



Bedside Diary

Matthew Aaron Walker

Bedside Diary



a collection of poems by
Matthew Aaron Walker

XYZ Publications
Boston, MA



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Welcome to the most random collection of poetry. I use the word “collection” loosely. The only commonality with these poems is that they came to rest in the same book. Dilemma. What do you call such a haphazard, literary gathering, “Random Freakish Thoughts”? Although descriptively accurate, it seems a little superficial. I chose instead, “Bedside Diary”. It captures more of the intimate, personal feel of these writings.

The name “Bedside Diary” was originally the title of a poem I wrote a long time ago. I decided to use the name for this book, because the diversity of the writing is something akin to the random thoughts one would scribble on a nightstand notepad, in those closing moments of the day, shortly before bed. These poems cover every aspect of my life: sex, suicide, fear, despair, hatred for my father, tales of my gay life, tales of my straight life and eventually how God redeemed every last crazy moment.

I started writing poetry as young man. A somewhat dysfunctional family provided me with plenty of material. Writing was the “pressure release valve” that ensured my pain never reached feverish levels. As a kid, I was happier with a virgin piece of paper than a new toy. I could escape into a world where pen and paper reigned supreme. Poetry gave my pain safe passage into the world, allowing me to heal from the effects of unbridled emotions.

As my gift developed, my writing took on an empathetic nature. Eventually, I was writing poetry about other people’s trials. The poem that is the namesake of this book is loosely based on an actual suicide note. In college, the best friend of the guy I was dating committed suicide, leaving behind two young children. Her note was pointed and simple.

Since that time I have written many other pieces based on the stories of people in my life. This collection contains poems from the part of my life that brought me to the place where I handed control of my life over to Jesus Christ. Many in today's world might consider me to have been born gay. I choose to believe that I was born sensitive, artistic and creative. I don't believe anyone is born gay. That is a statement based on my life experience not prejudice.

I tried for a long time to make life work on my own terms. I failed a lot. Not having found salvation in my sexuality, guys, possessions or even my childhood dream, I walked away from homosexuality in 1998 and returned to the God of my youth for direction. I have held nothing back. These are the poetic ramblings of my lowdown, dirty existence and the God who cleaned me up.

My life has been uniquely random. This book is an introspective exercise of many years of struggle, triumph and vision.

Bedside Diary



Forgotten Maiden

She covers herself.
The night air,
more than cool,
cuts through the weathered fibers of the quilt;
a frozen blade,
serrated by rust and time.
The final dagger comes
as the warmth of the sun
is ripped away.
Pain pulses below the surface,
settling beneath her skin,
tethering itself to her soul.
When the last rays of sun teases her with only light,
tears began to fall.
The liquid warms her cheeks.
Bowing her head,
she remembers the way home,
accepting death's icy embrace.



Stone Cold Sober

The rock sat quietly,
longing for a dip in the fluorescent pool.
It would always be this far from the water.
A quiet sentinel,
this was its place in the world.
It wished only for a heavy tide or
a fierce wind,
to issue forth a taste of the blue magic.
It dreamed of executing a beautiful swan dive or
even a chaotic belly flop.
All were inconceivable.
Stationary it would remain.
Nestled forever on the shore:
a remnant of a cliff,
the seedling of a mountain,
decoration for all to see.
In the still evening,
an outstretched arm to the water's edge,
all but a dream.
The rock had no hands.
Its only distinguishing features,
layers of clay upon limestone.
Dull reds.
Whispered browns.
Faded ribbons of gold,
the only hint of its regal aspirations.
Its etched surface
adorned with petrified leaves and

ancient fossilized imagery.
Once,
among the fissures,
a lone arachnid had crossed.
The rock marveled at the tiny one's precious gift of movement.
A treasured art form.
Somewhere among the lines,
crevices and
fractures,
one could almost detect,
a smile.

Black Waters

Bathed in color
I fight to maintain my ground
As I sink
 brilliant hues disappear
The blues remain
My faithful companion envelopes me
Structures around me
 immersed in the liquid matrix
Life is
 washed of character
 stripped of its voice
Rocks
 baptized and alive
 ascend from the depths
 forming the backdrop of my demise
Events play out
 too far down to find my way back
I endeavor to fight
 summon the colors I covet
 restore them to my new world
 give vision back to the mind
Descending further
 all light dwindles
My sapphire savior forsakes me

...black waters flood my soul

Missing You

Each night I go to bed,
I wish tonight would be the last.
Last time I sleep and dream of you,
And think about our past.
Doomed to see forever,
the face I loved so dear.
Tormented and anguished,
in solitary fear.
A truer picture of myself,
I'll probably never find.
Remembering how good it felt,
That your life ransomed mine.
Images and objects,
Slowly come to view.
Then right before my very eyes,
They morph and become you.
Erotic dreams. Romantic scenes.
I wish they'd all just go.
For each time I revisit us,
I feel my longing grow.
The pictures are so real you see,
Words you said are true.
I close my eyes and hold my breath
And wish for love anew.
You're far away, long since gone,
Forgotten where we were.
When last you pledged your love to me,



And let those feelings stir.
Memories are what they say,
We'll have until we die.
I'd settle for just one last kiss,
One final, sad goodbye.



Night Pal

I sit
quietly watching
black clouds
seep from the cracks of heaven
I smile
darkness bathes the sky
choking out the last reds of the sunset
The sun
mysteriously ripped from the horizon
sleeps under lock and key
held captive by the force
that steals my world from sight
I imagine
nightfall
my old friend
adorned in his ebony cloak
sitting beside me
on the green carpet of the lawn
I feel secure
my true self surrendered to the darkness
For it has no voice
but listens to mine



Notes

Black Waters was written as a result of the things I learned about the ocean when I was learning to SCUBA dive. I never knew that the color red disappears first and that blue is the last color to fade. I used this new fact to describe my early struggles with homosexuality and the odd attractions I was having to guys. I never wanted to be gay. I never asked for the feelings. The knowledge that I might be gay led me to out and out moments of hopelessness. This is one of many poems I wrote based on the hopelessness I felt.

Missing You: I wrote this poem many years after the guy I dated the longest broke up with me. At one point I knew he was the person I was going to be with for the rest of my life. Then he was out of my life in an instant. I was lonely and confused. He broke up with me. I was a Christian and he was an Atheist. Not a great match, but it was more about the intimacy for me. I spent a year of my life with this guy. Christians could debate all they want about whether or not our relationship was an abomination to God. It doesn't change the fact that the love we felt was real. Our life and times were not going to be forgotten easily. I was battling between my gay life and where God was ultimately leading me. I was very alone at the time as well. I had gone from being very sexually active and intimate with someone to being alone and bitter. This poem was my true confession of the feelings that still lingered and the reality that he was out of my life forever.

Night Pal: This poem has two distinct origins. I grew up very lonely. I was a loner, who was bullied, because I wasn't the most masculine of boys. I didn't have a lot of friends. I also struggled my whole life with having a voice or worse yet, feeling that anyone was listening when I was talking. This poem stems from the dark place I felt I lived for many years. It also tells of the dream to find someone who would care enough to listen. Early on, Satan, the enemy of my life was setting me up to fall victim to the first person who showed me any amount of kindness.

Stages: I love this poem. This is the first of my poems that my father understood. As a young man I desperately desired a connection with my father. Our interests were very different. After many failed attempts to connect with my father, I did what many young men who struggle with same sex attractions do, I emotionally detached from him. I put up walls to prevent myself from being hurt further. When he read this poem, he said he completely understood surrender. This poem, like many others was written in the fires of hopelessness. I saw other guys struggling with their sexuality as well. I knew their pain. I believed there was no way out. That thought generated empathy for others and sadness for myself. I honestly believed that I was created by God to help guys come out of the closet. Now I can see that Satan was twisting my true calling. I am reminded of Joseph in Genesis 50:20 "You intended to

harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." My true calling is to help guys walk away from homosexuality. I wrote this poem as a way of softening the blow of the hopelessness I felt. It also serves to warn others of the struggles that lay ahead with their homosexual desires.

Goodbye: I wrote this as a way of coping with my grandmother's death. When I was younger I was super connected with her. I called her Granny. She was my mom's mother. She used to make lunch for my cousin and I every day while we were in high school. She would sometimes hand me a twenty-dollar bill and call it Hamburger Money. She was the nice grandmother. I don't think my dad's mom liked me all that much. Her real name was Dorothy Nadine Williams. I wrote this poem from her perspective. It helped me with the grieving process.

Bedside Diary: The guy I was dating, at the time, had a longtime friend commit suicide. I didn't know her, but I could sense the pain that he was feeling. At some point he shared the first two lines of her suicide note. I wrote this note for him, a few days after her death. It was my gift to my friend to help him with the grieving process.

Frightened Child: As I aged, I learned more about the development of homosexuality in my own life. This allowed me vision to see the roots of same sex attraction in other people's lives as well. Many in the gay community believe we are born gay. I don't hold to that belief. I have traced its roots in my own life. I have seen many sensitive, young men develop homosexual attractions after having grown up with an overbearing mother and distant father, like me. This poem represents the collective stories of young men in my life who struggle homosexually. There are always common themes in the lives of strugglers. This poem was written because of my attractions, my desire to help others and a fear that ultimately, there was nothing anyone could do.

the chill of a faded whisper: This poem is based on 5 months worth of penguin keeper and penguin observations.

The Passage: I spent many years working as a dolphin trainer. My third day on the job we lost a dolphin named Scooby. I didn't have time to get to know Scooby. The trainers that had worked with him related the things I knew about him, to me. I wrote this poem for them.

Fracture: I wrote this poem for my mom. We had such a strong connection when I was growing up. There was a point in my life that I had to lessen that connection, because it was unhealthy. My closeness to my mother fostered the development of some very feminine characteristics in my life. I learned her moods, her likes, dislikes. I acted like her. I walked and talked like her.