

DON'T FLINCH

(2013)

So I've decided that instead of writing
poems I'm just going lose it instead
is the opening yes the opening to this
& as my life motto is *Don't Flinch*
this is also the title which I hope
you won't mind that is I doubt you will
unlike my life because here speed
has no meaning other than the meaning
you give it & not! the meaning
I will ever admit

we listen to reports coming through that both journalists
& troops are getting close to mayhem I try not to pass out
almost unbelievably neither of us knows that in times like these
we get time & a half we ask each other how we feel

*I'm ok, I don't know what she would have done had she known
about the natural faintness of my heart; very alert & large now*

Yeah, I know

one of those little black radios was sitting right there
other than an occasional crackle on the channel we sit in silence

no-one actually knows I am in here I think about leaving
some graffiti on the walls but then don't

Don't ruin this. This is it. Our Anonymity.

Yes, You're right. I said.

all very well having these various nurses sculpting bed-sheets &
attaching
IV's in the manner of a diplomat sampling food signalling
enthusiasm but

to what end?!

doctor walks in with the vague hint that he is an occasional
swinger
at last a consultant to riot the bruised colours painted in our able
fate

*last night my friends were inspected by plain clothes home-office
types
looking for a particular opposition to this whole global-amalgam-
brown-mulch
thing you lot have got going on.*

*all I know young man is the police had the gang pinned down by
snipers
which If I think about it sounds odd for a protest march but then
again
who are people like doctors to argue with what people like the
police
have to say*

The doctor turns to the patient (gamekeeper, trap wound) then
back to me
*I think you should leave sir; this is a hospital, not a place for the
mentally ill
plus glue is dripping down your sleeve & trouser leg*

As I leave the ward I hear the doctor say *repeat after one hour*
& the gamekeeper tries to cough

a lot of people are really angry about Human Rights now-a-days
as if they are sentimental
about a corporation's property as if their capability of reason has been
betrayed
by delirious checking & unchecking credit card statements
never touching the principle

even a small crowd's DNA on a tube platform could map the entire history of
mankind's migration
herd assorted scent predators they want thy blood!

Popular surveys have concluded that the
UK/US Special relationship as prophesised
in the book of Daniel as being the King Of
The South is actually in fact a medieval screw-

up

perpetuated by hallucinations generated
from neo-conservative circle wank sessions

A piece of paper is handed by an aide to a researcher
signing his name on it upturning fire fire fire trash talk
albeit a massive insult to indigenous vegan people

lobby for war because everyone enjoys Coca-Cola
sue me sue me sue me sue me sue sue me sue me
& I will call the town of Plachimada as witness

the secret director of exotic tinctures wheeled out on Wednesday
news programmes where the evidence was mostly sequestered in a
medic frenzy putsch

yet another existence of remains where we can't help ourselves
across the circle to have it left under
o the clouds of vaccines falling into a rule of thirds!

how can you be simultaneously passengers & lovers
who do not speak
at each other but connect eyes sweet blue eyes
& with each other wanting each other the entire week
any human will do clinging in the wake of arms
despair held up to light like small beads screaming crowds

she was sitting across from me teetering on the edge of a moment
I guess it must be some time since things were OK
yes she was alright building sandcastles with dad
yes she was alright falling off her bike & picking tarmac out of
her knee
yes she was alright when blowing bubbles a foot big & can still
remember the smell on her fingers
yes she was alright sometimes then

we just move to sit never enough just to sit

what do you do?

most people see themselves as characters in their own right
billed in lights
even if they are just office managers even if they know they are
just office managers

what do you do?

what do you say to someone who only asks questions so you will
ask
the very same question back to them

what do you do?

I do nothing nothing at all but I do it rather well

he will enclose your hand within his
as the smoke clears skin together close
as possible exerting firmness in the glow
of Saturday evening cinema shifting
from hand-to-hand palm-to-palm he won't keep
his eyes open if he likes you crashing
upon wild eye innocence holding eyes
with time cut through the town
like a sickle a vivid image displayed
with nothing but fingers & membranes
so thin that if pressed hard enough
they would twine into lace crocheted
in a way milk goes in the face
of an oncoming storm beyond
the nature swirled a great deal
of collateral & a high street of cool
passion that is really just angry
at its self underneath it all when within
every darkened corner lies
an old step where lives were lived
in stunted hangovers the inches
of a life the birth of a drifter

you're not going to get anywhere with those texts of trips
to rotten cotton shopping centres hauled flights to Greek islands
packaged food & the holy economy of scale
concrete over flowerbeds empires in bags squirming as they
are lifted over the canal in the shadow of an arterial motorway
sound of lorries cutting a hymn of sorrowful dependency in the air
o hot tarmac steamrolled! a turn of kinetic pressure for speed
so we can go go go wherever we want like birds twenty-
something
burned out to black black as the outline of cartoons brash
monochrome figures who once almost became adults the wind
blowing away a failed attempt of living from the baby boomers
children
but beside all this the universe is whispering tonight elastic
promiscuous intoxicated fear of seeming alone

Ignored on the street *I'm gonna fuck you all up*
a trivial nightmare pay nothing until your brains have hit the
 wall
dada is dead long live dada

wait that isn't it let me try again

why don't you come back to mine in a bit?

I'll show you that this seemingly weak adult body
is actually filled with a teenage heart that beats any way
you want it to beat soaked with knicked white paint

what became of our purity?
when the past does not equal our future?

no time for plastic forks!!

wait please wait that isn't it either

Dear You

I'm sorry let me come back

I cannot love you anymore than this

yours
 J

a split eclipse
innocent undiffracted light

where have you gone
limber one?

commit no sin
young mind

inspiration is everywhere
the skyway of air

as flowers
yet to disappear

are held by ringed
fingers

rings of coins
I'm almost at the end

of your fingers
all I've got left

is that half eaten banana
fearing the ashtray

spinning in strange
loop of aesthetics

but I will get there
& those flowers

will become lines
& they will

disappear

the bass hits me on the floor like nostalgia I love
the way your body exists I love your (un)truthful blink
the way you are straight out of the shower nobody can love
stones even igneous off the slopes of Etna

split unforgiven hopes across your memory & you
blanked me when you swim at night do you swim with
angels & are they smiling?

it is normal to control the end-game of orgasms

bled all week then drank the wages before breadlines to have the
chance to dance mass culture generation glutinous rich
hysterical

to dream of non-conformists in factories early years of cracked
glass

in scout huts I am a clock fog hugging the high rise flats
seducing shape fever of concrete elevator music scores

who do I see about removing the ego from poetry with as little
fuss as possible?

wishing good luck & fortune make no sense
after realising old Matchbox cars require care
for their pop art memories in shadow of electric fan

I find in the cupboard silence of the aftermath
 branded fading
 itself across the milkman apron grief
here for all I know is where the ash of lanterns
fall back down to be collected for lost love & divided time
poetry is God's satisfaction with burning
poetry is
poetry is...

burnt tongue rests dank unwashed Camden skin a jaw casket
 moist (but drying)
proud of youthful folly opened eye-door a linseed oil sunset
 over South Wales
white hot memory glooped chasing the sunset across South
 Wales I almost
touch it at Swansea this train is one of the most nervous actors
 I've ever seen
head forth into the wonderful guts of Wales light coming up just
 to be pulled down
up the aeroplanes cut ice I could be dead right now washed
 involved
zooming into an amazement of desire into Wales who knew

Poetry often starts with thoughts of happiness
speckled with a matched colour of a possible love
it all figured out until there is nothing but clues
then written with the fever of an ancient mythical text

everything is a fucking poem these days
this pen
this room
these petty actions
these irregular heartbeats
these awful poems

but not these prayers I'd say
pleading to the universe
for mercy
for a terrified
& naive soul

it never hurt anyone writing out the hot top hill PhD reaching
forwards
to rein in beliefs whilst around polite company spending all
spare time
sharpening knives in the library I lay down next to you with lies
ricocheting around my head scraps of identity are now extinct
under Tramadol I write epics searching for dog shit & the spirit of
Atlantis
Go ecosystem burn God is playing with his looking glass
& we cannot take the blame

vomiting to the sound of lost voices
in awkward teenage love poems
outside this point of a hangover
everything was box full forgetting
prophecy that we learnt by ear the
world is a poem swung hopelessly
from visions of bent pipes & angel
voices that told men to hunt
daylight embrace the joy
computer chip virus philosophy
that is stale time a different day
today yes nothing but a loop
of lock & painted over windows

we should all take a lot of pride in our global success story
take the East Asian Shark Meat & Fin industry booming
& take the cuts for the Help Company Telephone Club
take the whole as fiction & at least you will never feel betrayed

sometimes if I squint I see the hand of the market invisible
but happy in its slow yearned lust for nuclear families
in rivers I spot rivets welding off cuts & a film of black
moving in the sunlight like bacteria in a Petri dish

you are concrete bus stops
you are sun setting over beer garden
you are disconnected clinging to a pint glass
you are me losing my accent
you are a safe dosage for a male adult to consume

Do not worry
I have been so lonely I've written poetry for ghosts
of hypotheses dashed against window gleam a warm red light
thing is no one is reading this
you especially are not reading this

cut up & defoiled towards (yes) blackholes in sprawl of urban
night
sewn up headlights a powerful sense of forgetting movement
just for the sake of traffic a book like a bible handed out
o the butchery of underemployed office clerks in taxi rides home!

radiator dog wedged inside yet to be turned towards that dawn he
saw
Georgie is fiddling with wires & car batteries to get the system
wobbling
the first days of summer so nobody was about to start pacing
themselves
anytime soon another city lost to the power of youth about to be
spread out
to catch every bit like a thousand messiahs begging for crucifixion
for the sake of crucifixion close to here younger girls skip rope
whilst
superstars of BMX circle their side days full of joy & innocence
most knew
it wouldn't last that just made it go harder & faster until heads
span into mess
saying that it is easier to be reborn after close death than a close
life

pistols guitars poems flowers metals ceramics pictures of the
moon.

be a master of pistols learn to shoot a man between the eyes
from twenty yards but when passing vegetables to your little
sister

around the kitchen table be of the grace that you barely know
about the existence of weapons let alone their power

learn why you want to play the guitar this is the basis for your
first songs

commit to it the thing like marriage

don't write poems.

flowers express deep emotional meaning
only if they other person has the same symbolic references
if you want to love this person & this is the case write poetry
see above

you are metal

ceramics is speed

the moon is outside

long coat opium look far too much
fashion when you're already like
mohair caught in the downdraft
of her under breath murmurings

these lost betting slips are filled with Freudian overtures
am I just to soak in the Faustian afternoon until
streetlamps come on where the bioluminescence of night
allows my double life daytime nothing
 or this never-ending evaporation

hope for telephone ringing in long blonde afternoons
away from small town philosophy
earnestly cannot capture

helicopters are constantly hovering above high
heels on trains fast forward past Dave Christ's
Porno Warehouse
past synthesis of stout & shells of factories

& I once wrote poems about feral black sheep
& burnt out cars on moorland o boy
& smiles rise to the brim of sad eyes of old men
& their really old chairs.

ever write out your life in Ginsberg's Howl? like
who cried upon copies of William Carlos Williams TS Eliot &
 abstract minimalist trappist monks drawing nothing but line
 poems on the same island where the book of revelation was
 envisioned or
who K-holed television tripped up ten flights of stairs into arms of
 3 angels thought he was in Japan until the next day when he
 tripped over Britannia's robe then cried as she dabbed
 grazed knee with the sort of love only an empire can give
Who had the only true idea of love drilled into ancient fertile
 pastures of childhoods lost in abandoned farmhouses
 recounting like Warsaw like black pine confines like village
 pubs which became altars of tyranny & destruction when
 lights are turned off. or
Who got lost in chemical symbiosis of asexual religion on the way
 home to NHS voluntary psychiatric wards & didn't even have
 his keys.
who stamped on black mirrored iPods in busy summer parks as
 families & child's lost balloon looked on in horror next to
 forgotten general bronze horse hysteria
who in Faustian ecstasy kept writing & rewriting the same poem
 over & over on the steps on Whitehall because they wanted
 to keep forgetting - to save how beautiful it was the first time
 they wrote it
who saw angels in drum n bass then got shot with heavenly
 adrenalin for two years until they remembered Christ &
 hypothermia set in

& on & on & on

who this
who that
who great big New Jersey Jewish Accent doesn't sound so good in
 Yorkshire

pages &
pages

for years.

honestly, I don't get much done.

on the acrylic painting waves of the sea
I think I spot a mathematical pattern
for Latin Poetry which becomes in turn
different shades of gray in mistake
of metric muses of existentialism

Nirvana isn't meant to be punctuation but prose
in constancy of setting sun a void of silent height
your body is a content sage
that blocks out fear & disorder elsewhere

time should not be thought of as accumulative
but decreasing always dwindling because without time
decreasing there can be no entropy which would
make so many faces make no sense so many lives
meaningless we are entering time time does not
go by us we eat it we eat it like greedy children
like greedy Tories we eat it like Kellogg's Cornflakes
like cocaine like pornography like broadband usage
time should not add but decrease clocks should
count down & calendars reverse & descend this way
people would be more aware of their own mortality
& therefore themselves we would not have war but
for the sake of war in order to feel war rather than
for politics we would not have suicide for office workers
we would not have office workers people again
would become connected to the hard earth
corroding in its futile effort against the galaxy & not
dreaming of infinity & holidays & gawking
into a black hole of half baked disconnected personality

money & poverty does not tell the reality of a working day
tired old strain muscles eyes tendons arms that seek
6pm scarves & gloves slinked up after a dividing thought
temporary eye falling from an illuminated grip the morning
news
down the crepuscular highway to get to anonymous meetings
& afterwards we would eat prime beef with our hands

I heard about this Iraq war poet that worked nights in one of those
oh you know sleazy hotels oh you don't? well she did
the hotel dealt mainly with crowds all regulars she had her
shifts
cut when she said she couldn't pay the rent the manager
said not to complain as his father shot himself because the alfalfa
crop
failed that year & with the insurance money he was worth more
to his family dead than alive & for months that little boy stared
out
the window at the scarred dry earth half ploughed now &
growing
ever more silent as even the crickets began to disappear

the office of nature splices life together in cycles of congealed
tears
until a voice makes you turn to hear a question from an indifferent
sky
then these smiles come through like a cracks in a smartphone
screen

Dear Sunday

can we go snort huge crystals & read shamanic texts until our eyes
twitch
learn about pens sycthes amulets & sacrificed burnings of ghee'd
incense
in rubbish bins & strawberry patches

Dear Monday

I love you
because you make the general public miserable

Dear Tuesday

distract me from these laced up women so I can take my pills
yes to go to work to pay bills & remember to forget rhyme

Wednesday

I have spent you
thinking about military offices in Gloucestershire
razor sharp bombs long line cameras you could bet yr life on
all orders made in restricted areas pumped by anti-depressants

the most lovely day & we'll have it together
you would probably say somewhere like the Salford Quays
but i'm rather fond of chalk cliffs been hit by a bold Thursday

Friday

We have to go out but first fish & chips out of the paper
then we can drink until we fall down or up either way as long as it
is into each other
I don't care

on Saturday I have free tickets to watch the latest demonstration
of democracy

bit of a trade convention
need to convince people like poets about this sort of thing
the corporate hospitality menu says mussels in champagne
venison cutlets sticky toffee pud
& I don't think if I really put my mind to it
I could come up with a more delicious last meal

osmosis of cigarette smoke
in the damp lungs of a statistician
a super-slow-real-time embrace of steady gone streets

yes the sparse but significant ones
 the big black landmarks
 the double yellow lines a village in bloom

not the other one who lunged at a burning speed to grasp
 Hyacinths
but the one with a tattoo that says *they called me the Hyacinth Girl*
& everyone knew something clicked that would take a life to break

now this time I'm taking it very seriously a train
whispering old sea shanties of a deceased wife's poetry eternal
record of love
pulls away now from a station through a teeming elder brother
cluster of buildings
unwilling to join aether of dust twenty yards long as the train
crosses crescents of iron
picking up enough speed to blur sight a 24 hour supermarket
(strictly in a biblical sense) the cranes & grass of hospitals back
to back engine gardens the satellites
sound of train like an orchestra in a dull rotting gut sky
conservatories of aspidistras
desperately searching for something that cannot be overlooked to
the point
where it can only exist in poetry longing for distance but yet
close enough to hold it
in that moment when you thought you had it before the engine
slams into gear

& finally we are gone

& finally we are gone

finally sick of how her flat stunk of skunk smoke
she falls to her knees in the breath of drizzle
an intense sadness sparked by odious beauty of traffic

the (insert yr digits) bus choked down the high street
exhaust emissions floating away like a sociopath reading pulp
fiction
the fading lights fail to adequately bleach the atmosphere

these sirens are theatre props he writes
she looks across at his notepad
unsolicited emotion paralysed her to a point

where she was been pushed around in a haze of European social
phobia
that just means people reach for their mobile phones in awkward
situations
because it is too soon to talk about the weekend

& opportunity oozes away like a dwindling sticky oily summer

the visions picked themselves up from city centre raving to a
 soundtrack sponsored by the heavenly background of her
 shoulders making the morning
she saw the street outside hesitating in dawn with unique trees
 spotted up the side like a French boulevard from a subtitled
 film she'd quite like to watch sometime
he thought to himself that it isn't here but in those peeling plaster
 piazzas that we become men what with the architecture &
 strong compassion pointing like a seven sided star on the
 wall of a Turkish bathhouse deflecting & rebounding light in
 all directions witnessed stone sober
she has held back enough poetry already aware entirely of the
 horrible abundance of experience that surrounds her
 causing poems to teem with that searing black bricolage
 when telephony was just a dirty little secret canned
 laughter humming like a low wattage light bulb behind those
 eyes those fucking eyes
they will believe anything as long as it is doled out in hundreds &
 hundreds of decibels disconnected clinging to stars
lying down fucked out of their brains watching a morning
 unfolding that seems to have nothing to do with them as the
 starling daylight defoils the red lights defoils the chimneys &
 defoils these blackholes until they can finally stop dance
 fly fuck in the winter sun & write poetry until ink dies

this illness goes hunting even if I don't some days
I can't sit down effervescent unachievable
I walk box to box with fingers crossed
down to the next level via escalator
I fidget far too much & swallow it in one & usually
within five minutes she has blurred into the street
gone searching for a man's real confidence & there
I can feel all the Bristol night move around me

the sky was an incomplete jigsaw of a fishing village in the Faroe
Islands

light on the centre of my forehead
sends images of big rocks low lying storms
that turn eternal daylight
into a greyed sage red for months on end

each drop of rain a nimble investment made by millennia of dead
Viking breath

far past the polyester world this is Valhalla separated by burning
flags this is the end of the world

but on St Olav's day we all eat fresh whale meat
whilst an innocent temptress fills the tankard
slightly unbuttoned Bunad
whose hair is Heaven
& sometimes the stitching that joins nails
to the end of fingertips
