

Haikus

Unexpected rain,
grit inside wet flip flops
Wrinkled toes pale white

Wake up to sunshine
Monday morning melody
Just be yourself, ok?

silent afternoons
back home again for summer
We're all far apart.

Villanelle

A Lingerin Goodbye

A kiss
before you go and leave me alone. (*and I never see you again*)
Nothing more than this.

It isn't long before I count the hours and begin to miss
everything about you, longing for something as simple as
a kiss.

It's much longer before I find out anything is amiss,
that you are gone in every sense of the word, leaving me with
nothing more than this

loneliness that never goes away, and the sad capability to reminisce:
if only we'd had more time, I would have given you so much more than just
a kiss.

We must have been doomed from the start. Bliss
was never in the cards for us. Our end was always going to be
nothing more than this.

please, please don't dismiss
my last gifts to you: a poem and
a kiss.
nothing more than this

Sonnet

Year In Reverse

I fall for you in the summer of rain.
We watched the sky fill up with clouds and light
and kissed until I lost words to explain
why I had never before felt so right.
In four months you leave. I was not enough.
This bitterness is becoming way too much,
I can't function without thinking this stuff
disgust at the sight of young lovers' touch.
Who are they to flaunt love so openly?
Arrogant, inconsiderate—I hate
feeling this way, worthless, like nobody,
parts of a person I can't recreate.
That spring changes my mind:
let them stay intertwined.

Ballad

Something to Wish On

She's coiled tight under the lake
deep down where there's no light:
a dark creature, half girl half snake
with sharp small fangs pearl white.

There she'll stay for the whole long day,
biding time 'till night falls.
Then she'll rise up to great dismay
and start those wailing calls.

To the shore her voice will carry,
beckoning all who hear.
Taking over the unwary,
drawing them ever near.

All die simply, underwater,
never taught to swim.
They line right up for her to slaughter
chance of escape: so slim.

And then one day a man arrives
approaching from the east.
He's heard about each of the lost lives
and aims to kill the beast.

The townsfolk are unsure of him;
they've seen his type before.
All ends they ever met were grim,
never returned to shore.

This one carries no sword or steel,
only a simple net.
On his small boat does he conceal
this mermaid's greatest threat.

That night when her song starts again
he rows out off from the pier.
Following that ghostly refrain,
through mists does she appear.

Beautiful and dangerous is she;
scales glitter in the dark.
The sight of her fills him with glee:
for what did he embark?

"Hello there, my handsome darling.
Did you like that little song?
I could do so much more than sing
if you just come along.

"Climb up out of your boat, my sweet,
the water's nice and warm.
I promise you a lovely treat;
you've no cause for alarm."

He had some purpose, some fine goal—
his net is there awaiting.
But somehow he has lost control,
all without debating.

The water's cold and so she lied.
Her scales are smooth on skin.
Her gaze is bright and honest eyed,
causing his head to spin.

Her kiss seals air inside his chest
as she submerges them;
only then does he protest
feeling himself condemned.

His struggles do not last for long
as he runs out of air.
He should have known she'd be this strong;
that she would not play fair.

His eyes grow dim, water rushes in,
he sees her smile kindly.
His last thought is guilt, for having
hunted her so blindly.

He was not expecting to wake
from that last dark descent.
But the next day beside the lake
he still exists, all spent.

He's waterlogged and weary;
she let him go—but why?
He has nothing, not a theory
why she did not just let him die.

He finds the small scale long after,
tucked away in his coat.
He swears to keep it thereafter,
her merciful parting note.

Blank Verse Poem

Modern Dreaming

I am trying to scare you in the hopes
that you will leave me alone and never
come back. Fear is so hard to generate
until you find those simple words that come
together and resonate with our deep
dark instinctual terrors. The ones that
make us want to turn on all the lights and
pull the curtains over windows, keeping
out the dark that stares back at us when we
look outside. Fear of the pale face watching
from the backyard, looking directly at
my second floor window. I feel cold all
the time when you're not around and with me.
The people who lived in the house before
me kept their dresser blocking the closet,
and the lights on all night long. Sometimes I
wake up and the back door is open. One
morning there was fog outside the house and
it rolled in through the window, spreading out
across the floor and down the stairs. The sun
lit it all up bright white and woke me up
but I was still tired, and went back to sleep;
I'd considered taking a picture, to
send to you, only when I woke up again
I didn't know if it had been a dream or
not. Probably not, if the man I keep
seeing in my living room is real. He
is tall and thin and old, and at night he
sits on the couch and stares at the blank TV.
I let him stay because I don't know how
to make him leave. The other night I went
to bed thinking about waking up next
to you; at four A.M. I felt someone
climb into bed beside me. I thought it
was you until the next morning when I
woke up alone and there were no tracks from
your car on the fresh snow. I know this isn't
normal. I can't wake up without you here.
Sorry for scaring you. Please come back.
I was wrong to think I'd be better off alone.

Stanza Poem*I'll Be Lonely Again*

Headlights on the ceiling—
welcome home.

The dog barks and growls, jumping on your chair to
stare outside.

The light in the yard comes on, sentient and sensing your motion,
and she's still barking, even though she must
see you now.

Maybe you've been away too long
or maybe you're not you at all.

the doorbell rings
but
you have a key

She won't shut up;
the doorknob turns.
Did I lock it?

The door opens.

She lunges out into the darkness, snarling and ready to
defend.

The dark night extends out beyond the doorstep,
empty and yawning, stretching out to consume.

She is gone, swallowed up, so far from me that
I no longer hear her.

She is gone, and so are you.

I wake up on the couch.

the door is closed
she sits in your chair
You're still not here.
Maybe you never will be.

Elegy

Inspired Mourning

A vague, indistinct mourning period
that lasts too long and ends too soon

it convinces no one
but this is more genuine than anything he's felt before

and he's sorry, he is,
he wishes he could cry for the right reasons

but he can't help the tears that come
from the thought of death itself

and not the specific passing of someone
he'd never been that close to anyway

his life is not a long one yet;
he hasn't lived enough to be good at anything

if he died it would be so tragic
much more so than the death of his great grandfather

a person like that is living on borrowed time
but he is not in so much debt

he is selfish, he knows
to think such things

one day his selfishness will make him deserving of death
and who will grieve for him then?

Heroic Couplet

Going Home

On any other morning she would sleep;
continue on her journey counting sheep,
and let her troubles wait an extra hour;
give in to drowsiness, blankets' power.
That is not an option—not today:
She has an engagement; she'll not delay.

Her toes touch down on the floor of cold stone,
that cool sensation thrilling to the bone.
For she is sick of sultry summer noons
that swelter all throughout the month of June.
And ever long do the days grow, until
she begs for the cold touch of winter's chill.

Her mother hates that bitter frost and snow
and never thought her daughter should outgrow
the pleasant balmy spring of childhood;
she would not let the lass leave her for good.
Yet there she stands, that girl Persephone,
grown older now and wanting to be free
more permanently from her summer cell.
She'd rather spend eternity in hell.

It is a quiet place for weighty thought,
on memories she does not want forgot.
Like their first meeting, in the flowered field
when his true feelings for her were revealed.
Such love he had for the goddess of green
he dreamt only of crowning her his queen.
She visited the underworld that day
and fell in love as well, wanting to stay.

Today's the twenty-first of September
as the three involved all well remember,
commemorating the six seeds she ate
to remain forever in his estate.
She rushes into his arms at first sight;
half a year she's waited, now all is right.

Time to return to her true home with him,
a prospect her mother always finds grim.
But she is happy as never before
together with the one she does adore.
She bids Demeter a concise farewell
and, hand in hand with him, descends to hell.

Open Form Poem

Alone Again At the End of April

When it rains she turns the lights off and hopes for lightning, entire hours spent trying to capture the purple-white streaks on camera in an attempt to hold onto a moment that was never made to last, an instant in time.

I was never scared of thunderstorms—until once when I was riding in the backseat looking up at the sky
and it was a big storm right overhead
and the lightning was like fingers clawing their way through the clouds
and the noise of the rain and the thunder reminded me of dark fireworks

and then her. I discovered her obsession too late. I was already in love by the time I knew she needed to hang pictures of lightning around the room and sit on the back porch with only a flimsy screen to protect her from the storm. I thought we could be okay, that we could compromise. But she wouldn't shut off the TV, or stop using her computer while the sky flashed white and then thunder followed, loud like the way she yelled at me for being too scared of commitment, about how moving in together was a mistake.

I was too scared of thunderstorm to listen.