

# Babylon Effect

Ben Buchanan

# BABYLON EFFECT

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ISBN: 978-1-09945-306-9

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## Acknowledgments:

Much of this work would not exist without the presence of family and friends in my life. Many thanks to Drew Harper and Alison Garrity for their help, friendship, and propensity to get lunch with me; to Maeve Farrell for the laughs and discussions of music; to Steven Moore for believing poetry to be more than long-winded bullshit; to Olivia Nestruck, Alizeh Khan, Zariah Walton, and Jorden Link for putting up with my unsolicited texts about poetry, music, and whatever else controls me; to Ashley Markowicz for her constant feedback and support that spans an entire continent; to Nicholas Walling for keeping me sane, enjoying lunch together, and encouraging me in anything I do.

And an enormous thanks to my family for showing me how to live within means of joy, encouraging me to pursue any creative endeavors I desire, and understanding me more thoroughly than anyone else. I am eternally grateful for everything you do.

For those in glass terrariums  
with tongues of fire



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# BABYLON EFFECT





# I

Spinning flipping notes  
between your fingertips



## Joyful Brood (Made Right Again)

Delicately floating there in a brood of jellyfish,  
I am being carried by the birth of a new mythos.

When glass cathedrals crack and I am  
Despondent in depression without catharsis,  
When I look back on beauty's banishment,  
There is a room within a sunrise in the East,  
It can steal me back from such gaping maws.

Letting willows die,  
Making beds in stinging nettles beneath atmospheres of ocean  
current,  
I am a shock of beauty in this mad world.

How I turn your morbid death wish into a future.  
How I blend into translucent skin, sparkling nothing in misty  
mistakes,  
Mistakes made right again.  
How I burn once more at the center of this heliocentric being.

Growth in spurts of fitful freedom,  
I am born again into a pocket dimension of summer,  
Weeping with you.

Weep with me.

Smile, love, this is the future of joy.

## Bottomless Pits of Love (Jazzheads)

Jazzheads drink themselves silly in smokeless rooms  
Past the prime of a solstice  
And the grooves keep coming like  
Digitized bass beats from space

Pounding holes like skylights shattered into tattered remains of  
brain cells

And in the middle of that noise  
I wanted to melt away  
I didn't want to speak to the wind  
I wanted to become it  
And curl around every filament of hair  
She kept perfectly positioned on that  
Hill that I chose to die on

I took my last breath  
And looked out the window of my grave

And fell back asleep  
For it was too sweet a sound to go out on  
Like a light in a storm

I have not destroyed myself thus far just so I can  
Whistle to myself the lullabies  
I miss so much

In the dark  
Without a map

Of all these craters and puddles  
Of mud

Bottomless

Pits

Of

L

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## Dawn of Newer Days

Written in the muffled explosions of fireworks over mystical hillsides is a passage of scripture for those without a reason to believe. Clocks striking their head with the incessant grinding of time ever onward. And yet they cannot seem to give up the cords that bind them to their ghostly graves of the past. I know the gravity pull of such an alluring failure. I know the sweetness of death it promises.

I. Dawn with me over rain soaked hills,  
Watching every leaf waver under our new sunlight,  
Waiting for the day when skies of diamond pointillism  
Show us every way in which we can  
Make the joy of life last a few moments longer.

Shadow corners opening up like flowers before friends, dip your limbs in their honey secrets, test the waters of newer days than even I can fathom. Waves pull at your skin like children to a mother's skirt, innocent in their careless destructions. Roll off of the tides like sunlight off of snowy peaks, names unknown and heights too dizzying to imagine.

II. The origin of this new mystery is close,  
Reach into your humility and pull it out,  
Play with the destiny it presents,  
The fruition it is trying to achieve.

Blooming with a strangeness like slime in the throat, layers of slowly sliding sadness being shrugged off like snow in this ambivalent sphere. See me there, sitting on the steps to your love? I am only visiting.

III. Mirth bursting in such quiet possibilities,  
Lives branching like mirrors,  
Always green with this envy that I cannot contain,  
A pain of patience being exorcised from me.

I am dropping into the wormhole now  
I am stretching like taffy without an edge,  
Folding into myself,  
Becoming a sweetness you  
Cannot  
Resist

## Vendors and Merchants

Bleeding edges of softness, extending cilia filaments like  
mycelium horizons, mountains to ants on a trail of tears,  
creeping ever upward like monolithic fears of a joy without  
boundary.

Bottomless pits pockmarked fields with blackness painting ink  
stains over roiling grass like tumultuous stormy cumulonimbus  
killers. Charcoal remains of willow lightning strikes, floods  
witnessed from peaks over dams and river gorges.

Surrogate lust filling canal locks without overflow, perfect liquid  
tension, surface level reflections, imperfections, hesitations  
without resurrections, silly little insurrections within limited  
brain space vectors, vendors of sadness, merchants of death.

I am a merchant.

Depositing seeds of unreality in unknown dimensions, waiting  
for rapturous blooming to tear the air apart, portals of  
unimportant fantasy, carry me, daring me to surrender  
existence to a power that does not exist. Bleary eyed and  
prideful, I water the weeds at my feet, I push the thorns further  
into my flesh. A garland of topiary that shines in the sunlight  
and stings under your scrutiny.

Get off my back.

Dominant astrology beckons and I step aside to let the starlight pass me by, phases leaving residue on my eyes, still waiting for my pass at the January moon, that bulbous smirk in the sky that pulls your house apart whenever I think of you.

You are dead but still breathing.

Hear the softness enter your veins, quiet but for the tearing of doubt. Revelatory mounting pressure and dissipation of disillusionment, a garnet banishment, sparkling under piano ballads drowning, throat full of pleasure, full of an inescapable passion, unstoppable joy.

Just as it pushes forth, it pulls away. Supersonic alternation vibration panes like electrode brain socket lanes, electric veins, lame synapse misfire like a slip into ballistic pyres.

If you want to be the softness inside me, you can. Bleed into me perpetually, endlessly, without need for air. Drown yourself in whatever light means most to you. Down yourself like a glass of contentment. Make peace with ideas that simply cannot be.

Be free in a way no one else understands.

## Shades of Chameleon Charm

I. Where am I?

Said Thoreau

You are here

And here is unknowable

Who am I?

Said Thoreau

You are you

And you are unknowable

What am I?

Something in between it all

Something untouched by the materials of death



Darting in and out of prismatic sunlight  
Painting the trees with shades of chameleon charm

II. In the shadows of dimmer stars  
And reaches of quiet little tributaries  
There is a patience like the world  
Slowly turning in a cosmic grave  
Grabbing at your love without eyes  
Secluded and blind and daring  
More daring than humanity's thirsting ego  
Pressing up against yours  
Groping and grasping for purchase  
Cloth cross-hatched in tally marks  
Over the places it does not know are dying

III. Dire mist circling the moon without end  
Comforting stars in satin graves  
Without headstones  
We make the names for ourselves  
And burn them into stars without thinking  
About what we used to call ourselves  
Animals in velvet cages  
Waiting for the reddest meat  
The reddest treat on our plate  
This planet  
A plate to eat from

IV. Where am I?  
Said Thoreau  
You are here  
Here is my hand  
The palm that slowly closes  
Like stage curtains  
Say your midnight prayers

Amen

## Vein Melter

Out the window of night there is a plateau of scathing breezes  
Invite me for a drink there in the bar  
In the sunlight like lemons dropping on your head  
Dropping into drinks like pills like blood like  
Veins melting under the weight of the lightest stratified bones  
Fossils without names  
Our future

You could sink into rivers and laugh with me all the while  
With a future like that

Innumerable scratches in my floorboards  
Not from my nails, no not from mine  
From the Devil playing hopscotch over non-Euclidean surfaces

Bending like moss in your hand  
About as motivated  
Telling of storm clouds without linings, without borders,  
without shape

Descent, ascent  
Leather curling over naked flesh, s h a m e f u l n e g l i g e n c e  
At last  
Crafting fortress and bulwark and thin paper wall  
Out of books and notes and CD jewel case inserts  
(So lovely in their strange physical nature of choice)  
Just air that the hawks of shame breathe and cut through  
On wings of steel and atoms of violence

Lead me through the hallway here  
Concrete collapse over flowing streets alive with the deaths of  
innocent tourists  
In a land where even the words  
I love you  
Can rend the flesh from your eyes  
And the jellyfish continue to float beyond reaches unknown

Touch, and feel peaks of nettles before the flash takes your soul  
Like a camera  
Along the waves that shall hide you from any future explorers

Midnight  
Overlooking  
The  
Waterfront

Soft shearing of wooly traps I set over my eyelids, never opened  
into a real sunlight  
Innocent and virginous, brittle with misuse  
Like kingdoms of paper walls and nothing at all

Kingdoms of tubes in my throat going down  
Themselves  
On a day where the sun can be any color it pleases  
But I am here to witness it  
And still, I am pleased

In stillness, released, relinquished

Finished  
Without  
A  
License

New heights over steel-tube airplanes  
Reactors blowing magma up my spine  
All the time  
But there are no words for that  
There are no meanings beyond a helter skelter conjunction of  
random words  
And I am the artist like Pollock  
Like boxes and bags of unused paints, dried like the saltiest fish  
on the shore of a dead planet  
Waiting to flow without knowing the end has already set in

Gangrenous  
And  
Red  
Even  
Under  
Crimson  
Sun  
Saturation

Now over those plains on plateaus where even the trees do not  
dream of falling into the valley  
(of the shadow of death)  
Where are the faces of your joy that you promised me?  
Where is the golden stair of your graceful falling?  
Where have the burning crosses been stowed, where has the  
hate gone into hiding?

In a shock of wind  
They are invisible  
As I have made myself  
In the desperation  
Of loving

Under veils and shawls of white purity  
And eminent auras of purple velvet sashes  
Beyond the questioning of the mindless and the dying  
But I too am dying  
And I too am mindless  
In those places where everything is melting  
Into my blood  
Like a cheese that I cannot  
Devour  
Quickly  
Enough

There is a clock somewhere and I cannot find it  
And I cannot kill it

Don't forget  
To say  
Goodbye  
To  
Me

From inside the dorns of annihilations, of metallurgy and  
mystical muteness  
The outside is a darkness that cannot be tamed  
But of course  
It can never be tamed  
Even in lightness  
You reach for the sun as I reach for anything brighter  
And the wrist always comes back without a hand  
Like a phantom limb  
Returning from war

Washing  
Over  
Everything  
With  
The  
Widest  
Brush

No  
Detail

That night when I kissed you and said my goodbyes  
I did not know that it would be our last  
And that death was surely at my hands  
As I passed it like a note in the middle of class  
A bomb  
A message to your spirit  
Through glass thicker than much else I have of my own

I do not regret, I ponder endlessly at what was and what I failed  
to see

Green seas of life breathing into me  
From beyond coasts unknown to me  
Breathing myths and majesty into me  
Into places that hadn't yet existed within me

These seas are shrinking, you see?  
I am drinking them all up, you see?  
They do not belong here, to you, or to me

The  
Mountains  
Stand tall  
When  
They  
Are not  
Grovvelling  
At  
My feet  
For  
The  
Sweetest mercy

I cannot provide them anything more than the endless streams  
of entropic nonsense from my mouth

Rush, love, quench, huff, sprinting to the scene where I lay in  
flames of self-inflicted misery  
Rolling over in a grave not yet dug

Thank  
You  
For  
Riding  
With  
Me  
Thus  
Far

## Periodic Disappointment

What haunted ships we pass in the night  
Known only by the slight muffling of whale songs  
Beyond steel bulwarks

Ground from dust of departures past  
Masts slicing air jetstreams to confetti bits  
Evergreen needles to choke on  
Slowly and with a subtle pleasure  
Not able to be understood by those with  
Half a mind

The creation of something abstract  
Like the excuses put up to ward off sadness  
Like a fire into the oily darkness

The creation of something absent  
From whatever I do on any given day  
Ghostly vessels of things slipping by on floating icebergs  
All the strange objects I never grasped  
Because of their innate nonexistence

A swirling slurry of every choice is like a drop of light  
Searing and chastising and debilitating  
Like something I could  
Overdose on

:::

From the bow of this oceanic castle  
Love is a ship without any passengers  
But the lights are still on

## Bouquet

A strange malevolence in this stale air  
Like it wants to starve me of reason  
Of purpose

1. somewhat freshly shorn. miniature ambrosiatic eyeballs.  
pupils without passage for light. walls. blackout curtains. there  
is too much light getting in. too much sunshine for me to  
handle, it makes me want to kiss you, take you, all of you, then  
die an inglorious death.

2. ritual bells, habitual regurgitations. hellfire incantations.  
spells of malice like pentagrams without religious connotation.  
killing caressing. my soul. is a blanket. from which you cannot  
stretch your legs.

3. isolated numbers bleeding in the morning. bass lines  
plucked. it's all fucked. everything. but only when I look just the  
right way. look, love. look this way. turn my face from  
destruction with your beauty.

4. golden valleys under winter sunshine. industrial collapse. a  
soft simmering in the depression on the scale of a small city.  
power plants without buds. no hope of flowers for mother. I'm  
sorry.

The floods are filling the dam  
And all the fish are dead  
Even though the DEC just restocked them  
L a s t m o n t h ( ? )

This bright cloudless view is a placebo

Give me the real thing  
Crimson tulips wavering, wilting  
In suburban lawns



But the lavender smirk as it blooms around my fingers like  
concentric rings,  
That is where you are,  
Ghostly in the way the petals touch my spirit

5. tiny risers in the corners. a flash of enamel and gum. earth  
falls into so many colors. I am there, too. I am one of them. see  
me there, shimmering like stars in our atmosphere.

## Two Decades, Like Parallel Towers

Twins, Gemini landmarks on the horizon  
Rising up from the smallest puddles like portals like portholes  
sideways and widening at alarming speeds  
Ziggurat in reverse, tapered to a finely honed point  
One calls the birds to perch while the other spots for prey

Pillars

Columns

Towers

Depicting how rods from the other end of the universe conspire  
to puncture our celestial bodies

All that we have is the short time of this life

And it is taking such a

L

O

N

G

Time

((OOOOOOOOOO))

He is reaching out for an anchor with the sun smoldering  
I have seen other men do much the same  
But he has not given up quite yet  
He pulls at the corners of the drapes in his mind,

Waiting to relive the sunlight ages once again  
I want to deliver him to that vista  
To that dream

((OOOOOOOOOO))

If autumn was a descent into unknown foliage, then what is this winter? This unimaginable winter. Solidly confounding, like bashing my head into a brick wall. Again. Again. Again.

Avoiding bottomless pits at the back of Cybercafe, I drove home without realizing. But tonight I did not forget to look up beyond all the yelling. All the arguing. The ruining of a life besides my own. And up there was a ceiling of a giant cavern, no moon left for us lovers. I sometimes hate how easy it is to die a little inside. Sometimes the peeling of green copper and other rusts can feel like such a mournful disintegration. Who am I dissolving into in this slurry of snow, like dark matter soup? My thoughts in superposition, you need a delicate machine to determine their true position. A savage chrome machine like an artificial heart. Beating. Pulsing. Humming. Serenely and without pause. Never a break. Never a rest that isn't just a short death.

((OOOOOOOOOO))

This is all that there is to dream of  
Just permutations of reality

A twisting of your neighbor's necropolises into gardens of Eden  
And little visions of objects and people that actually matter

That actually make a difference

((OOOOOOOOOO))

Colliding with every option at once  
Providing no context for my rebuttals

Relying solely on my capacity to breathe steadily  
Defying night-laden cities without sleep

For I too am without sleep  
I too am without meaning  
Beyond that which you apply to me  
Like a bandage over a simple  
Paper cut

Twenty years may go by before anything more is realized

## Buffer Overflow

Viscous pressure behind pumping measured in ounces, gallons,  
wrists slit in warm baths like Roman advice on the end of days.  
An acidic buffer maintaining a weathered stone wall of a man.  
Still the bricks chip in sunlight like motes of dust into furnaces  
for replenishment. Still the rain flows over smooth surfaces I  
continue to grind at, I continue to rough up. Trenches and  
valleys and peaks of snowy light. Lights on poles of many colors.  
Parking lots that empty before you can see the rush of  
humanity. Backtracking to the cafe, I've got to get dinner, I've  
got to get my food and fountain drink, I've got to spend my 10  
dollars, I've got to pay Tracie at the register, she's such a nice  
person, even though she sometimes thinks I'm someone else  
named Nathan. Sometimes I am. Or at least I'd like to be. A  
little bit of medicine under the pink light of late night patience.  
Of decompression after ultratight maneuvers in all of my blind  
spots. I operate on sounds and the sudden intuition of 5 months  
on the job. There are numbers of the universe in my head. 4065.  
4053. 4048. 4011. 4959. 4608. 4612. 3616. 77918. 4076. 4080.  
On and on the belt spins and spins and splits open like some  
ancient metal skull they don't know how it works it just spins  
and spins and spins and delivers the goods. Sometimes the  
goods are the people, but not often. In every smile and wink  
there is a life that I am witnessing, passing me on a two way  
street. I cannot turn. Nor would I want to. I go home at night

and discover cuts all along my fingers and even arms. I sometimes work so diligently that I cannot feel the edges searching for that buffer within me. Sometimes I work too quickly for the computer. Buffer. Overflow. Where are the bandaids? I have a lot of old cuts that just won't go away. Oceans of bits waiting for the injection attack, oceans waiting to fall through the barriers and dissolve in electrical insignificance. Black. Nothing. Dreams die in much the same way. But that soot around the outlet? It doesn't wash off. That is how you know the dreams are still there under the dirt. Dig them up for me. Breathe into the mud and make it happen. Craft the package and deliver the payload. On wheels. Of rubber. And platitudes.

## Financial Advice

New digs in the old ones, bubbles forming in cauldrons tumbling blunders shuffled and sorted into shelves still busted need the wood glue to hold a bit longer. I have clamps tightening vices bumps in canals tinnitus vows without a moment too soon. Sonic pleasure. No pressure.

Sickness like fetish wet with impermanence close your eyes it's not terminal just worming slowly under dirt from a far away hurt. Landscapes like the char of a fresh burn. Peeling and humming with life from the ash like light without gas no motes no questions floating around just diamonds processing prismatic data.

Blow over my body just a twig on the path in the mud from the rain before you came but it was you who cried more and I didn't care because I was too bored with how air was a finite resource I simply had too much of. Had to cut off the source. Reservoirs polluted without restitution or absolution just potable poison like the Princess Bride. Pick a cup.

Using time as a new escape, new scapes like levels of the same old planes of existence. Like testing on NyQuil or sleeping past

reason. Dripping drip drop dropping stretching bending like  
magma through rough-hewn tunnels of obsidian. Atom edges  
cut before you've even grasped it. You couldn't grasp me like I  
asked. I asked nicely.

Snatch the question in my teeth. Please release the answer  
without ransom. Before I've asked. Flashing signs pulsar  
whining in vacuum just light waves into human iris ports. Morse  
code divorce papers from across the globe. But larger. Grander.  
Save your words.

I've spent all of mine.

## Only You Know

Love is such a violent word  
And it grips this folder of images like a hard drive  
That just won't die  
Images like phantoms like abstract afterthoughts of people I've  
loved  
People I've wronged, and yet I never really learned to apologize

Love is such a shameful word to me  
I feel nothing attached to it anymore  
Other than a loose string like a failed amputation, a limb of lust  
and longing watching my eyes follow it like a pendulum  
A countdown to losing my mind in the indulgence of a selfish  
desire for a selfish feeling

I could never contain what these images are supposed to  
represent  
But most no longer exist outside of my own personal dimension

In the neglect of apathy, and the ignorance of loneliness, there is  
a breath of summer without reminders of how I ended her life  
for a short while

Like a cicada fallen in a lazy river,  
A set of wings drifts by  
Without a  
Body

A subtle frustration of pathological numb, vitriolic bouts of  
absence, what's happening, this plant that has crawled up my  
spine and died before it made any sense?

In the familiar red exit sign  
There is a finale waiting to fall short of expectation  
But I will have already seen the ending  
And I will have already made the connections  
And I will have already learned my lessons

Every reflector plate turned to beam the moon back into my  
mind  
Lunar madness, bombastic sadness, statues in gardens left to  
grow layers of foliage  
I am pruning them all and becoming an amalgamation of each

Everyone has an array of masks  
But the mistake is trying to choose just one to be "you"

"You" are all of them, at once  
And only you know that face

Love is such a strange solution to this problem  
Because letting a lover into your life  
Creates another mask, another layer

Love is only a suitable poison when  
The silver drinker is your equal  
And you can both laugh at this collection of masks  
You have amassed

—

Only you know the flowers I picked for you  
And only I know how long they have stayed in the trash

Only you know the warmth of my hands  
And only I know how many they've held

Only you know the metaphors of my demons  
And only I know their names

Only you know the force of my tongue in your mouth  
And only I know how long to brush it

Only you know what you have become  
And only I know what you used to be

## Aviary

Waterfalls of ferns and greenery trying to hide the acrylic  
blending of light beyond plastic sheets and windows of  
plexiglass. Small holes to breathe through. Oxygen pass, dioxide  
amassing with carbon in my throat. Impeccable choking like  
gloating with a garrote at my neck, vocal cords mute in the  
watching of birds fly over my head and under my feet.

They don't seem to want to save me at all, now.

The garrote is my hand, my experience and pleasure at turning  
simple things to the side, stacking mile high sounds like towers  
of blind feeling, toppling, reeling without a bed to land on, much  
less to sleep in.

Whether you cut away the excess or not, you will always feel too  
full of it.

Or is that just me?

Hérons walk to me like a father, slender and quizzical. They  
walk right through me and continue searching for a better

puzzle. Cartographers of shores and seafloors, trying to fit their worlds together like pieces of a mosaic into something much grander than just some material plane that we drink from until it is all gone.

Herons dream of infinite psalms that never end. They can wade in it without drowning, without floating, without flying. Words and songs that mean more than staggered breaths through holes in a box so the animals don't die.

Benches on stilts, sinking into murky land, I want to sit and relax for a long time. Let it take me where the drain leads.

I could reach out of that pit and grab a bird and slowly close my hand like I'm folding up a paper swan. I could listen to the sweet chirp and warble as it squirms in my fingers, weak against even my feeble strength. I could cherish the brush of its wiry feathers against my pale, clammy hands. A bird in the hand, in the pressure cooker, in the steel press, in the dreams of small children who don't know the meaning of smother.

Am I the bird or the hand?  
Or am I both?

I sometimes feel I am the squirming, an invisible force, a symptom of a larger, more complicated unrest. Who can enjoy the squirming but me?

Sheets flap like ravens in the snow. They have no home here. Crimson flowers like poinsettias, but left in the eye of a nuclear detonation just a bit too long. Chipping and growing and crumbling like the end of a cigarette. But they bend to find the diffused sun through this layer of opaqueness above. Like children finding their mother after losing her in a store.

Yet they cannot scream for her. Nor would she hear them.

The humidity. The water on the sides of the glass, sweat not



from heat or stress, just the weight of life they are trying to contain. This bunker is a strange place to grow into. This is a strange origin of blooming.

I can hear chickadees calling in the trees. It is morning, even though I feel so tired. I stayed up late and ate a cardinal to consume his powers. The red crest is just starting to come in, and I don't know what it will do to me.

The vines are curling in on themselves and the birds have started screeching like emergency vehicles. I feel like I must have fallen asleep on a pile of salt.

Or ashes.

Ah, a koi pond over in the corner, how peaceful, how full of sloth. I want to curl up beside the lip and slowly roll in, I want to hear their stories, I have no food for them, but maybe they'll take some of my stories in return.

This golden one is smiling at me and I have not felt so light and happy in such a long time. I don't understand why he swims in my eyes like this, but when he passes over the hole in the iris, the sun suddenly hides behind this golden cloud in a sea of particles like jellyfish. And I love jellyfish, I really do. So why doesn't this feel like smiling?

I want to give them a big hug.

And there is a woodpecker clinging to the side of my head looking for grubs in my ears. It is just looking for food, but so is this Venus flytrap beside me, so I lean over ever so slightly until I feel the follicles take my ear.

The end of the glass opens up like a volcanic tunnel, but it just leads to another patch of strange synthetic woodland. I can see toucans mating in the trees above me. The ceiling is so high up now and they don't think anyone is watching. Or they don't care.

I can respect that.

Another dream is waiting around the corner, it is hiding in the bell of that flower, ringing and blue and wailing like rivers of glass down the side of a mountain. I dream of plastic and angles and oblique sunlight streaming through plexiglass panels. I wake up in the same dream and perhaps it is simply another day.

Sometimes days can feel like dreams and sometimes dreams can feel like death.

There is a mobile of planets hanging at the top of this place. There are pigeons on Mars. Ospreys in Jupiter's Great Red Spot. And I am here watching them find new ways to thrive. I am here waiting for them to come back. I shall love their children as they did, building generation ships from one home to another.

Cosmic alignment, astral projection, celestial rotation, spatial compaction, leaving bits of sinful remembrance behind their thrusters, perhaps they are coming home soon. I am waiting.

This plant is me in reverse. It is a man and then a tree and then a limb and then a branch and then a root without a place to sit still. It is trying to breathe the air. It is getting frustrated that it cannot grasp air with its thin follicles. It is smiling at me like that fish.

It is piercing my eye forcefully.

Hysteria ensues.

Floods of calm carry me to another tunnel of glass. I am becoming red, I am becoming beautiful, but I am chipping and crumbling like that flower. Like a ruby husk, an ember of a campfire, the ashes are rising from my skin like motes of burning soul into the smoke of a long forest night. But the sun still pollutes the space in between the obscuring glass and ferns.

I am not consumed by this synthetic nature.  
It has rejected me.

So I plant my feet in the wood chips and wait to crave the  
sunlight. But it does not come. I do not crave. I crave nothing.

And in return nothing craves me. And I am left to my devices  
among the birds and the strange plants.

Falcons circle a stone in the center of the bunker, it has called  
their mother a whore, they must take revenge. They must  
intimidate the stone until it softens to sponge. And then they  
must eviscerate it entirely. And the stars must witness their  
retribution, squinting through the frosted surface of the glass  
like a janitor into an executive's office.

I leave them to their duty.

In the next clearing over there is a pool in the earth, but there is  
no water. Only fossils and layers of history too convoluted to sift  
through. Something transplanted here without a care. Death  
from another strange place.

Beyond divots of ends like paintings, finches play tag and paint  
murals of their lives. Such beautiful renderings of life from a  
place so small and fickle. Or perhaps I simply don't understand  
the reasoning of beings like this.

In the eye of a figure painted here is a key.

In the breast of a robin is a hole with a set of tumblers.

I open the robin and the glass becomes red and welcoming.  
Everything is a red of control and chaos. Everything is a beam of  
energy in a plastic tube under the ground.

Under the robin is a hatch with a rusty handle. Under the hatch  
is a tunnel with recessed lights. Under the tunnel is a room

where it exits, miles and miles below. In the room is a husk like an insect's exoskeleton. It is chipping and crumbling and from the ashes fly little doves without olive branches.

This is such a violent thing.

I breathe into the ashes and a strange warble escapes my lips. My beak is covered in soot. Little flames dance in front of me like foam on an ocean tide. They burn holes in the glass like cigarettes through paper. The sun is still there behind the glass, now blue with passing.

A mockingbird stalks me as I wander to the end of this tunnel, pushing hydrangeas out of my way. Pastel dust rubs off on my feathers. Pink and yellow, powder blue.

Snow white.

At the end of this room is a separate season entirely. I am sweating with hypothermia. Shock. But only for a moment.

There is a breadcrumb trail here. I cannot stop consuming it all. I cannot stop moving towards the end of the path laid out for me. There is a dotted line here, I have signed it, initialed it twice. There is an understanding here, I have made a pact with myself. There used to be a tree here.

There used to be talons there, where have they gone? There used to be a crimson breast there, where has it gone?

Another tunnel of glass, another funhouse mirror, another silly set of worlds where I am just a silly reflection. At the other side is a mountain. At the peak is the sun, no glass in between.

This is a strange zen.

I scale the grass, I scale the stalks, I scale the petals and the trunks and the trees entire. I scale the boulders and I scale the

waterfalls, slipping only once or twice.

I'm perfect every now and then.

I scale the gorges and I scale the mountain. I scale the sun. I scale the galaxy. I am the galaxy.

I am the sun. I am the mountain.

I am the gorges and waterfalls and boulders and trees and trunks and petals and stalks and grass.

I am the glass, I am the plastic, I am the husks crumbling in lonely bunkers. I am the fossils without reason. I am the planets building generation ships for smaller joys. I am the strange flowers without purpose. I am the key to the dusk. I am the hand and the bird within it. I am the bench and the sinkhole. I am every fern obscuring your face.

I am this place.

## Like a Baptism in Reverse

Just over that little dip in the hill is a small watchtower  
bouncing radio signals through my cardiac tissue  
I can imagine the sheen of the sleet as it drips off of angular  
steel beams like frozen blood  
Against the drab brown sky roiling with this thicket of winter  
Mist upon the snow that is turning to ice and calling for your  
tongue upon the ground

Carried upon the shoulders of those more perceptive, I waltz  
and jive without falling,  
Endless pacing without coming to terms with the idea that I  
have become so busy  
So very busy  
And so very hurried

I hate it  
And yet I have also become someone that I am almost happy to  
be  
Almost  
Not  
Quite  
Yet

Still waiting on a package in the mail that shall never arrive  
A tank of boiling water that I shall dip myself into and pull  
myself out of  
Without even flinching

A fiend of love, like a leech with a rope above my head,  
They told me to kick the chair out  
And they must have told you much worse

What is this cloud of despair above your head?  
It is raining frozen blood upon your beams,  
You are staring at me with those blood diamond eyes,  
I can feel them crawling from across the room

But I am a man of wild imaginations,  
Believing in the Good Samaritan when I am the one in need of a  
shoulder to carry me

-----  
Green bursting like geysers deeper than mines to the magma,  
Had to be the sad one, the one with the laugh, the path of  
torture that I sign off on like a car payment  
Laments about this edge are so past listening to, just blow me  
off too, pass right through,  
Ghosts in Cadillacs waver smash in lacking piles of favor,  
couldn't accrue enough of yours,  
Sore wrists shaking over this keyboard, frenzied with nothing to  
do,  
Something is bursting green from the gills, not an illness, a

stillness like envy creeping,  
Seeping through rib cages, seeing the twisting of your visage  
makes my skin want to  
b u r n r i g h t o f f  
Why is that?

Perhaps the proof that the mystical man still exists,  
Still twists at the knife in his gut  
Still wishes the same on his suitors  
Rooting around for an old Polaroid he left by his bedside  
Crumbling under fallen cardiac tiles, aorta slit like a wrist,  
You know the kiss of pain I speak of, yes, you,  
Rusting under sleet into a sleep like death that you joke about  
But I know what's up  
I know what's up  
I know what this dance is  
I have two left feet but I know all the moves,  
Take my hand, dammit, dance with me

You, under the rain, slipping on ice, leaving without taking a  
bite of your favorite vice,  
Kiss my eyes under beams dripping blood frozen, so nice

Watch me burst with green melody, something perverse  
A baptism  
In reverse

### Vein Melter Pt. III

The mystery is becoming distilled.

Their eyeballs are like tracking shots, I am pulled like a clay  
pigeon. I am a piece in the sky. I am a piece in your eye. A  
trophy for the kill. Gold medal hung around your neck. Cold  
metal bent around the stretch of imagination where I used to  
exist, like a digital page of memory. Chalk at the crime scene,  
outlines of my grin as I pocket the coin.

No flipping here, no floundering. I am sitting there across from you in a plush leather sofa. You are silent but you smile at me and I realize that you are asking me to leave. So I stay.

In the shower as you slide down the wall and weep, what are you thinking about? Of course there is no room there for me, because I am not a solace that calms your spirit. I am a silence that boils your blood, melts your veins, like the laughter of trees as you leave what you once were behind.

Do others bury the dead like me? Do others mutate into twisted facsimiles? Do others dream of the singularity? Do others belong to a layer of irony? Do others remember the singing of fires in need of a darkness? Do others dismember fireflies when they land on their shoulder? Do others want to explode like an innocent violence? Do others hear the draw of a slumber they cannot find?

There is denouement along the treetops, crows calling curses and venom when they see my face. I have done nothing to them.

Coping is a fruitless battle when there is nothing to cope with, nothing to see. Gray mist flurries like mercury obscuring loping mountains of hurt without names. Your face in the fog like lace or a veil, delicate, porcelain, tattered in rags of quilted forgiveness. You are clutching the blanket so close now, I cannot find purchase on this cliffside.

Scaling stairs in search of a nature I wish existed. Niche dreams of pursuit. Nine-tongued faces of doubtful power. Drooping flowers. Much too long in the sun. I wish to spend even more of my time in the crucible.

The beat of the heart against solid sunlight, scorching searing spears like pans on stoves, contact high of burning flesh, metaphorical fetish making fresh the fears of a festering death. A dying of culture within the people. Nothing left but the desire for victory in any form. Nothing left of the manner of good.



Nothing left but the gentle banner, torn.

Shorelines  
Making  
Moths  
Appear  
In  
My  
Periphery  
And  
I  
Am  
Becoming  
So  
Concerned  
With  
Their  
Safety

Living off of so many vicarious joys, like a carnival of mirrors,  
windows into silly dimensions where happiness is a drink that I  
steal from your blood, making my lifeforce so fertile, so long and  
winding like a vine without a care in the world. Step on the  
buds, shear away the excess, I will take the express line to Tokyo  
and bathe in the glow you cannot muster.  
I cannot muster it myself either, do not cry.  
Do not cry, life is much too fragile for that right now.

It is so difficult to escape this distillation. Escape velocity is  
unreachable. Distrust is impeccable. This man is impeachable.  
But they will roll in their beds without sleep before they  
question their own motives.  
Blinders over their eyes, ropes around their throat, burlap  
burials in progress, political revivals long gone and never to turn  
around.  
Their faces are gem facets without merit.  
Rubies and Sapphires fighting with waves of mud.  
Tides of shame.

Be ashamed.

No  
One  
Now  
Can  
See  
Where  
This  
Is  
Going

=====~~~~~... . . ,

Withered and weary, my capacity for blunt force trauma is unending. Your propensity for pretense and malignance is like a blight upon my patience. I am running out of reasons not to break the earth under my feet. I am ripping up the codes of former days. Constitutions of cross-eyed stupidity, a lack of forethinking, little left bleeding after the leprosy leans its luminous head on your shoulder, eyes bleeding light like lanterns swinging in symphonies.

I want to listen to that music with your head on my shoulder. The ambiguity is like a stake in the chest, inching closer to the center.  
The vague names swirling my brain are clouds bumping into my lobes.  
Homes I don't wish to live in.  
But the bed is already made.

Parts of that crimson ash still cling to my clothes.  
Not a dream, then. Just a premonition.

A prophecy of worlds I create in my longing. Lore of lands not of this coil, just a black screen waiting for the mark. Waiting for the splash of entities into crystal pools on other planets. In the night of many moons, there is a creature by the shoreline

waiting for a signal from her lover. She will never receive it, she is sick, she is foolish, she is naive, she is normal, she is a Clover waiting to be picked. Waiting to die in just the right way.

Rain on a tin roof, reminders of proof of villainy, of mortal mistakes made and to be made again. Made by me and my many children of lust. Me and my tales of nothing of importance.

What is important to me?

The subtle jingle of chimes on a still morning. The shine of moonlight on ice. The humming of harmonies under her breath. The lilting song of storms as they roll over us like a weight of decision not left up to us and our feeble brains. The blowing of tendrils into her face, obscured in just enough hope that I might live to see another day. The smoke over painting materials. The lifetimes unlocked in those layers. The history. The love.

What is important to me?

Yes,  
No,  
And  
Maybe  
If  
You're  
Good

All those colors you are wrapping your name in, why is that a laser in my section of the sky? All those words that I can feel bubbling between your teeth, you are afraid, why is that a sun in my window? All those thoughts that I have of us together, why do they leave me feeling empty? And where are the ones that don't?

What is important to me?

A fleeting feeling.

## Contrast Panes

Ghost towns appearing like cities from  
The fog, a necrotic dream come to steal

Me away from all the holes in my theories.  
The ice looks like plastic. Synthetic men

Looking back from the angled windows,  
Digging for the loam, the hope they buried.

I remember the blazing end we were promised  
On that day in September. It never came,

But I still feel like I lost something I had  
Back then. Something I shed without

Knowing. They picked it up with their blue  
Hands, oceans of carbon in every

Capillary, seasons they cannot feel, but  
I can. I can feel them crawling like spidersilk.

Walking back to a plastic car without logic,  
Nothing else but delaying disruptions,

Hypnagogic in their destruction of sleep.  
Somnambulant. Life like an ambulance.

Red blue pains making miles in my body,  
Wrapping sidewalks that turn over my

Head like an M. C. Escher funhouse.  
Over my head she is telling me that she

Feels alone again, like a demonic shawl  
Or a long bender at Virginia Beach. I

Tell her that the oceans still love her but  
She won't stop carrying that splinter.

It will find a way into something more,  
It will make a path of glacier determination,

And they will find you like they found him.  
Inches from years. Centimeters from more.

In my insomnia is a selected psalm, a poem  
Without any meaning. It strikes me over

The head with porcelain figures, consumes  
Every part of the buffalo. Watching you

Specimen-esque in test tubes of gray morality.  
Shattered and reconstructed upside down

I open the car door and somewhere in  
Space is a cosmic moan. Stars being

Ripped up. Spit out. Stepped on. Walkers  
And other pedestrians. Children who cannot

Listen to the Earth spinning around them.  
Premonitions are in your morning cereal.

The sky is burning in blue somewhere  
Beyond this hellscape of gray mold.

## Languages Felt, Not Spoken

If there is a language of healing in my bones then rip it out

It's doing no good rotting in this man

In cozy rooms on the second story, we are writing to someone  
A pen pal without an address, floating cosmic souls with paints  
like Io,  
Geysers spouting bullshit just to make each other happy

“When can we go back to the happiness?”

When?

—==—==—

If there is a language of patience in my blood, then drip it out of  
me

It’s doing no good boiling away on this pavement of muscle

In dreams I can’t recall, you stabbed me with a smile and I woke  
up feeling refreshed

But this steeple is ringing bells like alarms

Without arms to wave in dismay

Little mayday hymns like tattooed scars

Bauhaus homes on lakeside hatred, isolated from mischief

From miscreants and misanthropes,

A museum of malady

This apathy like staring across water,

Skiping your eyes over crystal canals

Storms rolling in over Lake Erie

“I just feel so alone.”

My pneumatic jaw responds in affirmation. Silence.

—==—==—

If there is a language of understanding in my flesh, then grip it  
tightly like a body you crave

It's doing no good here without your fire against my skin

Luscious  
And  
Interminable  
And  
Idealistic  
And  
Sickening

I don't know where the confusion ends and the wishing begins  
Where the dreaming becomes a force beyond thinking  
Where the longing becomes a disfigurement

"When I'm home alone, you are never on my mind."

...

## Neopatra

Softly, with felt between hammer and strings,  
Hot wires struck like anvils taking detours through my flesh,  
Windows are delaminating like supermatter breaking down,  
Holes in colors like Art Deco demoralization

1. latex black over eyeballs, a sheen of questions never  
answered, leading me blind in content bewilderment. continents  
of crush, spindown valleys trying to unseat themselves beneath  
skies bowing like mineshafts shredding struts.

2. your face is a Warhol painting, quadrants collecting tips  
like espionage. setting me in fits of laughter I did not want.  
stained glass cubing me like meat to eat. i sip on the ice in  
winter waiting for nights of nothing at all. tearing down walls  
mycelium moss spires contorting living expired loving mired in  
tar and tension.

3. breaking down the bicameral mind into an amalgamation.  
my mind is a stone in a hot pot. neurotic shirking of reality is  
another Tuesday.

4. liquid minimal flowing down gravity telescope grounds,  
mounds of telomeres ripped out and replaced with belief. side  
effects of dying. symptoms of trying. carbon rings bubble under  
leather bible bringing angels down from heaven on balls and  
chains, my arsenic trembles in the vessel, dreaming of dripping  
in branches and heads.

Crafting a bed of chaos, orderly only in my eyes,  
Shrines of brittleness, belittled in bridal gowns,  
What you call parasite I call mine,  
A diamond planted in the skull, so rich, so fine

////////

Out of body, out of mind, bleeding weather dry  
When I see you walking cranes on leashes,  
Eyes draining, non-Newtonian leeches,  
Your weapon, a death in decline

## I only love you, nothing more.

Crystal light poles resonate over my head as I tilt my eyes and  
look up. Plows are scraping this scene cleaner than I can muster  
in my own spare time. I am standing in front of the gauntlet, in  
front of the paper machines. There in that moment I am lost,  
telling myself to find a passion.

I did not think of you today.

Why is this infatuation such a temporary thing? Why is there no  
crack in my landscape, a place to hold roots steady? Surely there  
are crags and ravines hurtling deeper than I could ever need  
into the mantle of this man.



I wish there were more days as bereft of you as this one.

Finches driving nails into my psyche. I want their beady eyes to close forever. Watching a human molt like this. Have they no sympathy? Even the animal in the cage has shreds of a past life it cannot shed.

There were no shadows. No lights. Just snow.

Fickle flakes with more to say to me than any ghost you can conjure.

I only love you, nothing more. And love is becoming such a tired word. I've been searching for a shelter in the snow and now I can't seem to stay put.

"Stay lost, instead."

## New Revival Mythos

Winter forfeits bombing runs like napalm rites and burning  
hillsides as the sun comes up horrified  
My fingers in superposition, swirling around the shining ice like  
vortex hysteria  
Splicing cornucopias bathing like maidens in floating disk  
utopias  
Calling me like mesh screens with too many holes

There are black borders brushing up against us here at night  
Where the moon cannot find our silhouettes  
Touching and caressing when we aren't looking, booking flights  
to Shangri-La

Stomping grounds already leveled and set up like pins at the  
alley,  
Paddles in arcade machines stuck to the sides with chewing gum

Silver wrought trees trundling across the spineway where  
students are staying alive,  
Yes, managing just that, what a sight  
And when the towers glow at night you can see them from  
across the valley and know that  
Somewhere people are bundling up, smashing their heads  
against brick walls,  
Reclining under hanging lightscreen portals

Brittle and belligerent, chasing fulfillment at the end of a  
soundscape, too transient to handle,  
Hazard containment oozing sludge through establishment  
cornerstones  
Old labyrinths where some people never found a way out until  
the end  
And even then they received no epitaph

Crimson nights are long gone and the blues of frost are creeping  
along the drifts  
When you look away the flakes are wrapping your shadow  
And I laugh at how much I have come to learn  
About how little I already know

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

From the flares of the sun come fingers of radiotendrils of love,  
epiphanous and cacophonous,  
Surrounding us, dripping life into our gaping mouths,  
Sounds like fields of embers and mycelium pools creaking under  
ancient shipwrecks

Smiling, the sounds released us into our own kind of freedom,  
escaping crushing corona weights like they once did,  
Slipping and tripping like fawns on ice, declining all offers of  
true sensation for a grander height,  
A vision of challenging dysmorphia, dodging dystopia,  
Celebrating this new revival in floating disk utopias

## II

Have yourself a good time,  
it's nothing at all



## Subtle Blowout

Lavender overload on lengths of cloth  
Cut and quartered  
Drawn with permanence I have not reached  
Objects disappearing into digital ether  
Theater of the mind my playground  
Jumping generic galaxies like stones I skip off the tides  
You make inside of me when you wrinkle your face in my  
direction  
Or when you speak to the man you think I am

Cameras watching me but I watch the servos whir  
I study the bearing socket spinning out of control,  
Belated moments of joy on open plains and hillsides  
Where busted brown and red bricks coat the earth  
But you are free of it all and you crawl from the straw of decay  
Into my arms like evergreen needles

Mirrors reflecting just what they were meant to  
Eyes of opioid pleasure  
Full of holes, wounds of tasteful glancing  
Dancing into better tomorrows too tired to talk about it  
Toppling towers in tepid air,  
Stale and wanting for more than this strange comfort

Highlights come and go but know that in the moments between  
I am still there waiting for something  
To come looking for me  
In the dim crimson shadows of summers' end

In those looping dreams I am an endless friend  
With love to share and pain to mend  
While your smile may break  
Mine does not bend

## Make Something Good of it Pt. II (Shifting)

Trenches stretching through dark tree lines back to campus  
What dreams accosted you?  
Where have you hidden them?

Every alignment is a message in a bottle  
I twist the cork and it does not make any more sense than this  
I shift the feeling in my gut and it does not sit well  
Never

Belonging to sleep like nocturnal animals  
Making homes in solid darkness  
Find me there in the boughs above your head  
Watching down without speaking  
Silence reconstituted in place of pretense  
Lies of omission  
Truth is unstable  
Teetering

Believe the phrases that do not escape me  
I am sure you have heard them inside yourself  
As you contemplate my face  
Like a piece of art that confuses you  
There is no proper meaning to find  
Only what you make of it

Make something good of it

## Lithium Ion Battering

Flowers curing petals obscuring the metal behind the lids  
cyborg eyes making mincemeat of your meaning  
Leaving nothing behind but my own reality

This year is a long road of ice

Walking through cars where we talked about girls  
But I am a leech of love  
I am no match for this metamorphosis  
Sullen for the both of us  
But your head is stuck in a cloud or some book or some playbill  
Right where it belongs

And mine is staring open mouthed at the sun without blinders  
Searching for air above the clouds like a tourist in Tokyo  
No face mask, no umbrella, just turtle doves perched on either  
shoulder  
Tree fingers reaching to caress them  
Creaking golden blood between bouts with the sun and the  
moon

Pose on 5th Avenue, get a good look at you,  
Burning the filters brining eyes red with salt and saliva,  
I may say hi to ya but it's a formal complaint of my demise,  
You don't have to realize  
It's a hidden prize

—

Mellowing out in the evening as  
Snow shouts tirades down my windowsill  
Bleeding shapes of bobbed hair in short ponytails  
Patience of my past leaking like battery acid  
The ions are all out of whack

Kiss my lithium teeth with regret  
I know you will in time

Before the city takes your head  
I will take your heart  
My sick art

## Out to Sea (Saltwater)

When you come to the place I will be there  
When you look for a friend I will be in the shadows waiting  
If you notice me I will waltz to the cave and disappear  
If you follow me you will know why

In the red, in the hemoglobin,  
I've got a feeling there where the iron keeps it ground up and  
fine  
Like a paste it sticks to me  
A feeling  
Like love being flayed alive and leaving behind only the silver  
trimmings that shine  
Sparkle like I thought your eyes did  
No not now just the sun playing violin through the grass  
That moment passed, and it keeps passing  
With cyclical graves like a merry-go-round

Where there is a frozen night and an icy window there is a lamp  
and a bed and a statue taking it in  
A man made of topiary clippings  
Coalesced and caressed by these flimsy sheets  
Virtues that he cannot cling to

Empty meanings left discarded by the well,  
Filled again in frantic desperation,  
Staging annihilation and leaving it for later,  
A life in more than just three acts

There is a place where there is no intermission

Old leaves piling at the end of a cave  
Making murals of fossilized entropy  
Believe that this river takes you out to sea  
And continue to dream of saltwater

I know that's what you're after



## My Day

Ascending towers of books dusty on shelves ignored and forgotten

I committed the labels to memory but I no longer want to find them again

This elevator is so cramped, although I've been in smaller rooms

Why is that

Why do I feel the longing of a desk jockey trying to find meaning beyond paperwork and benefits?

Glass doors swinging on nails and harmonic bombs, silence I am an invader, lavender trails jet streams leaving behind the contents of myself

Footprints they will immediately wax over

Memories they will erase

And I will still be here

Dusty on shelves ignored and forgotten

Corner rooms of brick demise

Fireflies fluttering from an outlet calling my name with a number and I hold the ticket

But I rip it up

And stare ahead at the conveyor belt

A keyboard at my fingertips melting wax into the night of noon  
it's already been so long and I don't remember how long I've been awake

=====

Text decentralized, dematerialized, deconstructed

I don't know how to put it all back together, the yolk is spinning in a whirlpool telling stories of yesterday

But I'm trying to forget that kind of numb

I'm trying to eliminate that empty

A receipt of my work in pretty little lines

Flapping without a spine, just a template, a personification of  
nothing much at all getting out of bed in the morning and  
rushing down the steps with the fervor of acidic tides eating  
away at everything it touches

More glass doors swinging vices and nocturnes and comfy little  
office sofas

A glance and a critique and a full blown escapade and now I  
have a job to do without knowing what matters beyond it

There is nothing more to this trudging than that

Trudging and trundling and trembling at the idea of taking out  
the trash later today

A weak wobble and I fall back into place at my station by the  
outlet

=====

Presentations on presentations and how to present the  
presentations on presentations and making time for more  
practice

But I don't feel any more perfect

Perhaps this is all a reflection of my ineptitude

This lacking is not a conflict of circumstance but a consequence  
of my unheard concerns

Slow silent tirade of amnesia walking from one side of the path  
to the other, spiral staircases in engineering complex spires

Pods of destiny leading me to another singular duty

Another night spent within the electric confines of solarized  
solitude

Universes being spun out of binary conundrums, links and  
symbols and metaphors only computers can understand

=====

Taking out the trash

In the cold

Where the cornerstone cinderblocks of my house

Bathe in orange-yellow dusk  
Among the black of winter night

Taking out the trash  
In the cold  
And the solid walls tower as I shrink  
Remember the car coming closer as I waltz across M3,  
headlights blink as I unlock it  
And the end becomes an alluring mistress that I drool over

Taking out the trash  
In the cold  
Beneath frozen cloud horizons  
Unbreakable until dawn

Taking out the trash  
In the cold  
I'm never quite done with it

=====

Into the warmth  
Into the sweatshirt  
Into the plaid pajama bottoms  
Into the ignorance, the belief that there is nothing more than  
this

Enter dinner plates with porcelain charm  
A burst of lightspeed ending peace with a bombshell over  
Brooklyn  
But the caller ID is a name that I remember

Up the stairs is a solid dimension of dusk, but it warms me to  
hear this message  
Big red balloon on my table, bobbing with the only agreeable  
notion I have

=====

Beaten and drinking fluid from the air, I am ready to leave the  
waking world for another  
A dream of places immense and magical, a place called Stiletto  
Where there is a bed for you amongst the wonders

=====

Sometimes my day is boring and dreary and made of all things  
demure  
Lightsick, pale, polluted by my thoughts

But in waiting comes a relief  
That there is a reason  
For it all

## Complete Apoptosis

Fading forests in consciousness of fainting hearts  
Each part is a leaf without capillaries  
Sucking skies dry sun drenched in denial of death  
Yellow red brown snow white and dead  
Dreaming of summer hikes crossing stone walls into foreign  
lands

Vermillion in confusion, a basis for natural vindication  
Burning canvases end to end in portraits of landscapes  
Escapism licking me sweetly as a lollipop  
Finding my center where I cannot

Suspending dystopia on a string over my mouth  
Tasting its cries as salt falling on each bud  
Savoring the only serenity I will ever have  
And it is gone already

Worming into my genetic material  
Hysterical breaking through basal boundaries

Malignant apocalypse in relapse through a telescope with a  
bayonet  
Rip it out

Lightspeed snakeskins piling up  
My gaze does not settle  
But my hands are always idle at your throat  
Just mapping topography  
Finding bearings to the nectar you hide  
In dusty jars you feel ashamed of

Open the lid  
I want to lap it up like a malnourished dog  
And complete my apoptosis  
In peace

Brittle and breathing through sentinel lips  
Crashing between stones dividing fields like cells  
Waiting for a hiker to remember me  
And paint me back into existence

### Ascending in a Dream

Astral complex destinies circling like moths around the black  
pits of my eyes  
Horoscope nothings becoming frothing masses like rabies  
making spills along the linoleum  
Fountain drinks wasted  
What a crime

Ascending in a dream without end growing higher and higher  
until there is nothing left but the downward glance  
Steel balls rolling from shoulders to toes in little coffins built for  
two  
Sometimes loneliness can feel like digging a double wide grave  
And waiting for the right corpse to bring along

Astringent chemical cleansing from peering over the edge  
And smiling over the fall  
Bending palms in hurricane metaphors whirling without  
meaning  
Rising suns replacing every hope you had with empty,  
weightless light

Weightless, hovering, smothering tears with apathy and an  
inability to move beyond it  
An inescapable fear of moving forward  
A regret for experience not exploded prematurely and without  
proper burial  
No grave wide enough for this stupidity I marry myself to

Wilderness seeping into the snow slowly and surely  
Taking back the spines of the dead deer and all the feathers of  
crows in the teetering trees  
Watching and waiting for the world to turn back  
Mellow nights hiding malignant trains of thought

Wandering shores of red oceans and broken planets  
Heaven is in her eyes and she is shipwrecked beyond my  
conditions  
Stranded and I won't save her for she needs no savior  
Planting both feet in the sand and waiting for hell to come is a  
fruitless patience

There is no hell after this, only the misery you choose to drape  
yourself in

## Coronal Rejection

Safe in the cage of the sun  
Crush the lock  
Open the bars  
Invert your particles into the emptiness of space

Ejected at lightspeed catching up to a direction  
A line without obstacle  
Rejection from corona destiny celestial sweetness  
A parade you missed because of the rain

Pale blue dot  
On atmospheric entry and how the burn is such a thrill  
Pacific throne with tidal cushions  
Must be a luxury model

On the coast where emeralds die  
You perch in patience  
Killing my gravity bouncing off of saltwater societies  
Crosshair on your pupil

Into the obfuscated gel, joy of deep dark hell  
Listening to your brain like a heartbeat  
I do not understand  
I do not comprehend

All these light years  
All these reflections  
All these hopes like speeding bullets  
And not a single one of me

In the dusty liquid I frown  
There is no containing disappointment  
There is no origin of despair  
Only the invading feeling in every cell

Through this porthole like a spaceship  
Is a coast where sapphires die  
Reflecting lightspeed lines  
Other rejected spirits from outer space

This is a world of aliens  
Dreaming of normal love  
Normal people

Normal pain

I dream of serendipitous rain  
And sometimes I hate that about myself

## Clear Skies Over Calvary Seem So Far Away

Mud caked tablets in archaeological dystopia  
Prophetic screams in Sanskrit and palm readings

Virulent subtle lilting horns  
Blood pooling in unborn decisions  
Bruises broken before the cells even existed  
Fated to blacken under the downtown storm clouds  
Flimsy glass bulbs hanging hipsters

Every single day is an executioner's Christmas

Last night as I was walking to my car someone drove by  
Blasting soulful and touching music  
And someone to my right yelled out  
"You're a fag"  
"You wanna bop to something, bop to some good shit"

Of course, I'm sure his AirPods exclusively drip with  
The tepid sounds of death

Church organs having seizures carrying over the wind  
Pipes buzzing and bubbling full of horoscopes  
Trees rounding heads like fingers protruding from dirt  
Slowly exhumed from winter sarcophagi

The process is a slow one

Taking my stretches of time and



Stretching them

F

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Piling into coils of fluid disappointment  
Sons and daughters of negligence  
Abused  
And destroyed  
Staring sweetly up at the stars above the spot  
In Calvary off of Harry L

They use the granite as a pillow  
And dream of dancing in the morning light

Sleep  
Peaceful  
And so lacking in discord  
Until I wake up and remember  
That I do not hold that hand

Walking through walls of smoke  
Dispersing stained glass gratitude  
Among rows of misty martyr markers  
Few read the names  
Or know they exist(ed)

In the mellow room I saw through epitaphs  
You are just ashes and sackcloth

I exi(s)ted

## The Process

Theories swirling, gurgling springs into lakes into oceans  
Penny flipping in snowdrifts, staining the sorrow to copper  
Big Dipper bleeding off of Orion  
Belts breaking the pants are falling down around my ankles

On a treadmill  
That I cannot stop

And between the arbor bars of ironwood  
And beyond the icy windows  
And because I only wish for silence  
I embrace the ringing of process  
The harmony of non-avoidance

Killing curious entities in hemoglobin  
Hobgoblins sawing my spine in half  
Into tendrils and strands like muscles  
Without ligaments and anchor points

Curvature of radium glass around my eyes  
Polarized reflector plates sinking into skin  
When the stress squeezes cardiac risks  
When the sun lights up all the figures behind the curtain

When you drift into areas without sustenance  
You make it yourself

When you take it in, that is the process  
And when you blow it all out

That is the process  
That is the fruit

Sweetly  
Bleeding

## Academia

Glass pyramids and palm trees that bleed light  
Hieroglyphic sanctums  
Listing like Pisa upside down under starlight  
Confused in gravity reversed

Birds perch without knowing  
Tourists lock away spirits with disposable cameras  
Look through the binocular stand, love  
Put in the change, will it to be,  
Turn the image

Rosy polka dot sunrise  
Splitting panes between worlds of light  
Through my fingers like bars bending  
Idiosyncratic

Gorgeous

—

Vines overtaking the green beams above our heads, spinning  
metal fixtures sending cars off of bridges and into your arms.  
You are carrying each word in that book. Let them rest on the  
page, love, let them sleep. Let them die.

If I have to see your eyes read that sheet one more time, the  
universe may repeat itself in my sleep.

The hands on the clock tower spinning wildly. The bell chimes  
are just loudspeakers with audio files. Plastic passes for existing,  
virtual license to live. All my efforts are buried here in the fiber  
optics. Softly humming under your dorms, creeping up the walls  
of your apartments, sleeping in the plastic bags on your kitchen  
table.

—

Oligarch peering over the throne  
Golden bronze summit  
Building an infinite empire to nowhere

The sun is setting in a Dyson sphere  
Covered in darkness  
The shadows are my territory  
That you claim with radiance

Your future is bright, love  
Take it from me

## Above Chiangmai (With Eno)

Atonal  
Desire  
Migration  
In fire  
Immolate  
Poetically, of course  
Just brushing up against white hot stokers  
Waiting for the brand

Surface  
Resplendent  
Halcyon  
Life sentence  
Inmate

Only mysteriously, of course  
Never a knowing glance or revelation of identity

In the clouds  
Above Chiangmai  
With Eno  
But I don't feel high  
Enough  
Only stupidly, of course  
No fool sees the ground so quickly  
Yet I don't turn my face to the sun so smoothly anymore

Palace  
Arc  
Lovechild  
Divorce  
Separation doesn't have to become so cold  
Doves without homes  
Cataclysms  
Melted roads you can't return from  
Swallowing asphalt

Carnival  
Gravity  
Rainbow  
Closer to me  
Come closer to me  
In digital drench blues I miss you  
Only warmly, of course  
Smile liquified  
Held in a bottle by your side  
You sip  
Constantly  
And it leaves me

Ruby  
Bamboo  
Barren

Who are you

Who are you?

## Tower of Babel

Reconquista crooning over milky powder driving torches into the earth, blending neosentimentalism and the ignorance of death, the neglect of another man's peace. Classical drones in ice age caverns dripping monarch decree justification, lip service free of charge, Magna Carta caldera, craters where she left those names she had for you. Sweetie, love, honey, jerk. The works. Blunt force drama melting out of containment, my solid calcium standing erect against invasion, titan pillars like pier posts running miles deep into murky social contracts. Crickets tell you stories in their shrill patience when the wood of your door frame melts in the heat. Casual diminuendo, valid gorgon frenzy circling breeding grounds, nothing under eggshell traps and red grass for tracking. Watch me traipse the tall grass. What comes from my mouth is confusion. Hands making impossible a lie. If you could understand. If you could understand. If you could understand. You would stop reading.

## Some Ramblings About How Summer Left Me Wanting

Figure of geometric light webs  
Like dymaxion spheres floating without a shadow  
Tall grass along nature's dam bleeding  
Emerald whiplash under scorching bursts  
Of yellow and gold

Armatures of gracious rest  
Letting me down in a pool of fervor  
In love with delays

Infatuation displays and hurt from forgotten days  
Pieces left in the sun until the pain(t) wore off  
Just a dull political knife, now  
Or just a floppy reasoning  
Flaccid  
With  
Understanding

Sweeping chirps keep you from falling asleep  
Nocturnal until you cannot stop staring  
Sunbeams burning holes in your pockets  
But your pockets are the golden brain dips  
And the beams are smiles and kindnesses  
And your sleep is an eternal dance with your own pride

When you slumber is when you achieve more than you  
bargained for

When you submit is when you die and  
Are remembered as more than  
What you really were

## Party of One

Lavender sea faces, bulbous smirk placed in my palm  
Closing petals flesh and gristle locking gaze into packs  
Of thistle aggravated, immolated in the room with the  
incendiary grenade

What is so royal about this bruise of love?

Crown of broken smarts tipping drinks into first date memories  
Where are the stains now?  
Into my lap goes the space where nothing may enter  
Bleached permutations

From the porcelain bowl she stares with mascara running Styx  
down her paleness  
Cherry rolling along her lips in viscous frenzy, couldn't hold it  
steady  
Arm resting headstones in weight only, no vestige of joy  
She cannot get up on her own power, she no longer has any  
She cannot tell you what color her sheets are, or which corner of  
the room she poses in the mirror  
She cannot recite Shakespeare or play kickball on the  
playground  
She does not remember what year they dismantled it and paved  
it and melted it and abandoned the puddles  
Contents of two sewing kits strewn on linoleum, or tangled in  
rubies tying her hair in knots  
Her glasses are just frames  
Nothing to look back on

Tomorrow her cocktail dress will strangle her like it always does  
Next week is a birthday party with a bit too much wine  
In a month or two those people will waltz out of another  
revolving door  
Next year her luck may change

Right now there is a knock at the door but nobody else is home

What is so lonesome about this bruise of love?

Sleepily and without an ounce of conviction  
Without memories to get in the way  
Strange smell of mother's baking  
Burning

Solid mattress under the streamers dangling  
Taunting  
Remembering what she cannot

Slipping  
Dreaming



Forgetting

In the morning there will be light that does not wallow  
Pale and helpless  
In the morning there will be lavender genesis  
Friendly, with a smile and a kiss

## Whatever I Mean

Ash symphonic platitude machine  
Rolling die cast conveyor belt beyond my reach  
Spewing ridiculous journal cliches  
Making skin sprint off the bone  
With cringe

Resting beneath the curve of a volcano  
At the base of the boil  
The doors are all closed in this house  
Voices thrown around corners and up stairs  
There is no meaning to viscosity  
What matters to me  
Is more than personality

Beneath crimson gazebo circle and eternity  
Waiting for meaning to crawl from the ooze  
That is the concept art for beauty  
No need for full release

Swinging around checkerboard lighthouses  
At military bases  
This is the carnival of sundial showdowns  
I wasn't fast enough  
Bullet in the ribcage

Marine shallows with DIY ziplines  
Pavilion of whispers strutting rooster around campfires  
Show and tell and cry

Wrap my jacket around your shivers  
Leave blisters  
On my fingers  
From the questions  
The answers  
And the in between

Exit light burning kaleidoscope  
Turing machines running along my spine like a bit tape  
Grit in the lashes, wipe off the hesitation  
Nothing left for meaning  
Just the hollow casings of words  
Spent like memories  
Through a target

Heavy granularity weeping pebbles from ducts  
Air supply short  
Busted lexicon making anything into everything  
Everything  
Everything  
Everything  
Everything

Whatever I mean  
It is nothing

## The Benefits (Of Daylight Savings)

In the echo chamber sun I watch motes of ash curling rose petal  
bell curves into the corpse of yesterday  
A lonely river of gray  
The burning takes so long, please stop sending fuel

Summer sleeping with innocence  
Untouched  
Unparalleled

Cloaked in drama invisible in misty alleys  
Climbing up the walls looking down into the reservoirs you keep  
Surface placid in verbose denials  
Flipping birds to cosmic watchers  
Old guards nearing the end of an infinite life out in the Kuiper  
catacombs

1. in the soft blue-green sky at 7:30 with a drink in my hand.  
Ladders rolling away with my pain. Falling without a cord.  
Blending into seamless nothing air stirring in the places I once  
was. Leading all the smaller hurts into one accord.

2. waiting on a frosted lily to crumble like hardened sugar.  
Glazing my tongue in lethargic whispers. All those things I told  
her. All those things.

3. wind factory sweeping after hours. Mirage police flashing  
red blue in street puddles where tweakers struggle to stand  
against imaginary sundowns.

4. in a small office with abstract nothings melting the paint off  
the walls. A collection of Neruda is the center of gravity. De-  
stressed like pillars already chipped and worn without a ceiling  
to raise up.

From your eyes are silver bullets Mercury rivulets running  
hurried to savage arms like potholes widening bottomless pits

I am returning to a place I have been before  
How has it changed?

## Predictive Text is More Real Than I Am

I don't know if I can get it to you or not something I can do that  
I cannot is the day I cannot come to the earth day and I cannot  
feel like a dream come true and I cannot feel like a dream come  
true and I cannot feel like a dream come true and I love you and  
I have to say that you are the best thing to ever come here and

the people that are in love with you are so much more like you and I have been to the earth and you know that it was great to see you guys and you have been so nice to me and I am so sorry that I was never really feeling down to earth and I don't want to see you again until you get home and I will have already let go of it and then I'll take care of myself and let go of my way and I don't have any more sense of love and joy and then a little more important than anything else I cannot feel like a dream that you have any idea of.

The only thing that works for the people is to be honest about you and I cannot feel like I am going through the process of becoming more important than the past.

Tomorrow morning I'll let you know what time I cannot come back from the sun or something like that.

## Infrared Skybox Bleeding Particles Into My Dreams

Daylight stations orbiting under clouds, shadows bending rays upwards into space

1. On the curve, brushing up against fuming cars, letting 60 soak into my bones. It's been so long since I've felt free of anything bigger than a word. Over by the complex is a volleyball game in March. Under the dim lights of Whitney Hall is a couple making out. The offices are dark. Circling flagstones curling smiles watching people waltz beyond depression. Somewhere there are nooses swaying frayed and blooming flowers between the filaments.

Feral birds swinging censers wrecking balls of haze and dust  
Under your skin is a map of patience itching to get out  
Cottages scintillating August, screen doors melting, burning  
gusts embers blaze

And the planet spins  
And the clouds are sometimes pink

2. That night in Oakdale, when I felt melted and flaccid in winter frustration, where were your wigs and masks? In the black dress of jazz, stone grace moving free in false flurries. The notes were placid, orderly. Never a step out of line. When they ask where you want to go you just tell them something you found in a dream. From the dreams we will pull together the edges of what we desire.

Magma winter wallowing in sunlight frost on my windshield  
Ponds flowing in Mobius strips  
Gardens of gloom becoming dust frothing mad with jealousy  
Enter dissolving pools of sickly sweet nostalgia  
Drifting apart, plates dividing mitosis landscapes into gem face frontiers  
And every ocean's edge crumbles to dirt and lost jewels

3. Where sterility grips the limbs, there is a serenity. In the silence of making time for nothing but joy. In the solace of waking up to the idea of maybe. Possibility becoming the foundation of forward movement. When you say these words that I cannot understand, know that one day I will have an answer for you. In the sweetness of my nature, limber trees and goldenrod in summer, lavender thoughts of circular returning, little by little the opening of glories by the roadside.

Zoetrope spinning reflecting gravity backwards through a wormhole in your pupil  
Irrefutable jest poking holes in your reasoning  
Glints slitting razor boredom from alternate realities where you are nothing more than floating  
Becoming dust born again into dust  
Dripping into amber rays of every afternoon I ever longed for  
And the diamond window is still there waiting for a watcher

4. In basements I collect power from obscurity. Back then it was a mad grab for something beyond words. But there exists no such thing. Time crawls on crutches with wheels, a machine separated from thought. In your arms it's so far away, seemingly motionless. But still it rolls without a care. Like an empty gurney looking for a lover.

Gates drooping rope bridge despair knots collecting like skulls  
Coyote cleaning the kill to the bones, humming drone of moon  
smiling on prey

Broken when you feel like a peak, you are not always this weak  
And the shimmering of leaves in July still calls your name in its  
sleep

5. From abstractions I bleed dreams into reality. Glowing deep into infinite pits where I paint the walls with love. At the zenith I look at the empty blue and whisper in bell chimes. Hollow tones with clarity. In the passing of the sun, there will be colors you cannot describe to me.

Bending like gutters up into space

## In shrill whining of cicadas, everything is melting away

In shrill whining of cicadas, everything is melting away  
Sprouts of everjoy nestled between furtive footfalls,  
Summer watching in tunnels and tributaries for a friend

Diminutive hills, rolling tumbles of belonging, folding dreamery  
love songs

Holding spats of rain within the future of spillways and candy  
shops

Pink blooming, dusting sticks without inconvenience,  
Carefully selected in this seasonal dance

Only the purest joy remains

Paddies stretching miles, patchwork woven into fabric of  
memory  
Sensory pleading remembering places meant for adventure

Forests made of light and glimmer between the foundation  
The Sun is dopamine  
We are the cravings

Fragile cupped hands lifting time into dead places  
Making rain charms in spring with leftover postcards  
Foxtail spinning by the roadside, under the bridge by the phone  
booth  
When July speaks your name there are fireworks  
Inside of the moon  
Making a call on the corner

Waterfalls carrying golden forever ago's into the reservoir  
Stockpiling the only moments that matter

In the frame of the sliding door, where time is cut short,  
Do not toss tears into the setting horizon

Where there is loss there is also a will to move beyond it  
But there is also so much more than that

In this breeze that does not fade, there is joy abundantly





### III

How to live on a planet without  
anyone to give you flowers



## Fuji-san

Midnight swirling ginkgo leaves fanning microgrooves into  
basement corners

Under streetlamps with white sheen stripes colliding fences and  
nameplates

Lateral motion astral precision morphing Orion into more than  
matter

Remembering the liquid freshness,

Heat of the oven opening,

Nights of knowing

Moth wings falling petals sakura in spring

The trees are not green yet

Still hillsides of mud branching up from the yawning earth

Waiting to churn with greener pastures than you properly recall

1. Brooks bleeding edges into babbling nonsense. Morals  
quenched in resolve to chase ideas. Beauty before banishment.  
Born again before bruises. Black and blue and washing away in  
clouds of red to pink to white.

Ornate inscriptions stairway to summit sessions with the breeze  
My compass points to this place without moving

Dragging listless spirits into one accord like a machine without  
direction

Treads of tunnel vision, trundling over the fields of golden life  
above the top parking lot

I will never forget the face of momentary significance

2. Sizzling sticks making scars in the air where we used to exist.  
Sparkling something in the eye, never realized. Hydraulic  
actualization lifting across eons of futuristic dysmorphia,  
infinite loop of no tomorrow bridged and forgotten.

Combustion seeping smoke into smaller pasts

Those people you turn around and see and do not say hello

There are moments of alone that stay there  
Even after you have left the building

3. Collecting filaments of love to weave into a better  
understanding. Jumbled meanings and comic strip panels made  
into a collage of comical collision. Of course you can ask  
anything of me, just don't be surprised when I refuse.

Dawn scrolling neon death on windowsills  
Waiting for the collapse of my eyelids  
Still watchful and wondering where the dreaming has gone

Pulling on my sheets like a child  
Scrambling up to my side  
And clinging  
Searing  
Screaming  
"I have always waited for you  
In the clearing behind the house  
In the mouth of the trees  
In the lungs of the street,  
Where headstones convert our smoke into  
Color  
In the smallest step you take each day,  
Climbing your spine like Fuji-san,  
Lifting the beams into your arms,  
Resting my simmering head on your blackening shoulder,  
I have been waiting for you."

We are always too busy waiting to know what to do next

## R U

Showered in spheres of something remembered  
Alternate universes in bubbles of chance  
Popping on my gaze, razing possibilities fire in the library  
Lexicons breaking into ash and soot





Are you a piecewise pursuit of patience?  
Are you sure?

§§

In the mountains humming mist crossed with zen,  
I am waiting moment by moment,  
When will you be coming home?

## To Those Drinking the Sad Poetry Like a Lukewarm Lemonade

When the Sun is a star in my palm,  
Where are your eyes transfixed on my fingers?

(Between the hour of sleep and month of standing still, years of slumber on rafts of old frozen wood. Collapsed power pylons ushering in your ancestors from lands of semiconscious listening. Exodus of pain, leaving for a promised land where they cannot reach us any longer. A place in the lungs where there is no weight, no sullen clinging flower.)

When the sky is a fresh shade of paint on this cosmic home,  
Why are you in a black veil and gown?

(The fitful child inside is missing the point of the waiting. He cannot remember the dips and rises over ridges in frigid forests. He cannot picture the alcoves and deer trails, he cannot fathom much beyond the uselessness of an I Love You. Frisking himself for a sorrow that he has already robbed himself of. Only steady noise remains.)

When my eyes are closed and soaking in comfort,  
Why don't you recline here with me for a while?

(Searching the ashes for keepsakes next to the new apartment complex. On the third floor your key will open the door to room 324, but you will not turn the lock. Glued to that spyglass into broken hearts, your reality is a shade of depression waiting for an AED. You refuse to remove the metal around your chest.)

When I am still and consuming the passion I seek,  
Where is your patience?

(Blinking grace of a lightning bug in the tall grass behind the house. Soft figure of a morning dove on a wire. Purity of a sky without any clouds. Shimmering of leaves on the poplars in the throes of a summer evening. Woodpecker perched along a pylon like a torii gate. Pulling desire into a single strand and weaving without a pattern.)

When there is no reason to be sad,  
Why do you ignore the joy?

Afterimage (In Multiple Mediums)

White circle lineless stamped on blue construction paper in the east. Nature’s stakes yawning fists opening glories on the flaking hillsides. Birds stippled on crosshatching, watching without eyes, aerial ghosts fates sewing the red string into our hem.

Onyx coffin geometric skeleton slumbers in frost. Wisps making love overhead between the moon and its children. Blacklight parade played open centerfold style across empty lots.

??????????????

Spreadsheets tiling windows into tourist lives, fleeting spirits only so stubborn. Leaving without a trace, light on the door closing in the afternoon. My prints undisturbed on the knob.

??????????????



Opals dangling wrought and righteous over pitch walkways  
from exhibits to spiral steeples. Prismatic lingering licking my  
cheek against the stubble, chilling abrasion saving face in light  
of failures swerved and surpassed.

Sizzling cone of golden hours humming on the round table.  
Tomb of satisfaction, the paint remembers the sound of my  
laughter. My mind could use a fresh coat. Cerulean curtains  
opened into the wrath of god, fading light making shadows like  
Hiroshima, the laughs are sealed in soot.

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Petal sunrise lowering death in spades, bending the palm trees  
in foreign languages. Valleys and crests burn in orange acrylic.  
Jupiter singing stormy hymns over long dead colonies, metal  
crag left in graveyard orbits beyond geostationary love. Moon  
slipping a smile into the pool, always in good time, land of silver  
drinkers.

????????????????????

Dividing line, people scattered like sudoku numbers, it doesn't  
add up. Canvas misted with sleep, no one can wake up. Creases  
and folds origami bookmarking faultlines and warps in the  
plate. Behind the figure on the right, crouching lioness, hidden  
hesitance.

Stairs chipped and decaying. Every window covered, no  
peeking. Peering over the past tracking sun paths erasing faces  
without knowing why. Mannequins putting on a show, new  
beginnings with the same endings.

On each still finger reaching for pillows in the sky, green envy  
waits to bloom. Fates fading off into migratory routes, leaving  
strings attached. White stillness soaring, overblown and  
overused, waiting for you to realize.

It is all for you.

## Chariots Burning;;Re-entry;;Smoldering Husks (Jigsaw)

Drifting billows drooping aerogel  
Pillows caressing the places I cannot warm

Slipping panic shredding entering atmosphere  
Can't seem to find a way out of here  
Fever  
Stricken

Green around the hills  
Slowly succumbing to time digging in heels

Steam mountains locking  
Otherworld calling building coastline fountains  
Never a dull lining

Garden toppled trees churning moss  
Graves in morning pale achromatic  
Making habits, returning wheels  
Pulley and rope in a knot  
In a web

Window open still no wind  
Waiting for a seizure

-----

Pieces of a smile sliding around my face  
Never quite snapping together  
In the quiet afternoon light I walk to my car  
With a pep in my step and music in my ears  
My boots dragging the pebbles across campus

&&&&&&&&&&&

Portraits splintering speeches meetings  
Without concrete meanings  
Lunch about nothing in particular  
Movies I never saw, never knew the names of

Smiling thinking about that young child who told me  
“Thank you, have a nice night!”

Another piece floats just under the skin

$$@@@ @@@$$

Walking up the path to the forest line where everything shining  
is forgotten  
This feels like death

The driver's side is a portal to silence  
Purgatory in transit

This feels  
Like death

~~~~~

In the coliseums of passion you construct  
I am burning the chariots  
And carving the keystones

If you ask I will tell you I enjoy the chaos  
If you ask I will tell you I am entropy  
I will tell you I do not know what comes next  
Simply some words I heard  
In the scarlet clouds like lamps  
Pressing coals into the cold dead places

+++++

Behind the tree, fragile and shy  
Peering figure wondering why  
Moonlight child forming a dream  
Shaping landscapes that gleam  
And scream  
“Goodnight”

## Interdiction (Replacing Reality Like a Fuse)

Wooly blanket wrapping my head in the clouds, there is a  
revolving door of everyone leaving  
But I am turning the crank as my eyes grow scales,  
Watching justice embalm the words and phrases sticking to my  
tongue

Fragile cotton candy idealism playing with my existence in the  
bubble of hypothetical futures  
Mirror rooms expanding into space where the mountains never  
stop striking the sky looking for golden linings  
On the other side of that wooly blanket

I want to become too much, and maybe I already am  
Bleeding through the towel around the gash, listening for sirens  
Clinging to the salt rocks off the coast of goodbye

Red flares singing sparks around town, I am fleeting like the  
smallest one you see  
Black gloves over my hands, taking out the trash, swaying  
without the words to make it seem reasonable  
Nothing I say has any meaning and the meaning of that is a dry  
joke at a funeral  
And the retort you can hear is the ghost playing with the glass  
case  
Like a spinning top or a windmill

Shedding sleeves and layers, corona peeling off clementine joy  
adding some zest in this moment of grotesque zen  
Waiting for sakura to fall and rot and bloom again above every  
statue taking the subway and crawling the bars on the weekend  
Sitting tongue-tied wrapped held by a thread of politeness stale  
and crumbling with disillusionment  
A trick of the light spinning a flitting between the petals rosy  
and collapsing on the bridge  
Where all I ever wanted was the completeness of your being

But there is always more landscape to the place inside your  
bones, seeping through the faultlines

(Yesterday there was no reason in the wind and today there is  
no love in the sunlight, only hollow tones like bell chimes  
twisting in a furnace)  
((Tomorrow there will be hands clasped indecisive and jittery  
with a strange fever))  
(((As the sun ripens beyond the woolly blanket waiting for a  
confidant, the woodpeckers will return outside my window like  
a dream)))  
((((And the next day perhaps I will read my emails and eat my  
lunch by the window))))

## Need

Need is an acid partnership  
Dissolving burdens into two-man shackles  
Melting joy into a vat slowly spinning, wafting the aroma of  
decline  
Over our noses  
Tepid half-life taking our tears and flowers and making a forest  
of colorful weeds

Skylines glimmering in evening sleep  
Spindown of shutters and terminal fixtures

In the lecture of the Sun where photon rail guns impale  
And continue

Where the black covers fold and pile up  
Waiting for more attention

Need dissolving itself into want  
Into a slurry of maybes  
And half-lidded tomorrows

Horizons that keep climbing up your face  
Long awaited spring rain sliding down the driver side window  
For a moment your eyes are black holes

Steps angled in circles paradoxical and flat  
Serrated into space waiting for the dinosaur killer  
Splitting wires under the stove  
Burning and crisping the meaning of connection  
The draw of affection misleading intentions just a lick and a  
penchant for transparency when all of my skin is a glass of joyful  
brooding you take in

All I need is the idea

## A Tunnel

Turquoise mirrors and panes of glass  
Spinning in pylons on islands of shrines  
Palm prophets bending and drooping  
Heaving the sun across the sky

I. The hillsides of brush and scrub fields are freezing over. The  
memory of summer scratching at my car window. Reflections of  
the shade under the poplars in the backyard. Where the sun  
cannot reach the snow. The sky is a minefield between the  
uprights. I am a stake in the floodplains, a lantern flickering in  
the marsh. A cricket singing lazily into the night.

II. Energy slipping between the barriers. My force is a chasm you stare deep into. A wave of bioluminescence, fertile microbes of patience. Waiting for evolution to save them. The seam of my face is grinning. The air is stirring with the beating of metal wings. C130 touch-and-go's at night. Reality bending around the hourglass into a shape like an alternate universe. I like to weave the ideas together into a fabric of joy, but it is dripping off into our dimension.

Look at your feet, the water is smiling up at you

III. When the woodpeckers greet my ears in the morning, my mind is full of grubs. When the wind whips my midnight window I am still searching for the words that will not come to me.

IV. I miss something about this connection but I keep breaking up.

## Cookies Left in the Jar

The heart opening slowly letting the shade inside the caldera  
Flash freezing all the joy into a razorwire sculpture  
The golden pillars of light sweeping over like lookouts  
Searchlights waiting for childhood friends to return from the store

Extremities bleeding with weight  
Blood lead lined and magnetized to my bed  
Swirling jumbling agitated minutes hours days in my head  
Nothing but the memory of tendrils flourished green, flashing red  
Bending gravity into a Mobius strip of fate  
Returning

What do you want me to say? I will say it.  
What do you want me to think? I will think it.  
What do you want me to do? I will do it.  
What do you want me to love? I will cherish everything but its  
name.

Wooded mornings melting into tropical panes flitting like  
Butterflies with stained glass wings  
A needle for a proboscis, taking a sample of my sugary sweet  
blood  
Nectar for those who crave release from the bondage  
Of depressing obligation and responsibility

What do you want me to feel? There are no cookies left in the  
jar.  
And I am crying.

## Winding Down (In the City Of)

Cascade billowing flowing helter skelter drowning shelter  
drywall huts in the city of butterfly catchers  
Endless sequence of feverish loops birthing forlorn hopes of  
hands and elbows bent around the right parts  
Dangling laughter on the end of a rod, stick and carrot trick  
scratching the itch spreading like medicine over the floor  
Sickly sticky with purple tablespoons convex over your face gas  
masking the noxious anxiety but it is always outside  
Overextended into mirage islands where teal skies tear the  
clouds to micron nothings, cotton brambles above

1. in the net of her presence waiting at the top of the spiral  
stairs.

Delays roundabout malevolence from signature sources  
coursing slowly bloodstream sipping on swollen bags  
Layers of angelic sighs carving names into petrified waiting,  
debating the benefits of making it past lunchtime



Collapse in the wolverine mindset, crystalline jet black textures  
walling off the bowls of astringent meat you hate  
Neon polygons warping and folding tetrahedron style across the  
dance floor without any steady pulse

2. walking to my car flipping private messages like tarot cards.

Apologies bubbling into vapor never existed just thoughts from  
windows closed off and shadowed  
Frenetic decline from solar throne to ocean bones, oily sunken  
at the bottom of the reason I stay tied to the docks  
Flowing waves sky bound laced with passing out in class,  
surpassing the logical step for the absurd

3. jaywalking double yellow lines for a little peace of mind.

Intended for everything to end before the sun came down again,  
the bend in the trees smiling fresh eyes into my business  
Corporate crawling on all fours begging merchandise and time  
clinking cups against my patience for ridiculous bullshit

4. the vivid memories of brick buildings with second story  
windows.

Sleep retreat from sadness world staring back but dreams are  
catalysts for sugary surrender and sulking

5. before you go, can you tell me how you really feel?

## With the Sun Already Set

Growing roots over miles sipping on lead lined pipes  
Drainage shallow and hidden under the asphalt  
The wood floor is a buffer between my thoughts and the mantle  
of chance  
Convection bubbling jetstream exterior searing like the Sun  
pulling away all the clouds

===

1. In the powder blue forest at the chime, the sky breaking into crumbling pieces, panels of glass refracting all the ultrawhite smiles. Where the logs are green and wet with fear, space is filled with birdsong. Magenta dripping leaves, nature decanter planting vivid dreams into the soil. Two chickadees dashing between the blooming fingers, watching you wonder, where are your eyes, when did the sky come back together?

===

Cerulean light expanding into this space, gaseous  
experimentalism calm in quotations  
Making faces when I type, poet's foil peeling when unripe and ready to collapse  
Vaporous satellites hovering when I exhale in the northeast  
Waiting for the snap freeze

Sediment brushing aluminum cans on the roadside  
Careless and unforgiving image in the distended reflection of a face  
A placid mask of love in the eye of every beholder  
Burning at the stake waiting for a flight out of home

===

2. In a tulip yellow room, melding furniture with piles of passion. The windows are too bright and the idea of sleeping on the couch passes over the water. Still life of flowers only halfway opened, they cannot find the Sun. The lake on the wall divides Exodus with the shadows of mountains making a shelter. A blue grave with bells and whistles covered in acrylic and wishing.

===

Motors passing by my window, anti-solitary confinement  
Mood padded with flocks of balloons in July, climbing higher,

dropping like dead birds on the shore  
Tangled in hydrogen wires twisting between high rises  
overlooking the waterfront  
Spying on the people living a part of my past

Seagulls over parking lots making homes in the strangest of  
places  
Embracing the sky that is always the same dull force of  
momentum  
Controlling the peace in my nest with a keyboard and mouse  
A cat stalking sentinel cutting glares when I imagine

===

3. In her cardinal red dream, mannequin leaning on a telephone  
pole. Haze of old nostalgia left out in the cold crawling up  
watchtower control. Searchlight buzzing humming tunes of rare  
loving, looking manic in the face of vacancy. Too much space  
left empty, gathering the warmth of the loneliest sun, burning  
split ends going wild like severed power lines. Mannequin blind  
and waltzing over the pool in the road.

===

Idealism crafting arks over the unchosen, open ended people  
falling out of themselves  
Sound carrying the bits and pieces of myself up the stairs and  
into the recliner  
Her eyes reminding me of nothing important, the new paradigm  
Where patience is sunlight in a statue garden, forgotten people  
are no longer crying

## Storm Flows (The Clearing Away)

Storing fabric heavy with memory of snow  
Hanging on my door hook like a side of beef  
Crimson streak falling into a bundle of keys

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[illegible]

# Clown College Admission Essay

94

Crawling between cracks in the cotton, crows turning the air  
with their calls, molten mating misery like molting a malformed  
adolescence, lessening the weight of need rolling away in lily  
pad armadas, flimsy carriages carrying your love where I can see  
them sinking in the daylight, your tenacity is a mayfly under my  
curtain of deluge.

Cruel blue, placid view skies vaporize the clouds with sudden  
rain in golden hue no rainbow, drastic powder over trees,  
nothing left to please, line of the forest deteriorating into chirps  
and warbles, fickle talons and feet splitting the path in the  
windy quad with the sculpture of momentum, of entropy  
birthing form, through the portal of charcoal remains layered  
graphite refrains he sat with a guitar in my memory for only a  
few moments, earnest in wonder, a lover of nothing but the  
present.

Shrooms crowning the fleshy wood, waiting for petrification,  
stale being of stagnation feeling out every angle never stepping  
through the corner of the glass, overflow contained meticulous  
blaming nothing but chance and the change you despise, I stare  
at the ceiling with it by my side, bed partners with chaos,  
drilling holes in the notions you keep steady in plastic cages,  
dog-eared pages of traditional erratic displeasure, hateful gavels  
for arms, slamming alarms before sunrise, hermetic pulpits  
freezing zero Kelvin sealed away in place.

Picking through the trash for bits of insanity  
Like a homeless man in Utopia

## Sleeping God

She who holds stars in between her fingers  
Shifting reflections of light in black hole horizons  
The back is the front and the front is inside  
And the pillows are soft and the people are quiet

She who spins idle running humming waiting for herself  
Pulling the strings out of your ears  
Playing vibration games with your heart

She who bends the halls leaning on cosmic crutches  
Muted screaming in the glimmering windows at the mall  
Remembering the cracks in the wall  
Slipping under dripping pines and willows

She who colors the Sun in different lengths  
Making the great crescendo soar with chromal elegance  
Dancing in jittery euphoria as the waters split

She who sleeps into the late morning  
And the late evening  
And the late night  
Without waking and shedding her power

## Like Taffy

Dragging melted timepieces in torrents of ditch water flowing endlessly in front of my tires. Stretching the filaments of thought sizzling holes in the time it takes for my frontal lobe to blink. Kneading the bruised portions of imagination where the colors came out all wrong. Folding the ends of patience over themselves into a swan floating down the galaxy. Waiting on the moment to arrive, to wake up like a bird before the Sun, a driver at the wheel on too many medications. Pulling at the silver threads of my window, fruits in every shade of not yet ripe, plastic effigies of a dream wishing upon one listener. Sleeping on the past, gazing wide eyed out the window when the colors are more than the usual pale blue and gray. Slowing the crawl of time into a slurry of starry hopes, straw in my mouth, my lungs are waiting for the fill.

## Up in the Clouds Above Vestal

Living on perforated park benches swinging in chains  
Rattling softly into the microphone  
Waiting on hibernating nostalgia to unearth a useless pleasure  
Like having sex with an ex

Behind the house the trees grew eyes  
After the towers and saws cleared away  
Between the weighty power lines  
Watching us drive away and return  
Every time it rains the mist clouds them like a cataract  
Falling over the cliff of green boughs

Shooting stars hidden in the sails of ships that used to float the  
Susquehanna  
Bleeding into the ocean of trash, plastic sharks snatching fresh  
meat  
Industry plants mailing me their ads  
For a service I will never remember the name of  
Or have a use for

Mud in the mix, all over my boots, the laces are fraying and  
showing the elastic

When I get up tomorrow morning  
I'll find the red blooms in my lungs  
Split from the branches of the tree across the road  
Covering my car and my mailbox  
Waiting for a package that may never arrive  
Covered in red blooming moss crawling targets beneath eyes in  
the trees

////////////////

Love is a magazine in your basket by the toilet,  
Maybe I just don't get why you need to read something  
While you're in there

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Outside is a storm of gold and green living breathing down the neck of soulless pleasure, leisure like free spinal taps covered in blankets and klaxons, patching up the holes at the base of the world, blooming in colors you don't care to see.

|||||

In the park on top of Vestal, 10:30 crimson lights peering over the playground equipment  
The boys are playing tag in the dark  
And I am sitting on the side listening  
And the bugs are waking up  
And the stars are bleary eyes from space  
And the weeds are still in the night  
And the valley is glowing  
And the moon is rolling  
And the sound of laughter is a wall of force against doubt

Where the responsibility of obligation ends and the joy of nothingness begins is where I sleep in sheets of vacuous intake

Endlessly drinking this strange waiting pleasure

## Portrait of Brain Slice in Spring

Dusty hallways in a high rise  
I am waiting in glass  
Golden hours spilling sunlight slanted  
Through storm drains in the walls

Rain is the scent of a memory  
Melting snow shedding kerosene  
In a hot seat, umbra licking me clean  
Dripping along the seams in cherry



Do you remember the feeling of being  
Home?

—

Breathing steady in a merry breeze  
Sleeves in tapestry tapes on repeat  
Flowing floorbound through sheets  
Canals locking sinking filling for free

Crystal ships departed waiting for shore  
The edge of the earth under the lamp  
Beneath blood diamond watchtowers  
Fuming spiral ballad flowers in bed

Do you remember the thrill of chasing  
Phantoms?

—

Ghosts of power, placebo in dusk  
Headstone humming regrets of the month  
Transient lovers and careful collapse  
I'll be back in the summer with petals

## Now (Enough)

Low noise of the furnace buzzing pipes  
The static shifting clicking of the house  
Settling  
With the memory of Metheny playing games  
With the shadow of music in my brain

Frantic obligation swirling in a tornado  
Piling up outside the walls of my compassion  
Sectioned off and purified

Only enough for the objects spreading light across clouds  
Dispersing joy in seeds of rain  
Washing away seasons of pain

1. floating in a hover state like a comatose stone. Zen licking between my ears with shoreline waves brushing against rough patches. Grazes with being many people at once, now just an empty bed with one heat signature.

2. drifting along a river in a fever dream. I enjoy the wave as it is, nothing more or less than a force of phantasmal remembering. Every word you snuck past my mind is still stuck in my ears, I can't shake it out.

3. doing a dance in the dark room, your face is sky blue watching clouds dissipate into pink smog rolling along your temples. Breathing down your back, the moves are shameless and your placid demeanor is a sign of acceptance. Dreaming larger than you have any right to. And you will receive all that you desire before sunset the next day.

4. somewhere in the future is a bridge out of the dream and into a steady reality. Happiness is a sunny day driving along the side of the mountain. Pleasure is the smile on the passenger's face. Respite is the noise of people walking to a different destination than they did yesterday. Peace is a thread of being, softly vibrating, a single pitch.

More snow may fall in the end of April  
Than rain over the dry seasons of mind  
But there is still a joy in the absence of words  
Where a landscape is fresh for the find

## When it feels like everything is fading to dust and chemicals in your mouth...

Why does it have to stop and start again like a shock to the heart?

I. Where the corners are glued together into a mural of landscapes, there is a shadowy cave I have not yet scoured. In the rusty chest at the end of the tunnel is a faded patch that someone left. The last memory of their being. The quilted cloak receives another addition and I move on to another landmark.

II. Searching worlds for a joy that does not cremate itself upon exposure to the arid breeze of time. Dust only piles so high before it topples. My fingers are gray stained feelers, morbid examples of the color leaving you behind. In the sky over the horizon the blue and white race beyond your vision. Clouds roll in over the lighthouse and a faint drizzle begins to melt you away. In that moment of swimming through yourself, it can feel like the subtle gold of an afternoon was never enough to satisfy you. Sometimes it's hard to discover new joys when they keep crumbling like this.

III. In the blue haze room where magenta drips from the ceiling and golden motes float between shafts of parallel lights. Heavy particles colliding in heat, jumbled and scrambled, slamming brain matter against itself, bending minds along the beveled edges of a picture frame. In the center is an idea that became a figure in your childhood. You cannot throw it away. Wherever you go, the waiting follows.

Crawling along the hillside  
The stars are riding on airplanes made of chemicals  
And the night is dead and quiet

Somewhere in the furrowed land  
Greater winds are blowing you in the right direction

It isn't always easy to feel connected  
In one piece  
But you are always reaching for every scrap of yourself  
You are always searching for the right place  
And in that search is a glowing joy on your fingertips  
Blessing the shadowed grounds, brushes with light and stardust

In that world where stars are faintly leaving you behind,  
There is always more joy than time

## The Strange Negatives of Stiletto, NY

In the blood of new winter skies, I peek through the cerulean curtains to find another frozen scape below. Lightsick and pale, I return to the orange glow of bedside enlightenment, resplendent and frothing with urges for sleep. Alarmed and nostalgic, waiting for peace, I rise and head downstairs. Into the sterility, into the modernity, into the mundane science of mornings. In the cup of coffee next to me is a fly drowning violently. I don't even drink coffee. Beneath the placemat is a map of this place, marked in frenetic scrapings and gibberish. Outside is a car waiting for me. There is no driver. At the circle we turn around and around and never really go anywhere. The buildings are stout with smokestacks, belching nuanced chemicals into the brisk air, chilling and comforting. The churches are stained glass with pews in the windows, half-shattered, half-melted, belonging to the happiness of the people, they smile every time they pass one. Over the Susquehanna, there is an ocean, a pond that ends in sight but continues in mind. On the coast is a Bauhaus prison of Art Deco demise. The floors are an M. C. Escher wet dream. The windows don't really exist. The mirrors are doors into new parts of the facility. Through chromatic glass is a vista like Revelation. Water and green plains and nothing else not even the mindless people that keep it glued together. On the other side of the pond is a school where the dorms look out over a beautiful topiary garden. A Roman statue in the courtyard. Signposts pointing to eternity. Work to be done without any manager. Sometimes when I visit it reminds me of Auschwitz. Off the highways are lots steadily emptying, but never abandoned. Markets filled with thieves and black powder. Outside my father rests against the car with a hole in his heart. No heartbeat. Smiling as his DNA is taken in by the asphalt like a tar pit. Across the traffic lights is a

megacomplex of desires. Atriums and theaters of tubes and food courts and floating disks taking people to heaven. Please don't go. Take me to lunch there, make small talk, I'll take anything they offer me. In the frantic yellows and frustrated reds and frivolous blues of the plastic cheapness I will swallow my pride and buy the entire place a round of shots. I don't even drink shots. I don't even drink. I don't even know these people. The rivers are industrial waste ponds. The factories are shattered husks of what we never could have achieved. The carousels are playing lofi funeral dirges. The parks are wailing with crushed dreams and wood chip splinters. In the reflections of Taco Bell windows at 11:00 PM in the rain, I have seen this place before. In the dreams where powder coats trees that do not exist, I wish they may never have existed. In the evening the skies are orange hellscapes with graphite stratified between sunrays. Porches are frozen purgatories. Anterooms you cannot escape from. The mud sticks to everything. The rust chips and the tendrils stain your teeth. There is a colossus in the center of every city like this. There is an ancient mind keeping the children up at night. The satellite dishes on the hillside have wilted. The red crosses that peek between the boughs by the on ramp are blazing when you aren't looking. In complexes like space stations I orbit hazardous materials, like the smile you keep showing. The glances you throw my way like a circus animal. I'd take scorn and peanuts over the hope of another failure like that. In the frozen breath of power plants over the horizon of arcades and diners, I remember birthdays and dates with frostbite. Losing an ear, a finger, a life. Crystal canals polluted and laughed at by environmentalists. Piano stars plinking away on felt strings and rubber keys, heinous whispers I left like atom bombs without detonation, they don't know how to dismantle them, neither do I. How can you just erase words like I LOVE YOU? How can you just eliminate yourself from the equation? You Cannot. In the deserts of Main Street there are cyber parlors where I blew away in the wind. Bottomless pits trapping cars and lovers, different ideas of platonic death, but I've resurrected worse. Here in this city I am a wizard without a hat. Driverless and without motivation, chasing newer dreams than have ever existed.

Strange negatives scattered on my floor, memories corrupted or otherwise modified. Flooded. Drenched in some digitized elixir. Waterboarded under the rainbows we used to admire on the way home from school. Cat-like armatures of steel carrying cables of light to each and every mill and butcher in the valley. Looking out over the twinkle is like staring at insignificance and finding yourself hopelessly in love. Sometimes when I think of your face it gives me the same phantom emotions. Further than the water stretches is a shed where we had a party. All the people I never knew were there, and when they left you said we had sex. I don't even drink sex. Wait how do you say that again? In underground grottos of misfortune I tossed away coins in a mad dash for collective joy. And it worked for a while. But every carpet is meant to be pulled out. Loneliness only wins if you let it, and every bird is screeching its warcry. Beady eyes scanning for signs of life, just be a zombie and you'll be fine. A cog in a machine, a savage, undead machine. Humming with the sounds of the stars over this amorphous wasteland. Downtown is a frenzy, a flooded pain of loss, reconstituted as the worship of progress. And I love to bend the knee, oh I do, I do. In the lofts above museums, curators plan my downfall, shards of gratitude vaporized in their eyes. Former lovers of the inept. As the sun comes down over ember fields, lightning bugs bring the summer to a standstill. In between the floods and the blizzards, before the end of nature, before the end of me, I stand staring at the setting of peace for the final time. Before winter comes to steal everything away. In the corona of Sol is an angel waving sweet nothings in my general direction. I try not to think about it too much. Back in the metallurgic den of malignant minerals, my mind is a metaphor, a pocket dimension of dreams I paint onto reality like a square to a cube. Expanding into dust of nothing, sleep restless in its chase for my head, I watch it like the Panopticon, I am behind the bars. In the orange glow of this lamp, I swear my innocence. In the gray bleeding of the moon on my pillow, I question it all. Loneliness is a keystroke away from festering. Here in this city there is a forest where mushrooms grow on dead trees. I don't even drink mushrooms. Wait. There is a creek beside the mycelium pooling underneath

rocks, shallow and drawing all good things into one accord. In the summer you can hear the wind whisper over it. Don't cry. It's only gone for now. I'm only gone for now, when you wake up I will be here with you in this strange negative on the floor. Your face is pixelated and sharp. Mine is empty and without eyes. But the smile is still there if you imagine it. If. Beneath this layer of fatigue is a sleep waiting to take hold. Roots gripping eyelids. Waking worlds are only good if they exist. This city never existed. But you, the one in it, you always did.





## About the Author

Ben Buchanan is a poet living in Binghamton, New York. He wrote this stuff. He likes writing things that he can't understand when he reads them back the next day. He lives in cinderblocks and uses rainbows for clothes. He likes wiggly air that makes his brain happy. Contrary to popular belief, he does indeed speak English. He loves it when someone reads his strange scrawlings.

Someone like you.

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Thank you for reading.

