

The Unknown Poet

Even A Rose Has Thorns

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Dedications

This book belongs to all of the underdogs in the world.

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Welcome Words

these words welcome all, a journey for all,
with each page turned, another chunk of heart is released in ink
a full heart ground down, bled, then used as ink
before its death with every passion felt in mind
it was ground down, and put into rhyme
a gift of the journey, from thorns to rose
from the remains of a heart, this book arose
please, I ask now with welcome words,
to welcome, a heart's last words.

A Poet

his emotions bleeding from his pen
proving he can't always hold them in,
writing of things not just for others but also for him
spilling his heart onto endless pages,
his only release throughout the years,
acknowledgment only arriving in slow stages
hoping his goal of publication nears
his dream, to reach those who are deemed unreachable
if only once, to write what many view as unthinkable
to convey that there is always someone else who has felt what some feel
to show things in this world that are seldom seen but real,
the audience consists of anyone,
anyone, who has ever felt anything
he's trying to have an impact on everyone,
expressing what he has seen, what he has felt, everything
this is all he is,
this is all he does,
he is one of many,
a poet.

Under The Embrace Of Thorns Part 1

incapable of understanding the ideology that mother followed
seeing others doing and wearing things far more than parents pay allowed,
sporting k-mart and payless variety, not able to wear what the other kids wore
told to never take more than what you need, there are others that might need it more,
a twelve-year-old boy already beginning to question his place in society
arguments with a father to the point where they would soon erupt violently,
the eruption took place resulting in the first father son fist fight
not long after the event mother mysteriously lost her eye sight,
MRI after MRI and the doctors still had no glimmer of an explanation
her eye sight returned, but other body parts began to sporadically lose their function,
high school was approaching, and with it all the more arguments ensued
not allowed to go with friends, the anger of the situation rapidly accrued,
my chosen high school was unacceptable and labeled as too ghetto
despite the fact that it was in the neighborhood my family chose to settle,
forced by parents to join a program that allowed travel to a different school
parents only looking to create a future that seemed brighter,
yet it was viewed as a fathers inability to understand, just another attempt at being cruel
this event drastically increasing the distance between me and father,
the beginning of high school marked the beginning of a most severe change in mentality
normal childhood issues not lasting much longer, it was time to hit rebellion and reality,
finally, doctor after doctor after bouncing around
a diagnoses to my mother's problem was found,
myasthenia gravis, a neuro muscular disease
no cure, just a poorly understood incurable disease,
now riding the school bus past a graveyard day after day
contemplating when and if she would die from respiratory failure,
keeping emotion locked inside, strength envisioned that way
no longer concerned whether an A student or a simple failure,
writing as an outlet now more important than paying attention
school no longer important, mind in a different dimension,
time to attain what society said I could not have
catch the bus, meet, and steal everything we did not have,
started originally to attain things for a personal stash
turned into an easy way for a fourteen-year-old to make cash,
each and every morning a longer list was made
students wanting things cheaper than what the store had to be paid,
the items stolen were sold at each school days end
ambitions snagged with the success of this new trend,
our operation went smooth for quite a long while
but as with any get rich quick scheme problems arose of the unforeseen style,
an argument over stolen merchandise escalated to an off-campus fight
an upperclassmen far bigger than me trying to jack me by way of fright,
after the fight, leaving the scene turned into yet another predicament
turned out the upperclassmen was friends with gang members now in the area,
3 members much bigger than him responsible for a sudden unexpected encroachment
after me because of the fight now wanting to fight in an alley in the same area,
knowing the probable outcome I refused and began hoping guns would not get drawn
not a swing was taken by either side but we still ended up getting punked by brawn,
almost out of the alley when asked for change to break a five
2 friends, one slightly behind when the conversation took a dive,
all 3 gang members were now around my best friend attempting to mug him
told by him to let it go, then impatiently waited as they took his money from him,
five dollars to him was not worth that probable outcome
off to ditch the rest of the day, make our money back and have fun,

revenge for the event was never an action truly taken
although we did eventually get the money back from them,
time flies in this manner, school year half way over
not a class truly attended or attempted to pass that semester,

out of breath, running hard, security and police in pursuit
partner caught, trying to think in between steps if he would snitch,
decided that he would, ended running, time to get patted down and change route
caught stealing, fourteen years old being arrested for the second time and still not rich,
this time different, accustomed to fighting a father but was now disowned by my mother
the pain went straight to the core, but only able to change a part of my behavior,
attending class only resulted in a different type of situation
friends hung out with changed, kicked out or transferred, a calm lasting a short duration,
made a new ally which with time would turn to an eight-year relationship
this new friend having problems with a stuck-up brown-nosing rich prep,
when called out he backed down, but behind backs he never stopped giving lip
in high school this was a problem, immaturity kicked and we couldn't just sit,
words exchanged several times calling him out repeatedly to fight
he was great at talking crap but when confronted he only took flight,
weary from numerous cowardly encounters he became a joke quite profound
the notes we wrote with him as the gag were somehow mysteriously found,
to the adults the prep was completely innocent, he wasn't capable of provoking anyone
school coordinators began to talk of restraining orders and expulsion,
Mr. Jackford in particular, told my mother I was a hoodlum
that I needed to be taken back to the hood I was from,
a five-day suspension, verbal insults, and a school contract that was written
a fourteen-year-old kid being told by society he was worthless once again,

summer hits and the gateway between my two worlds is easier seen,
going down the block to chill and play at my familiar scene,
to a good friends house to relax and play some video games
excited at being surrounded by my blocks familiar names,
sitting next to a friend while he loaded bullets from the floor into a banana clip,
not paying much attention, playing games, suddenly an ak-47 was pressed to my head,
laughter at the joke knowing that he never inserted the clip
an event that would shock upper society, trivial to me, normal where we were bred,
chillen on the block outside at night
now playing football in the road by street light,
paranoia at passersby dating back to games and lessons of a childhood flock
at younger ages we all hit the floor for each car that drove slow down the block,
each car that crept down the block was a potential drive by in our neighborhood
never happened on our block, funny how for some reason we always thought it would,
spent nearly every day outside growing closer to our tightly knit crew
the brief summer over and its back to world number two,

school started somewhat well, but as usual turned into a place to meet
ditched frequently, but this time only to parks to play football and meet,
I began witnessing another loss of friends, as many decided to drop out
back of a mind shouting stop following, become a leader, find a different way out,
a spring morning, waking up at 7 am as usual to walk to the bus stop,
a very small walk, down the street by the mailboxes at the end of the block,
peering strangely at the scene to get to the bus
the street ahead some reason a mess,
a car parked in front of the mailboxes, covered with caution tape, surrounded by police
not paying much attention, hopped on the bus and left in peace,
second period came, and with it the harshest reality that defines life

death had come, and it now claimed a neighborhood mothers life,
James West from around the block, after losing his father the year before,
was now, solely, responsible for his sister's life and a million things more,
his mother was shot and killed in that car in front of the mailbox,
an unexpected loss wounding deeply both our blocks,
sharp pains shooting through my chest,
but James, his pain, I could never have guessed
a transformation now occurred, writing vigorously to change my, our world
an event bigger than me had to occur to force a stubborn perception to come unfurled,
a realization came, that to win one must understand,
in order to put up a fight, one must not play into societies hand,
give them what they expect to happen and they will win,
show them their bias is false, succeed, then loss and anger will consume them...

Our Struggle

treading through dark green anaconda infested waters,
determined to outlast the unending acid rain showers,
dodging bullets constantly shooting from unknown cannons,
watching helplessly as loved ones drop unexpectedly,
this road of life is filled with death and tyranny,
wounds inflicted upon broken hearts of gold,
hearts not lasting blacken and turn cold,
agony spreading without bias, a virus passed to each individual
a wasted shell of a human created when it is not survived,
a robotic resemblance of a human no longer holding attachment to this world
empty shells walking, a wasteland of emotional scars,
rivers of blood and tears flowing from each ghetto atrocity
violent crimes of an underground unseen by the eyes deemed regular society,
the enormous blind spots of an imperfect system
keeping hidden the true realities of poverty,
lower class dreams repeatedly shredded by the wealthy man's knife
evidence swallowed whole by the abyss that is life,
these groups of people seemingly lost and forever troubled
this pattern, remaining invisible with cries that are muffled,
mouths of the brave silenced and sewn shut
our struggle remains the book people are afraid to pick up.

The Visit

eerie silence, swallowed by pacing brains
faces stricken, with emotional stains,
a waiting room, jammed with people in trance
all walk ins, no appointments made in advance
a place where poverty meets the upper class, with arms spread wide
as if welcoming a problem-less people, to the other side
a problem affecting all equally
no matter race stature or ethnicity,
rippling thoughts of experiences shared with past acquaintances
memories possibly revealing a future of unwanted changes,
off white light leaking from dull neon bulbs
televisions providing diversions for shredded nerves,
a broken number device of white and red
nurses shouting names to replace the numbers no longer read
the waiting, all dreading to pass through
a single oak door, leading to two
one path viewed as a second chance
the other, containing a deadly duet of dance.

The Angel

beauty undeniably standing out,
a flashlight in the middle of the darkest night
a sunset along the mountainside, viewed from the highest buildings height,
an angel to match those angel eyes
glamour only touched by that of the skies,
a single black orchid in a field of white
a clear ocean containing a coral reef, picture the most distinguished beautiful sight,
her mind, full of complexities
the oldest, smartest person, would find hard to believe
attitude matching the best of personalities
every aspect about her refreshing, an angel no man would wish to deceive,
despite the facts laid out
herself she did doubt,
far from perfect she thought,
struggling to be average she believed,
not knowing the actual perfection she had already achieved
she too fell victim to what everyone eventually does
felt the need to be needed, is what it was,
inviting another to join her, in her own special way
despite what the people around her would say
a loser, a mess up, not worth the time of day,
not judging, only extending opportunity
offering a small window of temporary immunity,
impossible to most she was to get
but with this loser, a date was set,
proved them all wrong, everything went extremely well
that is until he came out of his invisible shell,
she was special, not quite like all the rest
he had many before, never came close to the best
he managed to do it, he became her first
for him it was different, fourteenth maybe worse,
love did appear, not long it took to hear
two years disappear, relationship strong, nothing to fear,
only speed bumps easy to overcome,
just not as easy when your young,
all love is work, this is obviously understood
small problems readily apparent, of course understood,
then several of these speed bumps unearthed a mountain
so big it stopped the flow of love from its very fountain,
hid it well, pretended it was all good, she was strong
apparent to those who knew her, something was wrong,
he trapped her with his lies, arguments on how he was her only one,
fear tactics, knowing without her he was done,
scared of what to do if they became no more
she stayed with him, forced to believe his lore,
time went by, giving new meaning to a love-hate relationship
her heart battered, what was left, a single wounded heart chip,
it took a friend, that loved her more than he
to pull it out of her, the lifelong truth H.P.V.,
the victim of both variations
a strong risk of losing certain sensations,
changing her understanding of the situation
she broke up with him no hesitation,
life is a series of obstacles, an infinite cycle of odd twists and turns

true beauty is seen when it is unaltered, even after a series of harsh beatings and burns,
no other woman will ever compare
the angel, her form far too rare,
an angel to match those angel eyes
someday, an answer will be found for her cries.

Heart Thorn

a single thorn taking residence in an area far to close,
the place in ones chest that has an ability to hurt the most,
a thorn stuck so deep,
to pull it from its place would result in certain death,
forcing an overpowering anguish, putting all other emotion to rest,
a heart thorn,
only solution, to heal around the thorn, making it one with the one for whom its worn,
to tear it from its space would cause internal bleeding
a hole in the heart, with no real way of ever healing,
time is the only true solution
it is the only sure resolution,
with time, a thorn the heart will someday heal around
the anguish felt, will someday, eventually, go down,
a thorn of the heart, stuck into place by a love of some sort
now, be weary for this life is far too short,
too short to be constantly stabbed by a thorn of the heart
be wary, be smart,
pick carefully, who you choose to share your heart thorn
a wrong choice might result in a thorn, that is unwillingly worn.

Impact

the scene, a park, a place meant for fun and recreation
a shame, so sad, an exception was made in this situation
a barren place, the park known as falcon was on that particular day,
barren, excluding the five and a half, that were present that day
one and a half still young, still growing, still learning,
the half, an unborn child to a mother, not yet showing
the one, a mother, almost her eighteenth birthday,
a mere twenty-two days away,
the other four, well, no one really knows for sure
one however was known, the father of the unborn,
that leaves the other three,
friends of the father they had to be,
a horrible day, yet strangely, everyone there was thankful to be alive,
the idea behind the discussions held amongst and between the five,
are one with the concept that the park was picked when everyone was gone,
nearly the same reasoning used while the gun was being drawn,
what happened next, only describable in words,
as one of the loudest sounds one will ever hear,
a sound heard nearly anywhere,
no matter the distance far or near
Bang!
Bang!
Bang!
three shots, four men, and a woman carrying an unborn child
her cries drowned out by the sound which was so loud
Bang!
Impact!,
impact, to one father, one mother, one brother,
and to who knows how many friends of a heroic mother
a gun firing three shots by a woman who knew she was in trouble
the fourth and final shot, was shot in mid struggle,
it hit the woman pointblank, struggling to save her unborn child
struggling to save her child from a psychotic coward of a boy, unready to be a father,
Impact!
ravishing so many in so many different places,
creating tears flowing endlessly, from numerous faces,
creating anger which would easily burn holes through the sun,
impact,
a pain, which will always impact
and echo throughout everyone.

The Phone Call

a cell phone ringing with the same played out tune
an unrecognized number, bringing with it a monsoon
a peculiar aura suddenly stuffing the gut
thoughts to oneself, "stop trippin just pick the phone up"
the hesitation to answer, overshadowed by an urge of curiosity,
ignorance truly bliss, the phone containing information of an atrocity,
"hello"
a pause, followed by the crying of a tortured soul
painful words striking,
an unending blow,
the shock freezing joints, memories flashing threw a mind,
all speech halted, a call inflicting a scar of the worst kind,
a wave of past experiences, overflowing and flooding all senses,
the phone call came twice, although different each time
two completely different people, the same one line,
their gone, their dead,
one shot in the head,
the other seven times,
explanation of either person, an impossibility, needing an infinite number of lines
now, do not confuse what is being said, the story told is of two different situations
two amazing people, in two completely different situations
unfortunately, sharing the same end result
the phone call, this is where I ask for your support,
some of you still have time, do not abuse it, use it to give
due to unseen consequences of the world, in which we live
sudden events tend to occur taking away those whom we love the most
your support is needed, take time, call whomever you feel is close
tell them you love them, and how much they truly mean
do it now for the future is never truly seen.

Music

soothing tunes rushing to needing nerves
loud years of struggling hushed by identification,
easing lines calming restless notions
suicidal intentions erased with miniscule gratification,
hope found floating in lyrical content
ears rejoice to the sound which is so rejuvenating,
relaxation deep within relieves all daily commitment
perception of the unfair world lost as the music continues playing.

Simple Memories

reminiscing past memories
rediscovering old tendencies,
dramas to look back on and laugh about
looking for any reason to pick someone and shout,
stubborn arguments over young women
followed by the fear of actually doing anything with them,
struggling to actually eat lunch during lunch,
football at lunch more important than eating a bunch,
drunken bowling, a group of wild minors
carefree moments, free minds exploring new corridors,
mind strains to reach further back,
a time before our lives were on a track,
the elementary days,
memories that are wrapped with a warm haze,
worries solely on making it outside to play
games on the block the only way to spend the day,
a time when girlfriends pinched and kicked
when none of us were concerned with getting hugged or kissed,
simplicity the wondrous peak of bliss
thinking back at all the things we miss.

The Devils Playground

anger consuming the individuals trapped in glass boxes
entertaining to all but those locked inside
darkness cloaking everything near those caught
blind fury guiding actions through the ever-winding maze,
unknowingly misled by the lies of mischievous foxes
devils amused by tossing others' lives aside
reapers waiting to claim those left to rot
wandering down false paths held captive by the disorienting haze,
hearts beat, teeter tottering on the edge
hope slipping, dangling on the ledge,
sleepless nights imprinting minds with humanities failure
suffocation becomes apparent as life's warmth turns stale
educated decisions fly out the window when staring death in the face
fiends run the streets as individuals remain confined in hell's barriers,
amused onlookers laugh as the strong try to escape capture
dreams continuously shatter invoking suicidal attempts without fail
depressants abused while trying to get tainted memories to erase
overseers ambitions on spreading the imprisoning plague through drug carriers,
tyrants ensuring none outside the few receive enlightened visions
ensnared residents infinitely holding false hope to break their glass prisons.

Silent Death

shredding internals
chunks torn out and left to rot,
painful intervals
goals and expectations all shot,
one's silent death approaches,

a painfully stubborn silence it has become,
accept the consequences, never, he would rather run,
the truth, hiding among other fears in the corner
darkened, out of sight, unknown to even his closest brother,
one's silent death approaches,

running down the family line
leaving those affected with a limited amount of time,
the fight possible, but few do,
rolling over is just much easier to do,
great possibilities thrown in the trash
logical thinking lost, victim of a mental crash,
one's silent death approaches,

giving up only creating greater negativity
endless endings ignored due to blind stupidity,
decisions drawing death closer,
the clock running lower,
one's silent death approaches,

lifelong dreams disappear, all fading into the blackened corner
ideals becoming one with fear, no fight left to keep a mind sober,
a mind has been silenced
clock stops,
cancer wins.

Humanities Failure

a gentle breeze blowing quietly the green leaves of trees,
sitting on a balcony overlooking the city
contemplating whether life is complex or filled with simplicity,
watching from above, the hustle of everyday people
each person in a separate individualistic world,
trying to make ends meet, reaching for pieces of evil
the green shaded paper that rotates humanities world,
the ebb and flow of life endlessly cycling
whirlwind of a current endlessly swirling,
numerous struggling to keep afloat
heads barely above the freezing cold water,
so many struggling only to cope
some sinking to the depths of the darkest water,
society burying them without the slightest remorse
no helping hands just an unending struggle to survive the deadly course,
the so called 'elite' sailing freely on top, laughing devilishly at our plight,
while we tread in place, inflicting failure upon one another,
ripping each other's wings so none are capable of flight,
the 'elite' are unaffected by struggle,
they carelessly drink the earths beauty and squander humanities resources,
once upon a time civilization was beautiful, and the earth gorgeous,
one day our water will freeze, we must act before that hour,
we must take the place of those currently in power
before our world, and everything in it they devour.

Parasite

an entity who relies upon another for survival
feeding from the other being is vital,
using ones energy as if its own
turning its host into a powerless drone,
latching on as tight as it can
this parasite follows a simplistic plan,
find the easiest way to survive, abuse it, and begin to thrive,
it's almost over now, the parasite has been allowed to spread,
the host left tired and sick, dying, but it will not be the only one dead
without a host
there can be no parasite of any kind
this worlds the host
its parasite humankind.

American Slavery

time is not given to the timeless,
the same clock shared amongst the masses,
eighty percent fighting over a mere eight
not aware that they are each other's bait,
imprisoned within human limitations
success only found beyond exhaustion,
nonexistent fake material misconceptions
drugging minds to steal true ambitions,
high from all the wrong aspects
realization only when we've become train wrecks,
unstoppable spending machines flying through motions
incapable of steering fate back towards the golden success of hearts,
fighting amongst one another over petty meaningless objects
debt accumulated to a point where there is no longer choice,
tracks led us unknowingly into corporate slavery
the ships full, auto piloting all to be shackled and broken into servitude,
watching from afar the masters relax, concealed within obsidian castles
lifting fingers only to meticulously brainwash slaves into fighting unwinnable battles,
one percent of the population relaxing, controlling 40% of the nation's wealth
letting only a small amount trickle down to their house servants for good health,
obeying directly, carrying out soulless deeds in order to earn their pay each day,
the house servants make up 19% of the population
yet 51% of Americas money comes their way,
evidence of the tracks laid into the minds of the masses nearly impossible to trace
younger and younger minds corrupted and forced to steer each year,
the slave ships filled to the brim with adolescents fighting to gain a lead in the race
killing one another in violent fits of rage attempting to dispose of fear,
de-railing, a shrinking option as survival is first and foremost
Americas resources squandered by the upper ranks of the caste
leaving the slaves to fight amongst themselves for the rest
do the math and there's a measly 8% of the money left,
eighty percent fighting over a mere eight
a precursor to Americas neglected path responsible for its upcoming fate.

Regional Transportation Diversity

a fourteen-year-old girl sits near the front with her child dreaming
the drunks huddle together telling jokes in a drunken haze
a college student sits midway, headphones blaring head against the window sleeping
a broken man sits thoughtless, shut down after another one of his fourteen-hour days
teenagers stalling, wondering how a man who works so hard still has nothing
the drug dealer at the back patiently waits for the correct answer to his inquiries
a thug moves out of respect to allow an elderly lady to begin sitting
a delusional elderly man rants about how he single handedly won the world series

the loud screech of brakes cry out as it slows to a stop
climbing aboard desperately to get away from the cold outdoor climate
searching for a seat to squeeze into for the ride to his far-off stop
trying not to notice the hugely diverse crowd bound to the indoor climate
a single wealthy man clings to the window wary of the others, trying to keep out of view

a gang member stares down a kid wearing red simply because he bangs blue
inner city students stick together defending a young girl from a seasoned pervert
a preschooler strays from his mother to evade abusive swings, not wanting to get hurt
a couple to destitute for a car juggle groceries to bring home to their family
the bus accruing massive amounts of subsistent individuals far beyond capacity

the wealthy man getting an unedited view of the neglected half of society
the hardest working whom are struggling to eat and survive, variety
Regional Transportation District, the downtown Denver bus system
doubles unintentionally as a regional transportation diversity division
a place where the rich are finally, truly exposed to the poor
the underworld viewed through the looking glass of public transportation
a reality check, exposing the wealthy to the truth of their lore
a small wealth of information to stand against any uneducated accusation.

Stop And Think

lost within societies palm
pressured and pinned down by mainstream American ideals,
no brains left, only brawn
reactions before thinking negating what the heart feels,
money has addicted the mind, making promises which are never filled
too distracted by fool's gold to attain the brains liberation,
while sidetracked by false riches fates are unknowingly shut down and sealed
relying on others to show us our own path to salvation,
where dreams were once abundant subliminal failures now reside
media promoting such fake hope to fatten their own pockets,
green paper created a widespread psychosis the whole world invited inside
wills of the majority pulverized by self-created defective dream rockets,
billions of individuals left as fragmented versions of their former selves
standing in the cold broken, wondering why it didn't work,
then as if not concerned with the cause no one delves
we ignore it, doomed to repeat our actions with the same ignorant smirk,
the only way out is to follow your own personal wealth
ignore the rambling of the world, step outside societies roller rink,
create your own path by listening to yourself
be who you are meant to be, stop and think.

Trapped

loud panicked breathing,
strange rapid thumping,
darkness,

anxiety concealing sanity,
common thought flushed,
physically shaken and rushed,
darkness,

nails scraping surfaces in lack of any other grip,
desperate to hold on, struggling for even a partial tip,
darkness,

a shift sensed, focus on a small beam
a moment of clarity established, a flicker of light seen,
a breadcrumb path is peeked at
the window of opportunity has been cracked,
a split millisecond, light fades, breadcrumbs snatched,
a split millisecond, an inch forward, hope gets revoked,
senses aflame with a mile left to gain,
the window did momentarily crack,
but an inch is inch, when a mile does remain,
darkness,

dreams remain shackled in a brain yearning for escape,
waiting for the window to once again take shape,
desperate to begin but never left with a clear path to take,
darkness,

strange rapid thumping,
loud panicked breathing,
over and over again,
true potential trapped within.

The Mirage

walking alone, desperately trying to fight failures demons
head set on making it past the current state of desolation,
heartbroken, looking back on a life full of failed seasons
trying frantically to reach a new refreshing destination,
silky smooth crimson pedals glistening far off in the distance
calling out to be embraced by any individual willing to make the journey,
marching straight towards the irregularity of their existence
a new obsession to distract a core from its placement on loves gurney,
so perfect, glowing despite the surrounding drought
savior to a broken-hearted fool wanting to believe,
shutting out obvious flaws ignoring the blaring sun of doubt
unaware that his lonely pieced together heart had become easy to deceive,
attempting to escape the dehydration inflicted by the pasts mistakes
reaching out to grasp the seemingly perfect summer flower,
mesmerized by the awe of all her falsely projected traits
not noticing the sudden unexplainable drain of brain power,
desire further concealing the truths jagged edges
the fall in plain sight, yet denial was now in full control,
curtains on stage hiding the life stealing suicidal ledges
a succubus disguised as a crimson rose, set up to trick each gullible skull,
trapping all with fake sadistic performances professing her affection
numerous victims, spanning all twenty years of her development,
once caught personal goals disappear, fading with realities perception
aridity of the surroundings accelerating with her enlargement,
desert of a heart still empty, realizing something is amiss
not yet wanting to discard the artificial love currently responsible for hope,
a shattered pieced together heart longing for the ecstasy of bliss
locked out of his mind trying to figure out the best way to cope,
hanging on desperately as once again each piece begins falling apart
a deep breath is taken to try and hold together a one-sided relationship
memories still stuck on the illusion of the woman he met at the start.

Don't Exhale

quiet vibrance
sitting in a room of silence,
thoughts snagged on ovals
her ovals,
deep worldly brown eyes
full lush lips,
refusing to exhale
trying to hold in the moment
trying to prevent it from going stale,
meditating as the room stays silent
not willing to let go
face starting to turn blue,
lungs blazing hot
craving a breath of fresh air,
memories beginning to rot
blackout eminent, no air,
the hope of a relationship might soon de-rail
left fighting for it, must not exhale,
holding on just a little longer,
waiting for her to provide a refill breath
before exhaling brings hopes death,
waiting, just a little longer.

Reality Check

should've seen it coming from the start
all the signs were in plain sight,
too naive to accept the truth of life's art
ignoring the reality of her inner blight,
blinded like the others by outer beauty's corruptive glow
the crimson opiate of the masses successfully doped one more,
steady hallucinations of a future which seemed to grow
all while she solely concentrated on the number of times she could score,

multiple partners came knocking at her door
yet she never seemed to send any of them packing,
naïve becomes trust when such events repeatedly occur
reality becomes apparent only when one rejects denials backing,

seeing a familiar face from past boyfriends row far too often
a reevaluation of the situation began to take shape,
the veil had fallen revealing the other men and a hearts coffin
finally awakening from a self-promoted intellectual rape,
no longer impaired, viewing clearly the solitude of my landscape
standing motionless, holding every breath for a relationship which was never right,
the mirage merely a fabrication my heart created for realities escape
the sun once so bright, now setting leaving me alone amidst the freezing night.

Alone

individual in the dead of night
standing in the middle, on a lake of ice,
channeling all his heat to another,
she already forgot he exists,
kneeling on the ground freezing cold
wishing only for that other's warmth before death,
fighting so excruciatingly hard for every breath,
just to see her face one last time,
to feel her embrace one last time,
endless days waiting, hoping for her warmth
only to be rewarded with the discovery,
she ran back to another for warmth
falling to the ground mourning,
heart struck, an icy chill burning,
tears not leaving, just freezing
face numb, will worn,
all alone, world crushed,
wishing to stop a hearts bleeding
feeling of loneliness not fleeting.

Sleepless Nights

happiness not getting a turn to spin the wheel
unable to stop thought, becoming an insomniac,
inner demons in full control of the wheel
permanently suffering an emotional attack,
deep calm breaths, trying to gulp down pain and stress
time is running out, this heart will soon be put to rest,
eyes completely weighed down by the heart beating on a brain
seized up chest wishing eyes would let go and release the rain,
inability to let go, leading to a state of zombiness
robotic movements to get through each day, heart lies motionless,
the light love once brought replaced now with darkness
pitch black, cold, relentless assaults of loneliness,
sleepless nights filled with pointless unending contemplations
impossible to predict alternate endings, guessing at different variations,
tortured, pondering if a different action would have created an alternate outcome
it's far too late to go back now, the past is the past nothing can be done,
still, sleep refuses to come.

Cold

numbing to the touch
its presence brings a chilling aura,
looking at it directly sends shivers down a spine,
hair standing on end, trying to run from it,
ice upon layer of ice mixed with a bluish frozen blood
sending ice sickles through a bodies stream of blood,
heat reflected, unwanted by the object, frozen solid
a barrier of ice, wrapped with a thick fog containing floating debris
shards of broken parts held in orbit by the cold of a core,
time frozen, revealing deep wounds inflicted at the time of freezing
started at the outer most layer, cut its way inward
layer after layer growing cold, then dying,
fighting vigorously with no mercy brought no stop to the progression inward,
war wounds tunneled towards the very place responsible for resistance
misery finally standing at the entrance of the core,
maniacal inner laughter, tired of fighting for love in loves absence,
heart giving in to decay, declaring a new type of core,
numbing to the touch
its presence brings a chilling aura,
a heart frozen to the core will hurt no longer,
the cold impenetrable making it numb, but stronger.

Under The Embrace Of Thorns Part 2

junior year, now understanding what had to be done
a new mindset to shut out everyone,
writing passionately and keeping to myself
focus on catching up and graduating, had to make it to college if nothing else,
for the first time in years honor roll was hit
mindfully clawing my way out of failures pit,
fights and arguments at home continued growing worse
the uncertainty around mothers condition is what hurt the most,
writing was not enough, craved another form of release
the summer filled with parties, street racing and running from police,
at times it was a bit hectic but I always maintained my direction to steer
my seventeenth birthday was approaching and with it the prelude to another year,
two days before my birthday, a phone call was received by my grandmother, hysterical
mind in state of shock, trying to grasp if what she was saying, was indeed factual
sobbing over the phone apologizing for the timing
releasing news that my great aunt was now dying,
twenty-four to forty-eight hours to live
the estimate the doctors did give,
made the trip, sat in a room and watched as humanity left her
color in skin fleeting, then completely pale as life left her,
school began had to shake it off, cut all emotional ties to think towards my future
working as hard as I could at school to ensure graduation, the start of my future,
fights at home had greater intensity, I no longer could take his pushing
was doing all I could, completely in control had my life figured out, but he kept pushing,
only so much one can do without rejuvenation
the block was my only form of rejuvenation,
another stupid argument over school
said I wasn't doing what I needed to,
tried to lock me inside with a fatherly rule
walked to the door and unlocked it to stage my coo,
offense taken for he was mistaken,
I knew what I was doing and needed some relaxation,
a father son conversation rapidly mutating again into a war
argument out of hand, hands on back trying to rough me up shoving me out the door,
words sputtering saying if I was so grown then maybe I shouldn't come back
hands pushing on back creating the click that said to fight back,
a 360 degree turn, a quick attempt to swing and I missed
only nicked his face, met however with a full blown perfectly placed fist,
hit in the jaw knocked off the porch, then a scuffle to get up and recover
got up angrily ready to fight, stared into his face when the discovery took place,
I was finally big enough to do him real harm, but what if he didn't recover?
took his words to heart, I wouldn't come back to that place
walked away making it the first and only fight left unfinished
rage hit after I left, mad that after all these years I just left unfinished,
tried to ignore the anger, had to find a place to stay for the night
jaw nearly broken, could not chew or talk that night,
woke up the next day, pit of stomach filled strangely, anger mixed with clarity
time to get up, face the real world, become a man by stepping into my new reality,
to what was now my parents' house to pack necessities, then leave
hardest emotional strain, face my mother's crying eyes, say goodbye and leave,
walking slowly down the block towards my ride
weather expressing my emotions as tears began falling from the sky,
to my beat up integra with its broken window on the passenger side
took down the garbage bag placed in the window to keep it dry,

no destination, just wanted to drive as far away as possible to push it all away
friend's house to friends house, until I was offered a longer temporary place to stay,
on the block, another family taking me in as if I was their own
setting up shop upstairs on the floor, covers creating my bed in my new temporary home,
Kheena Brandon and my nephew Shawn always there before
but now all a simple walk to another door,
Shawn's attitude providing me with a getaway
an escape from the problems in my every day,
his happiness attained so simply at a young age
leaving me motivation to crawl out of societies cage,

late one night received a phone call from my mother crying
my second dog had collapsed on her while camping and was dying,
lungs filled with blood, rushed to the hospital but she arrived too late
just a few months after bear was put down, trouble now met an unpredictable fate,
on the floor in the dark, staring blankly at the ceiling
contemplating the probability that one by one, each thing I loved would be taken,
tears falling silently, what then was the point of all my future planning?
more disturbing, the news on my mother's condition, this news left me shaken,
discovered that escalation of her disease was directly linked to emotional distress,
that for the past four years I was the biggest factor causing her disease to progress,
had to turn guilt, anger, and anguish, into motivation and success
time to put all my pieces on the table, to win an unwinnable game of chess,
needed to push through and graduate high school
then somehow make it to college and finish school,
quit being a punk, get up and fight, never give up, quit being a fool
began churning all emotion into anger to use as fuel,
found a new hate for bugs when battling against my homes cockroach infestation
barely made it but took care of what I needed and walked on time at graduation,
rapid loss of time without true progress took root as my life began passing faster
helplessness had my gut filling with the dread of an approaching disaster,
didn't feel right relying on family, living under someone else's roof
seventeen years old, needing a place to claim as my own roof,
was solely responsible for myself, wasn't right for others to share that burden
not old enough to sign a lease but found an apartment, called my brother Traemon,
not by blood, but by experiences shared since kindergarten
my family if you don't already see, stem from the neighborhood I grew up in,

first apartment, TV on floor, bed on floor, table, the blanket on the floor
deep breath, things will get better from this point on,
optimism soon to be overshadowed by wave after wave of thorns washing to shore
deep breath, just a little longer, must stay strong,
stubborn, determined to only rely upon oneself, asking for help was weakness
nearly starving between checks, 39 cent bread and water bought a fake feeling of fullness,
a couple weeks from beginning my first fall semester of college
realized there was no possibility of paying bills, eating, working, and going to college,
withdrew from classes, only plan in life had fallen through the cracks
support oneself first, live life, push harder then get to college despite the cracks,
months began falling off the calendar as work took hold
constant day dreams to keep a hearts ambitions from growing cold,
a blown engine resulted in the need for a new form of transportation
a signature loan became the means of attaining my new motorization,
first week with my new perfectly flawless red acura
driving just to drive In my mint condition 92 gsr integra,
followed without reasoning for blocks, then pulled over by an undercover cop
noting the old address on my license, harassment began, a crooked joke of a cop,

due to my neighborhood of upbringing, my car had to be stolen and I must've been selling drugs threats of taking me to jail, if "juicy" information on dealers or chop shops was not spilled, plates ripped off my car, patted down, searched, more threats shouted, trying to get info on drugs mocking me with a: "you grew up where and you don't know what?!", crooked cop with a career to build, phony ticket written, fake accusations, said I had 2 weeks to call with the "juicy" information if I didn't call, the ticket would go through destroying my recently clean at age eighteen legal reputation, called alright, called internal affairs to get him investigated, to get the charges dropped instead, got a letter in the mail stating he acted within the law, what he did would not be stopped, refused to go to court, ignored the summons, kept driving had to get to work somehow ticket he wrote took my license, bring on the warrant, I was screwed either way now,

time simply swallowed by work, before I knew it was the summer of 0 four apparently I was just the first to go, one by one friends began getting kicked out, it started with one becoming my roommate, then bam! suddenly there were three more five of us in a one bed one bath apartment, all due to being thrown out, I took it upon myself to create a place of transition, a rest stop to regroup a very crowded temporary situation so they could find their feet and recoup, growing weary of 60-hour work weeks I was in need of a vacation luckily the 4th of July had arrived bringing about our annual block celebration, the yearly camping trip, this year to Utah in order to spice things up allowing me to stop along the way to visit my aunt, eat dinner and catch up, the camping trip commenced turning from vacation to a tragic comedy sad but funny as we were so ill prepared to venture to this new territory,

it started with having no food and no grocery store for over 80 miles then the drama continued as one of the radiators cracked, now stuck in the desert with no civilization for over 80 miles we found a camping spot despite the radiator that was cracked, we had 8 men to feed with a whopping four cans of disgusting soup the problem then became that we did not have a can opener to reach the food inside, eventually one of us took 2 rocks, chiseled open a can and rationed it to the group camping in the middle of nowhere, with warm beer, cold soup, and one less ride, the next day we decided the vacation was a failure and that we had to fix the car by melting a rubber glove onto the radiator we made it all the way home in that very car, upon returning from our poorly planned trip I decided to swing by my parents place a chance to fill them in on the hilarity of unfortunate events that took place, entering a parents house to visit, found no parents just a quickly scribbled note, aunt Carolyn had died, they had left to attend her funeral, had dinner with her a week before, now I was left with a quickly scribbled note, seemed as though she was fine fighting the cancer, then so suddenly a funeral, reality still wouldn't set in that she was gone, that she lost her fight to cancer, life travels far too fast only pausing for each life ending matter, merely two weeks after the news of my aunt we lost another blow after blow leaving no time for my heart to recover, a father of a friend considered family had been unexpectedly lost another life exemplifying the speed at which you breath your last, his life lost ironically by heart attack, while relaxing in the basement a reality check changing our thinking, shifting the entire base of our pavement, earth dropped by family on the casket as a form of final reflection squealing noise breaking the last barrier of mental collection, words no longer spoken, tears doing all the talking, a large group of black figures in a field mourning, black dominating every object, standing silent to reflect, a cloud filled day surrounded by friends, lost in thought saying goodbye, thinking how quickly everything ends...

Suffocate

suffocation, to choke, to smother,
the result of a certain choice that was made
a choice this person didn't wish to trade,
the decision was not clear
painful thoughts provoked fear,
the question now is what would be so excruciating
that the best choice revolves around suffocating,
the risk of something being destroyed, destroying all that has been built
the worry, that the others might not make it, that somehow it all might tilt
the stress, the thought of leaving a lifelong guild
why not stay and help the rest continue to build?
why, if everything is so great
would staying cause one to suffocate?
how could this life be so trouble ridden?
the answer of course is hidden,
hidden within a tear, behind an eye, that refused to ever cry,
thus the real question remains, take a chance, risk them
or sacrifice, fight for it all, certain suffocation,
that person picked it, they all did so well
they made it, got out of what was perceived as hell,
that person on the other hand, the easy thing to say would be, he fell
but that's not it, that's not all there is to tell,
that thing, the answer, his anguish whatever it was
decayed his heart, it took over his brain, it destroyed the very person that he once was,
shut down to life he held it all in, so angry at the world around
in the end a childhood problem is all that was found,
one attack is all it took
asthma, his body it shook,
he knew, he said it once, he needed air to breath
wanted to do his own thing, wanted to leave,
decided he couldn't do it, couldn't risk our fate
he picked it, he chose to suffocate.

New Beginning

time to start over
to get away from a place which infested a young mind with anger,
anguish and love mixed with hate and loyalty, a situation that couldn't be stranger,
emotion branching out, fleeing childhood wounds in every form,
memories racing through a mind, not one currently warm,
gut wrenching hurtful memories, of things that happened both recently and long ago,
no distinguishing between the good or the bad, the current situation says so,
an ironic predicament, in which good memories hurt more than the bad
leaving any one place has never been this sad,
a new beginning,
time to start over,
time to start slow,
focused, determined, to learn all the things one would need to know,
to fight for a dream deemed impossible to achieve
to change the label marked failure, and truly achieve,
to return one day to this place he is fighting so hard to leave
to show everyone no matter how impossible, dreams are possible to achieve,
time to start over,
a new beginning.

Walk Tall

leave it behind, never look back
unable to change the past, so why look back?
stand tall, chin up, chest big
smile that fake smile,
breath, then walk away from it all
push forward with cold ferocity,
leap toward a future with pain as the chosen luminosity,
grip life as it has gripped you,
bite down, walk as a king
take it all in stride, lock it all in,
time for petty emotion to hide again
stay strong, lunge forward,
feelings behind silent doors,
windows to a past, gateways to emotion,
hidden, never to be found again,
all that could have been done, was done
suck it up, chin high, chest big,
walk tall.

Visualization

can you see the goal?
the path to where you need to be,
do you know your true role?
that specific point on the vast sea,
the place you spent your whole life fantasizing about
the one where the inner child, your true smile comes out,
can you still see that perfect picture?
the one now covered by years of life's mist,
can you dig deep enough back into the pasts mental literature?
do you remember where you were first kissed?
the warm embrace of each day dream to a future date
that creativity that sparked your ambitions haste,
a time when life was still an open and clean slate
back before the clock started ticking, before entering into the race,
can you still visualize those childhood dreams?
the ones your parents said you could someday catch,
or did those dreams get lost within the fabric of societies seams?
is it a possibility that if you stretched just enough they'd be within reach?
can you see the goal?
the path where you need to be
can you reach that once dreamt role?
or are you lost, drifting on the vast sea?

Unbreakable

hazel eyes locking in an eternal fire,
burning uncontrollably, his aspiration and desire,
knocked down repeatedly, only to stand taller,
disastrous events designed to create a falter,
to crack a solid surface and weasel a way to its core,
attempting to extinguish the flame and create a festering sore,
a thick raw darkness of disgusting events
atrocities surrounding a heart, pitching tents,
dark clouds bringing ice storms of loneliness
the attempts at purging a will never spontaneous,
an endless chain is apparent
containing the same single variant,
repeated negative events aimed at freezing a will
each blow attempting to magnify the chill,
different events on the same chain poised to create motivations revolt
working together to provoke the same end result,
the shattering of a will that will not shatter,
the shrinking of an aspiration which only grows fatter,
life continuously creating new waves for torture
icy blazes of anguish engulfing determination infuriating it further,
passion is only fueled by the ever-growing winds of sorrow
the struggle not destroying, merely creating motivation to follow,
burning uncontrollably, his aspiration and desire
his will, an unbreakable well fueled fire.

Unwanted Company

around each corner one sneaks,
it follows,
no matter how fast one runs,
it follows,
no matter the distance of the disappearing act,
it appears,

always following,
always appearing right behind the one it belongs to,
there are many it seems to cling to,
once chosen it sticks to that person forever,
unwanted company and its unlucky partner,
on the bright side, its reliable,
unwanted company is not deniable,

it will not lie, it will not cheat, it is direct and to the point,
if things are looking up, never fear, nothing a strike in the side won't cure,
no crack of thunder for warning, just a cold electric depression,
no sense in mourning, it will only expedite its progression,
it strikes quickly at what is most important,
only targeting things which are extremely pertinent,

around each corner one sneaks,
it follows,
no matter how far one runs,
it follows,
no matter the distance of the disappearing act,
it appears,

one will never be lonely, because it will never leave you alone,
little black clouds choose a partner, then stick for life.

The Cursed Man

the cursed man walks tall
he refuses to ever fall,
not knowing exactly why
his life a repetitive failed try,
always responsible for good deeds
yet no reward he receives,
only agony follows the life he leads,
for each positive outcome comes a repercussion,
no matter whether the event was to help oneself
or to help someone else
he is doomed to suffer a deduction,
a negative event has to occur
something at least twice the weight of the good done before,
the more he does for everyone else
the worse it gets for himself,
this he knows, and yet this is still the route he chose
to be himself, to play the hand he was dealt
despite the fact that happiness for him, will never be felt,
a walking lesson this man has become
for people struggling old and young,
to never give up, to fight as hard as one can
after all they're not doomed like the cursed man,
the cursed man walks tall,
what would happen if he were to fall?

Broken Hearts Must Still Beat **(for Nick Nguyen)**

a bludgeoned heart still races
scrambling to dispose of poisoned pieces,
aftershock shaking previous ambition
the aftermath of a life altering cataclysm,
love she was to him that's all he knew
starring into her eyes a vision grew,
never caught in this trap before
love for once was at his door,
lost in life yet in her eyes he was found
as if walking for the first time his feet finally hit ground,
a strange series of events did soon occur
causing the winds of his future to violently stir,
with no notice her things were packed and she was gone
puzzled, he was left unknowing of what went wrong,
weeks of unanswered phone calls were placed
no reply, his messages repeatedly erased,
curiosity finally overthrown by hopes abduction
confusion hurling a mind into a swirling abyss of depression,
around every corner, throughout every friend, help was desperately sought
but no advice was capable of curing this case of gut-rot,
to make matters worse, when anguish seemed at its peak
from several states away, finally breaking her silent streak
his phone illuminated with that name responsible for all the ache
she called with words nearly able to revive the relationship from its fate,
she claimed that she needed space, so she moved back with her father
yet no justification was present, her father an over strict abusive police officer,
something not quite right, some part of the story still absent,
pregnant with his child she uttered, finally seeing it relevant,
the ball of uncertainty caught in his throat now mixed with excitement
millions of questions running through his mind but impulse was to overlook,
her response to the event however was far from delightment
his heart riddled with questions about her previous endeavor sputtered and shook,
as if reaching into his chest and giving his heart another poke
abortion just happened to be the next word she spoke,
but both her and the child he wished to keep
his heart nearly destroyed before and was still very weak,
an argument over the situation rapidly ensued
not wanting to dispute any longer she hung up in a manner most rude,
he meditated to the dial tone in contemplation of the situation
he wept at the fact his heart was still allowed no rejuvenation,
several days of unanswered phone calls were placed
yet once again no reply, his messages only erased,
different this time than the situation first encountered
knowing where she was he was not completely helpless,
he would not give up until every option was completely devoured
heart fueled ambition to do things a brain considered reckless,
twelve dozen roses sent to the location she now resided
a note explaining his love stating that he would support everything she decided,
a response finally came but was far from what he desired
the final phone call came a week or so after the roses were delivered,
still hoping for the best he answered the phone relieved to talk to her
his answer immediately met with a rush of words accusing him of being a stalker,
as soon as the word hit his ear, his heart took one last thundering crack

all the chips, nicks, and scratches, finally met creating one grand canyon of a crack,
the call was short, it was now official, their relationship was over
anger not present, nor sadness visible, only the emptiness of a relationships closure,
starring at the engagement ring purchased the week she disappeared
his heart in shambles, this was the very thing he feared,
to let loose, give your complete self to some other entity
only to have them leave you with ridiculous simplicity,
his bludgeoned heart still races
scrambling to dispose of the poisoned pieces,
valiantly fighting on without self-cause or reason
living more for his friends then any form of self-motivation,
this showing that his heart although broken
has more feeling than most hearts unbroken,
broken hearts have greater feeling than others ever will
somewhere deep down on the inside he is searching still,
someday two broken hearts will meet
together they will become one heart, on the same beat.

Writers Block

can't concentrate on anything to write
thoughts stopped, brain squeezed tight,
writers block, no brain juice
can't shake a single poem loose,
must think now, no time later
work brain now, go sleep later,
a brain cell,
an idea jail,
brick built around it all,
an extremely thick wall,
nothing freed by way of pen
everything being blocked in,
cant punch through it, can't get inside
giving up, thoughts remaining tied,
for now the writer's block has won
but this isn't over, this has just begun.

Running In Circles

second thoughts about this place,
came here to shut off,
to leave without a trace,
to chase goals of being better off,
stubborn to be alone,
meditation towards creating a world alone,
people met, acquaintances unintentionally made,
friends by accident, if such a thing occurs,
goals of self-focus once again begin to dissipate,
the desired selfishness, as always blurs,
an urge to protect those close over oneself has found a way to reiterate,
an attempt at freezing a heart laughed at by a mind that knows the truth,
a romantics heart can never be frozen,
only dragged along the ground and repeatedly broken,
never will it shut down, it just beats with added ferocity,
old feelings rediscovered still carry the same intensity,
running from the past in the present, attempting to reach the future,
embrace your past, deal with the present, then become your future,
running from oneself is to run in circles,
stop running in circles.

Missing

bitterness surrounding a cold empty box
sealed by huge unopenable locks,
a box from which a grayish black shade oozes
free to wander in which ever direction it chooses,
contaminating blood in a body, quickly circulating
rapidly spreading a spacious trapped feeling,
something is missing, missing, lacking, and dull,
a box symbolizing an unfillable hole,
a hard-frozen solid steel shell,
an empty impenetrable hell,
steel protecting a barren place
a strange desolate space,
missing, what is missing?
what event provoked this to appear?
why now and why here?
why did a heart just up and go?
leaving only an empty box here to grow?
this lonely abandoned space is constantly growing
an essence stealing energy becoming life draining,
how does a locked barren box turn back into a heart?
what does this require and how does one start?
what is missing?

Flash

in midst the rush of a college campus a momentary pause,
few students seeking refuge from chaos in the middle green,
taking time to temporarily escape ambitions jaws,
this is where her beauty was first seen,
gazing carefully, wondering if he has been noticed
solely upon her his eyes are focused,
waiting patiently for a glimpse of invitation
eyes met, she smiles without hesitation,
seeing her as a possibility in his future
he watches himself stand and walk to meet her,
names exchanged, numbers swapped
a phone call was made the first chance he could get
a short conversation and the first date was set,
their relationship took flight
two dark lives finally exposed to the warmth of light,
their hearts quickly meshed as one
a reaction outshining the luminosity of the sun,
years rapidly fell off the clock
the sudden abduction of time a shock,
a ring was purchased, a promise made
the day established,
a wedding in the shade
aspen trees and a fall breeze,

flash,
an eye blinks,
reality calls,
the daydream ends,

seeing her as a possibility in his future
he saw himself walk to meet her,
eyes meet, she smiles without hesitation
his movement none, missing his invitation,
he sits thinking, stares dreaming
she packs her bags, smiles at him again
takes her things, and leaves with her friend.

Warmth

day after day motions remain the same,
motivation, only to do what is routine,
a cold colorless trance
work, sleep, school, eat,
words floating in the back of a mind
what keeps one alive is not necessarily living,
will to break rhythm impossible to find,
goldfish of a brain in circles swimming,

a familiar face bringing teeth where lips reside
a dusty smile felt within, is dusted and worn outside,
eyes strangely hurting
suddenly aware of the bright yellow ball hanging in the sky,
a voice speaking
finding a way to a sleeping heart, thought to have run dry,
rhythm begins changing as a heart begins pounding
trapped no longer, the goldfish bowl broken
senses thawing,
colors returning,
his eyes meet her eyes, warmth.

The Only Yellow Rose

distinctly different, vibrant yellow
exquisite, sensational,
swaying gently in life's wind,
the only one of her kind,
on a field of green, standing alone separated from the rest by her glow
standing proudly, creating her own uniquely dynamic flow,
a field overcrowded by the normal population of pink and red
all the ordinary roses responsible for the same plain repetitive feeling of dread,
the sole symbol of hope in a society that has always been seen as broken
the flower responsible for changing a heart that always felt broken,
significantly distinguished, in the middle swaying
a superior color, flawless in heart and personality,
simply breathtaking, gasping to believe she's reality,
distinctly different, a vibrant yellow,
exquisite, sensational,
so many years spent looking for what was thought to not exist,
giving up finally brought her into view and out of life's mist,
a dream, swaying gently in the wind
standing alone, the only one of her kind,
the only yellow rose.

Spark

something is different this time
a spark invoked both in heart and mind,
the one I have been searching for,
fear inside because I know this is her,
refusing to let go because another change must occur,
my entire life has been spent searching for her,
why lock up if this is the one,
past scars should no longer cause you to run,
look into her eyes, feel the warmth of her heart
let go, this is the one, give in to the spark.

Foreign Answer

bouncing back and forth one conclusion to the next
brain twisted not receiving an ounce of rest,
can't come to terms, an impossible question,
brain torn, stumbling without a solution,
the risk of losing her existing due to a past that was broken
the fear of getting hurt controlling decisions made internally, but never spoken,
he keeps her in the dark
unknowing the final decision his thoughts will spark,
his heart is what he needs to follow
not the logic taken from a previous sorrow,
the past is an example of what could come
still, the past is the past it cannot be undone,
the problem is that the past is just the past, the future it is not
this is his struggle, the part where he seems to be caught,
a foreign answer to a question so commonly seen
running each scenario through his mind scene by scene,
he waits for her love, paranoid of a history which could repeat
he leaves his heart behind, moves on, a different form of defeat,
the simple fact of the matter is, without her by his side
he might as well give up, his one chance at true happiness will have died,
his only real risk is losing her based on what he will decide
will he see it? will it be too late? with her, his heart will he confide?
A foreign answer to you, me, and him,
Will he get it right or will the answer to his question end grim?

Bitter Sweet

life has never been simple
never a clear easy path to follow,
not a single amazing event can be captured without a sacrifice
at least nothing in his life attainable without some sacrifice,
decision after sacrificial decision, made with cold hard precision,
others a foggy leap of faith uneasily taken, based on a mere vision,
attempting to clearly view what he is willing to forfeit
moving forward in reminiscence of past experiences, but never with regret,
keeping his hand on the pieces he will do anything to keep
the personal chess game of life, with losses and gains running extremely deep,
trying to get ahead and attain his goals
attempting to reach out and snatch his dreams,
ignoring several if not most of societies restraints
pushing forward on his own terms,
believing any individual is capable of going great lengths
seeing possibilities to attain that for which he yearns,
changes however always have to be made
certain things in life have to be left behind to make the trade,
the present he will mold and shape
so the future he can sculpt and create,
he must keep in mind there is no easily attained treat
all the worthwhile things in life are bittersweet.

Tranquility

her eyes reflect with a gentle glow
energetic happiness behind windows of her soul
laying upon the floor she gazes upward,
the one above warmly captivated by her glow
starring deeply at the design her reflective windows show
lost in her eyes as he gazes downward,

pulled in by her complete petite body
her complexion to his thoughts ideal perfection,
bronzed skin coinciding with dark features
black hair complementing her dark reflective windows,

reflective and dark but far from cold
trying still to heal from heartbreaks of old,
there is no end to the intensity of her feeling,
there is no definition to the beauty of her being,
heart, a pristine yellow, lighting all that is around her
warm if one feels cold, cool if one gets too hot
adaptive to each situation to help those cared for,
boundless determination intertwined with a selfless heart of gold
state of awe found when reading her body,
her eyes reflect with a gentle glow
energetic happiness behind windows of her soul,
laying upon the floor she gazes upward
looking to the eyes caught in the tranquility of her glow.

Heart Beat

when love is true two become one
beating in unison, beating as one,
intertwining beats, one than the other
if lack of one, there is not the other,
together they function, together they beat,

two broken hearts aimlessly wandering
lost in life, hopelessly searching,
their rhythm lost, stripped by struggle
each half belonging to a larger puzzle,

when love is false two become halved
lost is the beat, hearts are torn,
irregular beats, attacking each other
both are lost, emotions grow cold
separate they wander, randomly thumping,

perhaps it was fate, maybe luck
but on that particular date, love struck,
two broken halves accidentally collided
although uneasy, both were excited,

when love is true two become one
beating in unison, beating as one,
intertwining beats, one than the other
if lack of one, there is not the other,
together they function, together they beat,

ambitions ablaze now capable of reaching any goal,
pieced together perfectly, a rhythm to overcome any feat
on the twenty forth of august two halves were made whole,
if you listen carefully, you might just hear their perfect heartbeat.

Sleeping Beauty

curled in a blanket for warmth, she breaths quietly,
appearance reflecting her peaceful caring mentality,
to many her beauty remains a mystery,
some are lucky enough to enjoy it daily,
dreaming dreams of the enchanted variety she sleeps next to me,
an entity of immense beauty,

laying silently I observe in a quiet disbelief as beauty sleeps,
gazing at her beige skin while cold provokes goosebumps to fill in,
contemplating this new option in life changing my no luck routine,
to call her a dream would severely under paint the scene,
all of the complexity in mysteries, all of the texture in artistry,
all of the magic in fairy tales, all of the wonder in society,
all of the vibrancy in flowers, all of the love in poetry,
rolled into one miraculous ball, curled up in a single blanket,

curled in a blanket for warmth, she sleeps quietly,
heart glowing with distinct intensity,
her beauty remains a mystery,
some are lucky enough to enjoy it daily,
for those few life stands still,
as it should be, when peering into the heart of a sleeping beauty.

Reflection

glass reflects the unsettling facts,
desires half empty and half full,
no longer capable of putting up heroic acts
the glass seems to be growing dull,
happiness overshadowed by financial burdens
stress weighing down daily actions,
creeping worries of past starvation manifesting,
a guts pain for greater things grows harder to digest,
despair knows not the meaning of retiring,
no air found when considering a time for rest,
the answers to success remain foreign in nature
the reflection blindingly screaming failure.

Under The Embrace Of Thorns Part 3

8 months since the undercover, going 5 miles over the highway speed limit, got bumped
state patrol this time, more tickets, also the warrant, was cuffed and taken to jail,
every single charge would now hit, stomach kinda jumped
lucked out a little, friends banded together made calls and managed to cover my bail,
2 court dates set, but no I wasn't done yet
due to my arrest, they updated my address,
fresh out of jail, the very week I was let go
not aware of the undercover cops waiting just outside my apartment complex,
hardheaded, it was another unfair blow
I would drive anyway, cop behind me as soon as I left the complex,
that cop I complained about had my new address, and an entire legal gang he could send
internal affairs, I heard they follow your every move once under investigation,
no real reason, got bumped again, cop getting revenge for his crooked cop friend
funny this officer knew where I was, pulled me over without reason, no hesitation
with a warrant my car was not taken, but strangely this officer HAD to impound my car
one block from my apartment complex, followed, pulled over, then he impounded my car
jail time and community service was assigned, of course along with outrageous fines
car was lost due to impound fees, couldn't pay after the court dates mixed with fines,
left with a car note for a car that the police took, but weren't legally obligated to pay
four thousand dollars more I owed, the police got a new car, they made out good that day,

it was all just in time for the nice and cold Colorado winter
the bus now becoming my sole form of long-distance mobility,
as if the other punishments weren't a big enough splinter
freezing at the bus stop in several feet of snow was my new favorite activity,
my 2-year lease was finally coming to an end soon
goal now set on leaving to follow a hearts ambition,
big changes in life needed to officially occur soon
had to get to college, drastic changes to be made in preparation,
a transition back to the neighborhood where I grew
moved in with the Romero's, another family with which I originally grew,
moved into the basement to pay off all legally binding ties
trying to gain freedom from all financial obligations,
one by one began trying to sever old ties,
no lease necessary a friend and family helping me erase obligations,
working endless hours for a negative amount of pay
reciting that the strongest struggle before they find their way,
scheming to succeed no matter the cost
living in the basement where a loved one was lost,
writing to relieve the daily stresses while trying my hardest to make it
deprivation from fun and all extracurricular activities to get myself college fit,
outside on the block when the information rang
face lit up with an unrecognized number as my phone sang,
impact on a sunny July day, phone showing an out of state number,
panic stricken serious voice screeching out words describing a murder,
police cover up said suicide, but reality was much deeper
the truth and information given to us by her father, an officer
a close neighborhood park, a sister on her way to becoming a mother
haste fully anguish ridden words spoken over the phone by her brother,
tears abundant as words were spoken, a tortured soul asking for retaliation
an angry vengeful response was given, a promise to take care of the situation,
full name, address, and directions to the murderers house were attained rather easily,
just before action was taken to claim the one deemed responsible

found out there were four involved, that three skipped the country,
a certain mafia was involved, the person who actually did it might not be retrievable,
moral dilemma hit when another innocent life could possibly be taken
the life ending plot temporarily paused after the change of information,
with that the end of 2005 was finally approaching
mind stuck on all the loses, every ounce of me began focusing,
have to make it, have to do something to change it all
have to change this path of life restriction leading me to an inevitable fall,
first necessary task to escape the neighborhood of upbringing
start clean somewhere new by packing up and moving,
Mesa State College in a small town where I would make myself blend in
mind only on college to realize my dreams then return home to follow them,
the time had finally come to leave it all behind,
the shoot outs around the block
the drug dealers, the gang members, the swat raids,
the helicopters searching for those labeled convicts around our block,
tires that got slashed, neighbors windows that got shot out
the robberies, the vandalism, the tagging
the house and carjacking,
it was time to leave all the negative things behind,
left it all behind to follow a greater beckoning
a move to a new place to start a new beginning,

a five hundred mile move to room up with an old high school friend
starting over fresh with no distractions, no worries or lives to help mend,
the first month without pressure and obligations was extremely soothing
that month was before sadness crept in with the news of another shooting,
a drive by this time, taking the life of an individual I knew since elementary
reminding me where I was from and how much those at home meant to me,
memory frozen upon his face as it sunk in that he had taken his last breath
my fresh start quickly tainted by the phone call revealing an old friend's death,
guilt overwhelmed me as I was five hundred miles too far to attend the funeral
my conscience debated whether moving was right sparking a painful inner quarrel,
sleepless nights continue as if I deserve some form of retribution
three years and coming, fighting nonstop for goals without compensation,
the college campus providing a brief refreshment from the struggle
before long becoming just another task to try and juggle,
irritation with small town personalities quickly rising
ignorant racial statements kept my argumentative speeches flying,
tequila drinking ending in several stolen street signs
drunken laughter at the pointlessness of the crimes,
my 21st birthday approaching, another interesting day to remember
what was once a close friend quickly became an alcoholic fool of an individual,
under the impression he had the same disease as another family member
always falsely believing his life was so overtly unbearable,
the day of my birthday he thought he was on an emotional rollercoaster
as any good friend would I consoled him, told him his life was far from over,
at the wheel he drove recklessly, a suicide attempt almost claiming two lives
a car rolling to the edge of a cliff, leaving only one pair of thankful eyes,
myself, thankful to take another breath,
the other, responsible for his own silent death,
a crash to end an eight-year relationship with a bang
laugh it off, life's a bitch, it aint no thang,
my block guild missed, was empty without them, their love missing to me
the gap inside, filled with a few new good friends unintentionally,
Kim, Derek, Robin, and Crites, all very good people

keeping me somewhat sane in a town where I hated nearly all the people,
decided to go with them to the club for fun one night
intentions on just trying to have fun, not on picking a fight,
intentions also as always, on protecting drunken friends from harassment
assault charge caught for knocking out a bouncer in response to harassment,
never had luck with the law but as strange as it was I got out of all the charges
a small-town thing, I think the friend I was protecting pulled some strings,
my name was conveniently left out of the paperwork when I went to face the charges
got off scotch free thanks to whomever that was that pulled those strings,
starting to see myself running in circles
same barely surviving gasping for every breath routine,
the truth of life necessary to stop running in circles
reflection finally leading to the facts capable of changing my routine,
always thinking I was trapped under the embrace of thorns
never realizing nor accepting that I was one with the thorns,
no matter how hard you try you cannot run from who you are
you cannot run from your past as it created the person you are,
unfortunately the majority of us are falsely labeled at very young ages
too many of us give up, accepting the mark of failure throughout all of our ages,
the few that do make it conveniently forget their past, posing as something they're not
the fact is that you made it regardless, you should be proud of the war you fought,
individuality stems from the struggle, not the fake presentation of an end result
we are purposely blinded, which is why I am now poised to start this social revolt,
wiping failure from my brow as determination regains hold of ambition
energy to return home, fight for those mistakenly seen and spread my vision,

the thorns of life separate us, providing a raw look at ones personality
thorns simply define each person, they're responsible for our individuality,
time to stop fighting what I am, embrace my thorns
show the world that behind every pile of thorns,
lies a weather beaten miraculously large heart, the head of a rose,
thorns are present in even the most distinguished, unique rose
time to show society, that regardless of thorns,
every human being is a rose.

Silent War

as kids we weren't concerned with the surrounding weather
grouped up at a young age only concentrated on playing games together,
living in a neighborhood whose inhabitants were struggling violently
malicious intents were force fed to us by a broken society,
the slightly more privileged kids rubbed our faces in what we did not have
unaware that the system had already pitted us against each other,
the same economic area, yet fights raged on between the have nots, and those who have
taught not to fight the powers that govern, to only fight amongst one another,
all silent witnesses to the failures our community has handed down
malnourished minds brainwashed into submission by our own town,
grouped together by growing on the same block we quickly formed our own guild
responsible for supporting one another as we each attempted to build,
several fell victim to the short comings created by poverties interpretation of ambition
surviving only to live was far too inadequate to hold our open-minded attention,
the allure of gangs to tempting to those on bottom of the social order
representing the epitome of money respect protection and power,
some of us were recruited and began chasing an illusionary families fabricated dreams
those younger, were protected by the ones already trapped on ganglifes neighborhood teams,
in defense our guild had to begin drastically rerouting its direction
many of those close began to procure weapons for protection,
scoped rifles hand guns and assault rifles plagued the unseen underpinnings of the block
violence with deprivation was splitting up and dictating the actions of individuals in our flock,
anger grew while watching peers constantly fight for their right to life
incarcerations left and right as the streets atrocities further enflamed strife,
participation is involuntary, bullets and fists fly regardless of your position
deference's of security lie within each person's interpretation and decision,
street fights territorial knowledge and respect, all became necessary means to survive
associates in shootouts dropped at hospitals fighting to stay alive,
carjacking drug dealing and burglaries all safeguarded by the holding of guns
the underworlds creations to grasp at seamlessly unattainable funds,
all of us first hand witnesses to such events on a daily basis
the rest of the world uncaringly relaxed, in a state of blind stasis,
while we're busy fighting amongst each other for the scraps they leave
they're tactfully furthering their strategy, planning to charge for the very air we breathe,
the crooked hierarchy of the law a sadistic joke,
help solely placed upon the shoulders of our own
ideas to prosper had to be realized within ourselves, alone
slowly realizing the family members they banded for were fake
a separation from the gangs began to take shape,
always there before, the guilds future was finally becoming clear
a real family, whose basis didn't revolve around control and fear,
spawning out of the carnage and bloodshed in our areas
the "fam" officially emerged, bringing with it an immediate state of euphoria,
the need to protect and survive has never died
but the fruitless acts resulting in incarcerations began to subside,
in spite of a corrupt systems plan of attack
the bouquet we created remains in tack,
our survival has presented us with enlightenment and greater strength
fear of repercussion nonexistent, leaving us the fire to travel any length,
feed into that brainwashed label they gave you, then there is no hope left
fighting those on top is the only way we trapped here can truly win,
don't become a casualty of the systems brain twisting, self-inflicted life theft
as improbable as it seems it is possible to escape this outer rim,
veterans of a silent war that still rages

our ambitions now set on breaking societies cages.

Dear Mother

there have been times where you had to have questioned my morality
the fact is, we live in two parallel versions of the same reality,
never understood why to you I was spoiled, when you fought tooth and nail for our home
it took me years to comprehend that you were cut from an even smaller stone,
you had already faced the massive discriminative barriers I now face
naïve to think I and those I grew with were the only ones trapped in this race,
a single mother in your time would have had to trek through hell to make it here
to blind at the time to see just how thankful I would be to have been raised here,
pinned down by societies unspoken agenda to keep those on bottom trapped
only recently understanding that we grew in altered versions of the same repression
both victims of a busted system being targeted then violently sapped
my life has been a mere sample of your lifelong struggle toward progression,
perhaps I lost your respect at times due to the truths my actions were hiding
there was a war in the neighborhood that me and everyone were silently fighting,
this book is the only testimony to the many difficulties I was facing
events only the block could identify and accurately rate my decision making,
not every story could be placed within the boundaries of this book
my heart however, lies here waiting for the world to take a look,
you mother, are the one who provided me with a heart that will not split
those closest to me will openly admit, no matter the endeavor I never quit,
I learned from watching you, no matter how hard you fall you always get up
after much falling I finally found my voice, it is my time to stand up,

through these words it is now my goal to give all the mislabeled roses a voice
all those deemed stale and rotten without being given a real choice,
people today seem to neglect the fact that every individual makes mistakes
there is no perfect human, there may be claims but all are fakes,
if survival is first and foremost no matter the species questioned
why then are those on bottom forsaken for simply surviving?
yet those on top holding all the money can cheat whenever beckoned
the agenda I now pursue is to provoke all humanity to begin realizing,
it is only by accepting these thorns that we can truly embrace our humanity
each and every single one of us is a blossom within the rose bush of humanity,
if I am capable of changing a single life with the very words I write
my successes have finally outweighed the plague responsible for my hearts plight,
thanks to you I had the courage to relentlessly chase dreams which are normally shattered
the bouquet you helped me create grows stronger recruiting others who've been systematically battered,
a war needs only a single shot to start,
I am simply playing my part,
a revolution of minds to rise against the oppressing ignorance plaguing our society,
a call to arms for all to hear, to stand up and face that dream crushing anxiety,
give those abusing power what they expect to happen and they will win,
show them their bias is false, succeed, then loss will consume them,
it begins here, proving I am not a hoodlum, wiping clear the label of a simple crook
my heart is on the table, for the first time it is quite literally an open book,
mom, if I can change a single child's label from failure to rose
a single child believing in themselves is more than worth the path I chose,
I was fortunate to have you to guide my heart through to today
unfortunately most children aren't as lucky as me in that way,
it makes me sick to my stomach to see so many amazing people struggling
labeled incorrectly from the get go then forced by necessity into hustling,
I'm tired of watching as those with the biggest hearts are handed the smallest shards to piece together,
good people ridiculed then given only scraps to reach their dreams, told to fly with a single feather,
I will fight till my last breath for all of them, for all of us,

to convince others to stop walking the self-destructive path they feed to us,
I wanted to give you and the world a glimpse of the real me
a view not shrouded by what society is telling people to see,
this is the true identity of your son
one that grew through all these events I have kept silent for so long,
this is the man I have become
one pledging to fight for all of us who've been pegged wrong,
all that remains is the wait to see if my heart was large enough
sufficient enough to unite the masses into escaping prejudices shackling cuff,
the answer unfortunately only time will tell
until then, this book is where my heart will dwell.

Dear Father

events have happened in the past that even now cause me to lock up shouting at me as I write to not tell you the things that have transpired, things which in another time period I would refuse to even lightly bring up not wanting to hear shouts about my irresponsibility as my ears have grown too tired, know that I am very aware of the ramifications surrounding each of my actions thanks to you I learned responsibility and the value of things at a rather young age, I now understand that you were merely trying to steer my transactions an attempt at directing me toward your view of a perfect center stage, one where I could perform my life to my heart's desire without financial burdens my environment was completely different from yours so I couldn't accept your curtains, it might have looked as if I was suddenly infected with the neighborhood endemic when the truth had just been out of view, cleverly hidden, it wasn't that I no longer wanted to be athletic and academic those were side effects demonstrating the extent to which my anger had risen, certain events opened my eyes to the corrupt way our society is run this book is a testament to many of the unseen things I have experienced or done, the underlying reasons behind many of the decisions I have made many which you never knew about and some you might not have thought had an effect, a list of things I kept cool and collected, behind the scenes hidden and in the shade facts in my life that you unintentionally didn't notice or might neglect, some as simple as the fact that my thievery truly started in the fourth grade on foot or that I ditched school as early as second in Oakland's field to support a friend, the reality is that my rebellion started much younger than you might have thought I conformed to most things early on because that is what was needed for me to ascend, anger grew in me as I could not comprehend the things we weren't allowed you and mom worked so hard to provide me with the options you never had, yet the real freedom promised by an American society never really followed though things are worse in other countries and we are not rock bottom it is still sad, if freedom is the choice between working a fruitless job your whole life or starving then sure, all of us here have it and I have misinterpreted freedom's definition, in my eyes it is literally the ability to act freely without the worry of perishing the definition only holds true for those with money, they are not bound by restriction, when I was younger I was concerned with the material aspect of this ideology always being compared to others by race and the material objects I didn't possess, I couldn't change my face but I could steal objects and that furthered my pathology throughout the years you watched as my mentality and my rebellion made progress, your main concern became targeting the rebellion due to its expansive growth my rebellion did damage certain options in my future or what is now the present, but all of my past actions presented me with an altered view, a unique ideological birth though I have struggled due to my decisions there is nothing in the past that I resent, thanks to your constantly putting me in check I learned respect thanks to your non-stop push for me to apply myself I have an unbending determination, thanks to your lessons in sportsmanship I have the correct image to project thanks to your never losing hope in my potential I have an infrangible concentration, the past enabled my mindset to change from materialistic aspirations to ideological goals everyone has dreams, the problem is that the majority of them are crushed, who has time to chase what they want when their busy surviving their daily roles all the people on the bottom with glorious dreams of doing amazing things are hushed, my dream is to change that, or to provoke an event to bring about that change, we are struggling to survive and it tends to be impossible to merely hold onto our dreams, people need to see that with their spare time they can rearrange their entire life range, possibilities can open in the smallest amount of time to catch those childhood dreams, giving up means conforming to unfair rules and living just to survive, why let the wealthy ones continue to be the only class with access to freedom?

they hold all the options, yet we are responsible for the largest societal drive
this is where that childhood rebellion has taken me, to fight for our real freedom,
this is the person that my silence has prevented you from seeing me to be
what lies in this book is the real previously unexplained raw version of me,
there are some events that have been left out that you may never get to hear
but you can finally take a deep breath, your sons path has been made clear.

Family Tree

a family tree always seems to be a necessity
no matter race heritage or ethnicity,
my family is not traditional by any means
no biological bloodline courses through our veins,
although we differ in almost every physical way
we stick through thick and thin in a manner nearly no family can say,
starting from the closest of close amongst my family tree
going back to those who've shared a lifetime with me,

Eagle street Denver Colorado is where we all used to stay,
reminiscing about those fine times back, back in the day,
tree roots lie here deep down under the tagged-up concrete and asphalt
here memories of my life flow freely without worry of fault,
the Moyers, fourteen seven o four east scott place
my families personally planned living space,
down toward the middle of the block is where we would all play
smack dab in front of the Dorsey's, Chris Joe and AJ,
running from Vireak's praying mantis attacks pretending we knew kung foo
fighting in the grass, fake tiger style representing Mr. Brandon Bou,
summer water fights when Anna bit my arm and tried to chew threw
Lakheena Bou, singer extraordinaire and mother to my favorite nephew,
Devin Collier sponsored the boxing tournaments with his shiny red gloves
Marcus sported his low rider bike making us all look like scrubs,
sports tournaments of all kinds with our rival block led by James West
Deandra and her pedal cars we destroyed trying to see who could wreck the best,
shoot outs held, all of us trying to win golden eye tournaments
flying off Oscars roof mid-winter, with our wanna be sled laundry baskets,
me and Brad starting a clubhouse that my parents still can't get rid of
Traemon's personal space bubble made everyone wanna give him a shove,
hide and go seek with unfindable Chris hiding in plain sight
a whole week of forcing Essie and Monica to run every night,
Lupe hatching endless entrepreneurship plans always trying to get rich
everyone hitting the streets to play, each season the sport seemed to switch,
Jessica bustin her butt tryin to do handstands wrong
memories on the block built twenty years strong,

with the roots exposed it's now time to move to the branches of my tree
the later created family members, the other integral parts of my tree,
there is Arty Martin driving his sick self-painted green eclipse
down ass David Vang trying to eat whole chickens before track practice,
Chona at cheerleading practice meeting Vireak for the first time
Cameron Nelson towering over everyone playing football all the time,
BG reppin the east coast always trying to flip the down town light rail
Kim by his side taking a million different pics each day without fail,
Bay placing that feared phone call to say he was getting shipped to Iraq
D Rose, a fellow poet whose signature happens to be coke mixed with jack,
Julio's dreaded drunken finger in your ear attacks
Master nerd Phi and his endless amount of computer hacks,
Carlos Proctor, determined to make cars worthy of shows
and of course, --, my only yellow rose,

these are the majority of the influential people in my family tree
the crazy people that helped orchestrate my life, turning me into me,
a special shout out to y'all friends who have been deemed family

those who stuck by and safeguarded my life in this twisted reality.

Mute

fuel the same, yet fire is slowing
tired and weary, with failure approaching,
tears rolling as they continue to lose
watching helplessly the plight of those close,
time continues gnawing at the heels of the unfortunate,
the majority cast reality aside rather than living with it,
relief means momentarily forgetting
a split second becoming liberating,
forgetting however only expedites failures progression
unconsciously integrating with a mind through repression,
the clock is ticking away
their lives continue to decay,
none here can find the golden ticket
smog preventing hope of ever finding it,
roses cut off from the sunlight
doomed to roam in eternal night,
fighting for every breath of life
shackled by the consistent strife,
shadows engulfing each city block
blight erasing opportunities clock,
fuel the same, yet fire is slowing
tired and weary, with failure approaching,
watching voicelessly on the sideline, praying to shout,
wishing for a voice to help all the overlooked roses out.

The Carousel

stuck spinning on a solid black merry-go-round
shackled by centrifugal force, held down dizzy and sick,
wishing to jump ship but it won't slow down
the grim reaper cackling not loosening his grip,
poison from past wounds oozing behind curtain walls
tainting blood and eating the apples core,
years falling from the clock while trapped in societies halls
the maze center stage as the spinning kicks to a roar,
desperately searching for a hidden tunnel to escape
hyperventilating as a gut swells with the urge for freedom,
exhausting every idea while trying to break the prisons shape
thoughts on how to break free growing overtly dumb,
goals exponentially slip at the end of each failed season
the cackling finally takes hold and the laughter begins,
mental grasp of the situation vanishes as a conscience loses all reason
legs crossed on the ground, embracing the carousel as it spins.

A Hearts Immortality

sitting depressed, eyes glazing as hope lies lost on the horizon
starring at the ceiling crying, exhaustion not rectifying the struggle,
inches from quitting, incapable of establishing a liaison
the village of loved ones which raised a young mind is going to crumble,
reoccurring nightmares surrounding failing clocks
hearts beating in unison, then one by one each stops,
death grasping randomly at the family line
actions to slow, incapable of outrunning time,
scarred from racing through life's motions against the hourglass
tedious strides made to grab our community a financial pass,
helplessness crippling the fires once responsible for motivation
will fleeting as each goal becomes a failed ambition,
the cursed man has finally run out of strength to try,
hope amongst every family member is running dry,
enough sand for one last push towards the missing link
a full heart is to be ground down and put into ink,
give society what is expected and they will win
show them their bias is false, succeed, then the loss will consume them,
the sacrifice of one heart to spare the loss of a guild
success for one leaves hope so the rest can continue to build,
the strongest struggle before they find their way,
the cursed man lost himself to help others find that day,
his heart remains bound to this book, to finish the endeavor
people die you see, but the written word lives forever.

Backs Against The Wall

time to shatter the cage restricting dreams,
suppressive fabric will be ripped at the seams,
fate of the flock can't be predictable
double barrel shotgun of a mind cocked and loaded,
failure is no longer applicable
the worry of death has been completely eroded,
poetic ideas unleashed to combat the unfair
the wicked shall eat the poison they put in our air,
time has come to strike back
these fake kings deserve to crack,
inquisitive minds spark mental terrorism through commitment
shouting out in reminiscence of the previously departed,
tidal waves of realism flood royalties "perfect" circles
the weightless smothered with burdens from our shoulders,
with prisons failing hells river is finally within sight
the outcome depends on reaching the shore for the final fight,
fighting vigorously, no longer turning our backs to the wall
the quality of life is at stake, the underdogs must create the oppressors fall.

Finish Line

why is it that this race has come to a stop?
body and mentality ablaze from slaving to reach a future dreamed,
wearily staring at the at the finish line contemplating surrenders urge to drop,
petrified, looking back at the beginning and all the ideas that have since been schemed,
crossing this invisible line means an irreversible indefinite change,
ultimate success in theory brings happiness, a newly experienced loss of struggle
however the option is not as simple as it seems, the reality quite strange
a double edge sword lies in wait, wishing to turn gold into rubble,
mere accomplishment may spawn pride but underlying reasons fueled progress,
without these basic blocks there would have been no starting process,
without a complete victory true intentions would remain in the gutter unfulfilled
every moment previously spent could be calculated as a moment failed,
a backup plan does exist, but at such a stage no such plan could equal bliss,
it is not a lapse of motivation, it is fear alone causing this halt in progression
so close to the finish yet frozen in place upon the final sequence,
what is a few more steps compared to the millions that preceded this place?
a nightmare of stopping clocks is already a reality pushing forth winds of reluctance,
their clocks continue to slow while I stand motionless amidst the last leg of the race
to stop or to fail would equally mean the entire struggle has been in vain,
clarity seen when acknowledging that hope only floats in a resetting of pace
outpace the pace setter and one can close the life flushing drain,
fail only when it is failure you have officially become
time may be running low but there's still enough for one final show,
beat the clock at its own game, it's the hour to take aim and run
it, is now on your time, take your breath and cross the finish line.

Hells Defeat

clock getting devoured by the many demons,
weight upon shoulders continuously growing,
shakily walking, barely progressing,

legs burning as they are engulfed by flame
a last moment attempt at changing life's game,
wading through fiery Styx
a final attempt to give those left for dead a chance to live,
mothers clock skipping ahead, myasthenia gravis
neighbors time dwindling, the gift of cancer,
Alzheimer's striking another, couldn't predict any of this
all left for dead, without an answer,
walking, world on shoulders,
time ticking, shredding nerves,
the heartless with money on boats sailing freely
red glowing eyes, laughing as they pass so freely,

clock getting devoured by the many demons,
weight upon shoulders continuously growing,
shakily walking, barely progressing,

the journey meaningless if their clocks stop
success means nothing without the rest,
the race across hells river cannot stop
fighting each trial without rest,
step by step, barely moving,
legs pushing forward trembling,
the heartless shooting poison tipped darts
hitting arms that hold the world in place,
trying to rip motivation into separate parts
trying to stop us from finishing the race,

clock getting devoured by the many demons,
weight upon shoulders continuously growing,
shakily walking, barely progressing,

populated with red glowing spheres, the shore finally in sight
only seeing a few on land glowing in bright white,
the heartless dressed in black, red writing upon their clothes
glowing red eyes populating the coast, society it reads on their clothes,
almost to the edge, just a step away now, nothing can happen
evil red eyes, laughing, rolling out a cannon,
last step, ears ringing,
arms severed, legs sinking,
mid-section of body missing, the world falling,
a single grain of sand left in the hourglass as,

the world hits,
rolling upon the shore,
tears of happiness unleashed from those exhausted eyes
his face sinking, hope is finally seen with his demise.

Even A Rose Has Thorns

vibrant color distracting from the past's truths
rose pedals glimmering with silky smooth intricacy,
an entity obviously bitten by perfection's tooth
a simple touch reveals an extreme amount of delicacy,
the head in bloom bringing with it the fragrance of ecstasy,
as time fades attraction to her increases exponentially,
looking at only one section however, does not justify perfection
a rose isn't a rose without a body, a heart, and personality,
a rose isn't a rose without a head, a stem, and thorns,
use your eyes to dig deeper to see beauty complete,
peer through the window, so true beauty you may finally meet,
sharp brown spotted green thorns,
each a scar of growth,
rugged weather-beaten green pedals
surrounded by an exterior of jagged edges,
at times starved for attention
left with no positive nourishment,
jagged pedals and unique thorns are the visual representation
showing the hardships when no warmth was present,
all remnants of past events that gave birth to her personality,
these distinctions are what separate beauty from normality,
look through the windows to see what is perhaps the most important part of all,
seriously, stare hard out of yours and into hers, let yourself free fall,
let go to witness the base of her life, her roots and stem
view what she grew from, the small fragile piece within,
it is responsible for all her splendor
the starting point of all her wonder,
to witness perfection, glance directly at the heart through one's eyes,
see that perfection coincides with imperfections, stare deep into her eyes,
understand that perfection stems from imperfection
without this understanding
we are only thorns.

~Amazing Colorado Authors and Artists~

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Excerpt from Nineteen A Hero's Rise:

1 NINETEEN

Throughout my life, I've read many books about how human civilization would come to an end and how all the great cities of the world would come crumbling down. Some spoke of a huge war where we would all blow each other up, others of insects and plagues that would wipe out all of humanity. My favorite to read is the zombie apocalypse theories, where hordes of mindless flesh-eating zombies begin consuming all of humanity. The thought makes me laugh, especially seeing as how we now have zombies walking around with us. Our zombies are definitely mindless and can move slowly just like the ones in the numerous stories I've read, but our zombies are still human. Shells of humans really. All addicted to the same extremely potent drug that was released in an attempt to wipe out the remaining poor.

Every apocalypse horror story I've read from these old texts has been way off base. If only they recognized the true evil that would erase the power of the United States. Then... well, they probably still wouldn't have done anything to stop it. The zombies we have are far from the beings responsible for the United States being ripped apart. The one thing none of the apocalypse stories talked about is the real reason for our downfall. Money. Money is the cause of all this chaos, or so that's the story the old folks tell. Right now it's hard to imagine that some type of colored paper is what started all this fighting. Even harder to believe are the rumors of what the officers used to be before they took control. The officers, the most violent, selfish...

"Nineteen."

...murderers running around in this wasteland. If you ask me, the officers are far worse than anything else that is said to be a threat. Worse than the zombies by a landslide and definitely worse than the stories of the supposed military who are said to be protecting...

"Nineteen, snap out of it! Stop zoning out! Get your head out of that book and come help me, ya punk!"

Startled out of my daze, I look up and about ten feet in front of me is Natalie with her weather-beaten black hair struggling to drag Tank's bag up the stairs. Tank's green bag is nearly as big as Natalie and weighs just as much she does. Natalie is my height at somewhere around 5'9" or at least that's what we've been led to believe. It's kind of hard to guess our heights when we've never come across a measuring tape of any sort. Natalie has a fuller figure than most of the girls we come across—not big by any means, but she has a little meat on her. Her eyes are light blue and, as always, I get caught looking into them and forget the reason I started talking to her in the first place.

“Don’t just stare at me! Get off your butt and help!”

“Okay fine. I’m coming. It’s just, there’s just not much daylight left to read. I got caught in the moment.”

I jump to my feet, drop my book to the floor, and walk over to the dirty brown stairs of the hotel. Natalie, already partially up the stairs, has the top end of the bag in her hands and motions me to grab the bottom. I squat down, grab the bag with both hands, and stand back up as we begin climbing the stairs.

“This thing weighs a ton. What the hell does Tank keep in here?” I ask

“You know Tank, he always says he’s too big to hide. He feels it’s necessary to lug around every possible thing he thinks he can use to fight. Besides, it’s Tank. This is light for him.”

“Hmm... so in that case, what’s he got in here to use against you?”

“Oh shut up!” Natalie rolls her eyes at me.

Reaching the top of the stairs we swing into the first room we see. We drop Tank’s bag next to the bed where the rest of our belongings are piled. Aside from Tank, our group tends to keep a relatively small amount of things with us at all times. It sucks when you want to entertain yourself, but in the long run it keeps you alive. It’s much easier to fight or run when all you have is a backpack and weapons. Our group is constantly on the move in order to avoid attracting attention from scavengers and officers. We move to new locations daily while staying on the outskirts of officer patrols and trying to remain near hunter trade routes. Today, we ended up in this beat down hotel.

Looking around it seems that the dirty yellow walls of this hotel are slightly better than the puke green ones from yesterday’s building. This room doesn’t smell of mold like the other building either, which is a huge plus. The sun is shining in through a singular inoperable window on the far side of the room. It has already started to set and soon enough it will be too dark to do anything but sleep. My stomach starts growling. Hopefully, the others get back from their venture to get food soon so I can eat. We all pretty much suck at hunting so we rely on trading scavenged items to people who hunt in order to get food. We can aim and shoot just fine—it’s the finding and tracking of animals that we fail horribly at.

Nearly all of us traveled with companions or families that were survivors from the inner-city areas. I personally can’t remember a time when it was easy to find food. Some of the older people I’ve come across have said that a long time ago, food in the cities was easy to attain. They talk of massive trading envoys that sold meats of every kind. They even talk about having an abundance of packaged and canned foods throughout the city. Now, most of the trade routes have vanished and the only packaged food I’ve seen has been in magazines. Since none of us can hunt, the best

chance we have to not starve is to keep tabs on locations known for having hunters. Luckily, most hunters are usually willing to barter meat for ammo, weapons, and other scavenged items.

A little earlier in the day, we split our group into two smaller groups of five: one to go search for hunters and the other to hold down our temporary home for the night. The group that went to search for the hunters was being led by Kai. Thanks to a week's worth of bad luck scavenging, they ended up taking a large supply of our ammunition to trade for food. Earlier today the ammo was hard to part with, but as the night grows closer and my stomachs growling gets louder, I'm happy to trade for food.

Murmured shouts can be heard outside as the rest of our group returns from their venture in the wasteland.

"Sounds like Kai's back!" Natalie says, rushing towards the window.

"Finally, I'm starving!"

Right at that moment, the excitement of our approaching group is cut short by a loud gunshot from what must be a high caliber rifle. An unfamiliar voice begins shouting immediately following the gunshot. Neither of us can make out the words clearly. Natalie and I look at each other and nearly instantaneously make a beeline for the stairs. The closer we get to the bottom of the stairs, the clearer the words outside become. By the time we hit the last step, it becomes obvious who is shouting.

"Officers!" we say in unison

My heart drops through my chest the moment the realization of what is about to happen sets in. Both of us scramble to get to where we had left our weapons. Natalie turns around and runs right back up the stairs. I run to the spot where I was reading. There my green and black AR15 assault rifle is sitting against the wall aimed toward the ceiling. I snatch up the gun with my left hand and look for a strategic place to position myself. Gunshots begin tainting the summer air. It sounds as if every person in our group is outside unloading their weapon. Seeing as how there are only five of them, it's obvious that our group is in the middle of a shootout with the officers. To my right is the dark brown front counter of the hotel, and to my left, the front door.

I run towards the counter, jump, plant my right hand on the counter, and pivot so I land facing the door. I prop my gun on the counter using the clip for balance, place one hand on the shaft of the gun in order to aim and the other hand on the handle with a finger on the trigger. With the butt of the gun pressed into my shoulder, I tilt my head to the right until I feel the cold plastic of my AR hit my cheek. I stare out of the scope and begin aiming the crosshairs at the top of the front door. My heart is pounding out of my chest and a sick feeling begins resonating from my gut.

I have never killed an officer before and thanks to the trade of ammo for food earlier, I only have fifteen bullets in the twenty-five-round clip of my rifle. My back up, which is on me at all times tucked in my pants and secured by my belt, is my dull black nine-millimeter handgun. Unfortunately, it has a whopping two bullets left in the clip. On the bright side, there are no windows at the front of this hotel, there's just a big brown door. I have to try and calm my breathing in order to improve my accuracy. If I have to kill an officer that comes through that door, I have to hit him in the head as soon as he opens it or I'm as good as dead. I want to believe that my friends outside will survive this shootout, but the obvious odds are that they won't. Officers always have bulletproof vests making them extremely difficult for normal scavengers to kill. A headshot is one of the only quick ways to take them out. To land a head shot with a handgun, you either have to have amazing luck or amazing aim. Even if you have both chances are you're not going to survive long enough to use either skill set to your advantage.

The gunshots cease. Silence. Fear shoots through me as the handle of the door is turned and the door begins opening. A face enters the view of my crosshairs, I squeeze the trigger once and then again immediately just in case I didn't hit my target the first time. The body drops in the doorway propping the door open. Was it an officer I shot? I pulled the trigger too fast... please tell me I didn't shoot one of us! I open both eyes and pull my head away from my rifle to inspect the lifeless body on the floor. An officer. I exhale in relief.

"You little shits! You dare take on the officers! You're going to pay, pay with your lives!" shouts a drunken sounding officer from outside the door.

A few ruffling noises from outside mixed with some taunts and then silence again. To the left of the door I notice Natalie standing on the stairwell, her gun pointed out in front of her. Had she been there the whole time? Waiting with me, waiting with me just as scared, waiting to try to kill the intruders before they killed us? Of course she was. After all it's Natalie. She's no stranger to violence, none of us are. She looks at me as if waiting for a signal to move. It stays silent for what seems to be an eternity. I don't know if it's out of the fear of another trying to barge in or the shock from killing my first officer, but I don't move.

Funny, I'm acting as if killing that officer is different from killing the zombies or the scavengers that tried to kill us in the past. Officers were complete douche bags in my mind so why the shock. Every other killing that had taken place throughout my life had been out of necessity to survive and this had been no different. Maybe it's because he was so easy to take down. After all the horror stories I've heard of them murdering anyone or thing who entered into their territories without permission. After all the stories of the rapes and raids the officers were responsible for throughout the collapse. After everything, they're just as easy to kill as the rest of us are. Breaking the silence of the room I hear Tank's fifty cal go off.