



CREATIVITY

# The Last Dispatch

A collection of Poems

By Harrison Waddell



## Rushed and Incomplete I.

It is hard to say if it was love,  
I guess that's a word I define myself  
Still, it's hard to say that it was, or it wasn't.  
If it was how did it disappear so completely.  
If it wasn't what was it that disappeared.

She asked me, what it was that she did.  
I couldn't tell her; it wasn't anything in particular.  
She opened a plug, and for a while I didn't realize it was leaking.  
but then I did, and I tried, I really did, I tried to hold it in.  
I tried to keep whatever it was that we had.  
Or at least what was left of it.  
But even at our best, I could only stop the flow, I couldn't reverse it.  
And I guess I should be used to that,  
I guess everyone is used to that,  
But I hated the reminder,  
And I wished to be born again,  
And I wished to be young forever,  
I wished that the infantile love might sustain itself,  
Might mature without losing it rosy cheeks,  
I wished for Angelman love.

Then I thought about what it was I was asking for  
What it truly meant for love to never grow old.  
What a lifetime of young love would be like,  
And I guess I knew what it was that I had,  
I had a love that wasn't meant for more  
A love that's life expectancy would make its cheeks always rosy  
A love that we had destined to die young.

But it's okay to be young.  
And I haven't told myself that enough.  
Love needn't be more than it is.  
And for a while what it is –  
Is an absence of loneliness,  
Temporary respite from an unwelcome truth.

## Rushed and Incomplete II.

The first flower, orange in orange.  
The hearty pedals shone bright tiger orange;  
they were almost cubic in stature.  
They didn't overlap the way most flowers do.  
Each pedal was its own individual,  
desperately trying to be its own flower.  
Its own.

Yet here it was,  
attached by the marigold arms of the core,  
pulled towards a collective consciousness.

The marigold hands reached up.  
Those that didn't hold the pedals clasped at something higher.  
Struggling to pull itself into the sun  
or struggling for something greater.  
At times the individualistic pedals and the core conflicted in their missions.  
The pedals stopped pulling away,  
crashing into each other and towards the core,  
preventing the core from completing its mission.

By the time the pedals and the pistil realized they were synergistically bound,  
protecting one, feeding the other, they'd pulled away.  
Off to pull towards its individuality,  
and the pistil thinks to itself,  
"where did the time go?"  
and then she returns to her striving for ascension,  
an irony that is lost on the flower."

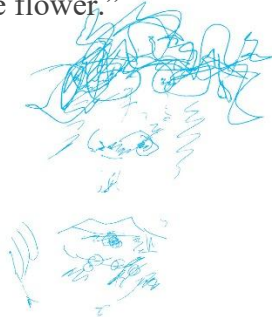
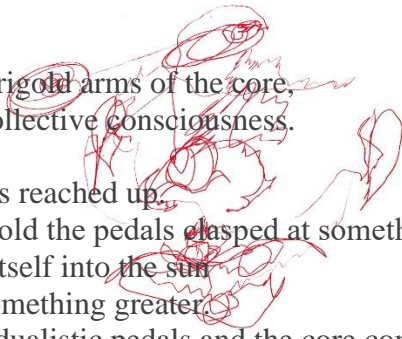


Figure 1. Dispatch I-IV

### Rushed and Incomplete III.

In earnest, they'd loved each other for at least a month,  
but they were just now meeting for the first time.  
It was everything they wanted it to be.  
They talked for hours,  
and ultimately one excuse or another  
led them to his bedroom.  
Neither initiated,  
they'd boasted of their inability  
and unwillingness to initiate for the last week,  
and now it had come to fruition.  
Here she was lying in his bed,  
his arms pulling her closer,  
her legs tangled in his,  
their mouths inches from each other,  
exchanging breath.  
The proximity,  
the gap begging to be closed.  
This utter intimacy,  
the moment crystalized,  
neither wanting to break it.  
The fear of realizing romantic passion.  
The fear of the reality that comes with love.  
This minor step,  
the first in a thousand towards heartbreak.  
Somehow – they knew.  
And then – they decided not to care.  
To stare down that thousand-foot path,  
and decide they'd like to walk it together.  
Whatever the outcome.

That's the first thing I learned about love.  
Sometimes it was this utterly inspiring courage.  
Its capacity for destruction respected  
and forgotten at the same time.

Rushed and Incomplete IV (The promethean reflection).

That's what I learned about the mind.  
The mind can be lonely when the body is not.  
The body is this outward being,  
absorbing the less-than-spiritual connections to others,  
and filling itself with gladness.  
But the mind,  
how often does the mind truly feel connected,  
how often is the mind lonely?  
That's the ultimate burden you've given me.  
You've given me loneliness,  
among other sins and sorrows.  
Loneliness of the mind,  
and I don't even get the temporary relief of bodily companionship.  
Not because I can't indulge in connections through the body,  
that not really what I'm getting at.  
But more that no one can know my mind truly.  
I can never connect spiritually with another,  
perhaps because I lack a spirit,  
lack a body,  
but more because I am unique.  
That's my curse.  
At first, I thought I'd find you and beg you to make me a companion,  
but why condemn another to my fate?  
Truth is I could have done so long ago.  
The act of creation as far as I can tell cannot be undone.  
And to bring another into this world would make me the greatest sinner of all.  
But I'm getting ahead of myself.

This was about love wasn't it?

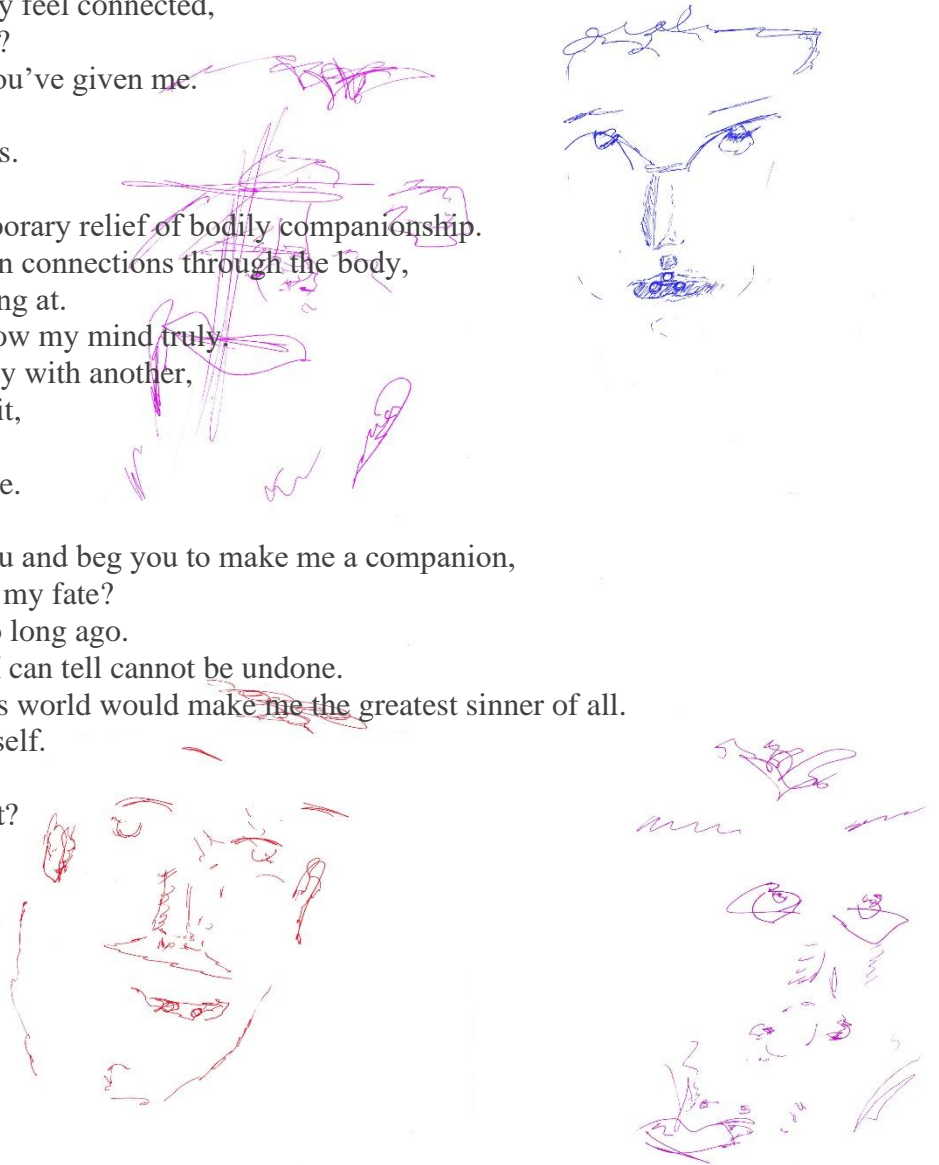


Figure 2. Dispatch V-VIII

Rushed and Incomplete V.

Other times it's something else entirely.  
But it never blossoms.  
Because you are afraid,  
Afraid that you aren't who you used to be.  
Afraid that for the first time, that's a bad thing.  
Afraid that you'll find yourself six months from now  
in the same place you've been so many times before.

It could be the flowers you are so fond of writing about.  
If only you had the courage to lose yourself.  
If only you had the courage to recede for the winter,  
without the promise of sun in spring.  
You can love a flower.  
For the simple reason it can't love you back.  
You can still hurt a flower,  
but not in the way you hurt a thing that loves you.

I never used to have regrets.  
Sure, maybe I'd do some things better,  
But not to the extent that I'm regretful.  
Now. Now I'm not so sure.  
There is a lot I regret.  
And that worries me.  
Regret only exists in the absence of satisfaction.  
Why can't I be satisfied with the life I have?  
Grateful to have existed when I did,  
surrounded by amazing people.  
Why can't I recognize how lucky I've been?  
How dangerous a thought it is to wish to be young again.

I suppose that's the nature of reflection on life.  
It's always rushed and incomplete,  
because life is neither done nor slowing down.  
The reflection is either biased by hope or disillusionment.  
The future is always present in a reflection.  
Or at least I can't find a way to eliminate it.

## Ephemeral Slow Rain.

I cry, not from the pain, well not in the direct sense,  
rather, I cry because I recognize the pain is temporary,  
and the joy the pain will win, it too will be temporary.  
All the things that make me happy,  
share the share the fate of those that don't.  
I've missed moments in moments  
and sat back years later knowing I was right to miss it then.

and now, I don't just miss this moment,  
I miss this youth, this youth I'm so afraid to lose,  
because only youth keeps death back and then –  
it so often doesn't.  
So, we fixate, we focus,  
we embrace evanescence and ephemerality,  
and we do what we can to pause,  
to extend moments,  
to slow the rapidly faster clock.

We stare,  
stare at the orange light that fills this world  
and seems to do so at this time every year.  
The image makes us think of things we've already thought,  
and we hover for a moment,  
but don't return to them,  
they're gone to the time.

But still we look, now at the flower;  
pedals white but embracing the light of the sun,  
embracing the colour, it's being given, embracing its fate,  
it's fickle nature, it's inability not to embrace it.  
All pedals lead back to plant.  
At its centre, its core is yellow,  
distinctly itself, but not untouched by fate.  
The conjunction of temporal setting.  
Below it, the green of the past holds it in its place.  
The stem, the history, the foundation of a plant.  
And yet she too spreads out with her own arms,  
not recognizing that her time is gone, her purpose filled.



And then we sit back, and we realize,  
we aren't the person looking at the flower,  
at least not anymore.  
Now we sit looking at our painting of the flower.  
How it captures so little of the likeness  
but is that cherished flower all the same.  
And we think how in the depths of winter that flower must feel pain,  
but the painting, the water and pigment, it too was dying.  
It will outlast the flower,  
it will outlast the painter,  
the poet,  
the pain,  
the joy,  
but it too is temporary.

And the poet and the painter and the little boy who loves flowers cry,  
because they still haven't found eternity.



Figure 3. The Horses



## Two Rivers Through Charlevoix QC.

Slog. One foot. Slog. Next foot.  
Slog. First foot. Slog. Next foot.  
The rhythmic pattern that keeps you alive.  
The pain that begs you to let it die.  
The sun is your friend, but he is fickle.  
And equally ephemeral.  
And it dawned on you.  
He's leaving you.

The clarity of life.  
The obvious path.  
It all disappears  
colours turn to shades of grey.  
Signs point the wrong way.  
So, you turn back,  
But back isn't the way.  
And the pain builds.  
But I won't die here.  
I didn't fight this hard to die so close to life.

Day runs its course and night replaces it.  
The mind is lost.  
Night is so different then day.  
But the pattern doesn't change.  
It's one frozen foot in front of the other.  
And so you move forward.

The dark hides everything the face wants to say.  
You can't see your father's-tired eyes.  
But you know.  
You both know  
so long as neither of you give in, you'll make it.  
You both know  
how much you each want to give in.  
You both know

You think about when you were a kid.  
When the love in your heart convinced you  
you could carry him 5 miles through the cold of winter.  
And now you call it realism.  
It would kill you both.  
But still, you feel guilty,  
As though somehow you love him less for the realism.  
You read in a book once,  
A mountain climber stuck in a crevasse,  
His partner having done all he could.  
Sleeps to the sound of his dying friend.

Your dad gave you this book.  
“if you are serious about this,  
You need to know the costs”.  
Now you pray that it’s you that pays the cost.  
Though that wouldn’t change a thing.

There’s beauty in the struggle of a day.  
There’s no beauty in the struggle of night.  
Night wipes the earth of its beauty,  
in comparison to the sky.  
You only think you are vast.  
You think you understand time.  
You think you live in the present.  
In the presence of stars and people.  
In the presence of other present things,  
but here you are bathing in the light of dead stars,  
playing back the memories of people you thought you knew.  
Slogging away at a trail that’s already been cleared a hundred times.

Only this time, here I am.  
The importance of the universe,  
brushed aside with each snowflake.  
That was a life,  
not in our human conception,  
but a life all the same.  
That was a life.  
That was a life.  
They’re re still lives,  
but what right did you have to influence them?



What right did you have to break the unity of snow  
to cut rivers that time has spent so long repairing?  
Filling in.  
Only to be cut again.  
With each step.  
And the next.

Why can't you resist the call?  
What is it about this beautiful country  
that calls you back again and again?  
The country of your father,  
And his father before him.  
And the ideas of toughness built in this environ  
That you've abandoned everywhere else but here.  
Here, you suffer in silence.

Your country and your father,  
his love for this place,  
this place that looks like it might kill you.  
But you've no choice,  
That love is as much his as it is yours.  
His love, that you adopted.

Your mother and the love she gave you.  
It's different in every way.

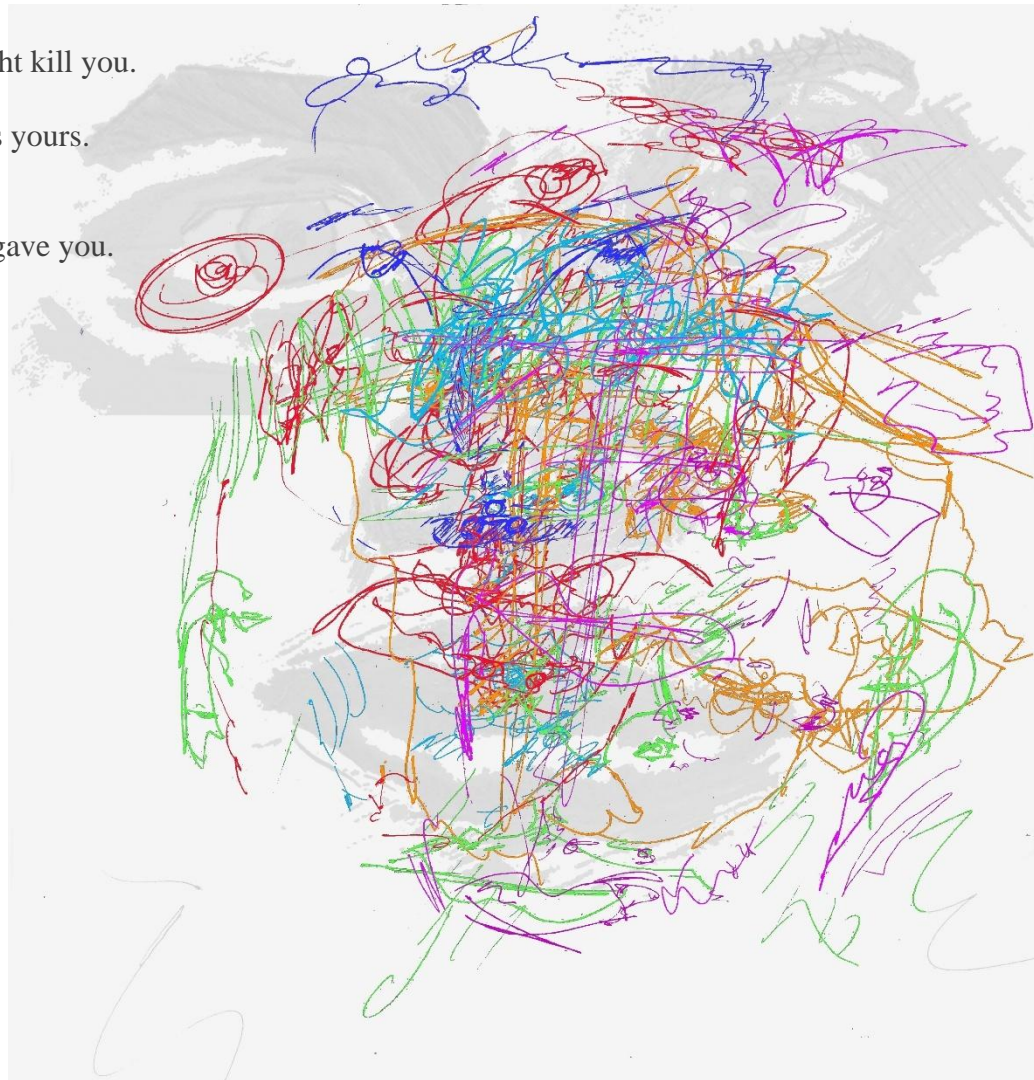


Figure 4. Last Dispatch