

**Alexander Wright**

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opening

*for Mum and Dad*

The days of my youth lately seem like different dreams, all strung together through the long

dark night of my soul.

To think there was a time when I might never have awoken from those happy dreams,

and might never have lived through this fitful, restless,

dreamless night that never ends.

Memories

swarm inside my head

like the rough debris of time; time, the ticking clock

which numbers human days and adds them all

to zero.

Memories

are the ripples on the water which we so easily create,

never knowing that life is hiding right there,

beneath the surface.

The passing of time heals not.

Nor does the dawn with its nascent glow cure the sorrows

of the dead midnight hour.

As years pass

like the fragments of one night's dream I find that invisible wounds

are left untouched

by the invisible might of time.

All I can feel,

as my life is hurried forth, is the rip-tide of time pulling me from shore.

I am changing.

I change apart, away,

off in the distance where I don't belong; under an old name

I feel new fears and fresh joys,

down in the depths of myself.

I change without knowing why, how, or in what way;

I change as do the dark and light, intertwining and splitting

each to each, day by day.

I watch myself change

like you watch the day turn a pale grey,

and the crowds of people passing in behind the heavy doors

now that the sun is gone.

These words,

this face in the glass with hollow eyes;

my skin a crumbling disguise as I assimilate and change constantly inside.

I am made of every moment that lingers in the past;

all the minutiae of the everyday insignificant events

which pile higher and higher into the strange shape of a man.

A spectre of forgotten dust that looms upon a pale horizon;

a ghostly shade

who flickers in the light

and vanishes into lengthening shadows.

I am a man.

These are my eyes, these are my hands, scribbling out messages written in the sand which shifts and cracks

and crumbles into nothing.

I see what I have become

like the morning sees the bastard night retreating into its abyss.

My inner demons

run rampant in my dreams, turning memories to dust which crumbles

at the slightest touch.

My inner demons

lie waiting in the shadows and hide in every smile and within every word

of conversation.

My inner demons

are cruel and crafty kings who prey upon my weakness and break down my defences when I am lonesome.

My inner demons

rule in the darkness of my heart, and my inner angels burst apart like soldiers made of glass marching on the kingdom.

Drunk on my own sense of loneliness,

in an exponential silence that grows and grows and -

Awake in this hour of the dead, breathing the air

of fleeting midnight;

cold fingers clutch my throat as time palpitates wildly.

Reverberating in the stillness, a starting gun I missed

some time ago; and here, now I eat the dust

from the other's heels.

The room seems to shrink around me until it's nothing but a tomb

and I devour silence as the worms of regret

writhe between my bones.

I move downward

through the inferno circles towards my purgatory of madness, dreaming deep of paradise

lost, found beaten and abused and raped on the other side of what can be perceived.

The mind of man is bleak

and without the feminine beauty which has always made me weak

as a worshipper, your gentle soul my oasis in the ether of eternal

struggles with this turbulence of mind, my inner demons always finding ways

to pull the blinds and shut me off.

Who can save the drowning

cripple cast overboard, heaving seas slowly crushing who he was

while the ship sails far down currents made for men who cannot see the horizon bleeding slowly, ink trails flowing over rolling waves and into the gaping mouth of the drowned.

Who am I going to be when all is said and done and I have become death;

destroyer, magnificent overlord of what we live our lives by.





Without hope,

the sun is a bitter regret at the back of my mind.

I am exhausted

and the dreams of youth forgotten.

I feel

restless hands pull me back, clawing at my skin,

pulling me down

into the deepest depths of shadow. My shadows;

my Kingdom of Rain.

I feel

impossibly fragile, desperately weak

as the strength of time pulls me in.

Too weak to succeed against so much sadness; so much inevitable pain.

And now

all the sadness in the world is mine.

It seems that after all the desperate effort, I cannot live in the light;

the beautiful light

I have loved so deeply for so long.







This is the silence that breeds in the dead midnight hour, which aches in the abyss

of tomorrow's pestilence.

This is a darkness

that collapses upon itself, perpetuating nothingness while the shadows implode.

I have finally found the kingdom that waits

at the bottom of eternity.

I have finally seen

the ancient face of death leering at me

from the corner of my room.

This is the soul

in the final conflict of existence; this is life on the edge

of the final abyss...

I write in turmoil

as the hands of the clock bludgeon me to death.

## If love can die

If love can die

I want to stand by its tomb and know the true silence of a broken heart.

Without proof

my tortured wretch of a heart continues to struggle vainly through each day,

as though love could come again.

Let me understand the death of what it was to love you;

I need an idol to mourn through these long cold nights which pass without hope

of love's obsession.

The need for closure will eat me alive,

as surely as the worms

will devour the flesh of our love in some dark and distant nightmarish crypt

whose key you've cast away.

We lit the fuse

and ran so hard we might have flown

through the streets that murmured our names. Amidst the howling wind and towering flame we chased time

and space and youth and life and love.

Now I lie here still as stone in a black room

as tears streak my face

and my eyes burst like dams.

I got left behind.

I wish you knew that for me

those nights never ended.

When we were the only ones alive and we chased down the time

we knew would come.

Well it was gone too soon and I am finished.

This is the cold dawn, the morning silence,

the debris scattered on the floor. The walk to the shops,

the slow recollection, the revisiting.

This is piecing together

the dreams we shared and threw away

in a glorious blaze of light that left us cold and afraid

when it was over.

On those nights we ran so hard I could have sworn

we flew.

In dreaming of you

the night is kept from coldness,

yet the sun is not permitted to shine;

only the everlasting light of your soul exists, and the sound of my voice

as I whisper your name endlessly

into the magical twilight I've ceased to belong to.

Of all the dreams I ever had, the dream of you and I

looms largest

and shines brightest in the secret,

ever-feeling centre of my mind.

I would trade anything in the world just to understand

what it would feel like to hold you in my arms as I have imagined it ten thousand times over in dreams.

If only you understood

what my soul screams into the silence that goes unbroken

night after night;

if only the weight of love had never rested on my heart, too weak to know you.

My heart

is that last lonely cloud scuttling across the sky before the sun comes out.

My heart

is the last ripple slowly diminishing

as the water calms and is still again.

My heart

is the last finger of darkness which, when drawn away,

does not return until the cold night comes and the world returns to sleep once more.

My heart is wounded and so tired

that it forgets to love.

The fire inside my heart

is a disease with no contagion, a shot without a warning,

an emissary with no message to convey.

I want without needing

and I feel without knowing why as my heart burns with the flame of a setting sky.

When darkness comes

I will slip into the night where no one searches

with only my dreams to keep me warm.

Winter chill

and I wander lonesome through the dawn of myself.

Where am I now

if not at the precipice of infinity as the expanse of time

bows its head

and cowers at my feet.

I seek,

and with my hungry hands I touch the tender earth, the biting wind,

the flickering flame,

and there I feel soft flesh.

Tenderly caress

the immortality of being alone, of being human;

this animal, primal, sinful being, searching always, never finding.

Yet in my darkness I dream new dreams,

and the bones of my body uphold the earth. I close my eyes,

and as I transcend

I travel through space

as the imagination of myself.

Every day I wake

woven in the fabric of time and I am one with everything.

Winter winds

and the heart is lonesome without your love to guide it; childhood memories

chasing their tail through my dogmatic mind

and the frozen world in which I find myself.

I miss you

as the night misses the sunlight which fell upon the earth

like illuminated crystals showing me my past, present, and future aligned and set ablaze

by your infinite azure eyes.

I want to be there when you laugh again.

My arms are cold and open, waiting for you

to bring the warmth I still remember

on lonesome nights away from home.

You were my centre

and without you I am a lonely planet revolving through a sunless sky, lost and without purpose

as I drift away and wonder

if I'll ever get to say goodbye.

What is her name?

The woman in my dreams, who smiles in the folds of white sheets;

the mother of my children, sitting by my side

as they play by tree-lined streets; the soulmate,

the counterpoint I have gone looking for.

So long I have been lonesome for the touch of someone

who wanted more than just a brief moment in my life.

Where are the women

who search as I search, who want as I want

for the ultimate?

I wonder at her name

or whether she even exists, for maybe I am just

a fool again. I wonder why

I seek this love so deeply, swiftly, irreversibly soon.

I chose my children's names when I was eight years old. One girl,

one boy,

born in that order, perfect in their way.

I picture them

and their mother lingers in the frame, too blurry to make out,

too uncertain to be sure of who she is.

She is a spectre, haunting me,

taunting me from the ideal, and she may never

come to be.

She may never know me, love me,

or walk this earth beside me.

I want her

as the day wants the night, reclining in its inky assurance of silence.

I want her

as lungs want air, as trees want leaves, as space wants stars,

as lips want lips want lips. I kiss.

I kiss the air. There's no one there.

What do you see

with eyes that pore over my skin like TV screen video feeds probing the drama within

or even lingering on flesh

and all the corners of my form as I was born, as I have lived, returning eventually to lie

down in the damp eternity of the death I always thought I'd die.

What do you see

in my eyes, my smile, my broken words between

the silences I speak with.

My secrets seep out

of my pores all of the day

and there's nothing I can do or say, no way to keep my truths within hidden. I've been living

under masks for far too long.

What do you see

when you study my face,

my skinny wrists and ankles

or the way I pull in at the waist;

they used to say that I looked like a girl.

My legs and arms and chest and neck and back and backside, feet, hands clasping fingers holding rosebud

lanterns in the night, and still I might never know how I appear.

You made me feel handsome while you were here.

What do you see

when you have met me

for a little while, brief moments in an overlong song

I sing in drunken monosyllabic grunts and protestations.

Eyes like trains when they depart their stations.

Study my hands, my face for all its flaws.

What are the things which you would change? Would you rearrange me? I want to know whether you see inside, my life

of lies and simple truths kept secret in the silent cell of myself, as I rebel

against the way that people use me for their own.

Could you adore me?

Could you learn to love the light within my eyes?

As I have loved a dozen times

and still I miss you, and still I wish that you were mine.

Whoever you are,

kind stranger on the horizon shimmering before and above me, pure as the rising sun

who may yet love me.

I need your love

like the moon needs a night to brighten, laying my head on your hand

as though bliss can be never-ending. I need the red blossom of your lips like a dying man in the desert

needs the water he stumbles to find.

You are my oasis and I lie parched

and prostrate at your door. My queen, ultimate kingdom made of sinful, lustful secret demands

I immediately obey.

As I worship at your altar, thread your fingers through mine and pull you closer,

our eyes connected

with that electric light of ecstasy I want most to feel again.

You push yourself forward

until you feel the breath of me, and I head toward your kingdom as though it were my own, arriving home within

towering walls built from your desire.

Your slender legs

caressing the back of my neck, your hands on my head,

your hair falling in waves so that I'm blinded.

You shudder and shake

and claw my skin to shreds with fingernails painted black

and sharpened like small daggers covered in burning wax.

This bed, a life raft floating on a sea of dreams. We do not swim,

we do not dive or sink or touch the water once; we float and fuck

and finally move beyond

mortal bodies to the infinite, bold voyagers entwined

until the clocks stop keeping time.

There is nothing other than this when I am whole again,

lost in your soul again

with not a sin absolved by now. As I share with you my heart, body, soul, and mind controlled and set free by what you give me. Within you, without you

I give into the urge once more and wake up dazed and unsure

by the oceans of your lustful soul, stripped naked, bruised and sore, far from home on an empty shore.

The way you kissed me made me think

that you would make me cry, and I was right.

I write

as the shards of our romance crumble in my hands.

But don't forget the tender kisses, the whispering moments

and giggles between the sheets that fell on your face

and across your breasts like a shroud.

I'd never seen

someone as beautiful as you.

My heart is heavy with the knowledge

that I'll never feel your lips again; your skin on my skin,

your warmth

or the wetness within.

I remember

the nights you lingered,

staying for another hour or three as the light of the morning birthed itself

continuously.

After, I would lie for hours in our bed and watch the dawn,

knowing that the sheets still carried your scent,

knowing that you were gone, and somehow I

could never bring myself to move on.

When I kissed your neck

you breathed deeply in my ear, and when you took my hand

and placed it on your breast I felt your heart beat there.

Chemicals in my brain and all I want

are your lily-white tender hands pawing on my skin,

knocking from the outside in.

Let me in, let me in,

let me live inside your heart until the world ends.

And let me know that your spirit flows to and from my own,

in endless rays of light pouring from your soul so that I am never

cold again.

When you look at me

I feel like more than I am; I feel like a better man.

I feel like I could die young and not regret a thing

for knowing you, for knowing this, for endless bliss

counted in the number of times we kissed.

## She loves me

Whose hands are these

which touch me in the night

while I awake, and there she lies half-buried in the depressed sheets we've shared while never speaking. Who are you, kissing on my eyelids as I see the day for the first time and feel the rhythm of the earth and the energy of space combine.

Who feels me there, so tenderly the night air grows less cold and her breath steams up my skin

and her lips whisper kisses on my chin.

Whose eyes are those, cast darker

by the exponential shadows of my room, and hidden in the gloomy near field

I cannot seem to see through.

Whose dreams are these I've shared, whose children are these I've fathered, whose love I would travel

to the end of the Earth

and bear a deadly curse for; who I love,

who touches me so gently as though she loves me, as though she loves me.

Your beauty, my soul, the widened hole inside

I feel when you're not with me.

And I miss you. And I miss you.

And I miss those little kisses you plant upon my cheeks

like seedlings that one day grow

into the flowers I perch beside your window.

Where did those days go, of our infant love

and your watercolour hands upon my own,

and sewn into your skin my tapestry.

When you look at me

I break apart, for you are all that I have ever wanted.

I am that hunter

in the lonely night. You are the light,

gas lamp hung upon the door of the cabin that I climb to

and the bed upon which I recline as you hold me.

As you hold me.

The leaves burst from the trees like the fireworks in your eyes when we're together.

I have strolled upon the avenues in waking dreams of you;

this waking life, this precious time in which your tangible form

is mine and only mine. And these rhymes echo,

constantly until I see your image blur into the world, into my mind,

into the void behind the veil of my desire.

You are the fire of my life.

You are the passion

which I have always failed to describe.

Across the desolate landscape of myself you are the desert wind, pale mirage shimmering gently through the heat haze.

You are the cool lakes of water

and sheltering trees which break apart

my lonely vanity and shameless self-deceit.

You are the healing light

which both saves and scorches my skin, gently surrounding me with warm tenderness and glowing passion

in the absent-minded tyranny of day

turning to night as abstract stars burn meekly.

Observe my heart

in all its cracks and ridges

and soft mountainous crests made out of sand and clay, and dirt, and crumbling stone

so weathered down it's barely there.

Observe how you come to me

like tender salvation in the night to make me cool, and calm,

and devoid of the bare terror of yesterday.

I feel you descend upon me

like the shadows of the withered trees casting flickering shapes in the dying light filtered across the expanse of myself, borne of nothing,

steeped in sadness.

## Your embrace

I have loved you

as an exiled man has loved his home, so long you are a vision and idea

of dreams and peace through this penumbra more than you are a woman,

more than that you live still, more than that you are out there across the seas which heave

and breathe life as you give life to me.

That lonesome moon which hovers, hung so perfectly in that shroud of infinite night I gaze through.

I see you.

I see the innocence of youth and how I began to love

with such force, those seas

crashing onto the rocks of my shore, your waves, my stone hands

which cease to hold you and only break

as you erode me,

as the memory of you fades, and I decay as all those shores

one day crumble to the sea, and finally you have me

for your own.

Your embrace my home.

Your fingers part the fabric

which whispers across your pink skin,

your legs trembling while you push deeper in.

The contours there of perfect legs pulled high, and I see all

your secret landscapes, ridges, valleys, folds of flesh and your portals

which bridge your ecstasy to mine. Your heaving breasts, your heavy sighs, your frenzied hands as you unclasp me,

grasp me, wordlessly take me for your own. A moan or two and we are in this,

eye on eye on skin on lips, on your pleasure, on mine,

on sweat and spit and the lines our bodies draw over these sheets, the floor, the walls, the semaphore of your head as it moves,

of my head as it moves,

of our bodies as we pull, push, and all as you stare through me like you see what you can do

and how it reduces me to something you can own, claim your own, bring me to my knees

or you on yours,

or you beg me for more while we're entangled.

I feel you gripping me with hips at tilted angles.

I feel you shake, I feel you tremble, I control you king to queen,

queen to king, you control me and I lose everything.

I hear you whisper and I see eternity briefly.

You simply smile as you release me, smile as you know,

smile as you overflow.

Your skin on mine

as the morning light peeks through the whitewashed blinds

and I taste your lips, pulling you close

as though it were the last time.

Tenderly

I caress you, undress you and

worship you in the half-light dawn breaking over us

and this hangover of lust.

Inside you,

let me be everything you need.

Let me sing the songs that make you swoon, lover in my tangled limbs and hungry hands.

Let the light of our love shine brighter than the sun, silhouetted forms

that push and shove and combine to one writhing eternity.

Wherever you end, I begin.

I kiss your eyelids, caress your face, and grasp your flesh as I enter in.

Give in to wanting.

Open the gates and let me swim in hot oceans

that melt the heart of many a man.

I want you again and again, whenever I can,

with your hand in mine

from dawn to dusk and starlight, shining over your skin

as we begin to love and share our souls

until we are one in sin. Young and full of youthful wants and whims.

I want nothing else. Only the sweat and spit and pure longing

that belong in this bed, your hands upon my head as you come closer.

I only want to exist with you, with this, these kisses

and the tenderness

of your lips as they devour me.

I want you to overpower me.

Your tender eyes

and I recline upon the bed,

you in my head like fever dreams and I am feverish, fecund male devoted follower of flesh,

and I undress, and you undress,

and I lay my head between your breasts and kiss you. I haven't slept

in days, and oh

how I have missed you.

Your tender eyes

and I am grasping at your flesh

as you caress the notches in my spine, and I kiss a line slowly down your torso until you push your legs

so forcefully that we combine,

and I feel the thoughts within my head go out into the space beyond our frames

and into night skies lit with little stars and all their flames

look like they were lit for us.

Your tender eyes

and you are mine in this and every other moment, you grab each inch

of my body as you own it, and when I kiss your neck

I hear your heartbeat climbing and your moaning

makes me feel like there's no living left for dying.

I wake and hear

the open window sighing.

Tonight I sleep

where I cannot dream,

in a quiet chemical stillness, lost in rooms of madness

I cannot bear.

Skin and bone,

eyes that gaze into the ether

as I silently crumble in despair.

I look into halogen glass

and know there's no one there.

Under observation,

I bet you couldn't picture this pale flesh caressed

by needle marks

beneath the doctor's gaze.

Madness and my acid brain moving further into the abyss as little by little,

bit by bit,

I waste away.

Time stretches on,

but I won't let it stretch a moment longer.

I wish I were stronger.

I am lost within myself;

I am wandering

through the ether of my soul, torn and tattered

during the closing sequence of my childhood.

I sleep at night

and dream as the day is born, carrying these visions

of the sweet surreality of life, of these people who pass me by with their own reflection

in their numb eyes.

Too strange to live, too rare to die, too blind to see

I belong on the outside, far from the happy lives you lead without me.

I fade away.

As surely as the day grows darker,

I push farther and farther out from shore. Mindless and afraid,

I look into the face of death and draw nearer.

The weight of time,

the burden of expectation, the unbearable temptation to lose it all.

As surely as I live, as surely as I die

by the choices I have made,

I wake up and the world is strange.

I look into my eyes

crying pale tears in the hollow glass and see them fade.

Little by little I am erased.

White linoleum counter, and I sign the form

and then they strip me.

Sleepless night behind the glass,

halogen ceiling lights and hospital gowns turned inside-out

to try and hide my body.

Doctor's orders

and I am whisked away, wheelchair and the empty stares make me tear apart inside.

Vaguely aware, they sign me in and begin to heal me.

They touch my skin, it's bare but can they feel me?

Five men, darkened room, pencil and paper in my fist as I resist the urge to scream as others do, my little bed

a long blue sheet drawn closed obliquely.

The guards routinely peek and check my wrists and neck for any marks. It's dark, but I can see the future

and it is bleak as the past.

Slow malaise, painful days

spent watching drool pouring down chins and all the patients taking in

the pills they give you, and all I did

was write and pace the halls in slipper shoes

and scream about abuse, pleading that I did not belong there, down where time forgets you.

I felt a lifetime pass me by

before they let me lie and say I learnt all of my lessons.

The paperwork,

and I was let into the light. All those nights

I thought of life

and never slept, and sometimes wept, and thought of mum and dad

and happy lives I never had and I can't help but think I may really be mad.

It seems sad now that I live among the living.

I floated down the stream

of time which ends in nothing

and currents swept me to the sunlight pouring through every cell

and molecule of what I am.

I ate leaves from the earth heaving with the rhythm of life and energy flowed through us

so that I dreamt and slept as one dying particle in space.

Never forget that I showed you this life as nothing becoming death, and then the walls cave in

and the fields of grass flow on forever.

## Vision quests

Vision quests of landscapes

I have never seen, nor ever will,

my road-worn heart the stuff of faded still photographs in attic drawers and frames on dusty hallway walls built to last but never seen,

my life a dream and shuddering terrified silent scream

for the sake of noise, for the sake of toil

against myself, my hollow heart sworn enemy of the dusty purple belt of stars which span my sight

when I gaze skyward lonely nights

and see all life unravel before my eyes, and I could dream this dream a hundred thousand times or more, and lord

how I adored the friends I made,

and all those loves I had along the way, and I will live forever, or at least another day of madness and blind

dismay as I think about cells and windowless, sunless,

godless prison hells made sterile shells for broken men,

and then I think I broke myself and then I sink into the sheets

and tremble through my awful dreams of ending up alone and old,

mad and with a manic soul which feasts upon itself

and I can't tell what's really real.

My head is full of dreams and the blue sky beckons

pale pink stripes across my eyes as I peer through yesterday

into tomorrow, past wrapped in future, three red lights flashing warning signs

above the exit ramp of my mind.

My head is full of dreams

and though I spend the day among you I walk the periphery of life

at night, my mind expanding outward into hazy skies and midnight joyrides, taking every lucid pathway and the psychedelic byway

past experience and into space where I soar by nebula edges into visions past my reality.

I have consumed the night,

the day,

infant spaces breathing death into infinity; blinding light pouring from my eyes

beneath fractured eyelids shielding daydream

borderline ghosts which are not there.

Hear me in my abyss shouting prophecy ramblings

into the unhearing, unfeeling night stretching through the edges of the map.

Hear me run

across the expansive trails of clouds which populate the liquid sky

and shield my eyes from hallucination worlds below my feet,

too strange to believe.

I drift from place to place, scene to scene,

as one man among

the many faces of myself. I move from land to land, sea to sea,

moment to moment

in the dream of identity.

I have unravelled the fabric of time like a heavy blanket,

covering my shaking shoulders through this dark night of the soul.

I lose touch

as surely as my fingers slip from yours,

I lose my grasp on permanence and the ability to hide.

I am alive,

true colours in full bloom

as I explore the chemical landscape, the altered headspace

dreamland beyond the ether. Awake at last,

slowly realising my tetralogy of self, selfish in my ceaseless need for exploration.

I have seen

the pyramids of Egypt burning, as the triumphs of man

become fickle, trivial things.

I have seen

the rings of Saturn divide and fall, crumbling as the stars

turn fretfully inward.

I have seen

fields of grass grow into forests and the smallest tides

become thunderous tidal forces.

I have seen

space and time holding hands

in a dance which made me lustful and lost in madness.

I have seen

the endless eyes of God and the hand of fate around my pale throat.

I have walked

upon the surface of the moon as it cracked and fell away

into infinite space beneath me.

I have held

the centre of the earth in my hands

like a tiny grain of sand.

I have caressed

the tenderness of my flaws, stripped naked and explored in all their complication.

I have seen

myself without my skin;

I have looked within

and made amends with darkness.

I am uncovered, stripped to the core as the image of a man

torn into fragmented pieces.

Piece me together

in the chemical fog of discovery I have pursued,

searching in the light of this journey.

I move into the unknown

with the pure eyes of a child waking for the first time, new dawn glow slowly rising.

I drift from place to place, scene to scene,

as one self

among the many selfish men I've been.

I have dreamt impossible dreams,

seen impossible things,

known impossible truths too early.

I was not ready

for this long strange trip which laid out my heart naked and bare,

unafraid of what is out there.

## Time

Time.

The inseparable weight

as the dates on the calendar page fly by.

I have fallen high

to low, and in letting go have found new crests which I have climbed to.

It slips by you

as few things ever do. It turns grey to blue, brown to green,

and fields into frozen winter scenes.

I have seen things

which no one else has ever seen, as though built for me,

as though I am living in the wormhole out of time, out of space,

out of my changing face and mind, out of the past

and everything I left behind.

We move with time,

as the waves of the ocean

or the ripples of the lake sigh slowly spreading currents outward.

I doubted if I would make it very far, but there are ways in which we all move onward.

My head is full of dreams and the blue sky beckons

pale pink stripes across my eyes as I peer through yesterday

into tomorrow, past wrapped in future, three red lights flashing warning signs

above the exit ramp of my mind.

My head is full of dreams

and though I spend the day among you I walk the periphery of life

at night, my mind expanding outward into hazy skies and midnight joyrides, taking every lucid pathway and the psychedelic byway

past experience and into space where I soar by nebula edges into visions past my reality.

I have consumed the night,

the day,

infant spaces breathing death into infinity; blinding light pouring from my eyes

beneath fractured eyelids shielding daydream

borderline ghosts which are not there.

Hear me in my abyss shouting prophecy ramblings

into the unhearing, unfeeling night stretching through the edges of the map.

Hear me run

across the expansive trails of clouds which populate the liquid sky

and shield my eyes from hallucination worlds below my feet,

too strange to believe.

When I am tall I tower,

but when I am small I am weak and unable to stand.

High upon the edge of myself,

I see that I am bold and brash and

wildly conflicting.

(Lost in the dream

from which you have awoken).

When I am tall

I feel as though the world rotates only for me.

Inevitably

I forget how to be,

and the power to feel eludes as I grow dizzy,

weary through my journeys aboard this spinning rock.

(The day opens already old).

I can be many men within this skin,

projecting everything I feel until I'm left alone again.

I only make sense when I write,

when I speak and find the words I wanted without the others.

(Do you ever write about me?)

At my best,

I am made of glass

which shatters at the smallest touch, and through which

any eyes can see. I am oblique, pale and clear

in the morning light. Look at me.

(As the cradle of the sky nurses my infant spirit).

See me here, see my soul bare

and naked before you. Watch the cracks appear and let me crumble endlessly without you - always apart,

forever falling faithless and strange, made for you to feel.

(Deep, dark

and as impossibly blue as the ocean's Aryan eyes

sparkling in their abyss.

Blue as the hydrangeas my mother used to plant and place by the window while I wrote

and dreamt of flying away)

Pick one of

the men I've tried to be, and tell me why he's missing

from the other side of your bed.

Alone in this

loneliness of the hunter, searching endlessly

for the reflection of myself in another.

La nuit est froide et vieux comme eons,

waking in pitch darkness to hear the echoes

of my dreams. Why do I dwell on solitude?

In my heart

I see every man and woman I have loved,

in all their pure beauty and immeasurable pain.

In the purity of infatuation, why do I dwell

on solitude?

Live within my heart eternally, infernally

lost to the abyss of time. All you men and women,

loved too fast and lost too soon,

who were never destined to be mine. I cannot help but fixate,

comme je me cache a l'interieur de moi,

and am destined to be forever lonesome in this desolation of romance.

Every person I have loved lives far beyond this door.

I am exiled within this paradox,

long past the time in which they loved me, a different man than they had known.

Why do I dwell on solitude

when I don't want to be alone?

Obscured by the glass, an image of my future drawn out of my past, as my present grows slowly stranger.

I remember the sun glow as it set over the beach by which our home rose, those long years I dreamt and planned on leaving.

I remember the hyacinth scent which wafted through the yard

those sleepy summers spent wasting time, my unfulfilled young heart lustful.

I remember the smell

of the Australian night,

dusky blue and serene as it fell over the country I called home a lifetime ago.

Yes, I have changed

into a version of myself broken apart and rearranged so that I resemble

the man I wanted to be.

Obscured by self-worth,

I want the true design

of the man my mother birthed that moonlit night

so long past it seems an aeon.

I have moved beyond

the sand, the sun and the stars; I am forever gone,

lost with winds which blow far and wide,

deep and loud, and much too fast

for me to ever catch them.

I still hear the sound

of the raindrops as they fell on the ground and the flowers planted

by the window of my boyhood room.

I still feel the sadness

of the nights I spent watching

the water drawing portraits on the glass, only for me, and my eyes

which stared so sadly out of my incubator cell

and into the vastness of the world around me.

Here I am, awakening anew

as a stranger in strange lands far beyond that glass,

my past a hidden vault

of light and sound which I no longer see.

I left that room, those sandy beaches,

those half-forgotten dreams of what might come to be. Day by day

I swim as fast as I can,

chasing the horizon while it lingers way out above the ancient sea.

I change.

As surely as the memory fades, second by second,

day by day I change.

Like a picture in a frame, torn and frayed,

decaying with age and hidden away.

Like a bird housed in a cage or a mouse lost in a maze, moment by moment I adapt

and change.

Like a dream you kept contained - surreal and strange,

which you can't quite explain - I change.

Like a rolling wave arriving at the shore, every moment different

than the one which came before. Like a half-remembered dream

I half-remember the people I've been, the faces, places, and lovers I've seen, hearts I have known

and the years

in which I have grown and altered. Despite what I have wanted

I never cease to change, in every way

and through every stage and circle of the descent.

I change,

and in place of the past I rearrange and mediate the message of myself.

I change as you draw breath and wake up every morning older, wiser,

stranger,

in the ill-advised torment of the traveller.

I am the shifter, the drifter,

the strange poem writer, renegade spirit lover without a home.

I am the changeling,

mad, caged, free-spirit thing let loose on winds

which blow across oceans deep and blue as the span of my soul.

Clawing tendril arms

from desert sands spilling blood red diamonds,

blue prismatic light pale glow fluorescent

dream eyes with no reality. Fire red, I see nightfall, shifting sand and neon radiation death and slow decay, atomic clouds and ash grey crowds of people crowding in,

buildings crumbling like tin cans crushed now that we're older.

Worms, dirt, the mother bee stung queen devoured freely, mutiny of self and rainfall tastes like acid and I see purple sidewalks waking up with silver sheen and I feel vibrant green shades

tinting eye patterns

and shapes beyond my sight.

Islands in the sea

and castles made of sand which fall into shifting tides made brilliant by reflected light like little stars or perhaps time is simple, standing still and lilting waters while the sky dips down to violent

colours like it's always bound to do.

Strobe lights and blinding images of cinder block buildings with heavy doors I enter through.

My ignis fatuus heart conquers the dark strong arms of night pulling inward,

the stars are purple shining brilliant light on me

and now you see why I'm alone,

dead of night poem writer and still you sleep.

Sleep well and long

and hear no secret song I sing to the black night

while others rest their minds.

Tomorrow we will meet and then of course you will be mine.

A blind desert skull

with eyes gouged out by dust

as I peer into the face of death leering above my bed,

in visions that infect me

as moments pass and I grow less.

I see towers fall,

crumbling into ash like nothing else, as the shadows fade

to a pale grey malaise that drags my neck downward and pulls me to my knees.

I see myself

grown strange, lone stranger, lost amidst the dreams and dismay

of the youthful fool's first mistake, bound by fate to lose

this game I never learnt to play.

I see the moon leave,

her journey calling onward, as I scream and reach

but cannot find the strength to touch the heights of heaven

which must surely lie before her.

I see your eyes

in the darkest dreams I ever dream, their emerald green hue

the shade of my next nightmare.

I see the tears

you shed for me so many nights over.

I see us in our embrace which felt like forever,

forever ago when we were lovers and the hand of fate

had not yet struck,

though it was hovering above us.

I see you die

the slow death of a drowning woman too unwise to know

she should fear the depth of water, and I see the light of your eyes extinguished by the veil of time.

I see sadness everywhere I go and I feel my happiness float out there into the distance, far away from me

and my hands which clasp at nothing without someone else to save.

I see people passing by

living lives I'll never understand, as they see a simple man

with simple cares and secrets, his face a mask he keeps up

so that they won't be afraid.

I see our future

grown heavy in the distant haze, as a tortured woman waits

for a broken man who runs and repents

for all his cruel mistakes.

I see love

and everything I am afraid of

follows next,

as the gruesome hand of death fastens its terrible grip tight around my neck.

I see every dream I've ever had become an outline of itself, white chalk on the tarmac

of my mind and my ambitious soul which was always destined

to collapse like it was never whole.

I see the skyline of a city I never thought I'd see, and I feel demons at rest

deep within the heart of me, myself and I, these eyes

and the tears they cannot help but cry. Goodbye.

My eyes change shade

from blue to green to grey and I wonder

if I'm changing too, never knowing

how the shades of my soul spread their light

within my skin.

My eyes change shade and sometimes I dream

that inside I'm never the same; that day by day

I wake and rearrange the form of myself.

My eyes change shade

and in the colours they become

I see the world through different lenses;

I am defenseless

against the might of time to move me, pull me as it will into tomorrow.

My eyes change shade

and nothing stays the same, yet I still wonder

if your world looks like mine, or if everything is strange.

My eyes change shade and there's no telling

what tomorrow's hue will be. Sometimes I can't help but wonder what you see

when you look at me.

Every day I see the rain pass - ash grey steel, cold glass

and the train speeds onward - homeward, wherever's next;

I pass the time by feeling less and less. The stress constricts my chest;

I think I'll just smoke and do my best to find the time,

the rhyme, the syllable to express myself.

I undress myself with everything I say, every note I play,

and day by day

I feel naked and exposed.

I'm in the throes

but there's a way out, I know. I haven't found it yet,

but it'll come any day now. Just keep the faith somehow.

Naked in the dark,

the patterns of my mind

displace these fragmented musings of mine, and I feel space unveil

like black star distillations

of pure truth, and I feel you echoing from tooth to tooth

as I try to explain

how I have gone elsewhere, to a place you cannot visit

in the ordinary light of life,

but must arrive by substantive seas made of blue and green jazz trumpeter love supreme rambler, gospel

poet, spirit lover doctrine delivered to us in the amber light of dawn,

and I have torn myself in two trying to push myself out to sea

with only chemical waves by which to drift, wilful abandon roads to walk,

and you know me; some of it's talk or verse, but most of it hurts, swiftly worsens

and quickly leads to glossy black hearses rolling down the avenues

they warned you of in school - birth of the cool.

People are strange.

I don't know how I

can learn to live among them.

Among men among women.

Among the children

of god and oppression, forgotten alien lifeforms

born strange within a brilliant truth.

I don't have any use for this bizarre juxtaposition

of love and death or hateful mess, lies, and cruel tenderness

which I reject. I am the man

who falls apart. Heart by heart,

I am the man who can never cease to look upon

the world in which I find myself

with constant disbelief and apprehension.

The dying sky is lit conceptually, vague dreams and memories of yesterday turned strange realities

and fractured sentences spoken into the night.

I breathe light into the vacant air

and feel the ghosts of lovers and loved ones and forgotten mothers and fathers

and brothers.

I had no sisters.

I had no reason to lie here and write this poem thinking of home.

I dreamt

of a child born to light, blinking in the halo

of a blissful glowing dream by the sea.

I dreamt

of days spent with love,

and laughter in the ageless race of innocence and youth.

I dreamt

of towers crumbling into dust as the purity of a child became a dark belief

in the atrocity of man.

I dreamt

of isolation, loneliness in the shadow of a child's heart facing demons.

I dreamt of darkness

and the proliferation of fear

as it swept across a small boy's soul.

I dreamt

of brief happiness, fleeting pleasures

in the dawn of youthful naivete.

I dreamt of drugs,

flames, sirens, tears, and the allure of death.

I dreamt of illness

taking over the body, crushing the mind, blocking out the world.

I dreamt

of passive years spent in commiseration and convalescence,

ageing into the ether.

I dreamt

of nothingness, blank space slowly

consuming all memories of joy.

I dreamt

of strength slowly returning, building in the body

and rising in the mind of a newly woken man.

I dreamt of courage

and the will to risk with the brilliance of an awoken soul.

I dreamt

of laughter, light, sex, tears, friends, music, lust, love, drugs, drink, travel,

and possibility.

I dreamt

of the promise of tomorrow and the happiness of knowing not every challenge is doomed to fail.

I dreamt

of a morning

when I woke to find the tears of yesterday had dried.

I have held you,

I have given you my soul and you have whispered words that made me shiver

with the thought that we could be something worthy of forever.

I don't know how I fall in love so inevitably, easily soon,

but I saw you clear as summer rain before the clouds came,

your misty eyes turned white and unreadable during the day, only at night when you

turned yourself away onto your side.

Remember feeling like

we may just fall in love?

Remember how it felt like we had given up or had given too much,

the fire of lust now dim and burning to the ember? Do you remember?

I have held you,

I have felt you cold throughout the night and made you warm.

You said you had never felt safer than you did between my arms,

in the gloom where demons lurk behind the curtains of the dark and I gave you my heart

and you trusted me to hold you, and I felt like you were whole







The dead of night.

My breath is slow, my chest rising naked in the half-light of a full moon, snow-filled sky beyond the glass.

I feel the will of sleep pulling me down

but I defend myself against the chill

call echoes in my soul.

My tired limbs

are heavy burdens as I sink into the sheets and folds

of tattered dreams I dreamt up yesterday and soon absorbed,

assimilating life into rebirth and I, Anubis of the day spilling outward.

Don't let me lie here too long.

I have dreamt

of days beyond these faltering steps in wrong directions,

and I thought I had learnt my lessons.

I lie

in dreamy vacant air, vague guesses as time ticks slowly away

and the latent image of my face peels slowly from your memory until I am erased.

I cannot sleep until the chase is over

and I hold what I wanted. Your eyes, I am still haunted.

## Mystery girl

Whose eyes are these that haunt my dreams so tenderly, so softly

fixed steadily on mine?

Who is this woman

in my mind, my third eye centre with all these shades and symbols in her gaze

so that I cannot turn away?

Of whom have I been dreaming when I lay upon my side

and try to picture nothing? Why can I never see her iris in the day, but only when

I lay myself upon the bed in silence

and wake up with her face inside my head, so deadly, so unavoidably,

seductively assured that I will love her?

She turns to me

and I can't see anything but this, the colours and the complex

hints of wickedness

and want within her look, and I am shaken to the core

forevermore, until I abhor her

who makes me wake in pitch black air while she who shook me

hovers above me sleeping there and turns my thoughts to love, so that I cannot help but call her name into unhearing night. She never hears it in time.

Mystery girl, you are not mine; where do you linger in the light?

Runaway girl, lost

in my heart like winter freeze on tilting leaves

as it blows into the evening closing shades of night

turning blue against the finite falling sky I see and strive

to touch or become one with.

I fall in love with stars and the dying burst

of colour into which they disappear and light up nights as dark as this, or how you made me

feel when I was so lonesome I could have died

a hundred times or more on the altar of your lips when beyond every kiss, an offering.

Rise, rise

out of the fitful sleep of a temptress lover lost in wilful tears

shed for undeserving men, your beauty lost on them

like light beams beyond the crest of the sea turning blue-green when the sun sets

and for one moment peeks behind the water's edge,

a coloured flash and then the glow is dead when Earth has gone a little darker,

my sweet abider, lovestruck angel

of the cosmic decay I face when aeons clash behind my eyes,

ignite the colours I hide from

when I lie and say that I don't want you to read my mind.

Hide from love, runaway charlatan lost

in sudden excesses of lust, a mad rush outward blowing gusts that propel me to you no matter what I try to find and seek within the stars that shine upon me,

no denying you will delight me no matter where I hide

and lie down amongst the ocean sands and shifting coastal cloud banks

blowing crescent shapes across the islands on the archipelago of myself,

made for sailing to and far away from, arm in arm

with your one and only lover, never another person to be seen as I look back into the sun

and not a day goes by when I don't wonder if you are just another dream.

What if my heart expands until it takes me over,

my mind a slave to love's design, free falling into blind romances with the world around me,

the sun, the moon, and the stars which shine upon the soulmates

I see in those I find

and in your eyes which fixate so tenderly on mine

when the gentle day is young and endless.

What if my heart expands and I am drowned by love

as I have been when I wake at night,

shaken from thoughts of you yet I still wonder if my hopeless heart can stand to break

once again, when I heave a foolish sigh and say love could ever be so simple

as a feeling I am overwhelmed by or the way my hands shake, heart rate ascending

when I'm with you,

on the days I feel complete

and the ripples of time cease their spreading.

Love can be

blue as the oceans of my eyes brimming with tender tears

on the 9,000 days I've been alone, my fear of isolation growing vicious, far from home on a tidal wave

of wishes made to be answered,

pleading whispers in the dark

while traced by fingertips on wrinkled sheets when I've begged the silence

for the happiness of a hand to hold, my faith in answers growing old

as I look for love and never find it.

Yet still I remind myself of blind trust by believing

some love must be deeper than the heaving seas, deeper than I've ever dreamt,

down to the depths I saw when my parents wept and held each other at my

grandparent's funerals;

the kind of love in books and films, in the stories I was read

filled with fairytale thrills,

and TV reels made for tissue maker's payrolls, the kind of love we base our romantic ways on, two blue souls singing a secret song;

the kind of Casablanca romance I've wanted for so long: picturesque kisses in the rain, the kind of lovestruck link which feels eternal,

meant to be, pre-ordained, hopeless, hopeful,

brilliant supernova burning brightly

for the lengths of our lives and beyond, tied together by indivisible bonds

we cannot breach and never try; perfect unison octavic notes which ring and ring, and sing and sing sweet lilting lullaby things, like the small birds do

when I hear them in the morning as I wake from dreams of you.

My oasis,

your dusky light on my wayward wandering dreams.

Made of forged, pale, luminous fire,

I come to you

out of the soft light of other worlds, across other plains,

through other women's hearts

so full of dreams and desolation, their wasted mouths

gaping in the fog of my lost past.

You open to me, your heart an unblemished white rose

which radiates the essence of you,

a night light in the dark corners of my mind, absent thoughts of us

and your beautiful face

drifting through the surreal, absurdist tapestries of my twilit thoughts.

And I feel you there, out in the infinite air I breathe, and sigh.

And because I know that you are somewhere I smile sweetly, sadly; bittersweetly because you are not here.

And I miss you

as the dark side of the moon misses the light or as parched riverbeds miss the river's ebb, or as burnt and barren trees miss the songbirds and their nests

chirping early into the rising sun, now gone, now forgotten

alongside all of those trees which had once held them.

With all of those boughs which bent to them, kissed them,

gave them life.

Yet

I

have never held you.

Still I miss you like that.

Like I have known you my whole life,

like you remind me of a love I left behind, like I am a burnt and barren branch in whose arms you once nested,

who held you against

the cruelest winter storms, held you until I burnt apart and crumbled into ash

and the crash

and the broken nest

so that only you are left

and you fly away

into the infinite, omnipotent, tainted beauty of the sightless sky.

I am pink and blue

with the echoes of you, rattling around my soul

like the electricity of light through my cocaine brain, left dazed and alienated

by the subliminal shards

of hope which you can give me when the world seems less dark and you descend upon my eyes like the hand of god or fate lifting me skyward, homeward, star-bound and star-crossed

lover in the night borne frenetic into the unearthing light

we save for simple stars, pretty distractions from the celestial void, and all this time the dark currents of life and matter crystallised

and my soul died when you left me

and my heart has never felt more empty and devoid of any love

and broken by the violent temperament you have

when you look into my eyes

and see that my weakness is you, and you abuse me

and I confuse you

for someone I will end up with, and somewhere along the way something slipped and now

I'm lifted in my bed, alone at night again.

## The sorrow of my life

My heart is open wide

as infinite chasms between love and loss or the black hole of your eyes,

so infinitely absorbing to my foolish heart beside my vain and lovestruck pride.

I want a woman to love me

as the night wants rain to fall so that when the sun wakes up

the leaves of grass which coat the ground hold up little dewdrops

and we can see their quiet beauty as we move around.

I want a woman to love me as the neglected goldfish you prop up in the corner wants food and clean water, and wants and wants

until it floats up to the surface

and no ones knows quite what went wrong.

Or how orphan, forgotten heart

lonely men have walked into the night without love to keep them warm,

and the rain, and the snow,

and the ice, and the deep thaw, and the sorrow of my

life.

Turquoise.

I saw turquoise light over my eyes

the night I nearly died.

I saw turquoise light over my eyes

so many times

in dreams, those tears, the life I nearly lost. The cost of my disguise.

I called you from the ward, my hands shaking by the cord as I hunched into the corner of the little booth

with scratched-in names and violent curses patterned in the wood.

The greasy black handle and I hyperventilated.

So small.

I used the words so uselessly,

ineffectively small. What did they do?

I couldn't read you. I could never read you in the end.

I tried

and pretended that I did.

But you were hidden

and you wouldn't let me in.

Your skin

not mine to stroke.

Your hand

not mine to hold.

The secrets

you would never have shown me.

I heard your voice over the phone. I had never felt more alone.

Fragile. My glass heart, my radio head.

I was almost dead.

I remember everything fast, then glacial slow but nothing else.

I don't remember calling for help.

Fragile.

Made of glass, my heart.

I am thin, pale, clear

as opalescent light through mullioned windows.

I break.

I have broken.

Small and feeble

and desperate and alone and wanting only

to believe that I am loved. My feeble flesh is not enough.

Fragile.

I break apart

like paper-thin glass blown into abstract statue

shapes you take the axe to. I couldn't feel you sleeping anymore.

I couldn't feel you close those eyes which lingered long on mine.

With time

I broke in two.

And into a thousand shards of dismal shattered glass as I am destined to.

I missed you.

The kisses that never were over her bare skin,

her eyes deep within my own, her soul with wicked whisper, the black hole

of my addict's embrace, sick and yet I linger

in the disintegrating silence of my haunted heart

which tears apart and settles in disgrace.

The kisses that never were given to her,

now mine forever.

Down in the depth of myself and in the separating sides of dualistic mind states and the mental health tightrope timeline of fate,

kaleidoscope never-ending moonbeam, meandering daydream getaway headspace I navigate.

The kisses that never were on lightly closed lids,

on secrets given and received and taken in, hidden

so that I breathe them,

so that I make them my own, so that I, lonesome voyager,

lonely traveller, alone methadone amateur, heave sighs into the infant night

where it was silent; embryonic saboteur, debonair Byronic hero sighing

the slowly dying spell of her,

and in the broken silence of my hateful heartache

I find escape.

Within my unravelling mind, this unkind unraveller,

the bond that bends and ties my heart beyond a blur;

its violence,

the nihilist leviathan lakes,

the oracular spectacular sunshine state, and the violent force by which it unwinds, panics and

breaks.

I have been so close

as to touch the face of death.

My mother and father wept over the phone.

I leapt

and fell through abstract portholes.

The hospital beds had heavy sheets.

Demon rising razor teeth through the centre of myself.

They asked me

if I had wanted to die.

Flying darkness, escapist phantom mind.

I can't remember

the IV tubes in the first hospital.

Depth of this ocean wayward blind free-dive. I don't even remember anything after the coke.

Grief-laden vapour trails through smeared cold windows.

What did I want?

Imaginary bottomless tomb closet bones in haunted homes.

There I sat

as the woman on the phone picked at her arms.

Digital, barren, temporal, sterile world of twisted labyrinth paths.

Who are you there

reflected in the asylum floor?

Harsh fluorescent Orwellian light on fragile arms in sunken sockets.

The worst of the regulars were no longer shocked

of the demons in their dead bone sight they saw but didn't jump anymore.

Flying angelic vanilla sky moments of truth.

They asked me why

I said I'd choose to jump from a roof.

Earthen, ancient, valley cradle mountain top and lakes of reflected bloodline light.

I had tears in my eyes

as he looked in mine and I swore on every bond.

So close, the distance

so nearly crossed behind.

My life was saved

by every friend who moved to the room when they knew I nearly died.

Loving, kind, different eyes, different hues and the laughter I have heard.

It was absurd to think I had nothing to lose.

I leapt through the portal of myself and touched death, and met his eyes too awful to describe.

I drifted off into the space you see before you die

but when I woke I was alive and changed forever.

Hospital gowns, and I have crawled into the rabbit hole

with wounded, tired hands. Alexander Wonderland.

I jumped the cliff over the sea and it swallowed me, my misery, my LSD discoveries

and the lessons I ignored.

There is nothing left to explore;

I have hit the ceiling, fallen to the floor, and I swam deep under the water

before crawling onto shore;

the tangible touch of dampened sand. Alexander Wonderland.

I pushed through the black hole hidden there and was peeled bare, my essence

and my dwindling grasp on

all the blessings I've received. I felt the expanse of time swallowing me,

stretched out; the blood I bleed pouring infinities out of the mouth of space's darkest cell.

My soul, in suspended falls

through a gate of pitch black stars far beyond the world of man.

Alexander Wonderland.

I have lived, lost, loved, and given all I had to make it through;

I have abused and been abused, found truths in hidden places

and seen the face of the ultimate light, the unforgettable eyes of oblivion,

and a path which leads me high and out of pain.

I have been ashamed to fall and proud that despite all I stand. Because I can.

Because I have seen the darkness which I am better than.

Alexander Wonderland.

I love the light

so much I feel like I explode inside when I am happy, and when the colours of my mind make pastel lullaby melodies shuddering like heat haze wafting over desert plains,

my cool blue dream oasis lingering, and you are my Isis of the dusky night descending purple midnight shades

on closing eyes and trembling hands covering skin.

I let you within

and now I live without you.

I love the light

as I love the new day's glare coming over treetops,

fanning electric shades of peacock blue and green, red, white,

vibrant lights that wake my mind up, and I am tired but the day is young, just begun and I am blessed

to be alive.

Still I strive for something more and I adored you.

I love the light

and I have been happy as the sun breaking the night, shattering black shadows with bright

rays crafting life and colour, and I sang lullabies to you

and broke in two when you forgot me.

I looked but you never knew that you had lost me.

## Deserted

I move through changes,

lone silhouette lost in the skyline haze and departure of yesterday

as opalescent grey as the ash tray full of spent cigarettes

upon the glistening silver glow.

I exhale vortex curls and feel my panic go

into the air, beyond there, that glass so seemingly clear as the present

or really murky as the past,

and I blew trees into the alleyway breeze yet barely had a dream last night.

I often fight the urge to lie

down in the sheets with my demons, my hidden heart, disbelieving self, my painful, ecstatic urge

to move far into the hurtful light of an illuminated ego death dissociative midnight soul.

That K-hole nightmare darkness down there, so romantic to me,

my self-destructive inner peace disturbed.

The silent room deserted.

The grim mask of this reaper,

my pale flesh caressed by the whispering wind and the dead secrets sheltered

in a barren voice

hidden in the space between her. My skin alive with vague threat, omnipresent nastiness

and bitter fear with every breath.

I am the emptiness of Earth in its regret,

this devout and utterly devoid follower of fatalistic pleasures of the flesh.

The sunless sky has lost this ploy for subtle madness in the mask of joy well kept, well secreted-away

in the forbidden hole I hid in.

I slid into the hollow between dreams, day, death,

and infinite space.

These micro-expressions of my face are no mistake.

I shrink away.

This is not permanent, it is only by design.

It is only by the mechanical dictatorship wiring

and the silent sirens blaring boy band jingle cartoon violence in your ears.

Only by the way I do not feel like I belong here.

Earth.

I wish I hadn't seen you first but I know you won't be my last.

Perhaps I clung to ground too soon, too fast to fit and sit with the past, an intergalactic space ship

fifth dan fighter

six shooter paragliding lightning storm trooper.

The past

bears nothing on my future.

Out of the corner of the room an epiphany, a silent truth

splitting the infinity of myself. Out of the shadows of my sleep the apartment sighs

and the floorboards speak their creaky soliloquy reading this dramatic monologue lovelorn love song.

It won't be long before I am gone again.

The whitewashed walls,

the refrigerator buzzing by the side as I dissolve inside the cocoon shell, this infant light

mortal hell;

all hope abandon, while I fall

into temporal holes bored by my failings. No self-control,

no release. No peace.

No hesitancy

as I climb ivory towers

and plunge a hundred floors or more, like May showers birthing the April flowers

with which you adorn your hair.

I can taste the air

and I can fall and fall and fall and fall

and fall

and fall

and fall into my darkness

as though there's nothing there.

The dirty window whispers.

Cut me down

until only the cocaine remains, and the remains of the day

die slowly within my withdrawn heart. The artist,

the art,

the starvation mode

fast I slowly disintegrate through until I am flesh,

until I am one with you.

My lysergic life, my changing eyes

no shade or design but mine. The sunlight tries,

but in my cocoon

I blossom like the death's-head moth and it cannot find me.

Let me fall

and I will drop every dose I find.

Let me lie in silence

until I stop this back and forth diatribe within my mind.

Me, myself, and I,

and who of these decided that I would destroy myself?

I starve in this half-lit room, this comfortable tomb,

this womb of my design

for rebirth, and I unearth every demon I have known. I grow thinner,

weaker,

stranger.

I take my anger

and turn it on myself.

I think about

everything that I have done as I have lived, and loved, and died a thousand deaths; the phoenix I've become.

These drugs, this mind,

this abstract, impressionistic life, the Van Gogh skies of my lucid dreams, the pain and the forgetting.

My liver, my lungs have had enough. Enough of these pills, powders, pieces of my mind made acid showers and ecstatic circles moving

round beneath my lids,

the caplets, capsules, and frenzied scrambles through the draw for something small

to mainline into a mind made spectral,

this spectrum span of things I have been told to think, feel, do, without truth

there is no way to overcome.

Alcohol ambiance in the room at night, cigarette ashes piling by the tremulant hand, pencil scratch and crumpled paper piles,

my liver, my lungs, enough for me to say I can drift into the night sometimes

a new man, a frail friend to myself, stormy weather doubt as I persevere.

The mouth, the eyes widen,

the lights turn into spiral patterns, the sky becomes a canvas filled with watercolour shades

of blue and whatever all this means it hasn't hit me, maybe partly, maybe lesson learned, maybe

a road to tread I haven't found yet.

The omnipresent threat,

omnipotent hand of death around me, the caress so gentle,

so resoundingly assuring

that reality is only half the scene,

and you can flip that coin

so easily it is a maddening temptation

to reject the days which pass me by just how they are.

I am not of this life,

I do not use these eyes

to witness the same things you do, the world does not compel me

as it compels those who surround me

and the happiness of the real has become barely attainable

against the weight of heavy flesh.

Smoke rises

out of this small unsteady fire, lifted as the light I am revealed by.

I wonder if you have seen the death within my eyes

the countless moments, constant time it spends there, and it is real

enough for you to witness turning grey then black,

then nothing after that.

These days

the snow looks like cocaine

and the sunlight looks like mushroom clouds over my sight,

vapour trails bleeding left to right across the psychedelic sky.

These days

the rain tastes like bad acid running down my back

and bursting through my brain, halcyon journeys twisting

through the electric light of ecstasy.

These days

the smoke rings come in loops encircling the joyless evening air, as I force my heart to rest

and capsule currents wash away

this fervid slave without a master.

The riverbeds are parched,

those days of wine and roses wilted and neatly put into the past,

as I reminisce about the times I hit the mark or missed it, or swam until I nearly

drowned and slipped aside; all the dim way down

inside this hellish hole I had to hide in.

Disintegration.

As the coffee cups grow stained in the sink, as the floor gathers dust and detritus,

as the ceiling fan shudders and gives up alongside I, alongside the familiar waking life I wake and sleep

and dread by every day.

Disintegration.

As the lightbulb gives up the ghost,

as the dishes pile high like a mass grave, as the arms, the legs, the head

lose their energy

and I collapse in this cacophony of silence.

Disintegration.

As the days blur by,

the second hand barks loudly

from the peeling wall, my breaking soul breaks down, the sheets are scrambled and you can find me in the heavy,

sleepy, poisoned air that permeates this day and the malicious timeline of my life.

It passes me, I disintegrate, eternity waiting

always waiting I won't make it.

Day decreases to day

dogmatically, this dry pace crawling like a slouching beast across the plain.

Why does my heart suspend itself in solitude amid a cloud of self-deceit?

I am deceived

and shackled to the pillars of my past.

I feel hollow

like a crystal vase in thin air just above the ground,

moments from impact without movement, without consciousness.

As expansive as the amber expanse of cloud which sinks before me now,

your eyes and the reflection of myself haunting day dreams

and dazed falls through ideational portholes into lustful, loveless realities

in which I shudder.

My horizon eyes slowly fade

into an unfocused gaze upon the dying sun mirroring my soul as it sinks to hibernation, always waiting

always waiting.

A diazepam pentagram

drawn out of the lightning in the air, as the drunken men throw bottles

and senseless shouts down there, the alleyway below my heaving breath gasping out this window.

I feel the night in its embrace

clutching through this shrouded darkness, and the sense of time as it is erased shows me nothing in the vacant flashes.

This city scene

bleeds water like feeble rivers burst through scorched ravines.

I sleep in the mellow glowing light in which I cocoon my mortal frame, my eyes awake and perceiving

the vivid shapes on dim display through this vastness,

through this permanence

of both the future and the past at last.

What is this strangeness

that follows me from place to place, this weird closeness

to the echoes of immoral, immortal, disemboweled

disgrace?

I re-arrange

and take what I can find in darkness.

Everything changes regardless.

I keep on slipping on the same rope as ever as I fall down the same holes,

my hands tired, aching from the day I grasp, hold, hope against hope

I learn from, heal in, do not descend with into darkness.

The kettle purrs from across the room and I look to find myself alone.

Once more the silence of the apartment, once more the void of the hallway, once more the echoes of man

from behind the sealed, closed glass.

The third button undone,

the sleeves haphazardly rolled, the eyes black and grey;

an inverted bas-relief of my face drawn exhausted by the broken light

in which the computer screen bathes me while the day grows darker

and disappears as I decline here.

Strength, weakness, strength, weakness.

I mitigate my mind in rows of numbing, nebulous white.

My eyes shine, dim,

recede into their sockets and close, another day for living, another day to fight, survive,

cling to dear life.

Dances through the smoke curls while the basement lights are dim, you my everything in present tense now passed.

At last I think I learnt my lessons. And the raindrops glisten like shattered glass

on the sidewalks we meander,

the city twilight we enter with loud voices and the fire of our faithless hearts.

Cigarette ash scattered underfoot while we gather aimlessly

in pointless corners made of cinder block. We linger a little longer in the dark before the crowds come,

before my heart crumbles

again and I head home too early.

Rays permeate the Western air while we move in the suspension of youth to care, of adulthood lingering there beyond us.

Not to know this time, ingrained hazy memories shared without a word. The coast unfurls my soul.

Snow drifts down the alleyway stone, faces muffled for the arctic freeze, grey fumes lifted by our eyelids

and the fire-lit brick walls shimmer.

Footprints on the melting ice

while we huddle as though there's nothing beyond this tundra,

this barren land we wander.

Forgetting, sarcastic subletting of my consciousness for days

I spent on end, on everything

I should have known to run from. Distant mistakes I never meant to see coming from me.

City street, blind light, Snow White.

Mad rush, mad days, hazy hospital getaways.

Here, stand where we can see.

Heal upon command

and tell me that the smoke curls open into the air and fade, those days neatly packed away

now that you have learnt your lesson. Do not tell me that you lessen.

Do not rely upon a hand to hold you while you turn crystal under pressure

and still the shattering is some surprise.

I cannot battle without hope. I cannot hang with a rope which I refuse to tie.

These days slip by though still I grin

and ask how you have been

as though I have not seen myself exploding.

Still rolling in the bathroom mirror,

still writhing on the floor beside reality, still sitting in dark rooms with dark thoughts and Bic lighters

throwing shadows on the tiled walls.

Still rereading fault lines in the construct of myself,

still the cut up straws in the cutlery drawer, still the scattered white powder,

still the hospital wards and thin plastic gowns gently rippling in the cold evening air

through a barred window who knows who has looked through.

Still the weightlessness

as I fall onto the couch unconscious, still the tubes of glass

opaque with thick grey smoke,

still the vomit, still the dazed stumbling, still the hash burning, the ash smouldering, the plastic bag deflating as my brain fogs.

Still the piece of card dissolving on my tongue,

still the bitter, dirty taste of mushrooms lingering in my mouth

behind the cheap prosecco. Still the half-broken tablets and the sight of myself

nervously clicking my jaw in the mirror, licking the benchtop,

scratching the bottoms of heavy jars covered in rolls of tape and nicknames scratched in Sharpie ink.

Still the butane. Still the codeine. Still the cocaine. Still the MDMA.

Still the clonazepam. Still the diazepam.

Still the temazepam. Still the alprazolam. Still the zolpidem.

Still the psilocybin. Still the salvia.

Still the LSD.

Still the healing. Still the relapse. Still the visions still the thoughts

still the silence I break still wandering.

Private life. These private eyes;

this private soul of mine you do not see.

The dead of night poetry, the Xanax dust

and whiskey shots poured over me. The suffering.

The way I walk into a crowd and wear a mask

and shout the loudest, brightest,

happiest I can. You demand it.

Yet when you leave

and I have only memories and fantasies

and alternate realities to explore,

I fall.

Then I run my hands through cutlery drawers.

The man in the light who smiles widely. The black, pungent, Kristallnacht smoke which covers his soul. This purge,

this absurd unearthing

of the hidden side, the tiny little hint

of which is buried in his eyes.

I pull the blinds during the day.

Sunlight cascades

and stops before it enters and before I turn away.

A single tear. You'll never see me in here.

I glance out of the glass at a treeless jungle,

leafless haven for the lost, the abused, the down-and-outers of the lunatic fringe.

There is a way the air grows heavy while the night creeps on,

and I linger by the half-light sunset I forget;

this vain forgetting,

the struggle and the fight and the moving on.

The streets are heavy with the memories of men and the vague delusions

flocking to surround them.

The sun swings low

in her seat, seeming to breathe through the rays of light

she emanates.

I watch the mouths move like grotesque openings

in the faces of the damned;

I see fleeting eyes make fleeting summaries of me, and the occasional obscenity thrown.

I am tired of the way the light falters and withdraws, and our lives grow dim. No light from within.

And yet the air is still and in the morning

I will wake

to begin again.

I had to force myself to lift this pen and write this poem;

loveless, passionless writer whose spark has left him

for the moment, alone

and I am slowly coming to see

the mixed-state, shallow-breathing lithium daze they leave me in.

They leave me little to believe in.

My madness comes in waves,

reaching for the Xanax or the Stilnox sling I slip my neck in.

Falling into the undertow riptide out to sea.

This depraved insanity.

How else can I destroy myself?

As I look out into the heavy air

and breathe tangents of twisted flame and ash, and it falls

and I wonder what the feeling is when movement stops

and you are resting

on the concrete pillow pavement which I was kept from,

which I have dreamt of, which I have seen waking

as though a premonition, this Jacob's ladder leading skyward, downward;

an invisible height I have clambered high to and the divine truths

revealed on the way down. What sound?

I wake to the rhythmic tick

of the cheap quartz clock I taped to the wall. Time does not absolve me.

## Hunger

How you look into my eyes

is not of hunger, is not of thirst, is not of want or affirmation.

Is not of greed, is not of lust, is not of need or trust

or anticipation.

Is not of power, is not of control,

is not of pleasure, Is not of Is not of is not of Is not of is not of

capitulation, protestation, joy, or sadness.

sanity or madness. Earth or sun or stars, Venus or of Mars. this moment,

future or of past.

Is not of encouragement, judgment, statement,

or disdain.

Is not of your life, or mine, or humankind.

Is not of pain or of design.

It is the look of the tigress to her unsuspecting prey

out across the plains

she traverses in her hunger.

It quickly pulls me under.

The apex of your legs where I am lost,

which is my wilderness.

That contour of your skin trembling underneath my hands. Your whispered demands.

The rhythm of your breath, your breasts,

your tenderness as you acquiesce to my kisses

tracing up your thigh.

You and I.

No infant light of dawn, the shutters drawn,

the light bulbs dim as we are writhing with our bodies

and our sins intertwined. Parched,

I lay prostrate before you. How I adore you.

I lift you, fold you, kiss you.

I have told you

what I become when drapes are closed and you remove your clothes before me.

This is the dance

we dance til morning.

I will be yawning through the day all of tomorrow.

You are my light,

my sorrow when we part, and I will carry you

out of the turbulence of my heart onto my bed,

and you'll be glad

that you are there instead.

It is better when I am not invested.

Crawl to my embrace

and I will satisfy you. Your eyes say I am bound to.

The skin which lines your inner thigh is mine for this night, dim in light

of lust while I devour every inch of you until it is mine, until other men

have no claim and will not find

the crevices of you I've climbed in.

Your body is my body, your pleasure is mine,

your lips part into a smile

I quickly cover, I quickly smother

you myself, and until I tell you to stop you will not.

You are as lost in this as I and soon we will align

in unison, in perfect visions

mankind has dreamt for traceable time.

I take you like Odysseus conquered Troy and took the kingdom,

and you my Helen, and you my gyrating, pulsating, sweating, swearing, heaving,

ferocious, quickly moving lover for tonight, for the morning comes and you are spent,

and you have come

to and fro, my window

is open, and now you hear the songbirds singing as though you didn't just escape and fly to places others only dream of.

We dress and say goodbye.

Other men will give you their love as you think of mine.

## My demands

Your lips upon my skin emit the brilliant radiance and the perfect cadence

of your awestruck eyes

as they flicker shut and open, your clothes halfway slipped down the length of your torso as you are choking,

and the straps of your bra broken from the hunger of my hands.

I whisper my demands

as the wind seizes the leaves of the unsuspecting

verdant, blossoming trees, demanding their obedience and bending them insistently

toward the ground.

You moan aloud. Your hair a shroud which, swept aside,

reveals your open eyes wide as you devour me.

We are one as we are bound to be.

I asked my mother

if she thought most women

would see a handsome man in me. She told me that they would, and that I needn't worry

when I deserved to feel confident, assured in myself

as all those photogenic men must be. A couple of female friends

I dared to ask had said the same but I remained skeptical

as a girl in school told me I had nice lips and I was flattered but too shy

and bashful to speak.

Another girl told me that my legs and the butt to which they led were beautiful -

I couldn't tell if she was serious.

A few women noticed my dimpled cheeks

and said that they were cute,

or that my smile was a sweet one; mostly I felt I was ignored, though my accent sometimes worked

to make me more attractive than I am, that strange inclination

to exotic lands manifest in me. My broad shoulders,

my tucked in waist,

my bony wrists and ankles, and my shaved head

with short stubble

and the lines of bald absence traced upon my countered edges.

My eyes, not beautiful but somewhat strange

and shifting colours in the light always a little grey, then blue and green and brown;

my unremarkable nose and brow.

My reasonably large hands and feet and the parts of my body

we don't write about in poems, told that it's wrong and that no one wants to hear about such vulgar things.

My voice, often deep, sometimes effete and usually strained by social stress

and mumbled whenever I feel shy; my undefined and effeminate abdominal expanse

of which I have felt so conscious; my moderately tall height,

my pale skin,

the stubble upon my chin;

my nervously trimmed body hair and naturally near-bare

arms and legs and back.

My genetic predisposition to heart attacks.

I don't know the man

I see in the mirror, who shimmers in the glass before me.

He doesn't look like me.

He doesn't look like anything

which I have ever seen, or ever felt or ever known to be real;

he is a phantom fa�ade and I am a beam of light

energy floating through space. I cannot feel your hands placed around my waist.

Are they there?

It was how you tasted, strawberry blossom lips

with the hint of lavender air as I explored you,

and that frigid wind

through half-cracked windows never sent a shiver down my spine because you radiated light

and warmth in the cocoon of my sheets.

It was how you stared at me,

and how I would turn to find you curled with your eyes over me like a dark shroud among the clear glass bottles,

crumpled clothes that smelt like cigarettes, drunken memories and burn marks

dotting the pale skin

along the back of my thin hand.

It was how those days of lucky light seemed longer when you touched me

and stillborn when you left before the sun. It was how your hair fell, your skin felt, your lips brushed shyly across my own.

It was how I held you as though I would hold a rose without a thorn.

It was how I let my hopeful

hopeless heart get caught up in the magic of your hands

once more.

Now the mirror reflects sadness

and I taste cigarettes and empty bottles which your lips have never touched.

Now the air is cold sometimes,

the night is dark, the day doesn't start on time, and I can't remember

the way it felt to love you because I can't remember your eyes and that is when you really know someone has left you.

You said you'd never be one of the pretty girls.

With your cellulite, your acne scars, your beauty marks

or the body you told me you couldn't bear.

Heavy silence in the air. Your hot breath in my ear. I miss you.

To love you until you would love yourself a losing game, and in your smile

a thousand lies you masqueraded. You didn't need to change.

Passing you the towel, your thighs now wet, my back a mess of scratch marks, sweat,

and bruises I asked you to give me.

Your hard, small, happy breasts pressing against my kneecaps. Your stubborn innocence.

The lily white fingers of your little hands entangled in mine as we made love.

Your curling toes,

the stubble underneath your arms and on your pubis

you kept apologising for while I ignored you.

Imperfect sex, impermanence.

Those things which you never let go, I couldn't have cared less.

## Come close

Come close until I taste you, my irreplaceable.

The silence breaks as you moan.

Your broken silence my design, these lips of mine.

Bring your cruel hungry eyes hither

as you shiver, shake, and push me down. Paradise lost, found, and I am surrounded.

Pull me in your embrace.

Your face, my face, the taste of you.

Our sticky skin sticking to another,

the sheets they shudder.

These feverish arms, octopus-like writhing surge

and the neighbours might have heard us. This lust,

this madness, lost

in the dreams of past futures, the future's past

and I'm alone again.

Rose gold patterns on the wall, this life in air

and immaterial barren doorways through which I see myself.

I am infinite as the sky is endless and I am complete in this beauty

of space, and light

as it filters through the eyes of those I love

and above me

the sword of Damocles hangs low so that I rise

and fall

and am made whole through my survival; this piercing blow my resolution.

I hold my head above these clouds of destitution and decay

and I will not accept the fate of lonely men, crumbling

as mountains one day fall onto the plains of sadness, indulgent despair

and the darkness hidden there in my potential.

See these summer leaves

waltz along the streets outside my window, and see my open eyes

gaze into the future light

that shines in the chambers of the dreams which I have always had.

See my hands grasp tightly on

and the strength with which I hold this Earth which I have held

and loved

and fought so long.

In my veins, you run the undertow through boiling blood and my dark sorrow born of woman, son of man,

stranger in the hollow of this planet

and the lonely wasteland from which I have run.

My fix, you are my ailment and medicine, surgeon and executioner.

You are my temptress, godless face shining between bottomless eyes.

In my heart you are the hole, in my dreams my one companion, in the night, death waits breathing kisses in my soul.

## I lay broken

I lay broken on the bed as evening falters, stalling her last careful glance over the snow. There is an emptiness to dreaming

I didn't know yet, and yet this slow

and painful ego death just will not end.

There were tears in both my eyes

as I crumbled into the dust under the boards and among the wet tiles of the bathroom floor, pleading for mercy with this curse

that still absorbs me.

I considered all the ways

in which I felt that I had died before and there were more than I could say.

It is enough to have the present and the distant fog

of a yesterday I barely know

because tomorrow there are ways in which

the echoes of these lines will fill my mouth

I shout -

the world burns and it is beautiful.

My cosmos will return before tomorrow

and first light's just a few more rays away; the sea is green

as yesterday was pink and black;

the night will keep your secret for you and then torture you with that.

Rain falls on the uneven alley stone. Boarded doorways leading home.

My loneliness in chloroform gauze over my barely parted lips outstretched to kiss you, outstretched to seize what I have only in dreams, only in the seeming belief that I will make it through.

Thunder splits the twilight sky.

Months since I nearly died and I'm still crying sometimes,

in the silence of a room I've spread myself into; the peeling walls

and the dirty windows

I have taught myself to speak my thoughts through

when you're not here, when you're not anywhere the hopelessness is near again.

Again, the bitter end

comes threatening above the rooftops, above the half-hid treetops,

above the lonely pit stops drunken men drink in

and I have seen my reflection in those glasses a little often for my liking,

for the way I think my life ends.

Summer heaviness in the air. The window seems to breathe

a sigh as though someone is there, the air

the air this breath, only death.

I wake to the cinder grey of the walls filtered heavily through blinds half-pulled from their perch, my window laughing

in the morning air that dies with the absence of sunlight.

How cold I grow

while I stagnate in this insulator, this incubator I detach, and claw, and break through into dawns

I didn't see waiting.

Breaking into lifetimes I don't want or see some coming back from.

I see my dawn grow black upon horizons spread through the smeared glass.

Nothing ever lasts.

The old road whispers things like the dead men in my dreams who cannot hear me.

Forgetful days

as the lines on my hands redraw themselves

as abstract angles torn both forward and back, I fade to black.

The maniac,

I find the colour in the centre of the sun and fade to that.

Beyond both you and I

there is a code within your eyes I seek to codify,

those starlight signs I'd light a vigil to or swore some oath or other by,

this unbroken lullaby

goes undimmed in the headspace of my dreams.

Perhaps there is a wish that goes unwanted all throughout these half-dreamt days.

Perhaps eternity bowed her heavy head as though to gaze right through me, assimilate the mind and body,

bend the twisted heart abjectly, lingering in the light behind the eyes

there is a galaxy of stars that go stillborn each wasted morning,

that yawning sky I looked into and swore on no returning

while three stars spread the dead light of the fallen far before me.

As seasons drift I drift

away,

as if there were some other way to live this life I've led thus far,

so far beyond what I expected.

There is a message in the fallen sun, the snowflakes heaven sent spinning that spun and now they're slush beneath our feet,

these old stone alleys and the frowning streets

already littered with my stolen memories.

There are pitches in the halo of the day, familiar melodies I've sung softly to myself as I have watched each passing ray,

the shadows forming murky visions while the old sun bowed her head as though she listened sadly

to the song etched in the keystone of my soul.

Shifting spectral shades of virgin light gone unbroken through my child eyes

I am eternal,

I am impermanence in this suspended air which shimmers in the space before you.

Incarnate, reverberations through the dead spaces of my recollection,

protracted silences and half-unearthed skeletons I shiver at the thought of, my haunting

echoes gently through a darkly-lighted house

I move within, without the strength to lose it and so I'll sit within these walls

a little longer

as the pale sills gather dust each passing day.

I am distant energy by now,

beyond the parted clouds and among stars or even demons, infinite joy

and sadness for the roughly trodden ground I cannot tread on;

this mortal shell, this disconnection, disassociated misperception of the self or perhaps of everybody else,

though on that count I have to say I'm undecided.

The warmth of your skin is electric beneath my hands

while the cold air loiters by the open windowpane.

Your kneecaps on my shoulders while I look into your eyes

and you describe the way you haven't felt quite this way before,

and I recite a poem I tapped into my phone when I got home last night

drunk, stoned, and alone in the bed which still carried the scent of you.

Your fear is my fear

when you run your hot hands through your hair and tell me that you're scared of falling in again, I read your eyes again

and see that you feel time stand still when we're together

yet there is a risk to every lust, there is a danger in my trust, there is a shadow on your heart

I can't cast off for you,

there is a question on your part I cannot solve for you,

there is the chance that real as this is it exists only in the dark abyss

between your past heartbreak and some bright future

in which I do not feature,

because tonight is not the night to want me, these months are not the months to hold me, this waning gibbous moon is dead in the dark above me

and the stars shed stillborn light on upward eyes

in cynical skies I plead you realise you should not fear to love me.

The sunlight on my ceiling is abstract through the curtain of your hair,

as you trace a line of kisses down my neck and I believe for once that I exist

beyond temporal and fleeting bliss and into life beyond my dreams,

where you have waited in the dark for far too many years.

The way you hold me

as though I can never break,

or how it feels to pull your fingers between mine and kiss you on the lips, that dimpled smile

splitting wide enough to show me this is real. I hold you closer and I feel you,

your moans and little squeals

as I kiss every inch of skin which you possess.

The back of my hand,

your planted kiss as we embrace

and our sunlight is split by daytime rain

so that the leaves on each tree dance and sway with bonds which seem never to break

as long as they hold tightly I hold you tightly.

## Because of the way

Because of the way you look into my eyes. Because of the way your delicate fingers fit through mine

and hold on very tightly,

as though the floor could disappear

and I am your anchor in overturning seas set sail on this bed,

suspended by thin air while we make love.

Because of your radiant smile

which brightens up my room whenever I kiss you. Because I can spend a day lost in your light and scarcely notice time

as it flies past the open windowpanes,

as billions of lives start and end and carry on I need only this, infinity in your face

and your lips on mine are planted lightly.

Because of the way you laugh and hold me and I feel my darkness slink away with its dismal tail tucked behind.

Because in you I found a life I searched for years to love yet never thought I'd find.

Because when I wake in the morning you are mine and I don't want anybody else

and you don't want anybody else

and the sunlight holds us as two halves while I kiss your neck, you sigh,

coming alive with me as the soft blue sky splits open.

Small coloured lights spread friendly patterns on the ceiling

in my abstraction,

daydreaming of tomorrow yet again. The snow has settled now,

its frigid fingers tempered down

and warming with the first light of the day.

The barren branches stand so stiff on these sentinel trees,

the watchmen gone uncovered through the heavy freeze.

But there's tomorrow

peeking through the twigs now bare in the form of all the beautiful, colourful, temporal spring leaves I soon expect to see there,

as I expect to one day bow my knee and ask the woman of my dreams

if every secret wish I've ever dared to dream came true.

As surely as I've lived to dream of love I love you,

my infinity in a thousand other lives than simply this

to touch you feels like coming home; the trees will clothe their skinny bones in robes of emerald green and gold

and I will hold you to me all the while.

Small coloured lights

dance in tandem shapes across the walls in my abstraction,

daydreaming of your dark magic eyes.

The sun comes through my window every morning now,

my tears are drier now

that you make me believe in karma.

My dharma bum, my lover in spirit

and an embrace that encircles seven suns, you are the one for whom I waited

before I even knew that you were there,

and now I cannot help but see you everywhere, out in new worlds far more beautiful than this.

I put my phone on Do Not Disturb while you are with me

because the world can wait as I cannot, to hold you and embrace all of your sighs as though they come from my own lungs, as though your lips were made to fit here on my lips,

my hands cradling yours while night falls.

Behind the plain apartment door you are my everything,

and when the daylight breaks I feel my heartbeat

climb because I know that you are with me, and you press lightly into me

while we hold hands

and occupy the paradise between our dreams and waking life; as you were once in sleep you are now here beside me.

As you were once a hope you are a light brightening darknesses I swore would never end, and as our eyes meet

for the first time of the day

I am as vulnerable as the snowflakes which will fall

on the next months of this romance, coating these windowpanes

while we share in our hibernation.

I am naked, fragile,

open before you.

I am afraid until I see you smile once again

and the heaviness in my chest expands, explodes, and my fear bows its head before the kingdom of your endless arms I would gladly fall into a thousand times

because your eyes on mine are fragile as my own and you remind me of a woman I have known but never met,

slowly advancing through the shadows of my past until I cannot help but let you into the shelter of my heart.

Only in my dreams,

but there you are naked before me

in the half-dark room where we collide.

There is the whisper of a fingertip across the light skin of my chest

as I inhale you, as I breathe you like air grown thin now we are high

and lifted in the sheets of my bed again.

The pale gold of your skin glows amber in this light

while the music intermingles with our open window laughter

and the agitated traffic on the road outside, busily humming with life I do not need when you are with me.

Smoke contracts and releases itself through the open pane

while you are nestled

in the harbour of my arms,

and your eyes are bottomless in this dark room like you are infinite,

like you are everything,

as though in you I see my heart unfold and all its deepest wishes surfacing.

Moonlight over us as we made love,

you said those words I'd only dreamt of however many thousand nights

alone in however many beds with however many unfulfilled,

unrequited romances I'd forget by morning.

A pregnant pause in midnight air

and then we kissed while our eyes met and I told you the same.

I'd spent the day in fear of ever giving up the little secret which had built

and slowly risen in my chest,

but midnight struck with your lips pressed and held

still for an eternity while I embraced you.

Our minds occupied by one another

we lay adjacent on the heavy sheets as I tried not to rush to write this poem.

The true poet stays in the moment, I said.

The true poet knows when he has felt

one of those feelings he'll never forget, and even if the lines to this poem don't last and even if a year goes past

and everything I have falls through

I'll never forget the way it felt to be allowed to love you

as I held you

and I truly felt your heart beating within me.

The night we didn't go to the party we stayed in our bed, your eyes stayed fixed on mine

while we both cried, the unspoken words,

the feeling of belonging, the lowered lights.

Holding you in my arms

feels like embracing my deepest happiness, my infinite wonderess

with all those playful kisses and piercing looks into my soul.

My elusive love at last,

where are your lips if not on mine, where are your arms if not surrounding me as the evening descends,

as each caress feels like the push which sends me over

the edge of what I ever expected to know.

You are not the center of my world but every particle of dust,

every little flower bud,

every drop of water in the sea. I myself am like the air,

and if it looks as though there's nothing there breathe one breath in,

reach your hands into the sky and as I draw life from you you draw life from me.

The sunlight dies but she returns for us, within your gentle touch

where infinity is never long enough

and winter paints her dazzling portraits on the ground.

I touch you

as I would touch a soft thing,

a fragile thing made by divine truth and with the beauty of a rose unspoilt.

I touch you like the air touches my face on tender mornings when I wake

and walk into the world with hopeful heart, and by your touch I am blinded,

by your touch I am complete, by your soul and your lips and your eyes I am made whole while I adore you.

I touch you

with the caress of the moon upon the Earth with pale light;

you are my sun, my beacon in darkness

and the brightness which I can only reflect.

I touch you as I would touch the strands of spider webs in which you've caught me, and so tenderly

you wrap me in your silk tresses, those moments we have spent

among the infinite, among the legions of lovers past and painted of, written of, never forgotten,

and the joy which only you can give me.

You alone,

my queen on royal throne in darkest night,

your radiance under my touch an epiphany.

If I had not held you

I would not believe that you are real,

or that your small feet could just walk the earth beside me.

If I had not kissed you, lip to lip and eye to eye to my infinities

splitting slowly as the day dies.

If I had not heard your breath in my left ear late nights as the window crack yawned,

your hands around my waist, your leg wrapped over mine,

the silence between whispered goodnights and small kisses on smiling cheeks

to wake with.

If I had not read your soul

line by line in every aspect of your eyes I would not believe that you exist,

like this, perfectly mine;

the clock strikes out at midnight

and the blue light of the frigid evening darkens.

Never forget

that my love for you is unconditional, automatically exploding from within.

When you feel so close

it is as though we share a lung, this breathless closeness we designed

like little outlines round the both of us.

When you make me feel

every single heartstring bow at once you are my orchestra,

you are the final movement

in a symphony of dreams long without closure.

When I look at you

I feel my shadows slink away because the day is young, the cold has gone,

the night can wait a while longer.

Dark eyes,

like the darkness in my poems

which comes and goes each passing evening moving dully into morning,

I move dully in the brilliance of your sight and all the majesty of you.

My majesty,

I concede myself to your dominion.

Your hair, which falls in wild lines across the light parchment of your face, over your pitch black eyes

and to your infant mouth, your child's joy bursting out in secret smiles

meant for me.

You are meant for me.

Hands light as two pale feathers in my beast's paws, I claw you and pull you deep into the lair.

I will keep you there,

my fragile thing, beyond words

and understanding, take my rough touch and my brutal hunger

for what they've always been.

I have always been searching,

that coarse blood thick in my itching veins running onward to you, through me,

like brilliant light in old stained windows, once closed, curtained, boarded-up,

now open, I see clearly

how the hunger, the utter passion of my love is far more dangerous than death

or any other fate from which I'd save you.

Untamed, uncaged,

I am a beast loose in the night, down the next street,

under the candlelight in a small room where I absorb you.

My prey falls like a doe beneath my claws, my razor teeth and fire eyes

spell quiet death, these final moments

when I will leave you heaving your last breath undressed below the arbor of my love.

Beneath the fury of the assault there is passion,

a burning in my blood that goes unmatched, unseen, unfulfilled until I drain you

and watch the sun set in blood red lines down your spine.

You are mine,

your every sigh a symphony

made from the white noise of my thoughts mixed with hypnotic colours

I could not describe.

You will collapse at my command as I dismantle you.

Hungry for flesh in fallen darkness, I am the shadow in a dream,

the light which does not reach below the bed, the skeletons kept,

the silence between breaths. Sacrosanct, my love,

I pull you from the night

like tearing a rose with my teeth, petal by petal, thorn by thorn, until it passes.

Unlatch me

from the aching in my limbs,

the old dumb want which lingers on beneath my skin forever.

This cold foreboding terror turned iridescent lust

erupts in vicious bursts from day to day, night to night when I am wild,

mad and angry, sad and dangerous.

Untie the chains;

break the cycle or I will hunt you endlessly, only to bite again and again,

only to win again and again, my countess, white as an orchid

stained beneath the blood above your flesh. Through dark woods I'll walk behind you.

Through this madness I will have you captive as a slave,

my light kisses down your navel

and your eyelashes fluttering with pleasure, tender gestures as you climax forever

and ever as my doll, my lolita I will hold you in my cold marble arms while you're asleep, porcelain skin and little breaths, my feather.

End it for me, or for you there waits only madness in the constancy of this,

these debased urges, my raw and primal kiss, the erotic turbulence built into my body's will will have you naked, prepared before me

like a feast I eat again and again,

your shaking gasps my absolution, darling.

The hinges on the door creaked lightly between the dead echoes of our kisses in this dim apartment,

nudging the front door closed with a blind foot as I assailed you with the burden of my love; the totality of it,

the ferociousness of it,

the responsibility of feeling it without shying away.

This morning I had to check - half-awake -

I wasn't dreaming,

as within your forever auburn eyes I saw the burning constellations

which light the distant worlds of your universe,

just as bright now as they were then

when you looked back at me and lit up every valley of my darkness,

a light that's lasted since that moment and which falls on me still

as both my eyes grow damp with thoughts of you.

I wish that I could bring your body into mine; your heart and mind could have a home and be the two best parts of me,

my eternity

I feel you shining in the centre of my soul.

I have felt infinity

in the deep heat of your arms

extending outward and around my captive waist. I have seen the moon cast its last light beyond the outline of your face,

your hands in mine

while we share permanence.

I have known love as your dark hair, your earthen eyes, your tender smile.

I have been to paradise between your kisses and the careful whispers which I know

more than I hear,

more than I need you to explain I read your radiant eyes

and see the sun which sets and rises just for us,

my love, my universe,

my best friend and my angel

both of the morning and the dusk I'll love you until the ashes fall from both my hands

and all my bones are dust, believe in us.

I do not write poetry because I love you.

Because you occupy the space in myself which those words once filled

I do not need them.

That wanting expanse of laughter which I let ring out as silence cloaked in sonnet lines is broken now by the corners of your smile curving inwardly, the way which only your smiles seem to

and as I read you, your galaxy eyes,

I see the vastness of the infinite spread far beyond black words over light as though there's meaning once again

and that's enough for me.

How I love you

is not of breaking hearts in fall upon fall, or bitter springtime in the nadir of myself where you gave birth to light

my path has been set forth,

and there my eternity comes beaming

rainbows through the bright core of my sight.

How I love you

as I am falling, as I am fleeting chance upon chance, like fast asylum

dashed against the rocks of a false homeland while I cling to you, this bed

a life raft upon seas I can't contend.

How I love you

beyond self or selfishness or blind obsession

clashing with the surges of my soul, battering ram bursts into the hard light of your transcendental heart

I have sung, and sing

and wish the night would fall sooner than ever it has seemed,

the same old dreams

die in the last pause before I wake, the same old shakes,

the same old nervous itch and terrible tick

second by second,

slowly erased to nothing.

How I love you more than myself,

more than is healthy,

more than I could have known before I set eyes on you

I did not have eyes, I did not have life,

I was not born before I met you my irreplaceable, infinite angel let's live our lives

as though they've just begun.

The keystone of our love is here within our vulnerable eyes, yours on mine

and on the waning afternoon light darkening gently as the day slips by.

Here, in your playful lips and their recurrent tenderness

as I float onto the bed and you cling to me just as the strongest autumn leaves will hold, fall, and revolve once

through the centre of my soul or by my window.

I'll let you go when the old sun breaks or when she decides not to rise

but simply glow behind your eyes forever, so tenderly, your radiant light

falls like a feather from the tail of my dream as I grow wings and your heart guides me.

Here, in this moment and the next,

and the next;

in each day that we share

and every one that we have left.

I fell in love with your eyes first. The way that I was able to see you and all of you in just a glance, your honest irises so beyond doubt

I could not help but know you and then I loved you

beyond what that word meant,

beyond what I had strengthened myself for.

My old defences made easy ruin as the autumn fell,

those early laughs and movie screenings while the weather was still warm.

In just a blink we both fell under as the year died, as the snow came,

as the sunsets counted themselves up.

I held you closer with each morning

as you became the object of my dreams, setting aside little corners in my mind and in my heart

to keep you there, and have you with me, and let your beautiful soul inside me, my thoughts ceaselessly of you.

Every smile we have shared is its own universe my everything, my light,

I love you

more than I have language to describe. The spell of you, the happiness of you, my changed life, the infinity

of us, our embraces, those endless gazes into the depths of your eyes

and every detail there I've memorised.

When there are no other words I whisper your name to myself,

half-dreamt at the threshold of my lips my breath escapes

and forms itself into the shape of you.

I would not be the first

to capture love in words without success,

but I do not need language when you're with me or even anything except your smile

playing at the corners of your lips and in your kiss

where I am everything.

Loving you has been like opening a doorway into life,

out of my bedroom into the sky,

out of the clouds down to your doorstep,

I descend and you occupy me with your tenderness.

Unrelenting tenderness

hidden in every kiss we've shared and kept forever.

I hold you in my arms, my dove,

my feather light as I lift you like a thief, claw you, my razor teeth gnawing

the fury from you, your moans which only I have known

and pleasure you never knew existed before I existed with you

neither of us reached this nirvana far beyond you

out into the night which exists only for us. The night belongs to us.

Dimples in the corners of your smile,

my heart is open as you unlatch every bolt and we step into the world as lovers.

Until the end we share each other.

Slipping into rhyming poetry; it happens naturally

but can feel a little twee

and I've noticed people like it less than blank expanses.

With that in mind,

midnight approaches and your sleeping arm is still resting on mine.

It feels like diamonds against the dirt from which they're dug,

like a pure white dove

(or some other blank bird)

flying into air that's filled with poison.

It feels like you're too good for me or far too clean, or far too loving, or misunderstanding of my stupid,

self-destructive time bomb of a heart.

It feels like I'm the frame and you're the work of art. (My apologies.)

It feels like I am finally whole.

It feels like all the pain can be let go now. It feels like all the air drops from my lungs - I draw for breath that doesn't come,

I pace the room in nervous circles, make up lies or false excuses,

blame myself or anyone else I have in mind, lie in bed and smoke and whine,

all because it terrifies me to my core to love you.

And now,

even now perhaps in your dreams you are afraid

because the truth is

I was not prepared to meet you

and immediately know that I am with you always,

completely, wherever you go,

indivisible as one whole.

My angel, my saviour and my entire soul,

I would spend five thousand years alone if I could live to be with you.

I'd say

stay away from people who will fuck you up, stay away from the big bad drugs,

stop looking for love because it will find you.

Your potential is your strength and your weakness when not met.

There are things you don't know yet which will change everything,

and people in your life you don't owe anything.

Smile when you can, but only when you want to because putting on a brave face

is a coward's choice. When you can't speak,

your art can be your voice. When you can't breathe, when you have seizures,

when you crave knives or needles,

put yourself inside your mother's arms and slap yourself;

you're doing well

and all this noise, these people can't help or do this for you.

I'd say

don't mess this up;

you have some sense but no idea of how lucky you are.

Keep your word, don't pretend,

and let friendships end

if they had no good reason to begin.

Your greatest sin is your selfishness, but there will come a moment -

at a time you least expect it -

when you will meet someone who shows you who you are.

I'd say

she is not far away, so don't give up Alex

you have a lot to live for, a lot to give her,

and she deserves a man who isn't torn to pieces.

She deserves a man who knows these truths and writes them down,

cuts them out with ink and re-absorbs them.

You can have everything

if only you have strength.

I'd say

take your own advice and go to bed.

Crumbled green clusters

in the small ceramic bowl, my mind is normal now,

my spirit immortal in this never-ending cataclysm of self,

unrest, unruliness, and unhealthy decay as little by little I change

and again and again

I have the same small doubts rearrange and fade into another.

You saw me then

now you see something other.

When friends let their best efforts

die under the same porch where that old dog once hid;

dogmatic silence

as the sound of the last exhale sighs and the room rises into smoke curls, dying embers half-reflected.

Dead grey glass as winter lives new lives not remembered.

# Lie

My heart holds secrets

of which I wish that I could speak; these depressive tendencies

and barely living memories which cloud my day.

The panic attacks

and the cold, brutal thoughts I harbour; my shattered armour at my feet retreating from the daylight yet again.

Send help,

I am not well.

I sit in rooms and wonder how in hell I got there,

this heavy atmosphere which chokes me, the waves of sickness over me

as I smile and say again that I'm alright.

The coming night will cloak me, far from putting on a mask

I spew these thoughts onto the page and burn it.

You meet my eyes but don't discern it, this pain

which I will keep inside myself forever.

The pace of the past, reversed second hand movements

counterclockwise round the pale mask which hides the dismal days

I've lived and plead to leave behind.

What is so hard about forgetting

or reliving, or antagonising my own life to oblique magic.

That which is lost

will linger, that which is found will detonate singularities

at the centre of my soul.

Let me not be the man you saw but who you would see, beneath the awkward eyes

the shy, hurt heart I am a man.

Looking for light out of loneliness, I am a man.

Yet the day has collapsed

so that I see only ruin in the second hand bent this way and that,

cracked and soon to meet its end in silence.

Night-time lapses of the heart

pull feeble pranks against my soul, but there I go

being sentimental over again when the end has all but met us

and the friendships that have left us burnt tenderly to ash.

This catch-22 of loss

is like a solemn premonition beneath the waves, this undertow and its incision

shows the lifeline of my soul run outward through bright waves and silver shoots of water in blue air beyond darkness.

Beyond darkness there is light. Beyond darkness there is light.

I couldn't go outside today, I was crying too much.

Heaving heavy tears like they were corpses for the mass grave of my face

which I fill slowly.

There is a darkness coming on with every morning

and I feel its shadow in the fibre of my skin, so deep within I cannot help but heed it.

Crying so much that my eyes burn

two red scorches in my cracked desert landscape with no periphery, no iris and no pupil,

dull welts which close then open with reluctance.

Dull pain which fades

then builds to something else, the echoes of my voice

which slowly grow dimmer,

this prison which they call my mental health dissolving round the ghost within the shell.

It feels like I am dying slowly,

this modicum of light left in my heart barely illuminating

the fading scars of panic passed.

I asked for what I felt I could achieve

now I'm defeated, the sunrise is white noise, I wake shaking in the late hours of the night and wait impatiently

with thoughts of abject suicide writhing between my bones

like the worms which soon will rest there.

I am so scared I choke on fear and gasp for air

where no one else can hear me,

the struggles of my soul pervading the atmosphere I breathe

while time just leaves me

alone in this last hour of the dead,

the world viewed through the shadows of my head and deathly sorrow.

Tears in my eyes at evening's end, I'm feeling older lately.

Sworn to secrecy by secret pride,

I wither slowly in a violent light escaping past the blinds I draw at midday.

Convalescent in my shame, my final heartache

and its dreadful resting place.

My eyes red, my teeth chattering no less I wipe my face and step out of the door stripped naked.

Heavy pressure on my eyes, my hands are shaking uselessly at either side, my breathing heavy

in the morning as I meet your wide blank stare. Shadows warping in the light,

the day unfolds itself like statues that I pass with muffled mouths that seem to shout,

I am alone in this cacophony of light and random sound.

As in my soul, as in my secret, this hissing vaguely in my silence,

split two ways between the evening's song the day is done, and I am home forever here, in the abscess of your arms

I find a shelter.

There is a darkness in my blood

thicker than sorrow, thicker than sadness, thicker than bickering madness

plaguing me from day to day

and yet the song remains the same and I fall deeper into shadow.

I gather noise

like a hurricane pulls debris to the centre and revolve slowly through the smoke, smouldering embers as you choke

and fall madly underneath my spell forever.

My heart is sick of this, tormented antagonist falling prey to my own tricks.

Deeper down wells of forlorn shadows I breathe the emptiness,

I am the hollow pressure

pounding at the gateway to your chest. Anxiety, I'm sick,

terrified beyond my wits

and deeper than you'd ever think to look.

Beyond the obvious, the ominous

innocent man you took and made a symbol,

I am the hatred in your heart and beyond every mirror

you slowly see clearer.

I pause,

wonder again when I lost the ability to do it well.

This pretence bids me ill at evening's end, this ladder of the mind I still descend deeper into the blue heart of the night

I long have lived through.

The darkness really wants you.

People move so quickly that they blur, going in and out of lives

in ways which still grow clearer as I age. And I have felt time pass but not like this, where history is a giant scary beast

ready to hunt me, catching my scent, chasing down my lazy steps

as I lose sight of shelter.

The past is now a vicious thing, a dark and dirty thing

I've locked my trauma in and left to fester.

But the day wakes. The people wake.

Some of them call me,

text me, reach their hands out to me, and it's like the past is round my neck choking me to death as I reply.

They say:

leave it behind, leave it right there where you left it long ago.

You don't need it anymore.

And I reply:

but if I don't need the past why did I do it

in the first place?

Why do we do things in the first place?

Why do we all share blame and guilt and other things

we'll soon be asking to forget?

Fighting to make memories we'll soon want to erase,

I wonder what the attraction is and why it still persists

when I've learnt better.

I wonder why I lie like this at 6am,

my woman fast asleep

on the far side of the bed, thoughts of birth and death and the shitstorm in-between, thoughts of passing life

and the bucket lists I laugh at

while the corners of my mouth stay still.

Sometimes I feel my life grow still, like I am standing in a rising flood and I can see the debris coming up,

the helicopters, the shouts, the screams, the people saving people saving themselves while every sound's on mute.

And I am standing, staring,

still as a totem on the outskirts of town

as though I'm waiting for something to happen.

As though the water isn't rising but I am falling into earth, bit by bit, limb by limb,

still as death while no one's watching.

There is a solitude

in knowing yourself too well; there is a silence

like a shroud over my secrets.

These long days kept in my darkness feel like missed grasps at holding on

to the cold bitter end I have been dreading.

Where was I when my friends grew old? Locked in dark rooms or lost and stateless, letting music cloud my senses

while I watched my features age, the vase's flowers slowly fade

as they suffocate in shallow water.

Long days spent with no response, no second wind, no better chance but I lay numbed out on the bed while the snowflake feathers drift like the halo round some angel passing sadly by my window.

This new silence is within me, so deep it seems unbreakable and my screams into the night just do not reach it,

pleading with myself, this never-ending attempt to keep my demons hidden.

"How do you feel?n Sad, today.

Like the dog has died, the ghost gave up, the smiles faded,

and the little things were all too much.

The time ticks down

while I'm in thought again, alone for the hundred thousandth lifetime I'll dream away my daylight,

drink away my sunshine

as though darkness has some sympathy for me.

There's no sympathy for men like me

so I crawl beneath the dust and lie there where only eyeless shadows fester

and the blackness blindly lengthens until everything is gone.

It's pure emptiness inside, pure chaos for us now

the seventh trumpet sounds yet I stay silent.

I can feel myself in the past, the past in myself,

the huge weight of the future hung above me as I scream out amidst sirens,

throw punches against a brigade of defense and lose battles in dead silence,

home alone, stoned, sadly with my thoughts a brash catastrophe

which can only end in death.

There's nothing left. The passion of the past, the ease of knowing less,

the comfort of conformity, normality, now gone

as I am headed nowhere.

Headed homeward drunk as hell. I'll get there next.

Better or worse

we all burn sometime.

Finding my love

took more years, more life

than I have language to describe. The endless longing,

the needless suffering

when somewhere in the world the treetops rustled

and she nestled in her bed waiting for my soul.

Making love

in your childhood bed, the shutters drawn,

the lamps extinguished.

Love, as the bedhead rumbles, the silence holding us in place, cheek to cheek, lip to lip,

my irrepressible.

I hold you with such tenderness

you could break at the smallest touch, you could leave at the smallest whim and I would be gone with you,

lost without you like a shadow without light. Without you there's only darkness.

I place you above life itself

with the angels and their endless radiance.

## Beast

Like a rough beast I have walked the night with hunger

because I remember how it feels to love you, I remember how it feels to hold you, kiss you, and compel you with the power of my heart.

I am starving for your voice in my ear, your hand upon my arm,

your eyes which will meet mine harden, and become diamonds.

I want to consume the essence of you

and never leave you, and be one with you until the sun dies in the sky

and we are nothing.

I am hungry for you

in a way that I have never known, my lioness, my conquest

I will assail you with a force beyond control and you will know that I adore you

through the kisses which I plant

and the roses that bloom from your burnt skin, turning red and white before my eyes as you flourish forever.

I do not know how others fall in love or how they feel when their eyes meet,

parting lips to plant a kiss upon the other. All I know is what I feel when you are here, as before my eyes my every dream is manifested and I know that yours is the last hand that I will hold,

yours is the last word that I will hear, yours is the last mark upon my heart and it will always stay there.

Inevitably you have become a part of my soul, where I have kept the little things,

the secrets that go beyond my reach; your scent in the air,

the sunlight on the ceiling making quiet patterns,

the songs we sing together, the jokes we make

and your laugh that fills me up,

our walks along the tree-lined avenues, my arms around your waist,

cupping your breasts with my hands,

sharing your breath while we are closer than it's possible to be,

in days both past and yet to come hand in hand, lip to lip

I break at the mere mention of your name as all my love comes bursting from me, straight to you, to every future waiting where my heart is yours forever.

I do not know how else to love you.

I do not know how else to live than to live by you,

with you,

surrounded by you

like a cloak against the cold, a shield

against cruel arrows that would mark me, a warmth within my blood

which gives strength to me.

I see the echoes of my eyes in your eyes, the imprint of your heart on my heart, the all-consuming power of my love bursting from my chest with violent light you do not shy away from,

and you do not let me down except to whisper in my ear

things which I had never dreamt would happen have come from your bright soul

like bold sun rays which end the night leaving only us and endless daylight.

Darling,

I have poured myself into you like raindrops over glass

obscuring the dark and dangerous night, where beyond the candle glow

there is only darkness. Your hands in mine,

the burnt sienna of your skin wrinkling as your eyes absorb me, your smile overthrows me

and I am lost within your light.

You have taught me how to get through life without pretending,

opened my heart to dreams I'd never dreamt of having

long years I doubted I would meet you. Heavy tears for every time I've hurt you, my love I would die to keep the shadows from your doorstep

and fight every demon with my teeth and fists and fury until I defeat them.

It makes my blood so hot, like fire runs in vicious rivers through my body

alight at the thought of you, the threat of you vanishing as if you had just been a dream.

After all.

After all the pain there is now light, to my surprise and my unending gratitude there is a star to guide me,

there is a future for me

and she is brighter than the sun, larger than the galaxy

even as she rests at my side,

my blessed life

which continues without ceasing would have no meaning without Maya.

I have pinched myself and woken from my sleep to find you

and I cannot believe that you are there, your slender arms beneath your head resting on the sheets we bought

and share together

these long days I forget to appreciate and hate myself for ever losing.

There is something inside you which can't be found

anywhere else I've ever looked,

and I have searched beyond the stars and into blackness and then back.

I can't define it

or make sense of how it feels,

this radiance you emanate so meekly, this tenderness you have

which goes outside me,

expanding far into the air around us.

I share your breath as we kiss words into the other's heart,

I love you darling

as no poem could ever tell beyond myself or any other,

there is only you, under your spell where I will gladly live forever.

All the women in the world

and my tunnel vision circles round you like a halo,

my angel there is light in you

and it is brighter than a thousand suns,

a thousand supernovas bursting in your eyes, beyond my life, beyond our lives together there is something eternal in this love, going far beyond either of us,

far beyond the pale glass I stare through long flights to meet you,

long days without you,

feeling incomplete without my soul.

No one else would understand the language in your eyes;

it is mine, it is for me, you are for me and I will be yours forever

in this embrace we hold across continents and oceans deeper than dark thoughts dreamt before I met you.

Now I am better, stronger, in a mad dash

for the straightest pathway to you, and I will get there

beyond our kisses into the rest of time where together we will never die.

Finding you, my lily, my rose,

my amethyst lighting up the room around us, you glow and I lift you from the earth

like treasure.

I kiss along your navel, your neck,

your collarbones like marble etched

into the shape of a dream I had for years before I believed in you.

Before I met you I knew nothing. I felt nothing.

You took my hand and led me into my own heart, into my own soul

where you are queen, beyond myself or anything. There is so much light now

I squint and fear the shade but cannot find it, though I fall beyond forever

you are blinding, guiding my way as we navigate the world together.

So sweet, so innocent

as I came into your life like a thief wanting your heart for my own, coveting your love for myself

when I saw what you could give me.

Suspended in the whirlwind of my thoughts you've lived weightless for so long, taken through the storm right to my centre where the stillness stops revolving,

the noise quits all its moaning and it's you and I at last,

hand in hand while the air moves past.

My little dove, my flower blossoming into a woman day by day

I see your smile and your eyes both change in subtle ways, turning sadder yet again as all the pain comes pouring in

and I can't stop it.

I can't heal it, or feel it for you so you don't have to,

and I collapse under the weight of wanting things to change,

to have you smiling and laughing as we laughed on better days.

You will laugh like that again.

You have not lost me

for while you breathe I have reason to breathe, while you hurt I cannot help but hurt,

where you walk I will follow, and while you struggle

I will carry you through darkness to the light side of the globe,

the patch of sun which burns on just for us where there is trust, a deep connection

built in both our eyes to tell me this is fate.

Tell me what could replace the intuition in my heart

which says I've found the one who waited, the one who knew someday I'd make it dragging my last strength along the road.

The one who gives me joy for days

as I attempt to memorise her face while staring deep into those eyes with hidden depths which no one could dive into

and no one ever tried to,

for no one else had loved you when we met. I turned around and had no chance,

a single glance, some little words were said and that was that,

now I cannot turn back because I love you.

The joy leaps to my mouth and from both eyes as I caress the little rings I bought on the best day of our lives

and hold visions in my head of wedding dresses, better days, warm Los Angeles,

children's toys and big adventures across the world, through our lives and to the threshold of the end where we'll both step forward

in peace together,

lip to lip, hand in hand, you and I like this forever.

All of my heart.

All of the sadness and mad dashes through the darkest parts of my soul.

All of the strained strength

and battered down defences against the starkness of my life

and the richness of what you offer to me, just there

frustratingly within my reach

there is a dream I dreamt so long it's blurry hidden in tormented fury

taking all of my heart, I love you.

I love you.

I love you so much

I cannot breathe without you.

That any doubt which others cast upon you seems laughable,

improbable,

simply wrong when I look at you

and see a woman with my future in her eyes and endless demons in her life

which I would fight forever if only they'd strike me.

So much I give all of my heart.

I forsake all love that passed

and which goes now into my darkness, the years which I spent blinded

and cloaked in armour made of lies, rivers of filthy poison wine

I drank and died and then you found me.

And you hold tightly

in the cold winter night when I am tear-soaked you are so close your breath will warm me during dreams I'll see your face and smile

my face pressed into the pillow, your arms tightened all the while round my heart which bursts with life and purpose just for you.

Halfway across the country here, to you

yet I am alone in this bed while you sleep over there a dazed and unkempt mess

I attempt to console

as my pillowcase grows wet

and the darkness rears its head.

You are not well my little angel,

my crippled animal in a cardboard box

with holes punched in and some water in a cup, I don't know how to heal this cut or stitch this wound for you.

I don't know how to take my love and send its strength through you.

In deep commiseration

and consoling convalescing

I hold your hand with tender gestures and brush my lips on you,

my frail feather

plucked from the tail of a flightless bird.

Confined to this small bed you are my everything.

Take my love and use it as best you can.

Your strength will come

and bring the smiles I remember lightning the apartment

like the sun belonged to me, flooding every moment

with emotions I had dreamed

but would never have believed without first seeing

and I have seen infinity

through the gateway of your eyes.

The sun is out,

a cold Saturday morning showing her feathers

like a peacock in deep heat.

One or two birds have braved the snow

and landed gently on the twigs which replaced branches stripped of leaves,

long limbs that could be dead if not for springtime.

Sparse traffic on the roads

and spare snippets from the sidewalk while the world slowly wakes up.

The day will grow momentum

and soon we'll all be spinning with each other, dancing the same ritual dance that each new light affords us.

I drank a little too much last night. Met a friend, talked about time, stumbled home in squiggly lines,

made love and then lost consciousness as my woman held my hand.

Now I write poetry in the dark while I wait for her to wake to another long, strange day

with all the struggles, ups and downs which somehow always find me.

Time will do that to you,

and the past will happen again and again. It's like the game is rigged,

the record skipped and you are static

while your illusion crumbles.

Don't forget the sun will rise whether you're ready or not.

Whether you've made plans or not something else will make them for you.

Time is like a pervert catching us sitting on the john,

watching

while we struggle with our pants and slam the door.

Just keep writing I say to myself

as all the cheques from books I haven't sold and heights I've never reached are cashed.

Just keep writing

though only a handful will ever read you and there is no poetry on printing presses anymore.

Just keep writing

against the pretensions and expectations and pseudo-intellectual connotations

of the thing which makes your heart break open most.

Just keep writing

because it is as easy as speaking, because without it you would scream nonsense into the silence

and quickening madness.

Just keep writing

because it is the only thing which you can't help but do, which you can't fail to feel,

staying awake that ten minutes longer.

Long enough to jot down another one of these little pieces of yourself,

and in the morning you read them

and remember that at least there's always this.

No space for thoughts

on these streets, cloaked with memories like a crash where there is blood

and glass and all the glistening. Timid thoughts, angry thoughts,

thoughts which make me want to cut them out I hate them so much.

The phone rings and I don't answer, the door knocks but I don't rise.

My head full of small bits of life torn apart and pieced together

bit by bit, the sellotape catching in the sun.

No time, no time to face this

fire without some ash within my blood. The smoke, the liquor,

the disconnected dreamer who can't sleep, who can't eat, who can't see.

No space for thoughts but space for poetry. Bad poetry, old poetry,

written a thousand times and where's it got me if not the same direction.

If not the same journey what's the difference anyway?

The light has that early morning clarity shining pale blue over the snow.

The treetop twigs,

the river of ice that's partly melted, the roads empty as a gym behind a bar.

Empty as a crowd when every song's the same, every sentiment's the same.

The same girl, the best girl, the missing girl

we are all waiting on.

It feels like waiting on the future.

It feels like waiting for myself to change while knowing better.

Knowing sense without believing, knowing shame without remorse, hatred without anger,

anger without violence, sadness without dying.

But I have cried my share of tears

and done my share of lying in the dark, my back to the cold mattress as I stare up at the ceiling

and pretend that I can see all of the stars.

Fingers of light slowly lose grasp

on the cliff-edge horizon looming vaguely through the distant blur

as day by day the clouds move into time-lapse waltzes,

dancing through a sky I struck with gold and red flames burning, dying warmth

I feel fading after long days dead

in hazy spaces shared with all those dreamers I've dreamt of living, dying,

breathing

the same fire that they breathed until it burns me

into embers.

Night clutches at my neck as I crawl inward, cold little lashes from the air above my skin as all these days end

before they seem to start,

this dying art of poetry, this feeble-minded lottery

I've counted losses for so long.

Midnight's kiss lingers like a lover playing games,

the heavy air, the pregnant pause which mothers nothing,

the violence in my core while others speak because I burn like few men burn,

as in my heart,

as in my heartache,

as in the desperate want I have for life and death,

and all the unspeakable frustrations I can see will never find resolve.

There is something in my soul the words won't ever reach,

the explanations won't amount to much, which can't be touched.

There is something I can't name behind my mask of feeble bone

whose torment is the gift I'm given, as long as the poem is written

sadly as the evening holds me closer.

**Alexander Wright** is a poet and mixing/mastering engineer from Australia. Born in 1993, he spent the majority of his childhood in Melbourne with a couple of significant periods spent living in France and Fiji. After leaving high school at 16, Alexander underwent a long period of treatment for mental illness. This culminated in his successful application to Berklee College of Music (Boston, MA) in 2016.

Alexander currently lives in the United States with his partner Maya.

<http://alexanderwright.com/> Front photograph: Philip Wright

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