

**re: a self declared
abassador of land**



**Oliver
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re: a self declared ambassador of land

Oliver Phillips Lance

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introduction

I am blazing my own path
through thorns of self-doubt.

I am trespassing into lands
once forbidden from imagination.

This chapbook is a collection of my recognition of love towards
nature, contemplation, loved ones, and myself. It is a catalog started
and not finished.

re: catalog of unabashed gratitude

Friends, will you bear with me today
for I have recognition of the love I have been given
and a realization rested upon the roots forged
under my step. *Oh my.*

I am a self declared ambassador of land!
Who knows what that really means.

I emphasize the air that refreshes my mind
and the sycamores, that unknowingly,
slow the stress that spreads,
that one day I will find a way around
the thoughts that irrigate through,
but for now, I will sit with you,
red breasted nuthatch,
thank you for keeping me company
perched above.

I emphasize my grandmother who expresses
what it means to truly embrace the connection

between self-love and love given,
who I introduce as my “fit, environmentalist friend,”
so those who do not know you
can equally understand my admiration.
Who still finds the energy to enjoy the weeds
that will not stop rankling the hydrangeas.
I pick up my step to show my spry legs
after you exclaim “go ahead, I won’t be long.”
I turn around and see you
not far from my gaze
appreciating the american wisteria,
goldenrod, and sun that seem to
be appreciating *You* more.

I emphasize myself
for I do not do that often.
I am the intersection of exploration and exclamation
who tried to follow the beaten path blazed
but fell off a while back.
Once lost, found again through
the red maple tree diverged,
cairns carrying structure,
and a new path that contains stop signs,
reminding the lone hiker to wipe your tears
and love yourself as you do to the roots forged
under your step.

re: a kind caretaker

Where critters crawl and
the blue jay's wings push
cool air and worries down.
You are not alone.

You can breath together with
the timed clicking of the woodpecker.
Sit on a fallen log,
let calm caress you.

Rest your eyes.
Push your thoughts deeper
into the house of roots
whose caretaker will gladly
let you stay a while.

re: the soil, sky, and everything in-between

To the multitude of love that multiplies in memory
I write unknowing of what drives my heart towards you.
How your aura so effortlessly captures the experience of my thoughts
despite the unknown, despite ignorance and immaturity,
you are, have always been,
the one thing I am sure about.

My heart tramples the seed under my step
as the bluejay flaps, pushing perpetually upward,
onto the lone tree in the backyard of the home I grew up in.
Sitting up on the hill, looking over rolling eternity, rolling,
growing the seeds that give life, farmland that lasts forever.

It is here I see your beauty.
It is here I will sit until I am old,
when the wrinkles of my face form perfect creases
that show the love that has been given me.
Until the butt chin that dimples my face
has given way to loose skin and slight fat.
Until the wind picks up and takes me with it.

It is here I will join you, willingly.

Thus joining in the rebirth of the life I so love where
trees offer shade to mice that scamper under leaves blown down by
the seasons, that give and take as bears join in the slumber.

That sometimes, I envy.

The peace of sleep, the world stopping the clockwork that takes over,
stress laying dormant in my mind, that is what I envy.

I envy the crows that flock the fields in numbers.

They have friends, they have so many friends.

I envy the lilacs that have a beauty that none can match,
the unweathering illumination they bring to the life around them,
what it may be like.

I envy the pigweed that grows through the pain.

Despite others attempts to diminish its life,
it continues. Being battered, beaten, the bombast of brazen attempts
to break. Thank you for showing what it is meant to live.

What life means to you. I envy you and the tenacity
you show. Sometimes it is hard to fight through the pavement.

I have given you my thoughts, but I know, you will keep them tucked
in with you soundly as you sleep.

Your unfettered attention to those around you
capturing those who need it the most.

Perfect is how I describe you to the ones who don't know.

Trying to show them, that they can give their problems to you.

That you won't tell, won't judge, won't misinterpret like so many do.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you for taking that burden on,

for accepting the timorous troubles that I am too scared to tell.

re: a lady bug

I am not as spry as I once was.

Hiking brings salt
crested along the brim of my hat.

I am lakes of sweat dripping down the pants that
I was dumb enough to wear;
“yeah those look good, it can’t be that hot.”

I am mountains, standing tall,
yet shadowed by the clouds
rolling over me.

I am a collection of journal entries,
bounded together by smeared,
misspelled words and sporadic thoughts.

Oh. Hi lady bug.
Swimming in the sweat collected on my knee,
probably similarly looking for a place to rest and relax.

re: a tree diverged

after I'm Going to Start Living Like a Mystic by Edward Hirsch

Today I will slip into the brown boots born again
and step through the marshy lands as Lewis and Clark.

The moss collects to the rocks ready to listen
to the sermon of the frogs.

Ripples form from leaves too tired to hang on,
pushing a message of peace to the protecting lily pads.

I will embody the tree diverged, reconnected through outreached
branches
like a young adult who forgot why he stopped loving himself.

I will timidly trek around plants that scream
“Your ancestors loved me!”,
and give faith in boots to hold me to the congregation on the rocks.

I shall read the book captured in the bark of the maple,
a love story chaptered by insects burrowed.

I will rest here as the crumpled leaves do,

before beginning life again.

re: a contemplation conquistador

Trampling the wet moss the morning dew
smoothed. Boots hitting the ground in a steady pace
as the poles sink deeper into the moist soil,
aerating the life that lays,
and the mountain mint that captured me.

But you don't have time to enjoy the simplicity.
Cramping. Crying your way to the next sign
that says the same thing as the last,
“5 miles” to where your mind will give up again.
Maybe this time you will be stronger.

Maybe. But doubt floods my face.
I am a contemplation conquistador
traveled into depths unreachable.
Endless exhaustion sucks away admiration

for the red maple, the doe passing by,
clouds and contentment, blueberries nestled
beneath the bushes that would make the

best pancakes, the leaves trampled
by the boots worn by so many others.

re: impression, sunrise



Back against dew and cold wood frosted
from the frigid air that lingers.

Where night turned and morning began,
I sit looking forward.

Fog smooths over waves rippled
from the silhouettes casting at the sunrise.
An orange rope, wrapped around the city,
tugging and yelling “Wake up, we’ve got work to do!”
Yet it does not know, the city began before it rose.

The haze denies sight but lets sound in.
I can hear the beginnings of bustle,
doors opening to let the day in,
the jangle of keys in the hands of shop owners,
all accompanied by the turning of
water that slows my mind.

re: the same lanscape

Mind slowed by silence.

Grass layered on grass being cut
by the farmer across the street
who falls into perpetual work,
like crows who claw at the critters below.

I recognize this landscape.

The one I have seen since I was old enough
to look out the window
and recognize love,
for the maple tree that stands 2 feet taller
and the basketball hoop
rusted by the rain that grows the view before.

Love for the soil upturned

that sprouts corn stalks
staggering over the homes curated by the critters below
that continue the cycle of the crows,
who flock together above the farmer,
who I watch every morning.