

All Along the Livery Line

Marshall Mallicoat

Preface

All Along the Livery Line is a collection of my poems published from 2011 to 2014, on a few websites now defunct and a couple times in print. They were written when I was living in Stamford, Connecticut, after I had first moved out to the East Coast. I drew much inspiration from the people I met through writing, and those I knew only through the internet.

To everyone who solicited my poems and invited me to read my work, thank you. And thank you to everyone who was kind to me.

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About this document

These poems were collated, proofed, and lightly edited in the fall of 2016. The publications where they first appeared are listed in the appendix. This document was inexplicably typeset in LaTeX and printed to PDF.

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The turpentine camps of north florida

In loud places you can sing to yourself
Alone with your bars
In a nowhere filled with people
I want to be left alone for three days
To do drugs and look at things on the internet
When Im done Ill come back
The drunkest someone has gotten in an applebees
Ive gotten that drunk in my apartment
My spine curved toward the computer
Like a flower toward the sun
The world is big and small
And I can never make someone know me
Tho Ive convinced myself I know myself
My bedroom is a time machine
Moving into the future
One second per second
While everything moves away from everything else
Im really doing this thing
Im tryna love you girl
Sitting on the train or standing on the train
Chinese food to go or chinese food to stay

Video game champion

Cops are harder to see in the dark
Cops know this
I know this too
I am a sad man
And my sadness spreads like wifi
Aimed at new york city
In beirut the kids do drugs
Get skull tattoos and race to heaven
Million being a thousand thousand
And trillion a million million
Street fashion will never die
Cuz street fashion doesnt care
I will die in an airport
If possible
While in the parking lot
A car tries to get underneath its own shadow
Like cows in a field
All tryna get under the same tree
It's raining in japan
And tomorrow it will rain here
The people of the world will survive
And discover secrets in this earth
And live forever

A graffito that says bank of amerika

In the mens room every man is me
Im on drugs and everyone else is on drugs too
My backpack feels like someone pressing against my back
In four hours there will be more hours
Ive seen this
Ive seen flags with ak47s on them
I kneel on the carpet and pray five times
Then I stand up and pray five times
Gods body is frozen somewhere in the ice
Listening to a perfect ipod
Rap will last 50 years
Then repeat the first 50 years in reverse
Like how every v nasty verse is an unrecorded eazy e verse
Like how I always go everywhere twice
The first time to go for the first time
And the second time to go for the first time again
While feeling like Ive been there before

Poem to white people

I watch movies about white people
To learn how to be a white person
I am learning
I assume funny people are happy
Cuz theyre always laughing
I laugh a little too
While my soul pools in my feet
I wanted to be white trash
And tried to dress white trash
I thought they were coming back
To buy up the block
Then leave again
Like life is a slow sickness
That kills as it spreads
Im sayin
White people
Go back to your communities
And teach them what you learn here

Like a movie you can see anything

The crusades except its americans
Drivin suvs into mexico
To feed the hunger
Under an electric sun
I cant accept the world
In such impossible detail
Wish I could be a drunk girl
Dressed up pretty with makeup
Holdin a cellfone
There are so many people I cant talk to
Imma buy xanax off the internet
Imma go to mexico and buy xanax
And walk down streets
Feeling things
Not even seeing the streets

Ice mines on pluto

Ask anyone what an alien is
And they will tell you
What it means to travel a great distance
I can hear my grandparents dyin
Thru my cellfone
Thru my cellfone
Thru my cellfone
Poetry is the poetry of atoms and dust
In the rap videos
They shoot you with invisible guns
Shit dont mean shit
President on tv
Talkin bout four more years
Theres no trash bag big enough
For what I have to throw away
My god
I wish the aliens were real
I wish theyd come
In the dark
And then leave
In the night

Poem

I'm the best man in this chatroom
I'm the worst minstrel dancing for you
I'm the worst friend for sending you bad links
My best rappers are wack to you—
My girlfriend on the edge of this time zone
I can feel you in this zip code and in every zip code
I can sing your telephone number
I want to email you and CC the world

I'm cleaning up the condo
I'll turn up the air conditioner
I'll do your math homework
I'll lay you out on my queen size bed
I'm so rich I will love you for handshakes, for eyelashes
I will love you for nothing
For love I will love you
Love your thumbnail slideshows
Love your scrolling text messages
Love your mpegs on loop

I'm out in god's country
Gathering pop tabs on a string, on a great necklace
To gift to my wife on our wedding night
So she might be proud, and you are
And the sky is your color
And the shampoo smells like your hair—
This is my email to make you love me
At least when drunk and on drugs and asleep and offline
Love me like I love your green fingernails
Love me like I love the cigarettes on your lips and the hairs on your ass
Love me like I love the shoes on your feet
Love me like I love my trailer park queen

The radiators come on at night and wake me up.

Two people together and god is there. Im all alone and god is gone. Off betting on natures science. Sneaking into hotel rooms to hide bibles. They were well hid. And what was written in there also hidden.

There are two worlds running alongside. One a little faster than the other. Like trains on tracks. The seats in trains like pews. All facing forward. Toward the altar. And on the altar nothing.

The other americans come speaking a moon language. To the moon and on a monday. They come and they go. Trafficking memories. Thru customs and thru sheets of glass. Thru invisible sheets of glass in the sky.

Let them drown before the sea. And throw the bodies into a sea of insects. Let god be Christ. And let Christ be the Lord. Let the shadows reach west and touch the mountains. Let each new blog bury the last. Let the atoms of air be numbered. Like each coat in the coatroom is numbered.

Stand on a plastic box. Stand on a wooden box. Stand on an aluminum box. And you see. And you see. And you see.

The people on the internet are not me. But they could be. Uncle Tom, Brother Jed, Saint Anthony. Reverend Run, Doctor Faustus, Professor Chomsky. Chairman Mao, King Cotton, President Aristide. Mister Carter, Citizen Kane, Master P.

We're Bowling with Bumpers Now

I know morale is low.
The ice shifts inside
the ice machine uneasy.
Where we can't get clean
we paint over the dirt.
When the buildings are finished
and the hospital gowns are lifted
the wrong songbirds will take roost:
the killdeer and whippoorwill will talk shit.
But it's just a little hazing
from friends you haven't met yet.
When the odometer rolls over
we'll all clap together and applaud each other
to have seen such a thing just happen.
There's a corset that holds the mountain up.
There's a belt that girds the world.
All exits have been clearly marked
for your convenience and safety.

A Bouncy Castle Lifted

Everyone's alone on their fone
busy unfriending their friends,
sitting at work pretending to work
shoveling shit to the shit eaters.
At this bad banquet
you gotta bus your own table.
In the crowded movie theater
you gotta touch yourself.
We come in thru the out door.
What's done is undone, like shoestrings, like oysters,
all the French curls and crazy circles
or the patterns of a fancy dancer.
It's a fuck-all wonder.
It's a revolving door you're stuck inside,
wearing a coat that only makes you colder
and pulling it tighter
against the air-conditioned air.

Horse Advice

Don't bet your house on a horse
You can't live in a horse
You can't even eat a horse
Or you wouldn't want to

Black Ice

In the late 20s of your century
in your painted room painted red
on your leaden mornings of done lovers
when the earth curves away from you,
you might find you've gone defunct
like spoiled milk in the guest house
like a small patch of black ice
left alone and not bothering anybody.
You're cut with a knife so dull
the wound doesn't even deign to bleed.
Your teeth still hurt, but only faintly
like they were someone else's teeth
and that man was walking away
concerned only with the stone in his shoe.

For the Santa Barbara Estates Trailer Community of Olathe, Kan.

The plain fact is there *are* no Super Walmart's—
only Supercenter's where you loiter,
where there is no center to be found
unless it rests like jewels on her navel.
She was blonde like a Fox News anchor
and made love like an octopus plug
with a Rorschach on her lower back
above the hem of her khaki pants.

The motto of Idaho is *Esto Perpetua*,
which means *it's forever*, which it is—
maintained by our selfless Aryan brothers
insurgent in the foothills of the Rockies.
And there's a handsome klansman here right now,
with toothsome smile, eager to guide our boat tour
thru the putrid Florida *everglades*—
a nice word for an endless swamp.

Memorial Day

We're once-, twice-, three-time losers:
the Sooners, Hoosiers, and Corn Huskers—
all the fishes: the Bettas and Tetras,
the scumsuckers who chew the glass,
the anchovies and sardines alone in their tins,
the feeder fish, the minnows—born to die.
The bugler plays taps badly
and the flag's gone orange and gray.
As the halyards chime their complaint,
let's try to remember Ruby Ridge
and the little 9/11 of 2000 and 10.
Let's salute Dale Earnhardt Senior
for everything he did for a sport we love—
Jim Beam, Jack Daniel, and Johnnie Walker—
Hank Williams I, II, and III—
Kiss Army and all the No Limit Soldiers.
Let's sleep in on the long weekend
and not bother with the flowers.

Mayflies in June

The liquor aisle stays lit until 11pm
and seven on Sundays.

I drink whichever beer is cheapest
so to let the market judge
what I have no business judging.

At Wed. church you can wear jeans
and sometimes it ends early.

It's there in the parking lot you witness
the first of the floodlights come on
and the mayflies queue up for communion.

Oh Little Quick Forgetter Pt. 1

The phone numbers wear out.
Your friends don't live here anymore.
You showed up for the party early and I asked you to leave.
I said *homie, go home*.
Your lips are drawn wrong.
Your teeth are set backward.
You got high off fake weed.
You caught meso from one summer doing insulation.
You could have done a tour in Iraq and been back already.
You're the one who buried his gold and thought he was golden.

Oh Little Quick Forgetter Pt. 2

Who is you?

You who would withhold dap when asked?

You who split cats and tie down dogs?

You who stand on the escalator and idle in the drive way,

your car in ten thousand pieces,

arranged in one of many possible ways?

It's no good what you might could, or can done, or been had.

Oh little quick forgetter—did you divide rightly?

Have you never seen the sea?

Are we to believe that *these are trees*?

Oh Little Quick Forgetter Pt. 3

In painful shoes, you'll stand, until you're fit to sit.
As your leg learns its limp, and your back takes its crook.
You weren't well liked, just familiar.
And we used you for your pool table.
You were named a supernumerary.
You came back home, and the lights was on.
The oven was on, and all of the faucets was on.
And in the garage the car was running.
And when you stood in the Dutch door,
we closed the other half.

New Haven

Your breath appears in winter, like a new pope
and the snow smells like your smoke.
You stutter like Roman numerals: I, I, I
and I touch you with gloves on.
We kiss like bridges half-finished
in your parent's house on the sound.
The mirror is a perversion of the room
and in this perversion is your face,
your hair arranged in folios
with the pages yet uncut.
Your body is a grand concourse—
not just a terminus, but a place to depart from.
I'm drinking from the faucet of your mouth
not worried who has to drink after.

Eulogy

Canadian geese crossing the street
are ready to die for their country.
Why not you? Are you too good?
Do you bloom perennial?
Or once then never again?
The soil is soaked thru with malt liquor.
Something smells sweet in the greedy weeds.
Our reparations are pending and hang
like a branch of rotten fruit.
It's pythons in Florida that will redeem us.
The kudzu is busy at our retribution.
The nightcrawlers are out in the morning
and they're embarrassed, and you're ashamed,
as we lay one of our alumni to ripen,
to dare reckon of underground trees.

The Sun Do Move and the Earth Am Square

after the sermon by Rev. John Jasper

In the flint hills, you cut your feet
where the fences are fallen ladders
and the power lines come together
at right angles, like corners—
where the old internet still runs
blown on the wind
carried on strings drawn by pigeons.

The earth was taught patience (and waits).
The stars learned loneliness (and don't they look lonely?).
The day comes when the sun
will be called from his racetrack
and his light squinched out forever—

But what do I care about the sun?
I ain't been appointed to run the sun.
We are moon men, have always been moon men:
moon men and moon women.
And tonight is our favorite moon.

For My Then-Girlfriend

My little phone holds your face
in the distance where the birds
are just plucked eyelashes,
maybe an unclosed parenthesis.

From an airplane, we see the landscape
as a modest array of paint swatches.
The people become pointillistic,
spittle from the idiot maw of creation,
a bit of food you lost in your clothes and wanted to eat.

If there aren't enough blueberries, and they're black—
If the stars are asterisks with footnotes to follow—
If I'm allergic to your cats and ugly with freckles—
If I touch your collarbone and break its wings—
It's just as well.
The pictures on my phone are yours.
With obliterated eyes I've seen us together:
(me) laid out in a deleterious sun
(you) cutting your nails, and letting them fly.

Original Publications

- [1] “The turpentine camps of north florida,” “Video game champion,” “A graffito that says bank of amerika”: *Pop Serial 3*, edited by Stephen Tully Dierks, 2012, popserial.net.
- [2] “Poem to white people,” “Like a movie you can see anything,” “Ice mines on pluto”: *shallow*, edited by Zachary Whalen, 2011, letscallourbandtheyeahyeahyeahs.blogspot.com.
- [3] “Poem”: *Everyday Genius*, edited by Stephen Tully Dierks, February 2013, everyday-genius.com.
- [4] “The radiators come on at night and wake me up”: *horse ghost (volume one)*, edited by Matthew Donahoo, 2012, www.horseghost.info.
- [5] “We’re Bowling with Bumpers Now,” “A Bouncy Castle Lifted,” “Horse Advice”: *Pop Serial 5*, edited by Stephen Tully Dierks, 2014, popserial.net.
- [6] “Black Ice,” “For the Santa Barbara Estates Trailer Community of Olathe, Kan.,” “Memorial Day”: *Aclypse*, edited by Cody Troyan, unpublished, aclypse.com.
- [7] “Mayflies in June,” “Oh Little Quick Forgetter Pt. 1-3,” “New Haven,” “Eulogy” (appearing as “On the Occasion of a Friend Falling off the Wagon”), “The Sun Do Move and the Earth Am Square,” “For My Then-Girlfriend”: *Western Beefs of North America*, edited by Willis Plummer, 2014, westernbeefs.com.