almost forming a pool.

Is he hallucinating? He seems to be...

Shaking

Panic

woke up in a panic
the dark cloud was back
weight on my chest
my mind, my mind was so fuzzy
so cold
people keep backing away
looking at me like I was dead or something
the cure hours away,
but I will let myself shake for now
I will breathe in this poison, let it hit me deep
I just haven't been clean long enough,
haven't enjoyed my freedom apparently
it may be an easy fix,
but I need to learn now
too much time spent dirty and itching,
to take being clean for granted.
I do not want this anymore.

Chance

We sit and eat hummus.
I've been looking forward to this all day,
not that I would tell you that,
that's not the way we work.
You look so amazing, you always do,
hair pulled back and those eyes,
they tear down my walls so easily.
So unfair.
You kick me under the table and smile,
pay attention.
You have no clue that I am paying the utmost attention,
I just can't help but get lost in your words
and drift away on the tambour of your voice.
Like I said, so unfair.
"I met someone" you say, "I went out to lunch with him
today.
He seems really sweet."
For one moment, a panic, but no, not this time.
Too many times but not this time.
"Well, that's all said and good," I casually speak,
"but I'm in love with you.
You're the one that I want, I can't imagine spending
another day without you."
At this her face drops, her piece of half-eaten pita
falls out of her hand,
she does not notice.
She rises, almost knocking the table over.
I stand to stop her from leaving,
but that wasn't her intention at all.
She wraps her arms around me,
and in the middle of my favorite restaurant our lips meet
for the first time.

Corruption

innocence draws me
or maybe it is my lack of
that tempts me even more
to taste the lips of the angels
to hide my devil horns,
until her mouth finds me waiting.
to feel her hunger,
her pent-up moans of ecstasy
to steal her angel wings for my very own
and add them to the collection in my closet.

Harlot

time and defense are the only constants left
a harrowing sidestep, a brief miss
after a slip of the tongue
when it comes it comes too fast
sweeping and rushing,
a second's perfection and a lifetime of doubt,
head to head
mathematics chooses the victor
no equal sign lies between,
greater than overcomes the spark and the chance.
She kisses like the final harlots of the earth
wide mouthed and sweet with honey
damning me to hell when the equation is worked
a simple computation
and she walks away

Bullet

Bullet holes aren't really holes,
they fill too quickly with blood.
It's not like you can really see through the body,
see the landscape and vista behind the person.

I saw a man, someone I would call a crackhead.
He wore a wedding ring and needle holes at the bend.
A simple nod, basic acknowledgement, I don't know you, I don't want to.
I laughed as I walked away,
how could someone like this ever be married?
Squealing tires, gun shots, and tears.
Wrong place, wrong time.
That was the worst part, the sound of tears.
I've never heard tears before, not like this.
And I didn't see pavement through him,
for bullet holes really aren't holes.
Didn't see the ants crawling underneath his body,
didn't see the sidewalk I walked every day for the past three years.
I saw tears, that's what I saw.
Not color, not hatred or drugs or poverty.
not needle holes, just wedding rings and life.
He was torn to the lowest common denominator of humanity,
that which resides in all of us when we are truly scared.
Begging for life, he asked me if I was an angel.

Sidewalk, beautiful summer day. The wind was blowing,
crows on a line overlooking two men, one dying.
He actually made a joke, this poor dying man made a joke.
he said "so much for the insulin,
I thought I needed some a few minutes ago,
but no more needles for me, at least that's one thing good.
No more abuse for my poor veins."
That day I wished I was an angel, wished to sweep away his wounds
and save someone's husband, someone's father.
He begged for forgiveness, called out names in apology, made his peace with God.
I knelt and prayed, prayed for someone I had discounted only
minutes earlier.

His last thought, he asked me to tell his family that he loves them.
I cried as he passed from this world,
I cried when I looked into the eyes of his family.

Porcelain

I have never known her kiss,
only seen the ways she brushes her hair back from her face and smiles at me.
I long to be the one to brush her hair back,
electricity jumping between synapses,
the smile still a forming thought,
met instead with a soft kiss,
a question finally answered.

We have come so close that only breath lies between,
and somewhere inside we both have the answers to the questions
we are too afraid to ask.
We pull away from that breath,
only to desire the still air later.

I am taken by her,
and I know not more than what I feel,
every time her eyes meet mine
and everyday that passes.
I can only pray that someday,
I will know her kiss,
will feel arms wrapped around
as we drift into the throws of sleep.

Fourteenth

Thirty-three degrees latitude
October fourteenth
northeastern sky
beside the big dipper, five stars down
two stars to the right.
Here lies my gift,
so that she will always think of me
remember how much I loved her
to not forget the good times and the magic
that we shared.

I often stare at her star

Belief

I am of the belief that people don't know what they have till it's gone
I am of the belief that love and war may be opposites, but they like to play
on the same team quite often
I am of the belief that if you don't burn for someone, you have no right
to hold their heart
I am of the belief that the world thrives on adversity, because we have nothing
better to occupy our time with
I am of the belief that this is why professional wrestling is so popular
I am of the belief that slowing down to look at a wreck should warrant other drivers
to throw things at you
I am of the belief that no religion is perfectly correct, that each one has
a piece of the whole answer
I am of the belief that to be truly beautiful, you must challenge me mentally
I am of the belief that if you don't control your children, they will control you
I am of the belief that coffee shops are still truly cool
I am of the belief that chain coffee houses do not count
I am of the belief that people have stopped taking responsibility for their actions,
and this is going to be the downfall of society
I am of the belief that smiling at someone on the street can make their day
I am of the belief that hatred is learned
I am of the belief that there is no good answer anymore to welfare, public education,
or any large issue. The government messed up long ago; let's just admit it.
I am of the belief that we have too many possessions, and we take this way too seriously
I am of the belief that I can back this up with the fact that people die over being robbed
I am of the belief that pop music is worse than heavy metal; at least the heavy metal
fans wore leather and looked cool.
I am of the belief that pop music is a closet version of lessons in being a whore.
I am of the belief that anyone who wants to contest me on this should look at the clothes
the "performers" are wearing and read the lyrics your twelve year old knows by heart.
No twelve year old should ever have a crush on a twenty-something pop idol,
male or female.
I am of the belief that people have so much more potential than what they think

I can't sleep

Time and time again they sat on my couch.
I would listen, nod.
Sometimes I would tell them what they wanted to hear,
that it's okay to feed the addiction that tortures their souls.
They are all the same anyway,
fears with feet.

But not this guy though,
This guy's different.
Illusions of grandeur, schizophrenia, arachnophobia.
Hell, fear of falling in the toilet and drowning.
You name it.
These conditions have nothing on him.

He seemed normal enough,
kindly shaking my hand and flashing me an
almost-winning smile.
The kind of smile you give someone when there is something
that is really bothering you,
but you are a generally a well-adjusted person.
When you come to seek help not because you think you are
crazy,
but when you think no one else needs to know and you really
need someone to talk to.
He took residence upon my couch, the couch of the hopeless.

"Sleep" he told me,
"I can't sleep."
We then went through the normal first session barrage
of deep psychological questions,
running the gamut from his parents to his present life.
Everything was in order, and as far as I could see,
he was more mentally sound than me.
At least, me now.
After the first hour I was no closer in understanding,
I couldn't figure out what was haunting this guy.
Then he re-stressed "I can't sleep", and I caught it this time.
"I can't sleep" as in "I really can't let myself sleep."

I only wish now I wouldn't have taken the phone call.
Something inside of me told me not to leave this guy alone,
but I stepped out of my office anyway,
only meaning to be gone for a split second.
This guy was intriguing,
there was definitely something about him.
My secretary said it was important,
she no longer works there.
I don't either.
I was only gone for three or four minutes.
He was asleep when I came back.

Apparently he found my couch comfortable,
at least for a little bit.
Right now, though, he was hovering approximately
three feet above it,
twisting and turning,
fighting off something seen only to him.
I smelled something acrid in the air,
and my mind flashed back to when I was a child
My parents took me to see David Copperfield,
and I remember the same smell when the flash pots went off
and his assistant rose above the table.
This is my office though, not some stage with wires and harnesses.
My initial response was that he was in danger,
so I reached out and shoved him downwards with all my strength.
He hit the couch and rolled off, awakening immediately.
It took all my strength to keep him calm,
and to not appear desperately shaken myself.
I told him to take a deep breath and start from the beginning.

"It's been two weeks doctor,
every night I fall asleep they come for me.
Little devils, for some reason they look just like little devils,
from a storybook I had as a kid.
They used to scare me,
and I think something in my mind is going back to that.
Maybe it's some deep issue I have with my childhood,
but I keep dreaming they are coming for me, we struggle,
then I wake up from
falling out of bed and hitting the floor."

Oh my God, he didn't know he was levitating.
He had no clue.

I should have stopped here,
my sanity was in jeopardy as it was.
I am a man of reason though,
a student of the human mind,
and of human explanation.
I asked him to continue.

"Maybe I am just being a big chicken,
but I really don't want to sleep anymore.
It's getting worse,
and every night there seem to be more of them.
Lately they've been talking about coming for my family,
and just now they were talking about you doctor.
Saying how tasty you might be.
Crazy, huh?"

I haven't been home in a week.
I have been going from hotel to hotel,
but running is useless.
There are more and more of them every time I drift off.
The waitress at the all-night truck stop asked me if I was okay.
All I told her was

I can't sleep.

Three days

It is three days until she comes back.
something inside of me isn't right.
I can't decide if it's the way she said goodbye to me,
or the way she tried to run away,
only to find my arms and my touch.
Three days to think.
Three days to worry whether she will leave me
or I will leave her.
I am in love with her,
I can't help myself.
But she scared me,
she pushed me away.
She's done it before.
She tells me I am perfect for her,
perhaps too perfect,
and that she doesn't deserve me.
This makes me think.
Three days of solitude,
nine meals,
fifty-seven cigarettes,
countless cups of coffee,
Too much time spent trying to convince myself
I am not in love with her.

Swim

to the one who left,
leave
to the one who promised,
lie
to the one who cheated,
fuck

I will learn to swim

Destiny

She was destiny.

I had seen her face a thousand times before,
somewhere in the back of my mind.
No matter the searching I have done,
love lost and heart broken,
she was the one that was destined to find me.
She was supposed to walk through the door.
I shunned these thoughts,
disregarding voices that I should know damn well
do not go away.

She appeared in my dreams for years,
and the first time seeing her in living color,
I almost drowned struggling for breath.
She looked identical to the one who kept appearing to me,
down to the cut across her hand,
which I later found out had happened only days earlier.
Had the paths been that set,
that after all this time I find myself in the perfect place,
the perfect time?

Refrained.

That word has always haunted me in my life.
No matter how great the love or how wonderful the situation,
there has always been something that has held me back.
Something inside told me I wasn't in the right place yet,
that there was more.
Not just more though, that there was something coming,
and with patience,
it would find me.
So I always held back, maybe not completely consciously,
but I did.
I was free when she found me.

The first second I saw her sitting there,
I knew.
She looked up at me and smiled,
I cannot even begin to describe the thoughts that rolled
through my mind.
Relief, joy, shock. Everything.
My journey had come to an end,
here she was.
Finally.
It took a few days for conversation,
partially from shock,
partially because I wanted her to make the move.
I know, I know, I shouldn't doubt after all this time.
When the move was made, it was over.

We were caught in a whirlwind,
and I never realized I could love someone
as much as I loved her.
Everything was perfect.
We spent every waking moment together,
wrapped up and completely in love.

Ten months later I found the wheels of fate
often times take cruel, cruel turns.
She was dying.
I held her hand when the doctor told her about the cancer,
which would take her life only months from now.
It was supposed to be a normal prenatal checkup,
but like I said,
fate is often cruel.
She passed quickly from this world,
I kissed her forehead and told her I loved her
as she closed her eyes forever.

Every night before I go to sleep,
I kiss my daughter's forehead the same way,
whisper that I love her,
and tell her

she was destiny.

Intermission

Every time she breaks up with someone she dyes her hair.
This always made me laugh,
since we remained friends after we dated
and I started calling her "rainbow,"
after about 20 different shades.
I think she was actually buying stock in Clairol for a while.
Or putting their children through college.

So the last time I broke up with someone I followed her lead,
in memory of her poor abused hair
(which is now a rather off shade of blonde,
almost a green.)
guys shouldn't dye their hair though,
we have neither the knowledge nor the talent,
for she referred to me as "copper" for many years,
and I didn't even feel any better anyway.
Damn girls.

Amnesiarica

I awoke to a ninety-two Chrysler,
my hands firmly gripped on the wheel,
heading down the highway at 60 miles an hour.
I couldn't remember my name,
couldn't remember what I was doing here,
or where I was going for that matter.
In fact, I had no clue what the year was.
Or what the hell route 23 Indiana meant.
The only thing that existed inside my mind
was a seemingly endless fog that could not be cut through.
A half-smoked cigarette burned between my fingers,
the taste of bad coffee lingered on my tongue.
Possibilities swam in my mind as I downshifted and pulled
into the rest stop.
Had my mind been erased by sheer terror or
simple boredom?
Had some horrible occurrence stolen my identity?
Or had some impossible wish come true,
clean slate and half pack of cigarettes west?

Over the next half hour I tore the car to pieces,
a mixture of half panic and half wonderment.
My worldly goods at this point consisted of
the tweed jacket I wore over a green sweater,
a pair of corduroys,
a beaten up pair of brown shoes over white socks,
half a pack of Parliament lights and Zippo,
sixty-three dollars in cash,
a driver's license proclaiming me as Theodore Drake,
and a ninety-two Chrysler Coupe.
The trunk was empty,
spare the ever-present tire and jack.
The back seat held no clues as to my journey or destination,
it seems I had cleaned meticulously before
losing my mind.
Maybe some cold water on my face will awaken me from this nightmare.
I walked to the rest stop with my collar up,
hoping to avoid looking like I had gone insane.
The face in the mirror I saw in the bathroom
held no explanation.

But mine was not the only face in the bathroom
searching for answers.
Dead eyes stared, people wandered aimlessly around.
The thought and emotion occurred almost simultaneously,
that I was not a rare case of amnesia,
and the sinking feeling that something is very, very wrong here.
Maybe not just here.
I had no desire to talk to any of the other lost souls,
and it didn't seem they did either.
It was quiet, dead quiet.
I have never felt fear so thick and pure that it silenced everything.
I ran to my Chrysler,
the only connection that I held with my current existence,
(or was it my Chrysler I thought..)
popped the tape out of the deck and turned up the radio.
Nothing.
Dead air.
According to the clock, it was 4:29.

It wasn't the way I got into the car,
or the way I slid the correct key into the ignition and cranked
the engine over,
like I probably have a million times.
It was the fact that this held no familiarity,
no recollection at the slightest.
How did I know how to do this?
Have I become Frankenstein's monster,
the ability to play the sweetest harmonies,
only because of trained hands that are somehow not my own?
I dropped the car in drive and floored the accelerator,
trying desperately to shun these thoughts.
According to the sign Concord was six miles away,
maybe some answers would lie there.

Marty's Grill the sign read.
This seemed as good as anything,
though Concord didn't seem like a very happening place at the moment.
The streets were inhabited mostly by people sitting on the benches,
staring blankly and picking through purses or wallets.
I entered the grill.
Six people sat huddled on bar stools,
staring at the TV and crying.
I joined them, they did not notice.
The television was on, and words scrawled across the bottom
of a blue screen reading CNN.

2:23 PM EST.

For those of you reading this, please do not panic.

Today at 8:32 AM EST this 21st of March, the President of the United States, Martin A. Crest, held an emergency press conference informing the American people and countries of the world that he has received a message.

Unless the United States and all UN countries bow to the Separatists' demands of a full stop on bombing and full withdrawal of all military troops,

there will be dire repercussions.

These repercussions include a poison being introduced into the air and the water supply,

with various effects from permanent memory loss to death.

Afterwards there will be constant bombing runs on our nation's capital and key locations around the world.

President Crest and UN board members called the message "pure propaganda" and "ridiculous."

At 9:42 AM EST, explosions were reported at the Hoover Dam power plant, the Capitol building, and the Los Angeles Dodgers Stadium.

At 10:01 AM EST HazMat truck explosions were reported in the following U.S. cities: Annapolis, Austin, Bangor, Boulder, Charlottesville, Cleveland, Des Moines, Detroit, New Orleans, New York, Orlando, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Francisco, Seattle, Tallahassee, Washington, D.C., and Wichita.

Worldwide explosions were too numerous to report.

At this hour the Associated Press is receiving too much information on further explosions to confirm or deny.

At 1:50 PM EST, President Crest, aboard Air Force One, delivered this message to the American people and the world.

"My fellow Americans, I am saddened to report that the United States of America and countless countries of the world are now under attack by the Separatist faction.

Due to the dire circumstance of this message, we are disclosing full details, and ask the American people and members of the world to not panic. We strongly urge anyone listening to this message to stay in your houses and wear gas masks wherever possible. There are already numerous reports from many major cities of seizure, amnesia, and death. We are doing everything in our power to care for the injured. I personally ask everyone listening to this message to pray for you" At this point President Crest seemed confused and was quickly pulled from camera by his personal assistants.

This message will now repeat.

2:23 PM EST.

For those of you reading this, please do not panic...

Tile

Hospital waiting room.
Tile floors, plastic plants, sterile,
deathly quiet.
We all sit, families talk
meet
pray.
Hours of silence.
A stupid book that to this day bears my tears,
my prayers
held to my mouth to shield trembling lips,
so that I am strong for the others.
Our eyes don't meet, we all hold a dead gaze.
2 packs today.
My brother won't talk,
just wants another
and so do I.
6 hours of eternity and
doctor and nurses without news
please oh please
just hear me now
hear my prayers
my voice.
She looks up
He is alive.

Adrift

Set adrift upon the ocean
night current carrying me out to sea
behind the lights of the coast disappear
and for the first time I am alone
the oars still rest against
a fisherman's makeshift dock

I abandon myself to the waves,
guide me where you will.
Here I face the world,
to make my last stand
Sink or find shore,
but either case,
start anew.

Six

the top is down
heading through the desert
she yells
the stars, look at all the stars

it has been five days on the road
five days of freedom
since she met me at the door
we packed two suitcases,
stuffed with our final mortal remains
up to five days ago

Five days ago no map was decided, just west
always west
The means to run, to explore, to live
A decision met with hope and bright eyes
Five days of seeing you in your cheap sunglasses
looking like the final queen of the world
Five days of wind
Five days of freedom

the top is down
heading through the desert
she yells
the stars, look at all the stars
and all I can do is smile,
for tomorrow will be six days, not five

Misplaced

She found my bed again.

As she lay next to me,

it wasn't the same,

not bad,

just different

She felt like a piece of me, not another person,

not the one I desired for so many years.

A long-lost piece of my soul,

that I happened to misplace walking down the street one day.

A piece that I learned to live without,

and did not kill me when it was gone.

As I lay there I felt more whole,

but the parts which learned to live without that piece screamed out in agony,
cursing me.

Are we not good enough, they cried,

have we not sustained you, held you up,

allowed you to live,

have we not made you whole once again?

Catalyst

Love isn't that hard,
it isn't the scary monster lurking in the dark,
waiting to eat us.
It isn't pain, even though we associate it with that so often.
It's only gained a bad reputation because we are so careless with it,
casting it to anyone who holds our gaze.
Lending it to those undeserving,
those who will not take proper care.
Love is its own entity,
and it, too, needs a mate,
a second half that will meet it and join.
Love can never survive on its own,
but will burn a lasting flash when supplied the proper catalyst.
It feeds, it breathes,
and eventually, it overtakes to such a point,
a point where nothing stands in its way.

Siege

It is early dusk,
and I have no business going where I am.
I have tried to put her out of my mind,
said things to chase her away.
Come, she says,
come.
As the door swings open her gaze finds me,
eyes that tear down castle walls,
eyes that destroy armies and ruin kingdoms.
I know these eyes all too well.
I felt this night coming,
this now coming,
for hours now a fog has descended.
I stand speechless in the doorway,
and it suddenly feels that I am in a movie,
where everyone in the theatre is screaming
don't go in,
clutching their significant others,
spilling popcorn on the floor.
Still I enter, in true movie form,
and sit next to her.
She smiles, asks if I am okay.
I answer with a kiss,
and can hear the approaching horsemen,
coming to lay my castle to siege.

Illusion

the numbers have started matching up more frequently
the exits and the time are one in the same
this world, an illusion,
a collection of hopes and fears of the flesh
old women shouting obscenities at passing drivers
magazines tempting dust on newsstands
no one stops to say
"look at me, I am more than just this human body,
this shell which I was blessed and cursed with till my death finds me waiting!"
no one feels the connection, that pull which brings us
together if we close our eyes and feel the energy that leaps between people,
unseen to the eye
for their eyes are no longer trained
we choose to sleep instead,
willing to drift through the world not questioning why we love,
why we kill, why we rage, paint, write, compose
people are capable of the greatest, the sweetest emotions,
but it seems only in a ten foot radius,
or as their attention span dictates
we don't see the signs, notice matches,
find the beauty in stumbling across destiny,
even when it lies in our roads waiting
question ourselves and our souls
and the connection that lies between you and I

Sinatra

I brought her roses in my mind
stared into her eyes all night long,
in an old Italian restaurant
with Sinatra playing in the background.
Great conversation and candles on the tables,
lowlight is always the best.
The shadows danced on the wall behind her,
and I can't get over how her eyes glowed.

But the first step is always the hardest.
I could bring you roses in my mind all night long,
but all it takes is a phone call or a whim and
you could move from your seat across the room and get in your car.
Then I would never get to look across a table in an old Italian restaurant,
with Sinatra playing in the background,
and see you smile.

toast to the meteor

and in the end there is coffee
a bistro set
some smart sounding waiter who looks a bit too french
a sunny day with a cool breeze
an umbrella to block the sun,
half a pack of cigarettes, one burning in the ash tray
she wears a funny hat,
I wear a jacket with material on the elbows
it is the sidewalk
it is the summer
come meteor come, I say
I am ready for you.
Take a drag, and
in the end there is coffee

to have and to hold

the difference between to have and to hold
is actually being able to have
or even hold anymore
people cheat,
it's a fact of life
I can't account for her hours or her seconds
but I can tell when there has been that passing kiss
when her spirits were lifted on a day when she saw him
how dinner was perfect and she smiled at me like she was
trying again
not because she was in love with me,
not because it was to have and to hold
but because she fucked him and she didn't want me to know

she doesn't think I see
doesn't think I notice that her patterns have changed
and all the little things, and I had to look.
the way she dresses,
a smell of perfume in her car.
A half used box of something we haven't used for years
under a blanket in the trunk
or her wedding ring in the cup holder.
It was last week when I found it.
I sat there in her goddamn car and leaned against the dash
in the passenger side,
sobbing like a child.
I never tired of her,
I still bring her flowers and tell her she is beautiful.
there I was, at two in the fucking afternoon,
in the summer.
crying in her car,
holding her ring,
and the only words I could think are

to have and to hold

the fear

Be afraid, be very afraid
there is a degree of abruptness
that is wrapped in the
park bench you sit on,
the trees around you head
the grass under your feet.

You will feel the fear,
your breath will be robbed from your lungs
and words will be near to impossible.
Stare at your hands now,
it won't help
trace the lines that run your palms
bury your head if you like

Your world will change,
and everything you have ever thought important
is sand to an hourglass,
times that have passed you by.
You will see that eternal sign,
but not yield my friend,
the exact opposite.
Eight corners of magnificent red,
impossible to ignore.

She sits inches away,
his true love,
awaiting his kiss and laughing.
He stares at his hands and smiles,
not evening knowing how their worlds will
change.

Locked away

It got to the point of
snorting Ajax.
Of course, I didn't mean to snort Ajax.
I assumed it was something else,
but then again,
in the state of mind I was in,
I imagine it could have been anything and
I would have considered it for the high.
And it's not that I snorted that much of it,
real addicts know to test,
no matter how great the itch has grown.
My nose bled for three days afterwards,
to the point I considered the hospital.
That's another thing about real addicts too,
it takes a hell of a lot for us to consider the hospital.
Hospital is the same word as busted in our dictionary.
Snorting Ajax huh? Hmm...sinus infection?
Trying to clean out the old nasal passages?
Nurses do not have a sense of humor.
I guess they see one too many people like me.

But anyway,
I promised her I'd write this so I'll continue.
The itch has grown worse now,
it's been two days and I've
gotten to the point where I am chain-smoking and
considering rearranging the furniture for the third time.
This hour.
I have a chair, two lamps, a mattress.
Not exactly an infinite amount of possibilities in the
interior decorating department.
I think I am only writing to amuse myself right now,
my love for her is fading quickly.
She locked me in you know.
I agreed with her, I mean, I did snort Ajax.
That's pretty bad.
But at the time I had just fixed myself,
I think I would have agreed to run for president then.
But now though, this room is just too small.
Maybe I should sleep some more.
Only three days to go.

Okay, I can't take it.
I really need a fix.
Please oh please let me out.
I have started to sing little songs to myself,
making up the words.
Most of the words begin with "bitch."
I hope she hears.
a few minutes ago I caught myself fetal and rocking,
which is why I decided to write again.
I think this is the only way I can focus myself at all.
I hope she feeds me soon,
gang-rushing the door is the only option now.
I wish there were windows.
I am pretty sure I would jump.
I really need a fix.

Ahh the stairs.
Twenty-three of them if I remember correctly,
and only five left till she opens the door.
Two deadbolts, one left.
Rattle rattle
I hear her slide the master deadbolt,
and with all my force I slam myself against the door.
Never mind that she is on the landing,
never mind that I'm probably going to smash her against the wall and
break her bones.
High, I must be high, must stop itching.
But the door does not move, she tricked me,
just rattled the bolt.
I hear her scream in surprise, then I hear tumbling.
A dry snapping sound.
And now I pray for screaming, shouting.
Anything.
Honey, I shout,
Are you okay?
But no sound, and I can picture her at the bottom of the stairs
neck broken,
eyes open.

The master deadbolt is intact.

My shoulder is broken.
the past four days I have slammed myself against that fucking door countless times.
I have screamed myself hoarse,
hoping that someone three stories down will hear me through the door,
that someone passing on the street will call the police, the fireman, anything.
I have already had the shakes, but that's the least of my concern,
at least then I didn't want to eat.
I am almost out of water.
I haven't eaten for two days, the extra food is gone.
I am going to die.

It is day seven, I just finished the water.
So hungry.
I don't have the strength to pace anymore,
and the only thought keeping me alive is someone,
anyone,
hearing me scream, saving me.
I walk to the door,
put my hands against it and lean,
preparing to shout until I can't even make noise again.
The door swings open.
Natural light floods my room as I stare in disbelief.
Have I died? Is this my Heaven, simple freedom?
Have my prayers been answered?
I walk the stares in a daze,
and at the bottom is a dressing dummy in pieces.
A dressing dummy that has been pushed down a flight of 23 stairs.
A note has been carefully placed on the last step.
I sit down, temporarily forgetting my hunger, my thirst,
and read.

Dear love,
I hope you realize now what your life means.
I also hope I took you to hell and back.
But I did what I did with the best intentions,
I was not going to let you die,
from the drugs you couldn't live without,
or through starvation from being locked away.
I am long gone, my flight left this morning,
about an hour after I unlocked your door.
Look at this as my final gift to you.
You are alive. You are probably hungry,
thirsty.
Eat, drink, live.
You have a second chance.
Good luck.

Exit 33, a path and a stop

She changed the line in the song for me
calling me the dream king.
But menial lives breed menial thoughts,
and she chose the road so long that there is no end,
just joyful stops for lust and betrayal.
She doesn't care about the bad taste in her mouth,
she can push that away and find a new stop.

She told me she hates her heart,
that it never leads her right.
Right to her is immediate pleasure,
and the heart is much wiser than that.
So I sit on her couch and watch her sway
memorizing the lines of her body
her smile, her kiss,
so that I may paint her later when she moves on.
I am only a stop on her road,
one which she takes when she grows tired.

But I need her, if only for a little while
for she is much more to me.
She is a path of my heart, not a simple stop
and sometimes I hate my heart for this.

Unkind

When will my love find me?
I grow cold in this bed alone,
and the morning greets me unkind.
I watch them pass, hand in hand
left tired by their smiles,
jaded as I walk alone.
I never intended to live this way,
a face in the crowd,
unseen
until my love finds me.

Balance

I was already slipping before the storms came.
I started noticing the twitch,
the small thoughts that seemed to surface,
and a distant voice,
humming softly.
It was discomfoting at first,
and that eventually grew into sheer terror
as the thoughts came quicker and the voice grew clearer.
Displacement was the only recourse,
but this only provided a brief breath of fresh air
and false solace.
I could feel what was coming,
something I couldn't stop,
something so much larger than I.
On the horizon the storms approached,
and they were menacing.
My hands twitched, as if in agreement.

And now the storms have come, and there is no turning back.
I am heading even faster toward the edge,
and I fear I am precariously balanced between insanity and ink.
when the thoughts, the voice,
when they take control,
my entire being turns into one walking verse,
my ability to hold even basic communication fails.
There is no world past the words, the voice,
and the speed at which I can release them from my head
unto the paper.
I have been swept away,
and I am at the mercy of passing sky.
There is no light on the horizon,
no, not yet,
just paper, so much paper,
and no means for escape from here.
No way out but through.

Traveler

She flew across the country,
neither for season nor snow,
but because she was in love with him.
He has stolen before,
but never from someone
as innocent as she.
She stood at the end of his bed,
arms outstretched for the first time,
falling backward with faith
into the grasp of someone
that only claimed he would catch her.

She will always claim that the flight back
was the hardest part.
Five long hours that only days before held so much hope,
now too many seconds trapped in thoughts of him.
But this trip will never end,
she's just become another traveler
who will never spread their angel wings
and fall backwards in faith
quite the same way.

Lodi

There is a truck stop in Lodi
that is the center of the universe.

Once a month I go to have coffee with Michael the Archangel,
usually around two or three at night.

I fill him in on local current events,
he buys the coffee.

This has always been the deal,
give or take a time or two he's left his wallet at home.

Fate

I hide away in a little coffeehouse in Ohio chasing ghosts,
burning for another chance at staring at her walls.
Locked away under brighter skies and beaches,
she waits for me while watching the tides roll in and out,
a never ending cycle.
She feels alone, as do I,
no gentle breeze cools the burning we both feel, her on the ocean,
me in my coffeehouse, both of us biding our time.
Will that time come about,
a time to feel the presence sweet and right?
We are trapped in a fate that knows no end,
and no move can be made until it allows,
when the path opens and I find myself
on her beach,
or her in my coffeehouse.
And so we wait.

Not dead

My grandfather could kick my ass till the day he died.
Two weeks before, he caused a bar fight over a card game,
flipped over three tables,
then drove his car past three cops who were coming to break it up.
He just smiled and waved.
This was after his license had expired three years prior.
We actually had to hide the car keys numerous times,
and we found out later that he had a spare set
and kept getting copies made.
Eventually we had to hide the car itself.
He flirted with women half his age,
and always would tell me with a smile,
"it's okay to look, just don't touch".
My grandmother would just shake her head and laugh.
When I was young he would teach me dirty words,
then laugh like the devil when I called the lady on the television
a "dirty fucking whore" in front of my poor unsuspecting mother.

Not that I condone some of his behavior,
but there was a man who knew how to live.
Someone who taught me that the true definition of youth is
"not dead."

Honesty

I will never be happy for you.
I will be devastated when you get married,
I will forever feel empty when you have children.
Conversations on the phone can't happen,
everytime I hear you voice it fucks me up for days.
Sometimes when I fall asleep I dream that you're in my arms.
You're still the only girl I love,
nobody compares with you.

I will always miss your kiss.

Unfinished

The book lies open on the table, unfinished.
He has prayed to write the final words,
For when he does he can fade away,
complete his final chore,
find rest in the cold ground.
Chapter after chapter he has found frustration,
struggled for words that escape him.
He has laughed, cried, felt the rush of excitement,
felt the stab of defeat.
He craves the final word and his death.
He lies on his bed and cries,
please Lord, guide my hands,
let me finish my toil.
From somewhere inside of him, a voice.
Do you think I have not been guiding you hand?
During your writings, did you not see your children and feel joy?
Did you not walk in the morning and feel the fresh air?
Have you not watched the setting sun and been awed by its beauty?
You have fought for your words,
and forgotten how to fight for your life.
Your book remains unfinished,
just as you.

Scarlet [precursor part one]

I stand in front of her,
slit my guts and the blackness pours out.
Confess on my knees, stomach bleeding.
I have done wrong,
that I bleed not red, but black,
and I have been bleeding this way for years.
My soul, no longer pure,
craves bad love and lightning.
No matter how I wash it, perfect it,
The blackness still remains.
I'm so sorry I hit you, please, I'm bleeding for you.
There was a time when I wasn't this way,
but the world moved on and I have grown
sick and stunted, black,
practically turned inside out.
I'm sorry I freaked out, this is why, honey, but please realize,
just a little black inside, but still capable of love.
I don't mean to be broken, and I will get past this, be better,
and I promise never to do it again.

She thinks
it's amazing how one moment can change
Everything.
Trying for soft eyes, feeling eyes,
trying not to panic, she speaks.
I am so sorry you are black inside
(must get out must)
but I really should go soon,
I have to work early in the morning.
My face is fine, really, you didn't hit me that hard.
She watches the knife held against him,
sees the shallow slit running from his left side to his right,
painting his jeans and the floor beneath
thin lines,
sick shades of dripping scarlet.

(I'm losing her.
Okay, stay calm, relax, okay?)
I'm sorry I cut myself, look, I am going to go in and
Clean up (never clean never clean never)
I know you have to work, let's do lunch tomorrow, okay?
I want to make this up to you, let's just forget about this whole night.
I just don't feel well, I'll be okay, lunch? Please?
Really? Okay, great, see you tomorrow.
Hey... I love you. Please don't forget that.
Door closed and wash the wound, the pain almost feels
alive,
silently beautiful.
Like it always does.

I'll just say I went to see my mom,
that she needed to talk to me.
No big deal.
Everything's going to be okay.
(then why are your hands shaking on the wheel)
Going to be okay.
Please come over she begs, I am scared of him.
I am scared for myself
He comes, talks to her, watches her fall asleep
Something feels
Off

I really need to see her,
make sure she is ok.
God I can't believe I freaked out so bad tonight.
I'll just knock on her door and make sure (twitch)
She's okay (that she still loves me)
I won't even go insid....
His car.
His goddamn car outside her apartment.
How can she cheat on me with him?
I love her so much.
She's a whore.
But I love her, no, no.
She's a whore who doesn't deserve to live.
And him, always shaking my hand, being so nice to me.
Fuck him.
Dead. They're both dead.

But I'm going to have some fun first.

Fluorescents [precursor part two]

In full vision I'm not beautiful.
Every scar has finally come to light,
every bad choice I've ever made,
through dare or drunken stupor
has attached to my name.
My face in the mirror under fluorescent light,
sickly and conquered,
and no matter the reconstructive surgery,
I've become a beautiful monster in the purest sense.
How could anyone truly love me,
with my mistakes,
my insecurities,
my scars,
the lightning that makes up my soul?
Spread my arms to angel wings,
angel wings I will never be granted.

I've been sitting in this locked room for hours
tempting my desires,
conjuring thoughts of decadence and deceit.
A black magician in this world,
trying desperately to push away my thoughts of
what is beautiful, what is right,
what is wrong.
I want to be a demigod.
I want to be worshipped.
After them, it will be time to run,
to make my name
as the beast I am.

But for now though, have to focus on the matter at hand.
It's amazing how encompassing she is.
(Guns don't kill people
demigods kill people)
I should write that down.
Whoever said that stupid quote about letting people go
and then coming back being yours
never had a 9 millimeter
to make the situation a whole lot easier.

Four Little Indians [precursor part three]

I sit in darkness, rocking slowly in my chair
Blood in my lap again and
Six little bullets all in a row.
One for him and one for her,
four to start my name.
Oh what a sweet four.
Tomorrow
Grows near

Four not five

phone call
she looks at me, unblinking.
don't answer it, keep packing
hurry.
He knows we're here, he has to.
Breathe deep I say, we'll be out of here soon.
The note still lies on the bed
it stinks of anger and threats,
a beacon of fear that drives through her.
Toothbrush she says, toothbrush.
I grab her suitcase,
Soon it will be in the back of the car, accompanying mine
The phone rings again, this time the machine picks up
I know you're there bitch, I'm coming for you
and him too, just wait, he can't save y..
She rips the machine out of the wall, cutting off the line,
cutting him off in mid-sentence,
and not realizing what she's done before it's too late
shit
out now
She takes off down the back stairs,
somehow moving faster than me.
She's crying now, I can hear her
faster, please, faster

Interstate 75.
Every car that drives past makes her shake,
and nothing I can say will comfort either one of us.
The cut-up picture on the bed.
Her tires slashed, a single bullet left on her pillow.
I've got four left, he wrote.
It won't take any more than that.
I don't want to scare her,
but I know why he wrote four and not five,
the present he left at my door resides in my shirt pocket.
My cell phone rings, ID unknown.
Where are you going?
Where are you taking my love?
I'm going to kill you last Mat...
Who was that, she asks, but she knows.
It's 7:15, our plane doesn't leave till 10.
My friends in Maine are expecting us,
maybe for longer than we thought.

Check the bags,
why can't I stop looking over my shoulder.
We are practically in the air now, safe.
Something doesn't feel right.
Boarding rows 1 through 10.
In line, almost to the ticket counter.
My back tenses, and the rush rolls over me.
Gun shot, I just heard a gun shot.
People screaming.
I shove her past the flight attendant,
too confused to object.

There are alarms now.
We cower in the entrance hallway,
but no plane, not after the alarms.
His voice over the intercom.
Did you think I was stupid?
Did you think I wouldn't check to see if you were
leaving?
God bless the computer age!
God bless these helpful ticket agents!
Bang.
screams.
I'm coming for you..
the big bad boogiemán is coming for you.
Break my heart, will you bitch?
I'll show you who bleeds now.

Running down a hallway, never long enough.
Jump, I'm serious.
Footsteps in the hallway behind us.
Jump now. No time to think.
I jump to the tarmac, catch her.
I can hear running from above.
Hard footsteps.
Our adrenaline is up,
and before I turn around,
she is halfway back to the terminal,
screaming for me to hurry,
please hurry.
No cover, I think, there is no cover here.

Bastards, he thinks, run from me will you.
The gun still warm in his hands,
such a delicate and perfect warmth.
He can see the end of the hallway,
can see the open door.
Five steps four three
two one
jump
down he goes, a blind rush.

have to time it just right he thinks
he hides just underneath
out of sight
no cover
no choice
legs falling
waist
now

His forehead drives into the pavement,
the gun slides away
weight on his back
hands around his neck,
head into the hard cement.
oblivion overtakes him.

She's crying, her arms around my neck
it's ok, it's ok
breathe
it's over.

Strapped [jail part one]

My foot itches,
and that damn nurse will not get her ass in here.
I don't think I've found anything more frustrating
than being strapped to a bed and itching.
God my head hurts.

I guess I really should be upset about this.
Maybe I am still running on endorphins,
it felt so good to shoot them.
They felt me,
I could taste their fear as I brought them to their demise.
I just wish I could have delivered my last two little Indians and reloaded.
But there is still time.
All I have to say is they better watch me very carefully.
It is not over.
Not till I draw my last breath,
two little Indians delivered,
and the world burning around me.

The monkey [jail part two: psych profile]

I might as well start from the beginning.
So cue the music,
let's get this rolling.

I've been a devious bastard pretending to be innocent.
But then again, I never was a true player of this whole game
that is life.
I never fit the mould of thought,
someone must have missed installing the wiring
between my inner soul and the rest of my being.
Years later when I tried to coax that little voice out of the
corner it ended up being more of a monster than I.
But already I am rushing ahead.
I have brief flashes of memory from my youth,
I was a walking zombie of sorts.

The one thing I do remember more than anything else
is trying to actually feel.
I saw everyone else with emotions from joy to sadness,
but every time I felt them creep up on me,
a mild indifference set upon me like a sedative.
I struggled with the notion of trying to feel something,
anything.
My parents, friends, relatives.
They would ask me what was wrong,
why I wasn't smiling.
Or crying.
That was the hardest part, not crying.
Imagine life without emotion,
thoughts that are purely that,
thoughts.
No attachment to my actual self,
Just thoughts.
Needless to say my childhood was hell.

Years later I found the radio.
No one should ever need a teacher
to show them how to be human.
At the time I was a no one though,
like I said,
a zombie.
So I grasped every note full of despair,
love,
angst.
Anger.
Here was a pure medium,
exaggerated emotions maybe,
but stories and reactions of the way it was supposed to be.
I was sixteen, sitting in a room full of candles with a mix tape,
trying to learn the intricacies of love, hate,
relationships,
and life.

A monkey remained though.
I was never one for sedation,
and in the end I found myself on the opposite extreme,
fighting with all my might to run from indifference,
even if it meant practical manic depression.
Happy, sad, screaming and kicking inside and out.
At least I was there.
As I sit here I ponder what I looked like to the outside world.
A quiet kid who acted strangely,
now someone who would go to such extremes.
It is scary enough having a kid who you can't reach.
It must be even worse to watch them laugh maniacally.

Honestly, the next half-decade or so is a blur of
bad relationships, lost friendships,
and basic failure in any and all endeavors.
Music had turned into a saccharine for my soul,
and my attempts at emotion crumbled and burned around me.
It wasn't that I couldn't feel anymore,
I had grown strong inside and could push away any sedative now,
but I didn't know when to stop feeling,
when to stop reacting.

As I think back now I never truly attached thought and emotion,
I was just going through the motions hoping I would
pick up on being human.

More later.

Wildcard [jail part three: psych profile]

I read once that there are two forces in this universe,
the good and the bad,
light and dark,
and that there is a precarious balance between the two.
All people fall into those two categories,
except a handful of special people.
The wildcards.
Only the wildcards can truly change things in this universe,
can set the wheels in a different motion.
They are more than just the movers and shakers,
they are the shapers.
I think the great minds of this universe fall into this category.
I also think the horrid monsters,
mass murderers, bombers, psychos,
they fit as well.
Read the profiles on Einstein and Hitler.
On Socrates and McVeigh.
Caesar, Lennon, Koresh, Stalin.
People that split atoms and people that destroy nations.
They all have common components,
They shape,
either with great terror
or great humanity.
But brilliance nonetheless.
Could I discover the next element,
bed for peace, love my brothers?

Lots of people say they are "different".
I know I am.
I can feel it in my bones,
I am on the outside.
I subscribe to this theory,
The light and the dark and the wilds,
and I think I prefer being swayed to the dark side.
The more I write this the more I understand.
Why be on the side of the light,
give joy and knowledge to the human race,
when you can never truly belong and enjoy it?
Winston Churchill had his black dog,
his severe depression,
which eventually took on the form of apathy.
A great man, a changer, a shaper,
but he couldn't enjoy all of his great accomplishments.

Fuck that.

The dark side seems so much more attractive,
carnal animalistic instinct and joy,
doing what feels good to the body.
Taking control,
making them bow.
Anarchy.
Fires in the streets,
harems,
destroying your enemy.
Watching it all burn,
and knowing you had a hand in destroying the humanity
you could never be a part of.

Must sleep now,
getting too worked up.

Possibility

She cries "Jimmy, what have you done to me?"
It is two in the morning,
and I find myself on her couch again.
We've both reached that comfortable point of intoxication
in which the walls that surround our inner thoughts fall
and we become philosophers and politicians.
I have heard her story countless times,
and I continue to argue time together is not an excuse
to remain,
that there are so many others.
She is beautiful and intelligent, more than most,
but she is trapped inside his box,
and he knows this.
She recites names of other girls,
drinking binges and missed anniversaries.
She swears she used to love him and probably still does,
and that she can change him,
that she shouldn't give up.
But I am not the one she is trying to convince.

I may have a collection of angel wings,
But this night's seduction is not for me.
I have seen the way she looks at me sometimes,
and I have been planning this for days.
I can't stand to watch someone I care for being hurt so.
She has no clue that I've been directing the conversation against him,
that her walls are down and I am grabbing onto that little piece
inside of her,
that little piece that sees tomorrow
instead of yesterday.
When that piece fully comes forward,
and it won't be long now,
I shall jump.
I will not let it go too far tonight,
a simple kiss should do,
I pray that all she needs is a taste
of possibility.

Stormchaser

Tonight I am a stormchaser
no sight through the downpour
thunder and lightning
flashing white, holy,
pure and full of energy
strong wind out of the north
running after the thunderheads
arms outstretched
laughing and soaked in
sheets of rain

Definition

We came to stare at the stars together, she and I,
standing in fallen husks and crisp night air.
I never looked down that night, spare the brief moment I
write about now
For she kissed me, and everything I have ever known changed.

I saw the fireworks that some speak of.
That ultimate definition of perfection,
that oftentimes in movies jumps from the first kiss to the altar
in some dramatic cut-scene scored with a crescendo of violins,
proclaiming forever.
Directors, poets, hopeless romantics alike,
they know not this kiss, this power,
words, images, music,
they cannot begin to describe any part of the whole.

I, too, am held steadfast without true definition,
wanting to pour my heart to this paper about that night.
There are no pretty metaphors,
no similes I can make to talk of the feeling that holds residence inside
of me now and forever,
to draw with words that one night that changed all.
Let me tell you this, dear reader,
this love does exist and is within our grasp,
for I know the magic of a kiss,
and fireworks.
There are not words.

Cat

I've been driving your street for the past month since you've moved away,
trying to recapture the feeling
of you running out on your porch to greet me,
laughing and waving in the sun.

No matter where I went I found some excuse to turn down
this familiar street,

whether I was heading across town or to the highway.

I couldn't escape from the thought that you had come back,
that I would suddenly feel that rush of excitement
as your door burst open and you came running out,
that you had changed your mind and had decided to live the
dreams we had planned.

But your door has never opened, and I think in the end
all I've managed to do was hurt myself even more
and confuse your cat,

who is always perched on the railing.

The one thing I do know,

It's time for me to get the hell of this town.

I just can't let your street, or this dream, go.

Any and all

It was a Sunday when I gave up the last piece of this mortal coil,
when I turned from every name I had been given
and broke the boundaries for which our civilization so
nicely provides us throughout our lives.
With my head in my hands,
barely sitting upright on my couch,
my mold was shattered a final realization.
No more and no less a person,
a living breathing creature,
but different in a way that even I cannot fully grasp.
No country, no name, no face.
No history for which I can recall,
that existence perished on the Sunday of which I speak.
Since then I have been disconnected from any and all,
left to be a simple luminous being
with a taste for eternity,
and the desire to search until I discover it.

The Muse

She says I used to be a Greek goddess
inspiring poets and musicians alike.
These days though,
I only wish that people would keep their problems
and their desire for inspiration to themselves.
It has been centuries,
and I have grown tired.
My beauty has not faded,
nor my mind,
but my patience has grown short.
Shall I not desire inspiration myself?
I wish to compose,
to feel the fire of frustration set upon
a potter's wheel,
to create beauty with only the soul and hands
that have touched a spark in anyone
but me.

But that's not the worse.
King Midas and I have grown lasting friends,
both never knowing the passion of a lover.
But I always admired old Midas, she admits,
I have known their touch,
but have watched after that fateful fire
a turning to their true passions,
of which I ignite.
None of which ever truly encompass me,
the muse.

Venus Flytrap

When I first met her I was intrigued,
the corners of her smile and the way she held her back
were new to me.

Her eyes held this glow, this certain glow,
which I realize now was more of a warning
than it was a sign of brilliance or beauty.

But that glow caught me,
and fascination ensued.

Now that I think back,
she was not the most beautiful girl I have ever seen.

At the time though,
I would have proclaimed her Venus myself.

So I took the bait,
and she caught me like a wolf in a trap.

She was waiting behind the trees, gun loaded,
so very patient.

The perfect hunter.

She smiled an evil smile, tempting my patience.

Her words were loaded,

She had studied me enough to know
what will make me snap.

I stepped, and she fired both barrels.

I saw the beast, this venus flytrap,
and understood the glow.

Bait.

But she was not hungry, not at all.

She was enjoying this.

Chairs and dishes felt the recourse that night,
she had near perfect aim and it was all I could do to avoid the barrage.

I spent days trying to clean up the scattered pieces around the house.

I can still remember the sound of her laughing
as she got in her car and drove away.

She had won,
and she was reloading.

Fit

I am going crazy
She is gone, I couldn't win
I couldn't make her stay
I love her,
Fuck her.
Fuck her and everything
All of my memories
All the good times
I can't drink her away
I don't want her fucking picture
I don't want to think of her over and over again
Please let me stop
Let me bury my head and make this go away
I don't want the weeks of pain
Don't want the sinking feeling every time I stumble
Stumble over something that reminds me of her
God I hate myself
Why wasn't I good enough
Why won't my mind stop racing
All of our plans are gone
Our trips, seeing her family
I don't want to start over
I want the girl I have loved for so many years
Fuck
She is gone and I have to move on
Let go please
Just let go
God I have to stop crying
Please just let go

Life(raft)

It's startling when you notice the thing
you've always wanted ten minutes after
it has walked out of your life forever.
I've made good choices and bad choices,
some worse than others,
but anymore it doesn't matter.
The choices now are all easy, just night currents
I let carry farther out an ocean so wide
there is no other side.
Every day I watch the thing that mattered grow
one step farther away,
I lay my head to sleep at night knowing it will be
further away when I awake.
It's not a matter of finding different shore,
what I have lost has shown itself
to be the linchpin to my soul and my sanity.
Take what you will,
it no longer matters.
She grows farther and farther into the distance,
and I am left wishing for a paddle.

Necessary

hands tempt still air with energy
I am taken with the way her body radiates the sound
the way she moves, the way she sways
the way her hair falls over her face and hides her smile
the smile that knows I am enthralled with her
she is beauty, but this is her weapon
still I will kiss her tonight, share a secret never to be forgotten
and make her want
me

The fourth last ditch effort

She wants to see me,
but I am too smart for myself anymore.
There are two thousand,
nine hundred and twenty-three miles
between us on any given day,
except today.
Right now she is simple concrete away,
a wall one foot thick,
directly beside my favorite coffeehouse,
where I often reside.
Of course,
she doesn't know this is where I practically live anymore,
but that is the way we always worked.
Only days ago she wrote me mockingly,
saying she knows I don't want to see her right now,
(when I am sure I quoted forever)
but she will be home and she wants to see me.
This would be my fourth last-ditch effort,
but no, not again,
and now that I am fulfilling the promise I made to myself,
my heart tells me to fuck off.

So I stand outside the concrete,
between my car and the wall.
Simple concrete, I can feel her through it.
She is sitting on the third bar stool from the wall,
waiting.
Everything hurts, my head, my heart,
everything.
Car keys or front door.

Right now I am sitting with my back to the concrete,
on the second stool from the door at my coffee house.
It is three days later,
car keys and she is gone.
I am miserable.

Human chess

It is the time of the year to reflect,
for every move that showed possibility is gone.
My ship has run aground,
a mast and sail once proud,
now scattered pieces in the sand.
At one time I almost had it all,
but those who dream oftentimes play well
beyond their means.
In other words,
my king has been captured.

To play the game means the chance of loss,
and the higher the stakes,
the more veracious I played.
Everything was on the table,
all bets were down.
The last move queen to rook one,
checkmate,
and I ended up on this god-forsaken beach.

I had turned on those who had raised me up,
sacrificed them for my greater good.
They were all pawns and rooks anyway,
they did not possess the mentality or the drive
to be King.
I was shunned upon my rise to power,
all my actions brought to light
to a jury of my peers.
No matter how much responsibility I took for my actions,
I had taken the game too far,
it seems people don't like playing human chess.
The story was easy to reconstruct
when all the players were in the same room,
when all pieces of the puzzle came together.
There is power in numbers,
even pieces that have been taken from the board through capture or
sacrifice
have the ability to effect the outcome.
I never counted on that,
an oversight I will not make again.

Now is the time to reflect.
New shores are new chances,
and there will be others
to raise me up,
new chessboards.
New pawns, new knights, new castles.
I just have to be a more careful,
read people a little bit better this time.
Play with patience,
watching three moves ahead.

I enjoy this game way too much.

A brief definition of love, IV

Yesterday you died.
I never thought I would have to be without you,
you were always so full of life.
I am trying not to cry for you,
I know that is the last thing you would want me to do.
You would want me to celebrate your life,
tell stories of your accomplishments and your victories.
You wouldn't want me to be sitting here on the couch,
looking at old photos of you and ripping my heart out,
trying to write a eulogy for you like this.
You were my best friend,
you always had the ability to find parts of me I didn't even know existed.
There were so many that you brought out the best in.
You made people shine.
We were all blessed by your presence,
your time here was truly a gift.
I prayed for your mother today, and for your father.
And I prayed for you,
but you are probably the last person I need to pray for.
You are probably eating lobster right now.
Do they have lobster in heaven? Wouldn't they be vegetarians?
Wow, I actually smiled.
I know you are in a better place, but we miss you so much down here.
You are loved.
If you could hear one thing, please hear that.
Do not hear our tears,
our cries of how unfair this is,
the pain that rises in our voices when we mention your name.
Hear how much we love you,
and how we celebrate the brief time we have had with you.
You will be missed dearly.

Keys

After you moved out I still had keys to your apartment.
I just couldn't help myself,
whenever you would leave town I would walk your halls
and remember what it felt like to bump into the end table
at 3 a.m.,
trying desperately to find the bathroom without hurting myself.
I would stare at the pictures on the walls for a while,
and sometimes I would even close my eyes and breathe deep,
hoping to catch your scent.
And it wasn't so much that I was coming here because I couldn't let go,
it was the fact that my picture was still by your bed.
I know you would think I was crazy,
but whenever you left I had to find out.
You see, I am still in love with you.
And just like you, I keep a picture by my bed.

There are some new pictures on your shelf of people I don't recognize,
friends I will probably never know.
I think this may be the last time I come here,
at least for a while.
I am starting to feel like I am intruding,
like you have started over,
even though my picture remains.
But I have respected your initial request,
that I do not call, and maybe I should quit coming here too.

So time passes and I haven't been to your house in a while.
I don't know if you still think of me,
I know I can't seem to get you out of my mind sometimes.
Someone at work wears your perfume,
and it seems that every time she walks past
my heart tries to escape from my chest.
I still keep your picture by my bed though,
sometimes it's more than I can bear to say goodnight to you.

Saturday night I went drinking with my friends.
We shot some pool.
Someone actually asked me to dance,
and I know this sounds crazy,
I told her no because I felt like I was cheating on you.
I know we're not together,
and it's been a few months since we said goodbye,
but my heart,
my heart is still yours.
I can't help it.

So they dropped me off at 2,
and it's been a long night.
I can never seem to find the right key
after a few pints.
I walk to my bedroom, sit on the bed, and turn on my lamp.
Under my picture of you is a note,
and a jolt runs through me.

My love,
I am so sorry I haven't called you.
Please don't think I am crazy,
but I still have a key to your apartment
and sometimes when I know you're not there
I let myself in.
After all these months you have kept this picture
of me by your bed,
and tonight I finally broke down and left you this note.
At one time I questioned your love because I was weak,
but now I see months later that I had no right to question.
I still think of you, and every night I say goodnight to your photo,
which has always remained by my bed.
Lately it's more than I can bear.
I know you'll probably say I'm crazy,
But I never claimed not to be.
I only hope you still think of me
the way I think of you.
And that you don't call the police.

Love,
Me.

October

Whispers of the year's defeat,
the gentle stir of the autumn trees.
Colors and shadows fall from the sky,
as leaves celebrate their death in hues of the deepest orange and red.
The cold comes way too soon
underneath the harvest moon,
but for now I will pull my jacket tight to hold in the warmth.
Walk the path to her door and smell the bonfire she has built,
knowing soon we will huddle close to the fire,
and count a million stars in the October sky.
I love autumn,
the trees saying their last goodbyes to the closing year,
the smell of the bonfire and the crackle of embers burning,
carving pumpkins and chilly nights.
the sound of leaves underfoot.
But what I love most of all,
it's how her room is always cold,
and when we sleep she holds me even closer
so that we may share our warmth.

S.B.

S.B.

A pet name.

She loved me for a while.

She was beautiful and smart.

And very possibly evil.

I still love her in a way,

I know that because it still hurts

when I think of those two little letters.

I still suspect her of being lied to

by another whose pet name,

given by me in the aftermath,

cannot be repeated without

excessive swearing and references to hell.

Some suspicions, and pet names,

are best simply

forgotten.

Fall to ash

I thought I recognized her,
She bears a striking resemblance
to a thousand girls who have come before.
And although she sits across the room,
I know every feature upon her face,
every muscle moved as she arches her back,
every incoherent sounds she makes as she sleeps.
I know the lines of her kiss,
the final outcome after the equal sign in a game of
mathematics,
for she is July, fireworks doomed to fall to ash.
Just a child's delight in the night sky,
a sky destined to grow a sweet coolness and forget her,
just months ahead.

Heretics

Okay, they need to get the hell out of here.
I want to stand up screaming and order them out of the room.
It has grown sick here,
the beautiful people have overtaken my coffeehouse.
If I see one more pair of Dockers I am going to go insane.
This is not a meat market,
this is not a place to inquire about fresh ground gourmet coffee.
This is a place for pipes and cigarettes holders clutching cloves,
beaten-up sweaters and hipsters.
Open mic nights with badly tuned acoustic guitars
and horrid singers telling the best stories.
Coffee that is good only when drunk in bulk,
writers in corners and the local college station played on
a beaten up old radio.
This is sacred ground,
it should never be walked upon by unbelievers.

The Reasons For Insanity

Live for the moment.
Tell him how you feel.
Tell her how you feel.
Watch the sunset once a week.
Burn incense.
Buy a convertible, or find someone with one and be their friend.
Count stars. Give them to special people in your life.
Drop someone a card or letter just to say hi. Mail means more than phone calls.
Walk around the house naked.
Listen to Dead Can Dance. Chant along.
Act strangely in public to see people's reactions. You will see at least one person who does the same thing, and they usually will talk to you.
Have coffee.
Have tea.
Apologize to people you hurt, even if you don't see them anymore.
Cook for your friends.
Take risks.
Buy cookies you like; if you could die tomorrow, then why eat bad cookies?
The same goes for beer.
Smile and raise your eyebrows to little kids,
It confuses the hell out of them.
Tell stories.
Try to remember inside jokes you used to have with old friends.
Take a day just for catching up with yourself,
Re-examine where you've been, where you are, and where you want to be.
Take a shower by candlelight.
Go walking in the park in the fall.

Live for the moment,
for insanity is time mixed with boredom, set patterns, and
opportunities passed by.

Bring

I passed the final light above
summertime, warm breeze
I put the top down,
to see you bask in the air, hair all around
and now there are a million stars
the music turned up so loud,
it screams every word I want to say to you
darkness all around
sky, endless sky above

you are beautiful now
and I am beautiful too

Endgame

Enough of this disbelief. The matches are too great.
Right this way, down the path, you are doing well.
Have you found your way yet? So close, so close and
Through the matches I continue to stumble,
Young and punch drunk against the world, I once
Tried to ignore them, but I gave in to my own personal numerology.
Random is only as random as
I believe it to be.

Hard to understand, but
The answers draw near, quicker and quicker, the numbers
Erupting now,
Nonsense once, now a perfect circle, the
Onset near

Last Goodbye

One beer
Five cigarettes, two songs left
Body hurts and the storm is on the horizon
A hurricane last night,
was only a sign of what tonight may bring
Thirty-three times, but we all seem to be creatures of habit
I need this new cycle,
This one is for me, and me only
That I may remember November rain,
The joy in melancholy,
And never fall to that addiction again
For I may be the largest creature of habit, or the brightest star of all

This is my last goodbye
I will find what I need
What will make me burn

Heaven, loft

Jukebox
Booths
Blue-eyed devil
wooden tables,
my name carved
Rolling Rock
you

Oh God let me be there again someday
for this is my

heaven

Phoenix

I have found a way out
as the phoenix to the fire,
I will be reborn
I stand, spread my wings,
and take to the north sky.

my silhouette upon the sun
a new cycle has begun

End

To live in the present
is to remember the past
to let go
as you laugh,
smile,
and shake your head