

• A COLLECTION OF PERSONAL LOVE POEMS AND POLAROIDS.

A  
LOVE-LETTER  
TO MYSELF

LAUREN BARBER

A  
*LOVE-LETTER*  
TO MYSELF

LAUREN BARBER

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is something I've been wanting to create for a long time. Poetry has been my saving grace in my darkest hours, as it is for many people. I want to thank Stephen Quigley for encouraging me to not only start this work in his Projects in Digital Composition lecture, but also to finish it despite the many roadblocks I had faced. I also want to thank all of the men who inspired each poem included in this book. Without them I would have never felt the love and loss that my work encapsulates.

With love,  
Lauren

# CONTENTS

The fall .....	6
The pain .....	23
The anger .....	42



THE FALL

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

It's a bit brighter today,  
And the air feels a little bit lighter than last May.  
The thoughts that consume my brain still remain,  
But now I feel like they are somewhat more sane.  
I've managed to find pleasure in the day to day,  
Including even the most mundane.  
This change isn't the result of finding myself in some cliche  
way,  
Yet finding good that still exists among the fray.  
Knowing genuine people still exist in the modern day,  
Makes me want to stay another day.

LAUREN BARBER

A clear sky on a hot summers night,  
Your delicate eyes shining brighter than the moon and stars  
combined.

We are young and reckless for the night,  
So you push me in the pool to give me a fright,  
But it's just you and I and the tensions are high.  
Sparks flying as you wrap your arms around my devilish  
thighs,  
Kiss me like you've always liked,  
Oh how much I long a summers night.

- 11:49 on a Saturday night

# A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF



LAUREN BARBER

I crave that feeling in my mind,  
When you ever so gently touch my thighs.  
You make me feel so alive,  
Fuck, you make me feel so alive.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

My legs shake without my consent,  
When I try to explain, it sounds like complete nonsense.  
Something about you wrecks my nerves,  
And it's making me wish I could be silently purged.  
Free me from the worries that consume my brain,  
Give me a shot of that numbing novocaine.

LAUREN BARBER

I hope you heal like I did,  
And I hope one day you're able to love like a kid.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

You were my poison,  
But also my pleasure.  
So toxic, yet so fun to treasure.

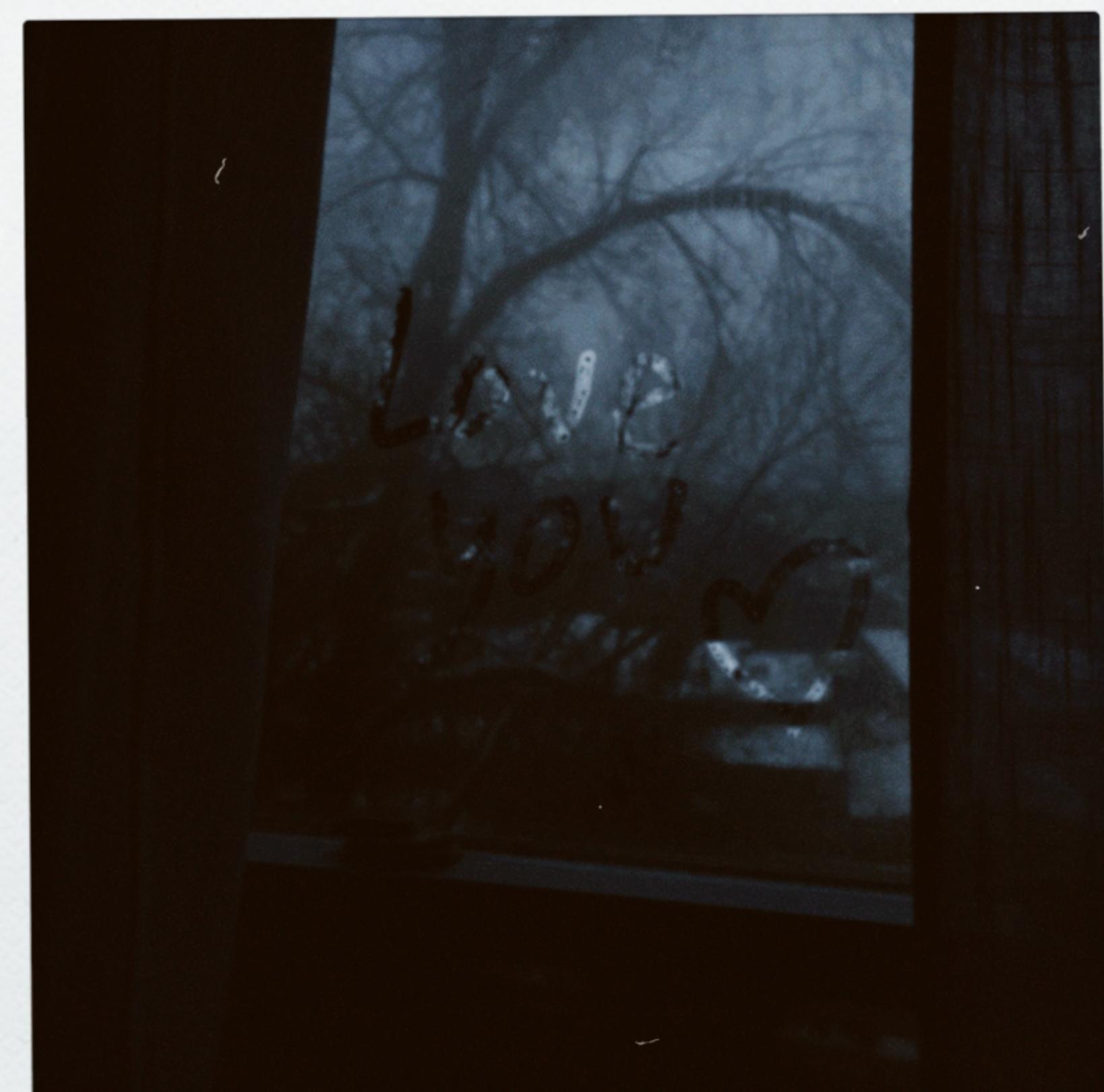
LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

You stole my heart like a bandit,  
And god damn I really can't stand it.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

You killed me swiftly with that one look,  
A flood of emotions that could fill an entire book.

LAUREN BARBER

The sun graces his face,  
And my mind gets lost in space.  
Silently I wait,  
Am I too much to take?

– anxiety

# A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF



LAUREN BARBER

A body tender from the love its received,  
Bruised and brandished from the suffering.  
Is love and suffering not the same thing?  
Or should I merely be ashamed?

# A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF





THE PAIN

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

The part of love that's heart wrenching is that unrequited love. He's everything I want, but I know I'll never be what he wants. I fall more and more everyday, but to him I'm merely a distant thought. I'll never be quite enough.

I step back. We become distant. I try to squash my hunger, but my mind keeps craving you, the man I'll never have. The man who will never see me the way I see him.

You've become the revolving door at the hotel, allowing different people short stays in your heart only to meet 40 percent capacity and never be completely full.

It's difficult to ever reach full capacity.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

I disappeared into the night,  
Purely out of fright.  
You touched me like I mattered,  
But when it was clear I didn't, I shattered.  
With Parts of myself strewn across the floor,  
I only grabbed what was at my core.

It was a fantasy.

You, me, everything.  
It's a faux reality despite all the rationality.

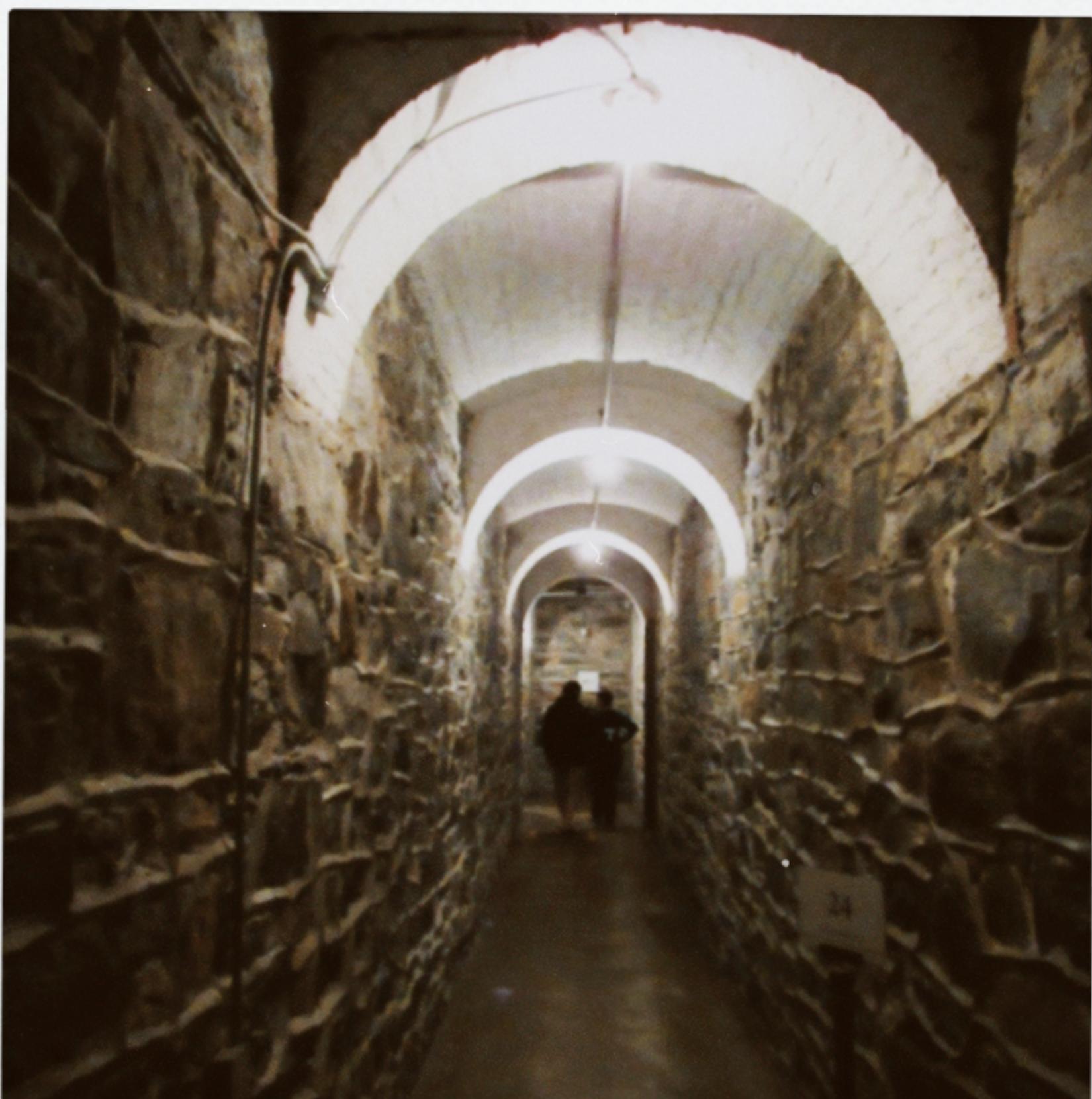
LAUREN BARBER

Always just an option,  
Always just someone's problem.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

I love only to be left,  
This should be considered theft.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

Today.

Today was one of those days.

One of those days where you start off anxious and consumed by the idea that no matter how hard you try, you'll never be enough.

One of those days where it feels like you're somehow too much despite trying to be just enough.

One of those days when you question every word that escapes your cautious mouth for the fear that someone may not like what you have to say.

You begin to shut down.

You repeat the thoughts in your head only to then sound rehearsed when you say them. You wonder if now your deemed dis genuine because the words now flow off your mouth too easily. You're trying so hard to be yourself, but instead you fear they see someone who is the complete opposite.

In the middle of breaking, things stop for a second.  
The pace changes and the suffocating feeling that filled your  
throat begins to dissipate.  
Calamity fills the air.  
Someone just made you smile.  
Someone made you feel a little less alone and a little more  
normal.  
The anxiety still lingers with a slight hum, but the happiness  
is now what people notice.  
In an instant you've gone from holding back the tears to  
holding back the laughter.  
Today was one of those days.  
One of those days that you need.  
One of those days where you remember what it's like to feel.  
What it's like to be a silly little human with emotions beyond  
comprehension.  
Emotions that can change in an instant just by the presence  
of another human whose just as silly.

A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF



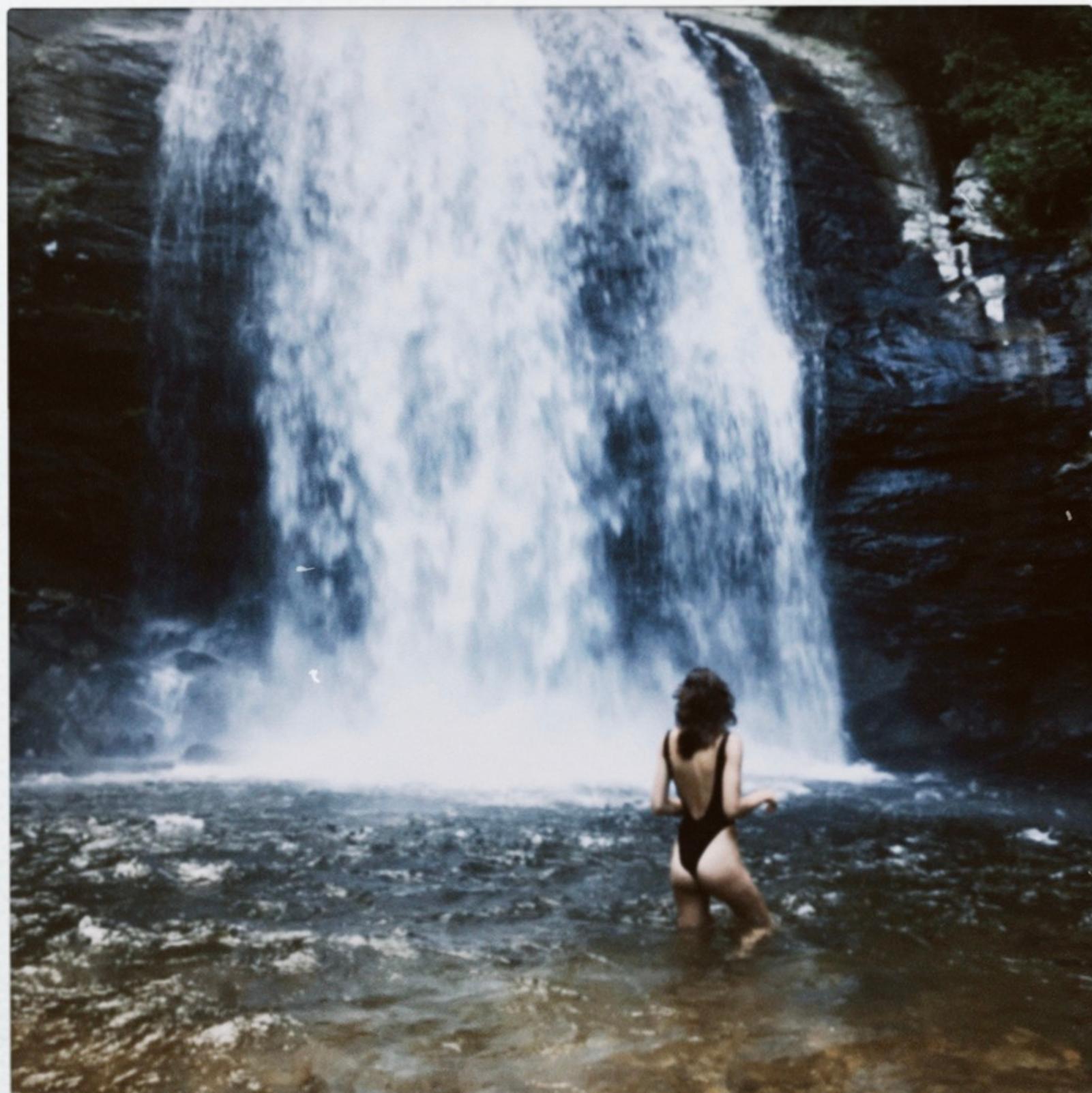
LAUREN BARBER

I wanted to be made of stone,  
But instead I was fragile like porcelain.  
One mishap and I would shatter,  
But alas, to you, why would that even matter.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

You said we could chase waterfalls,  
But now the only waterfalls I see are the tears that run down  
my face when you call me another girl's name.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

Why do i always end up feeling this numb?  
Is it simply because im just that dumb?  
To think one would want me,  
When really i'm just their plan b.  
Why does no one want me?  
Why don't I fill someone else with glee?

LAUREN BARBER

To the man who was never mine and never will be mine,  
Today I leave you behind.

You and those little wrinkles that form whenever you smile,  
That little giggle you make whenever I crack one of my shitty  
jokes,

I leave it behind to find someone who makes me smile,  
Someone who wants me to laugh.

Today I leave you behind in hopes of receiving the love I gave  
you.

# A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF



It's 11:03 on a Saturday night and I sit alone in a three bedroom apartment with no one home to call mine,  
No one who thinks I'm worth the time.

I hear the cars driving past,  
Each one a little louder than the last.

I start to hyper fixate on the sounds that fill the background,  
And I wonder if I'm the reason I sit here alone.

If there's a part of me I shouldn't have shown.

I genuinely wonder how people do it,  
How they don't get attached,  
How they don't feel some way  
About the person they just kissed the other day.

I used to believe in the thing called love,  
But now It's just something I'm sick of.

I just want to make someone smile on their worst days,  
However I'm the one who could use a smile today.

I'm instead someones pit stop for merely a square mile,  
But there's a part of me that knows I'm worthwhile,  
there's also a part of me that fears that maybe I'm just a little  
too old style.

I want love,

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

not late nights with someone who only likes me kind of.  
I want deep convos about things as vast as the cosmos.  
I want to feel like I don't have to cover my wounds in order  
for you to swoon.

I sit here alone at 11:27 on a Saturday.

No one in sight because there's something less lonely about  
physically being alone.



THE ANGER

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

Why must I limit myself?  
I am not an equation.  
Am I?  
Bound by factors beyond my control,  
A life set in stone before I was known.

A cold-blooded killer,  
That's what you are.  
You left me wanting more,  
But all I got were scars.

# A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF



LAUREN BARBER

You sunk your teeth in deep,  
Like a vampire waiting to feed.  
A parasite who wouldn't leave,  
You rid me of what once made me feel complete.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

Anger.

Im angry I let you fool me.

Im angry I let you use me.

Im.

Just.

Angry.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

You told me you were different,  
I believed you.

The end.

The devil's lips stole my soul.  
Disguised as a lover, I felt consoled.  
Weakened by his sweet eyes,  
I was left feeling hypnotized.  
He took and took and took,  
I didn't even bother to look.  
Oh, how he took,  
Now i'm alone and overlooked.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF



LAUREN BARBER

There is power in what I let known,  
There is power in what I own.  
Don't mistake my honesty as something you should condone.

## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

I was once told that if I had flowers in hand,  
That meant you were my man.  
What they failed to mention was that you being mine,  
Didn't mean I was necessarily yours.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

I sit alone as the sky dims and the wind breaks.  
If only I were not what you inherently hate.

LAUREN BARBER



## A LOVE-LETTER TO MYSELF

My feelings towards you are fleeting.  
All I wanted from you was a sweet greeting,  
But instead I was left with you leaving.  
With no formal goodbye,  
This sucked more than when you said hi.

*A Love-Letter To Myself* is a vulnerable collection of poems and polaroids that explores the bliss, pain, and suffering that goes along with falling in and out of love.

