

Amateur Song

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Presented by

My poetic side 

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Synonyms for Matt

Dysphoric

i.

you were possessed
recently you can't remember at what
moment in time the person cracking
your knuckles suddenly morphed into
a stranger but don't worry
that foreign psyche will welcome
you back into your body before you know it
he didn't like it in there anyway
you won't see anything new in your
reflection once he does and at first
you won't know the reason
for returning your skeleton
in the first place but you'll
understand soon enough why he decided to
find a new home a home more
rectangular a home with a chiseled
jawline and wider shoulders and a
really long doorknob.

ii.

only two factions in which
rejects like you are permitted to live
in the first freedom will lead you to your
demise and the other will welcome you with a
warm smile but you'll still want
to turn yourself into a
carcass if you stay there too long so
either way you're gonna die very
shortly so does it even matter
yet still you can't seem to choose a side to decay on

iii.

what's your name? you figure that spirit
must've done something to your
bones your name has become a pseudonym and now
you will hurl the title your mother gave you
from your throat like it's spoiled poison and each
syllable is a different flavor of stomach acid somebody
notices this and looks concerned for your safety
they ask if you have a title they can
give you that doesn't make you queasy
but you can't answer them
you'll take a long hard
look into the mirror that night and wish you had told them
that your name is Nothing
after all that's the only
part of yourself you can see anymore

iv.

he must've abandoned a part of himself
inside of your fingers because you keep pulling
down your shirt so your chest is less valley more
sidewalk if somebody treaded upon your breasts would
they flatten if you took a blade to them
could you slice them off could you make
them into cold cuts could you slit your
throat in such a way that forces your vocal chords to
vibrate slower if you use sandpaper instead of
a towel to dry off could you walk out of the shower
and scrape yourself into brawn could you polish
your skin into rugged tough stoic survivor macho
masculine if you hung a vacancy
sign around your neck could you convince your former
phantom to move back in
when he evacuated your temple did he realize that
his absence turned you into an asylum does he
know that you're dying to feel sacred again

v.

you know you're going to hell everybody says so
they won't let you forget it the same
way you're forbidden from holding scissors near
your scalp but you fantasize
about haircuts all the same you'll sit in the barber's old leather
the remnants of your fallacious womanhood will
fall to the freshly waxed floor will be swept away will
be piled up onto a dustpan and discarded
replaying the buzz of the razor that sheared you
will lull you back to sleep after waking from night terrors you keep
musing of a serpent who after fifteen years of
asphyxiation finally liberated
itself from its scales
and then was made into a wallet
the scary part is that you're supposed to be the snake
except you aren't to be skinned and hold pennies under
your tongue you need to be sneaky you need to be cunning you
need to be slither and venomous bite
and you're not

vi.

relax
fight long enough and you'll be able
to take an arrow to the knee
except it'll puncture your thigh and
it won't hurt won't bleed won't swell won't
require healing you already
own too many battle scars fight
long enough and you'll be able to inject your
first victory into your veins
feel triumph pump through your blood
you can't bury yourself in the nearest graveyard
and be born anew you can't grow a
new body in the dirt
you don't need salvation

you don't need salvation

vii.

beware of your peers they're bear traps
just itching to sink into flesh snares waiting
to noose your ankles but remember
your entrails are not unholy
you can still renovate your insides and
that spirit of yours will come to visit you over
the summer and you'll feel okay for once
and you'll make a very snug home for ghosts

Sonnet for Noah

I endure a love unspoken. It twists
into a prayer of profane words
La douleur exquisite for you, vision blurred?
Yet my silent infatuation persists.
I awoke to fresh bruises on my wrist
You inquired the cause (your query was slurred)
So I spoke of fond confessions unheard:
"I had a nightmare last night. We kissed."
Close your eyes to tenderness unseen
(irises of professed love, left unsaid)
My screams grow silent but your breath echos
and gnaws on my heart like exquisite cuisine.
Our fingers are tied together by thread
You've never held on, but please don't let go

118

woe is the fool whose heart feels
no satisfaction
woe is my pulse in particular, tricked
into associating
an incubus with divinity
i focus on the back of the head
of a / boy like i
am a gun waiting to fire
at the back of the head of

a / boy whose voice is smoky / boy whose name is murky / boy whose handprints are hazy / boy whose presence makes your mind misty and whose absence makes the floor foggy / boy who walks out of your life with the door cracked open even though he locked it when he entered / boy who stains your bedroom carpet with blood (you don't know whose it is and he claims he doesn't either) / boy whose chest rises and falls like a sinner desperately trying to escape from hell / boy who lathers holy water on his wrists like cologne / boy whose bed is empty (so is his grave, pity the dead who feel no rest) / boy whose chest is made of concrete / boy whose heart beats like conga drums / boy with spoiled honey in his blood / boy whose shout is a thunderclap (and at the crash i cower like a dog) / boy who is a hurricane wrapped in stained glass skin / boy whose memories of me are vacantly replayed like vinyl records / boy who knows my face as a mere scratch on the disc / boy whose native tongue is half-assed apologies / boy who is a catholic church, gothic eyes and cathedral hair and brass fingers / boy who snapped hercules' spine like a wishbone last week / boy who doesn't know how to kiss without making your lips bleed / boy who has never held love it slips through the gaps in between his digits like water and he just accepts it / boy who can't be bothered to write bitter craving burning yearning unrequited poems about some / boy who is staring at the back of his head / boy who is resisting the temptation to dig into his chest and extract his own pitiful heart

Yellow Paint

1. They tell me the cliché of Vincent Van Gogh and
His yellow paint, which he ate because he
Thought it he was pouring happiness inside of him.
Yellow was brilliant, it was lively, it was gleeful, and if swallowed
In great enough quantity,
Joy would run down his throat like a river,
He believed that he could wash away grief with
Pigment. He believed he could digest pleasure and dissolve
Misery with stomach acid.
They tell me I can find salvation
Like he did, pry ambition out of a can from Home
Depot, tilt it toward my mouth and let it surge through me.
They tell me I can, and will,
Find my yellow paint.

2. I call bullshit. Van Gogh didn't drink yellow
Paint so he wouldn't feel sadness, he did it so he wouldn't
feel anything. He wanted to poison
Himself by consuming paint turpentine. He intended on
Squeezing death from a tube, and I
fear those who say that Van Gogh downed paint to
Bring his mood up because those are the type of people who
Will look at razor blades and call them paintbrushes,
Who will roll up the sleeves of turtlenecks to uncover cuts
Riddled against skin like tally marks and label them art,
Who will name my scars "tragically" and "hauntingly" and
"Beautiful", who will read suicide notes as if they were poetry, as
If they were love letters to Lucifer,
Who will describe fresh blood as if it were red wine,
Who will reassure me that I am just an angel who wants to
Go back home and embracing an oncoming train is just the only
Way I know how. I
fear those who say that Van Gogh downed paint to

Bring his mood up because they devour
Suffering with ecstasy because to them it's a
Masterpiece because my
Sulk is their silk because to
Them depression is runny mascara and the melody of
Your own cries lulling you to sleep like a
Siren's song and
Blonde and skinny and
Star-crossed loner and
Delicate mystery and
Pale fingers with chipped
Black nail polish laced around
Cigarettes and
It's edgy it's enchanting
It's glamorous it's beautiful because
To them broken people
Make the prettiest things and broken people
Own the prettiest smiles because broken people
Are the prettiest people.

3. I call bullshit. Heartbreak is no epiphany,
Depression is no passion. It is not stranded soul,
Fallen hero, painting done with knife and opaque tears titled,
"Homesick", signed by some downhearted saint.
It is desensitized, devoid, every waking moment
Just an extension of sleepwalk, ache carved in psyche,
Nights bad, mornings worse,
Drowning, but drowning
Just after the point where you've
Stopped struggling to stay afloat so you're just lying there,
Witnessing the rest of the world as your lungs fill with
Water and it envelopes you and that's the last time you'll ever
Smile because it'll be the last time you'll ever anything but that's
The reason you're smiling in the first place, it's numb to the
Point that you fear feeling
Anything more emotional than exhaustion.

Depression is pain and pain isn't
Pretty, my agony is not your aesthetic, it's being tortured and
Preserved by the same emptiness and
Really wanting to sucker punch the
Next person who commands you to
"Snap out of it",
"Stop being so negative",
"Just choose to be happy,"
"Get off the pill, stop relying on drugs and find your true self,"
"Get on the pill, it's like you're choosing to be like depressed,"
"Try yoga!"
Fucking... yoga.
As if you would tell someone with a broken leg to heal
Themselves by going outside and running on it.
(I've been told yoga will
Keep me sane, but let's face it: if that were true the
Beatles would never have
Progressed beyond Sgt. Pepper's, so again,
I call bullshit.)
Such an illness is not to
Be worshipped and romanticized and idolized as if
Forgetting to eat is tender, as if hopelessness is sensual, as if
Being shackled to your bed doubles as a performative dance.
Depression
Cannot be dominated with downward dog,
Cannot be forgotten with "happy thoughts",
Cannot be boiled with herbal tea,
Cannot be rubbed away with essential oils, and it most certainly
Cannot simply be coated over and dried up and forgotten
Behind some yellow fucking paint.

4. I fear those who say that Van Gogh downed paint to
Bring his mood up because what they would say if I were to
Perish that way, the way they say he did?
I bet they'd speak of me as
The boy who used an X-ACTO knife to

Etch the sadness out of himself like his body was
Linoleum tile. They'd say, "oh, he knew it was toxic but he
Was so desperate for euphoria that he would try anything,
So he decided to turn himself into a block print."
"He picked grapes and pretended he was his dog, his meals
Consisted only of dry cheerios because they reminded him of his youth,
Isn't that adorable?"
"I mean, It's a tragedy he's gone, of course, but
Isn't it endearing how much he loved
Snapdragons and boys who were passionate
About ballet and walking outside on summer
Nights and fantasizing about
Poisoning himself?"
"He tiptoed at the edge of subway platforms because
He wanted to know what it was like to walk on a tightrope,
He wanted to be a circus act,
He didn't wait for traffic lights before crossing the
Street because he believed in luck."
"He was such an artistic soul and he wanted
To become a painting. He wanted his final
Breath to be the wind that puffed through the *Starry Night*."
"He just wanted to find his yellow paint."

5. I call bullshit. Like a tree guzzled from
The inside by termites my body is only a
Hollowed out shell and it is
Home to a ghost who
Has absolutely no interest in becoming
An artist. His only desire is to cease
Being a ghost but he
Still wakes up every
Morning as if he were a
Soul whose absence
Would be noticeable.
It's the only scrap of human
He has left, and he's not sure whether to

Hold on to it or learn how to become a
Demon instead, nobody likes a demon swirling around in a
Human body like a wicked fog and he would
Auction himself off in a nonexistent heartbeat if it
Meant he could leave this vessel and
Become nothing at all.

6. If you just clutched your heart
In wistful pity, I hope as you decay
Your misery blends in with the dandelions
I bet you'd like that.

Three Stargazers in Beechhurst

We're bounded by four streets and they
Resemble the spots where clock hands freeze
At the witching hour and serial killers claim
Their victims in broad daylight, and we are none
The wiser. Like kids who leap onto desks at the
Sight of a rat on the floor, our feet dangle from
Two stories up because you know, a spirit
Could rise from under the concrete at any
Second and you gotta watch your back around here, you know?
Except it's two hours till dawn and we're the
Only two souls left in the whole
Suburb and the only one who ever passed away on
This avenue was a God, legend says
Got ran over by a Cadillac in the spring of 1998 and
Maybe that's why you get goosebumps in your uncle's car
We're perched like crows on his roof.

We both dread climbing down
From the shingles. You're
Never done singling out all the two-faced stars that
Failed to uphold their end of the deal
When for four years straight you wished for
Somebody to move into that empty house across the
Street but you only have
Yourself to blame for these unanswered
Oaths, the universe resides in your irises and
You should know this more than any diety
But to make amends,
I'll tally the eyes of angels amongst
Nirvana anyway, I'll lose track, and I'll only
Count yours when I start over. I bet I'll
Grow so marooned in you that twilight
Will spill sleepy lilac around you,

The approaching sun will yawn,
Outline your body in gold, and I'll be none
The wiser

Cathedral

the boy
is a church his eyelids
drape over stained glass
he shares his name
with the man of the
ark (he could've been a saint,
i swore he was a saint)
he speaks of ballet the way my art
history teacher speaks of basilicas
but i have yet to see the boy
dance and the only
cathedrals i have ever seen live perpetuities
in worn-out history textbooks, but i know
that if you free them from their
weathering bookshelf and stare at those dog-eared pages
long enough,
you, too, will enter
the house of god
my professor's voice ripples through
the classroom as he raves about men who were born
to die building hammering away their
years and how these structures, they tower over you like
giants, like deities (for the duration of a class period)
and my hands don't remember ever
touching a bible but lord o' lord
i may have found a mortal who makes me
wish i was still faithful
his stomach is a bronze door

Hermit

i live / in a tiny room instead of
windows there are socks instead of
a bed there's a huge fur coat instead
of carpet there are blouses there's
literally nothing in my room except
for all these clothes upon /clothes
upon / clothes i can't even see the
hoodies can't even see my hands or
my hallucinations or the ceiling can't
tell which / one of these walls is the
door i can't see shit in this closet (i live
in a closet, by the way)

i live / in a closet / and i've been
here for a while for a good couple of
years i've woken up in breathed in
slept inside of a closet did i mention
it's pitch black in here the paint sheds
from the walls like reptilian skin the
dust is rigid as steel so i draw blood
from my palm / when i get bored
which is pretty often when you live
in a closet

you might be wondering "how the
hell can you even survive in a closet?"
well / for starters i have infinite food
supply i feed off of both my hatred
for my home and my fear of moving
out and trust me that shit never runs
out it doesn't taste that bad actually
it tastes like how the leather brushing
against the walls feels it tastes like

my / identity has a padlock weaving
through it tastes like the walls calling
me a sodomite / sissy / sinner / the
food in here sucks, actually

anyways i'm not lonely in the closet
either / there's this boy in here with
me and i hold his hand a lot / there's
actually a lot of people crammed in
this space with me even though they're
all mirages but yeah it's / like a clown
car in here we're all here for the same
reasons being drawn to our own magnetic
fields afraid of the same consequences
of being found out

and now you ask me "oh my / god
do you need someone to set you free?"
actually i can leave whenever i want
perhaps i should've made this / clear
beforehand, but this is a metaphorical
closet / that i choose not to emerge from
so please don't turn the metaphorical
knob and tug on the metaphorical doors
and metaphorically evict me from my
home and then force me to confess to
certain / metaphorical aspects about
myself that will quite literally put my
life in danger

there's a reason / i prefer to collect
dust in here there comes a point in time
where one grows accustomed to their
prison their eyes / begin to forget the
difference between the metal bars and
windowsills the marble will start to feel

like wooden floor their minds will take
solitary confinement and it / will be
remodeled into a tranquil yoga studio
that's why

so many people commit crime right after
being released just so they can be jailed
again that's why / some of them get so
overwhelmed from being thrown back
into the public after years of captivity that
they kill themselves when you / get used
to the safety of stealth you cower at the
mere prospect of freedom freedom / is
danger love can be deadly what if i open
myself up and the outside nooses me on
a metal hanger and takes me to the dry
cleaners so i can / be worn like a faggot
jacket don't ask me why i choose to stay

locked up in a tiny little room when it's
the only place my love is safe / is when
it's wrapped up in chains wrapped in the
arms of a spectral lover that i'm far too
careful / to keep don't mock me for my
choice to be a shut in when you were the
one who put the hinges on the wall and
shoved me into this tiny little room that
you call / a closet and i call the closest
thing i'll ever have to a refuge

Bullet Through the Moon

My silhouette clings to rifts in the sidewalk.
There are three of them sometimes, and one of them
Has a heartbeat. They follow me every morning I
Walk to the bus stop. The moon watches all
Four of us. I don't know if she's watching over us or
If she's just making sure we don't do anything
Stupid in the dark or if we're like a sitcom to her.
Shadow number one is bashful
Under fluorescence. I'm not sure how, but it always
Glow, glows humble, soft, meek, a hauntingly
Gentle blue. It's best described as an alarm clock too
Timid to wake me up. I think it fears that my
Body is made not of flesh but of playing cards
That even a ghost could fold my skin as if
It were paper if it isn't careful. My second shadow...
Never leaves. *Ever.*
It tugs onto my coat sleeve like a child who just wants to
Go home except neither of us know where that is
"So stop trying to drag me back to a place that doesn't exist"
I wish I could tell it.
That's the reason it even tags along behind my feet
So it can pull me back to square one wherever
The hell that is so it can have its way
"So can you *please* just let go already?" I wish I could
Ask it, but I'd get a lot of looks considering that I
Would be some disturbed rando yelling at the ground
At six-forty in the morning.
I don't need to become whispers from downcast
Heads speaking of how I'm not right in the soul.
Also, I could miss my bus.
I'm really thankful that my
Second shadow can't assume a physical form. I bet it
Would try to steal my MetroCard.

Number three walks right beside
Me as if it were a person
I don't know why it pretends to be a person
I don't know why it would want to be a person anyway
But who am I to question the motives of demons, y'know?
...Demons, shadows, ghosts, spirits, whatever.
It looks like it'd have a Brooklyn accent if it were a person.
Like it would ride the Q46 and 44 and 20 and
Sit in the center seat of the very back
Of the bus and for a brief
Second, feel like a king.
It would have a shitton of dreams that just zip
In and out of the cracks in the pavement like electricity
But it would just watch them rise and fall like
Fish who leap out of their rivers before diving back in
It wouldn't think it'd be worth the trouble but regardless,
It would still fantasize about spearing its aspirations.
Sadly, it's no fisherman. Anyways,
I feel like would look a lot like me if it were a person.
Luna stares down at the lampposts that outshine her
With scorn, chooses to flicker every now and then like a bulb.
And doesn't say a damn word.
And I think she pulled my shadows from the
Concrete

I Look In My Bathroom Mirror

I REALLY HOPE WHAT STARES BACK AT
ME IS NOT MY REFLECTION I'M WATCHING
SALT LAKES ENGULF MY EYES
I'M AN ASYMMETRIC TAJ MAHAL
JUST NOW I REMEMBERED ABOUT THAT BAG I WAS
SUPPOSED TO GIVE TO MY AUNT IT WAS
FILLED WITH DIAMONDS I ACCIDENTALLY
LEFT IT IN THE PARKING LOT OF A LATIN BAKERY
THANK GOD THOSE SHINY LITTLE SUCKERS
ARE WORTHLESS THE REMNANTS OF MY HEART
CONTINUE TO ACHE AND I YEARN FOR THIS
MIRROR TO TURN OPAQUE
MY BATHROOM VANITY CAN ONLY SPEAK
THE LANGUAGE OF LEAKY FAUCETS THE JITTER OF
ANXIOUS HANDS SLUGGISH HEARTS
EXCHANGING DRUNKEN KISSES
IN THE DARK (DON'T TELL
LUCIFER I'M HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH HIS SON)
I CAN'T HEAR MY BREATH AND I'M GRATEFUL
FOR THE PULSATING SILENCE
I'M IMPLORED TO TAKE MY
FIST AND STRIKE THE GLASS BEFORE ME UNTIL I GAIN
WOUNDS THAT RESEMBLE ROSES UNTIL MY KNUCKLES TURN
INTO VOLCANOS UNTIL I SEE SEVEN HUNDRED LIMPID
SHARDS ON THE FLOOR
APOLLO MUST SEE ME AS AN EYESORE
WEEDS BUD FROM MY SCALP THEY'RE
IMMEDIATELY WRENCHED BY THEIR STEMS SO ALL THAT'S
LEFT ARE STUBBORN ROOTS I'M UNABLE TO COMB OUT
LIGHT DOES NOT BOUNCE BACK FROM
THIS MIRROR INSTEAD
I AM BUT A NAMELESS FIGURE SOMEONE
CRACKS OPEN THE DOOR SEES MY SHIFTING MASS OF

UNCERTAIN HUES AND UNEXPLORED
FORETHOUGHT HE CALLS ME "HOME"
SITS DOWN FILLS IN
MY SILHOUETTE WITH OIL PAINT TWELVE MINUTES LATER
HE LEAVES THE CANVAS TO DRY UNFINISHED
JUST AS HIS STUDIO APARTMENT IN JERSEY IS UNFURNISHED
WHO IS THIS ARTIST AND WHERE HOW WHEN WHY DID
HE FIND A UTOPIA IN ME
WITHIN THE RUSTING BARS OF MY RIB
CAGE IS AN INSURRECTION I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT
DESIRES TO BE FREED BUT I HOPE WHAT
STARES BACK AT ME ISN'T MY REFLECTION

A Black PSA

Attention, white people!

I was going to start this off with "dear white people," but
That's been done a million times already
And unlike you guys, I like to be original.

So anyways, white people,
I don't care what *any* nigga tells you,
Or how many niggas tell you this,
Ain't one of y'all invited to the cookout. On that note,

White people, may I have your attention, please!
I catch any one of you reading this poem out loud and
I'll bust those cheap excuses for lips on your face
Like balloons.
Like really thin balloons.

For some reason this is an still
An important message for the white individual:
How many times,
How many times do we have to tell you that you
Can't touch our hair without our permission? We shouldn't
Have to say this shit no more! It's not like
We just suddenly dig into your purses and say
"Wow the inside of this is really soft!" now do we?
We ain't takin' food from your plate without asking,
We don't crash at your cribs uninvited and also,
Even though you've been trying to train us for some
Four-hundred years, we still aren't dogs.
Or tourist traps, or whatever the hell else you think we
Are that somehow justifies your attempts to
Touch a part of our bodies like it isn't attached to us.
I should yank your bangs and see how you like that.

White people who drool over us,
Try to keep your saliva off of us.
Fuck "jungle fever", you're coming down
With a critical case of fetishization and literally none of us
Appreciate you watching our bodies
Drop onto the streets like flies with
Your hand down your pants
As if the recordings of our deaths were pornos.
Literally none of us find it flattering that our oppression
Somehow turns you on. Being
Your kink first, human second
Isn't exactly a compliment.

Hey, white people,
Please stop twisting our vernacular into knots
As if you have any damn clue what your words even mean.
Y'all be saying "Bye, Felicia," but y'all don't even know
Who Felicia *is!*
I had to hear the lyrics?and this is from a real actual song, like,
You can go look this up?
"You can finna catch me."
That arrangement of words had to
Fly through my ears unironically, okay? I'm not even
Going to explain how hilariously incorrect that is
Because frankly, it isn't any of your white business. Just know
That y'all sound like a buncha fools spittin' shit like
"Yassss hunty you better finna catch the fire tea
She just dropped on me I ain't throwin' no shade, tho!"
Literally nobody understands what you're saying, Lexi.

¡Atención, gente blanca!
Estoy cansado de voces blancas
Rugiendo sobre las nuestras cuando el tema de
Discusión es nosotros, cuando el tema de discusión es
Nuestro humanidad, nuestros vidas.
No, I will not be providing a translation.

You won't learn our mother tongues, so
It won't be your motherfucking business.

But this is. So listen up, white people.
Why should we let you deliver our speech when
We built the podium where you stand uninvited,
The podium that was made with
Black hands for support black feet attached to black bodies
Talking about blackness? You must
Be extremely arrogant to think you're qualified
To teach us who we are.

Here's a free lesson on AAVE, white people.
Lesson #1: Ebonics is a whole other language, and we're
Not exactly welcoming to non-native speakers who take
Our classes so they can sound cool.
It was a way for slaves stripped of their roots to create
A new cultural identity among themselves
They invented their own English in attempts to
Form a sense of unity and connection
With other slaves without white people interfering.
Jump four-hundred years later, y'all still be interfering.
The only use for our culture you people have is to consume it and
Then spit it back out like bitter food and I'm tired of it.
No one said you could eat off of our plates.
We didn't cook this "lit" meal for you. I'm tired of
Every letter of our dialect being "hella" commercialized,
Every grammatical rule mass produced to be squeezed
Into your choppy tongue,
Every dance move we authenticate instantly
Warped into "turnt up" performative stand-up comedy.
Everything we create to rebuild our sense of self after you
Constantly tear it down turns into a joke or a marketing
Strategy or a hip new way to sound
Tough or sassy or "woke" and if it isn't
Profitable to you then it's garbage.

And that shit gets me mad tight.

Listen up, white people.

You tell us we are inferior because we

Are good for nothing learn nothing do nothing make nothing

Discover nothing are nothing

You ignore the cause of our nothingness. You

Yank everything we produce right from our tongues our palms

Our kitchens our studios

Distort it all into an incomprehensible caricature

You wear it laugh at it post it speak it rap it

Toss it back to us a week later and tell us that

This is how you found our creations

You erase us into zero and then mock us for it.

You tell us we are inferior because our complexion is

Equated to evil ghetto ratchet criminal stupid lesser yet

You turn around and char yourselves into ash

And sell our skin tones in spray cans you use

Elmer's glue as an alternative to shampoo and get

Away with comparing your rotting, moldy,

Sorry little excuses for grinch

Fingers on y'all's heads to our dreadlocks.

I don't know about you, but if your hair was physically

Able to be made into dreads it wouldn't smell like

Musty asshole because you would be able to fucking wash it.

Y'know, like black people with actual dreads do.

I'm real tired of y'all stinkin' up the bus.

White people, can I ask you guys a question?

Why do you watch with wide, beady, fearful eyes

As my phone gets pulled

From my pocket as if there were bullets in it?

Why do you stare at me calling my friend as if

I were reloading a gun?

You make me wish my Samsung Galaxy

Doubled as a gun.

Hear me, hear me, white people!
To see us as human beings you apparently need to live
In some hypothetical world, some
Alternate universe in which we are not black,
But "just people". You know we can be both... right?
You know that our race doesn't negate our humanity, right?
You know that darker skin doesn't darken our souls, right?
You know you can take your tinted glasses off and stop
Announcing your supposed colorblindness and see us as
Black people, and at the same time see us as
Black people, right?
Blackness is embedded in our flesh and blood, it pumps
Through our hearts and gets pulled along with our muscles
When we stretch and it pours out of our skin
When we get shot. Do not tell us that all
Your eyes can make out is just a bunch of
Cells and veins and meat.

Alright, relax, white people,
I won't waste another breath reading this poem.
Knowing your bloodlust and your tendencies
To label our murders Suicide and Well He Deserved it and
But the Killer Was Just a Lone Wolf Twenty-three Year Old Kid,
You might make it my last.
I'm not ready for my skeleton to be bent into a hashtag.

SiO2

billows of crystal swirl up like smoke like the
breath of winter like a devotee's
quiet dust storm
like flour but it is still, it
is serenely numb

and placid, a heavy exhale that liberates
fatigue. serenity thaws you in pulses.
there's no shelter from helios's
beaming affection but
slacken up now, he's careful to cast himself
into your arms
gingerly here

romance is fabled to set
flame against forest, burn it all
into grain that will have your
fingers roleplaying as hourglasses
it must boil your skin
rock through your body
with carsick bake your

heart like the dirt
below your bare soles it needs
to cook you for it to be dubbed "love" though
who wants to hurl
devotion and have
it riddle you ill? it must rebuild
you, restore your vessels with vigor!
it should greet
you like a haven from mayhem and your
lover's irises will shapeshift into doorbells.

and should there, like
here, be no shore for waves
to sneak up on your ankles,
to curl around you like a sweetheart's
embrace and wash away your ache,

the desert shall kiss you vigilantly
be compassionate,
soft, subdued. see my tender
beloved doze in the dehydrated beach!
the aridness is not a bother to
either of us. for the zephyr is calm, and
i wait with a
smile to dishevel
the sand from his flaxen hair.

Paper Airplane

i'm going to fold my ink the way you do
your arms your legs your homemade
cards your pizza slices your loft bed blankets
that body pillow you cradle like it's name
were darling as if it were me oh,
how i yearn to be your body pillow
how i long for my skin
to crease the way that fabric creases i beg of you
empty me out replace my vital
organs with goose feathers and let me
fall unconscious beside you
i want to fold my tongue into a
love letter for you
but there are only so many
ways to call you my beloved my angel my
my sweetheart my squeeze
my dear, there are only so many ways to
describe adoration only so many ways to
illustrate how i wish to kiss you only so
many ways to tell you how just the thought
of fitting our jigsaw hands into
one another turns my circulatory system into
an electrical current and jolts static in and out
of my palms only so many ways to shed joyous
tears over your shoulders only so many ways
to run my fingers through your hair as if
i were a boat sailing in an ocean
of liquid gold only so many ways to
scream in pleasure only so many ways
to describe a person with only so many
letters there are only so many ways
to write a love poem
and there is only one method

to printing them but just let me
fold this declaration of devotion into a glider
my dear, there are boundless means
of showing you that love can be
a monarch butterfly
that love is airborne and
i tried to type it up and read it to you
in hopes that you will take it in like the sky
and sense it in your goosebumps because
there are only so many ways to swirl up
your passion with the dust like
a mixed drink

Synonyms for Matt

my name is DEADNAME

i hear it resonate through my dysphoria i recoil from my body i desperately want to hold a match stick up to my birth certificate and watch every letter blacken into ash when i grow up to be a tombstone i want you to burn me too ignite all the dresses i wore to church

my name is WOMAN and

no matter how many times i insist that it is not i will be categorized with a quaking punch in my stomach and i will throw up SHE no matter how many times i jam this shirt into the washing machine it will reek of MISS i am cloaked with words of caution to the public because if the truth were unraveled i would be myself and myself will shatter minds and destroy virtue because my psyche is a crime scene my humanity is a dangerous opinion my identity is a car crash it is a siren wailing magenta it wraps around my chest like police tape i wish i could use it to flatten my chest those knuckles feel infinitely more therapeutic than the aftershock of FEMALE i would much rather be bruised and downtrodden and battered and beaten from every centimeter of my body than to submit to the ear-piercing declarations of GIRL now i want you to punch me again please punch me again please punch me again please punch me again please

my name is DELUSIONAL and

i heal paper cuts with bow ties and houndstooth handkerchiefs because it's as close as i can get to a suit when me and my wardrobe are confined within the same nine square feet of wooden floor i still come close to weeping when i get flu shots but fill that syringe with testosterone and by god you could slay me like a beast *god* skewer that needle through my skin like a katana i will embrace it i will live for the torment handsome hurts and *boy* am i a masochist

my name is YOUNG LADY and

while filling out my passport application i flooded the box with an M beside it with blue i turned that box into a fish tank i never told my mother about it i smiled to myself for the first time that week and i still don't regret it i will never regret it because no matter how many times i hear her edicts of DAUGHTER she can never take that precious M away from me

my name is SNOWFLAKE and

i hope i give you hypothermia, asshole

my name is PUSSYBOY and

oh god i drank too much lemonade at the movie theater so now i have to make a choice whether it's better to get scolded and renamed PERVERT or to get pummeled until i piss myself i decide to just hold it until i get home i look in my desk during a geometry lesson and read a post-it that threatens to turn my body into a dozen breaking news articles and yet another hashtag echoing in silent screens my blood dries up like paint i crumple up the note rip it to shreds throw it out but the ink has

already set into my flesh my guts got a tattoo today and now my name is PREY i try to focus on learning how to dilate polygons on a graph while desperately attempting to grasp the wasps swarming in my gut and crush their stupid wings in my palm i wish these flying little suckers were made of paper also i just love when straight guys say they want me to be their chick i love when girls flirt with me and in the same breath continue to declare themselves lesbians also i actually think it's really cool how i'm a porn category how people get off to the mere concept of me in fact i'm gonna change my name to XXX because isn't it sexy that my selfhood is a fetish that my binder is their lingerie that people orgasm to my panic attacks? pussyboys are just so hot my name is

CONFUSED my name is OBSCENE my name is DISEASED my name is DYSFUNCTIONAL my name is MUTANT my name is ABOMINATION my name is GIRL WHO MERELY ASPIRES TO MUTILATE HERSELF INTO A GOOD ENOUGH EXCUSE FOR A MAN my name is COUNTRERFEIT my name is BAIT my name is SHAPESHIFTER my name is PROFANE my name is BLASPHEMY my name is ILL my name is FUTURE PREDATOR my name is YOU KNOW WHAT MY NAME IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS my name is SUBHUMAN

my name is

MATT

and i am just one syllable but that syllable is a thunderclap i am a gunshot mistaken for firecracker i will leave you riddled with bullets the pistol's name will be

MATT yeah i would name a gun after myself why not?

a lady at starbucks will ask what to write on my cup one day and i will say

MATT and i mean i'll bet you five dollars she'll spell it with one T instead of two or something because c'mon you know how starbucks is but it's good enough i will scream my revelation from atop my fire escape at four in the morning in triumph MY NAME IS

MATT and someone will roll down their window yell back from their car HEY

MATT, SHUT THE FUCK UP and i'll take it as a tribute i'll take a bow and say THANK YOU

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

MATT is a MAN he sliced himself in two and poured liquid gold inside of his body like his skin was a cast of euphoria when a cashier called him SIR that one time he was getting ginger ale at walgreens HE is yet another piece of proof that the designation assigned by the distorted purity of a lab coat doesn't have to be a prison HE is yet another piece of proof that you don't fully understand these color coded cages we're all crammed in until you break out of them yourself HIS individuality is authentic HIS reflection in the mirror is real and the name of the man in the mirror is

MATT and

MATT found out that the life expectancy of a transgender person is thirty-two you better believe that

MATT will live to be thirty-three HE will give a little hope to the kids like him who don't even think they can fight long enough to wake up to sixteen and HE will tell everyone who believes his heart has been already beating for too long to GO SUCK A BIG ONE and by god you better believe that

MATT will live to be thirty-three years old and you better believe that HE will make it to thirty-three

and you better believe

that i will make it

to thirty-three