

Pages from a Forgotten Notebook

D. M. Ashley

Presented by

My poetic side 



summary

Descent Into Hell

Dante's Lament

Rain Dance

"they danced by the light of the moon"

Dream Sequence (i)

Empty Spaces

forgotten field

Restless Sleep

Another Branch

appen

I now forget

Morning Walk

Waterloo Sunset

Ode to The Pink Couch

Days Journey

In the Shadow of the Hollow Men

Wish You Were Here

The Sunday After

The Art of Love

A Swan Flies

I Dare You

The Heidegger Principle

Branded

"All the leaves are brown..."

Summer Rain

Winter Dreams

morning moment

Grief

I am just a shadow

day to day

Descent Into Hell

Fog shadows and faded light
The pale cloud remnant of familiar face
Reflects grey shrouded flame and fire
Bloodied red explosive destruction
In a magnificent midnight bloom.

Upward glancing
To melancholy moon
A Languorous lament
For this unexpected falling star.

Code words and call signs
Misplaced in panic,
As the iron bound lucifer
drops from the sky
Illumination exultant
Slow motion settles
into a delicate fountain
Of ash and dust.

Dante's Lament

Dante's Lament

struck dumb,
blinded,
as your light fades
into the frozen frosted
empty wastes of the past.

the ticking clock
torments the senses
now departed,
strikes the hour
in clamorous anger
for that absent sun.

intoxication rages through
these broken tears
and memories spent.

and the dark shadow of
time looms over the day
'till nothing more remains
but
bitter fatigue
 and
 sleep

Rain Dance

Rain Dance

summer black tar river
sticky dust path
pebble verge
and me in old torn jeans
acid stench of road
corn blistered sweat
crawling down my face
praying at the altar
of an iced coke
corn ocean dancing
on a mirage wind
that ripples
over the blue mountains
and shelters in shadows
of forgotten cloud
dust path dancing
to the pump pump tune
of black burned
motorcycle
leather dead
and drifting
across
cross
roads
me in old torn jeans
and drifting
along black tar river
and the ripples
of an iced coke
on the back

of my blistered throat
praying for the shelter
of forgotten cloud

"they danced by the light of the moon"

"they danced by the light of the moon"

Wand-happy frag boy
Settles into feather bed mud pile
While town brother bounds down
Lazy aisles of guilt green
Glistening with today's special,
Dismembered limbs in a red sauce.

And the flame crew chant
"Would you like fries with that?"
As fat man grins black,
Smiles smart and wishes you all
"Have a nice day!"

The humpity hump hump
Plod of a spit in your eye
Slow sweet stench that reminds
"There's no place like home.",
And whispers on into
The boom black surprise attack
And impromptu firework display.

Dorothy's innocence ponders
Her red white and blue chirp
"Why has Auntie Em been hidden
In the old fruit cellar?"
Norman laughs in the light
Of neon splutter motel sign,
Remembering,
Things are always bigger
In Texas.

*and hand in hand
with the lonely hearts band
they danced
to a trembling tune.
and they made a last stand,
spilled their blood on the sand,
and they dance by the light of the moon,
the moon,
they danced by the light of the moon.*

Dream Sequence (i)

Dream Sequence (i)

small sounds loiter
amongst desert memories
slipping beneath the sand
like ancient tombs
and the birds sang
songs pugnacious
amongst ashes
and smouldering mud

slither mist
vapour trail of deceit
floating on high tide
while the pier waits for morning

shattered pipe
chalk wall crumbles
and
the face in the mirror
blinks

devil demon and his witch queen
stalk waves in moonlight
in a black cat coated silence
only time can see

well were we,
and slumber light
in moss mildew
clinker bed
floating on high tide
floating

Empty Spaces

Empty Spaces

I looked into your eyes
And the universe melted around me.
I felt your wanting, your needing
Pulsing through my veins.
You held your breath
For eternity,
While I teetered
On the brink of a dream.

Then I fell,
Headlong into your waiting smile.
I rested my thoughts
On your perfect lip,
And gave you my soul
In a kiss.

I looked around at the new world
And drifted across the ocean
Towards the setting sun.

But when I turned back,
All that remained
Was the whisper of your name
On the evening breeze,
And the ever growing
Empty spaces in the dark.

forgotten field

forgotten field

Walking weary night
That stalks in dank gullies
And dry sand
And waits.

Night that strays into wounded morning
Whispers black into the dawn.
Whispers into the black earth and the black clouds
And the slow black silence that creeps over the ground.

No green and pleasant land
In Night's dark kingdom.
Trees stripped and stark
Lurch out of the mud
Burning black against the grey of forgotten sunlight.

Unconsecrated and unattended,
This hill, this field
This bleeding piece of earth
This blood black desert
Land of the dead.

Restless Sleep

Within a slumber deep and dark
I journey through a memory lost
A barren landscape dry and stark,
burned by fire, crushed by frost

I stumble on the ancient walls
of a once forbidden state,
And wander through the empty halls
that held their history of hate.

Silent slabs of melted flesh
are bent upon the giants back,
A golden thread, a silver mesh,
a jewel encrusted iron wrack.

The sun falls to these weeping lands
that stretch their stamen to the sky
And in an instant lays it hands
upon the fields that pray to die.

The moon in all her glorious might
shines forth upon a world that's dead
And in the glimmer of her light
the angel bows his weary head.

She whispers in the vales of death
beyond the pinnacles of fire
And with her last remaining breath
she weaves her magic of desire.

The dry and trembling mountain side
is cast upon a wilted lake

And where the sweetened waters hide
begins to wither and to quake.

The molten image where I walk
is nurtured in this aching night
And as the rocks begin to talk
the dragon spreads his wings in flight.

I float across a sea of light
that hides the dream I left behind,
And wonder in these depths of night
what nightmare visions I may find.

Another Branch

Blustered frozen simple smiles,
crushed by the weight
of a thousand delicate snowflakes.

The tree bends and breaks
in the floating rain,
in the gentle rain,
the feather touch of midnight dew.

The tree burns in the deluge.
Burns and breaks,
and shatters into a fine golden powder.

Crisp crackle cobbles,
lined with Autumn bones,
brittle in the dry winds.
Meters paced with brown and gold,
and fading green.

All across the ocean,
with the wandering clouds
and distant shafts of lonely sun,
giant hunks of coloured steel,
crawl.

I pull the dagger from my hand,
oil raked stains of the night,
oil soaked memory, balanced...

Bells,

the unheard clammer of morning,
the pencil clutching empty hand,
aloft.

A string of silver beads
tiptoes along the empty twig,
naked and forlorn.

And the tree breaks.

appen

pen aslip atween a darness,
atween a gratehound and afrey.
in dinner wine of sleet an gindy
brakes a boundry and a brey.

carpet mouth a little weary,
taykins low an slim ease tream.
suck and slurp upon a heary
goat of bisbegatten neam.

night he clank a midder creepy
strang elate a missy hoar,
silvry spike a little digger
slasher troat a little soar.

penny slip and scrawly bubbish,
scrawly cross a kitchen floor.
scrawly little bits a pantry,
windy peek an bitter shore.

penny drops unto a dankness,
penny bent and broken bare.
empty andy eyes are shrouded,
nobody no go nowhere.

I now forget

silk sleep and milk deep softness
in feather down slumber,
as fingers reach and rest
on wanted skin.
eyes in mine are falling
through the end of years,
across the empty wastes of a time
I now forget.

and yet the flesh
remains beneath
my hand,
and murmurs gently
in the dark,
the light
the slant of sun
and gasp of moon
and sigh.

turning through a fitful dream
our lips have felt this rushing tide
of pounding pounding breaking hearts
across those years and empty wastes
and aching burning beating passions spent.

*I lay beside you in the peace
of late and lonely summer night,
I lay beside you with my fear
and gently wept a secret tear
and turned from wrong to right.*

eyes are closed and turned away
and I am falling through

the empty wastes
and tears of time
I now forget.

Morning Walk

Run river run
Past kits and cats and caty kits
Past garden gate and apple tree
Through silly slopes and bendy bays
And bright copper kettles
And warm woollen rings
Round and about the roundabout
With Myrtle and Merrill and aunty may

Back to the sea and soft soap swell
Of weft and wave and windy wish
On the clanky sand pebble racked pile
On Weed covered slippery slick edge of tomorrow

From a house in the cloister close comfort
To the rough street of cobble crunch and clutter
He walked the mornings misty way
And sleepy haze of daylight dreams and ultimate forgetfulness
Of lost remembrance and misplaced moments
In the autumn twilight of yesterday

He walked past fallen wall and fallow farm
With an old soldier who had no name
Strangers greeting in quiet accident
Towards a door both faint and familiar
With blue and brass and burning bright
And with a gesture did depart

Today and tomorrow and forever
Our yesterdays and neverdays
Forgotten and remembered days
lazy half grown salad days
Summer winter weather days

Our Shiny sleepy rainy days
And in and out the houses days
And all in all the days go by
And in the blinking of an eye
They're gone

Waterloo Sunset

Waterloo Sunset

(as long as I gaze on Waterloo sunset I am in paradise)

From Paddington and Portobello

Past an array of fountains

To a rain drenched Peter Pan,

Just a gentle walk in the Park.

Flowers and fragrance

Along the Serpentine's edge

And the Duke's house

beyond the gate.

Quiet moments in the heart of the city.

There is a tree lined walk to the palace,

Always crowded with opportunities

For that awkward German moment

Captured on film.

Then through dreary corridors

And government streets

To the saints house,

The first patron,

"Builded here"...

Or maybe wander past Harrods

And an acre of coloured glass

For coffee, croissant and custard doughnuts

Always better than Krispy Kreme's.

Quiet museums and galleries,

Pottery and paint plaster casts

Contemplating Klimt and Constable

And Vivienne Westwood's clothing collection.

Taking a little time,

To spend a while on the floating Castle

Or in a Covent Garden café

With propitious poets

And optimistic operettas.

But in the end
All that matters
Is the quiet moment together
On The Serpentine Bridge.

Ode to The Pink Couch

Sofa strange, slip streaming sumptuous and sentimental daze of woollen blown soft stitch scream, listed under fuchsia and salmon and resting on pillow down bliss. Carbon based synthetics adorn wood and wire and you rest as we rest. Dressed, down filled bliss pillows, fuchsia and salmon and screaming pink, drip steaming cotton covered cushioned lover opened for us, and wanting. And we, basking in your passionate light, must wear sunglasses!

Days Journey

Late sun on silent waters,
As the shadows spread
Across the fields
To a group of children
Playing by the brook.
Lazy grazing evening cattle
Look on in disinterest.

Clouds, like vast continents
Of perfect snow,
Floating above me.
Fallow turns to arable
And an ocean of wheat
Floats past.

Rabbits and pheasants
And a parade of poplars
Flank the melancholy miles.
Ditch and dyke and deep canal,
On a clear day...

Through sweet sorrows saline lens
A brace of Magpies mock;
"Two for joy".
And twilight echoes the ache,
The absence, the parting of the day.

Railway graffiti,
Scrawled on the side of a derelict factory workshop,
A single arrow,
Pointing back down the track;
"SKEGNESS - have a nice time."

In the Shadow of the Hollow Men

fifty miles of muddy water
fifty miles into the darkness
chasing ghosts and chasing devils
to the land beyond the sunlight
into lives of shattered silence
into days in dreary circles
from the chest constricting madness
from the land of milk and honey
from the greedy smiling faces
from the hands with silver daggers
to the temples filled with shadows
to the nameless headless horror
slipping through the murky water
sliding through the pools of sorrow
face to face with hollow minions
eye to eye with straw filled puppets
till I find myself among them
till I find my eyes are empty
fifty miles into the darkness
hidden from the waiting world

Wish You Were Here

as I rise
from car comfort
to the dark cloud drenching
to the boarded and battered shack sheltering
coke can tacky tap tin tapping
an upbeat rhythm for a sombre song
the rain crackles
like damp electric fire
on the surface of my umbrella
your umbrella
the one you held
in warm hands
in cold English weather
and I cross
the glass splattered car park
past Knightstone and Welbeck
and the Stowaway's Bar
climbing Coach Tour tracks
to Westcliffe
and the sea
and all I can think is
I wish you were here

The Sunday After

My haze cloud memory
And pain ache hobble
Rode through the lights
That framed your kiss
And placed you full faced
In the sweet warm silent
Morning sun.

Your back stage
sideline tip-toe smile
Always on the edge of forever
Whispered your name
And vanished in the night.
Tripping down the cast list,
Tasting audition tremors,
An understudy triumphant
Left me wondering
Who, how, where?

And I chased you,
Down wafer paper lists
Into little black books,
Friends and friends
And friends of friends,
Until,
In the tired tea time glow
Of long late summer,
Your quiet voice
Echoed laughter Back
Across the miles
That Sunday after
Sunday afternoon

The Art of Love

Rest
In sweet naked slumber,
Gentle and pure,
While I, enraptured,
Paint my life
Across your perfect frame.

Eyes closed
And silken cheek,
My childhood traced
From nape of neck
To gentle spine
In green and gold.

My purple youth
Loiters around
Your lower back
In envy of buttock and thigh.

These later years,
In deepest blue,
Traced across belly and breast,
Now diluted by the tears
Of regret.

You wake,
My finished work,
Wild and passionate,
To be displayed
In another man's
Private collection.

A Swan Flies

a swan flies,
floating on a pillow
of impossible dream.
secret magic and comfort lies
and an ache of a none past fiction
this green and pleasant land.
a flash of white
in the morning grey,
cold wet misery
unfurled by sudden majesty.

caught in the billows,
mind synced and memorised
and flying free,
in remembrance of mists
and mellow fruitfulness
now left to rot and decay.

the swan flies oblivious.
no sadness or sorrow
or weight of the world.
the swan flies regardless
of these human constructs,
these fabricated obstacles
we make for ourselves.
and in it's simple beauty,
suspended for a moment
in a waking mind,
the swan flies.

I Dare You

I dare you
to walk naked through Tesco's
on a Sunday afternoon,
buy 20 packets of washing powder
and a reel of cotton,
then say you forgot your purse.

I dare you to laugh like a drain
and eat like pig
and never refuse chocolate.
I dare you to write the names of your children
on other peoples faces
with crimson lipstick.

I dare you to kiss a stranger
in a dusty museum
and whisper obscenities
to an ugly Picasso.
I dare you to break old records
and burn old books
and throw away a dozen pairs of shoes.

I dare you to run barefoot
through the desert
and shout at the moon.
I dare you to sleep in the rain
and wake in the sunlight.

I dare you to scatter the pages of your mind
across the ocean of dreams.
I dare you to sing in the streets
and dance with the devil.

I dare you to look into the face of terror
and scream your defiance with pride.
I dare you to live on the edge of reality
and float on the tide of forgotten passion.

I dare you to love without reason
and weep forever.

I dare you.

The Heidegger Principle

this wall
immobile immutable
fragile membrane
a construct
the illusion of infinity
contained
splashed with mind echoes
and memory fragments
washed with laughter and tears

they say that time travel is impossible
the physicists and mathematicians
this is the law

but they haven't touched the wall
pressed their ears up against it
to catch the distant voices
the truths and lies we have hidden

they look to the stars
they count numbers on blank pages
all they need is to capture
that waking moment
before the dream fades
to see that time is nothing
but a painted canvas backdrop
in a cheap theatre
pretending that the whole world
is encased in a tiny room

time travel is impossible
that's what they say

Branded

Do you remember your name,
Buried in this House and Home,
This waste bin world
Of IKEA opiates?

Do you remember your face
Beneath the Bodyshop beauty
And Sassoon stylings?

Have you looked at the flesh
Beneath your fashion facade,
Seen the dirt on the fingernails
That clutch the wheel
Of your BMW dreams?

If you tear off the label,
Will you remember your name?

"All the leaves are brown..."

*"all the leaves are brown
And the sky is grey"*

The stillness of the pond
ruffled by a solitary magpie,
"one for sorrow",
head down,
pause to drink
and gone.

Pidgeon's quarrel,
flap and flutter,
while squirrels look on
and turn to beg for crumbs
from a passer by,
glued to his phone.

This quiet morning
the summer sun
dapples the grass
with splashes of green and gold,
but,
in my melancholy moment,
all the leaves are brown
and the sky is grey.

Summer Rain

Swimming in a sea of brain fog bewilderment
A not so mellow muggy mist
Sluggish and stale
And the slow dull throb of a long lost headache

A dark storm gathers out at sea
Awaiting that perfect moment of inconvenience
A chance to disrupt a walk in the park
And the brief summer sunshine

A spattering of raindrops on leaves
A gentle melody before the torrent
And the hurried rush to shadowed shelter
Out buildings and damp doorways
Or the lofty woodland canopy

The air filled with the haze
Of grass and leaves and lavender
Disturbed by the deluge
The familiar fragrance of a summer rain

Then the sun is back
The air is lifted
Fresh clean and new
And all that remains
is the gentle dripping from the leaves
And the scent of damp grass
on the morning breeze

Winter Dreams

I dream
like fish in spring
of slanted green shaded
sun bed haze,
ripples of silence
through pollen mist
and rustle reed.
those dragonfly days
when we splashed
and shouted
in golden brown
pools of light.

while snow falls
and the world is cloaked
in winter's jealous shroud,
I dream
of my lost
lazy summer
joy

morning moment

Walking through the park
The morning sunlight
Captures a cloud of midges
Blocking the path.
Birdsong and chatter echoes through the trees,
And pigeons flutter among the rowan's red berries.
A gentle breeze rustles the yellow green leaves
And a solitary seagull watches for picnic remnants
Or a stray fish from the pond
Hiding amongst the water lilies and weeds

Grief

A moment of bliss
Time suspended in endless tranquility
Broken with a thoughtless condolence

Everyone thinks they can help
When you just want to be alone
Alone with the silence
And the calm

They say they're sorry
When they have no idea
What sorry means
And with all that
The peace
The calm
Is gone
Forever

I am just a shadow

I am just a shadow,
lost in your sunlight.
I am just an empty shell,
Lying broken on your beach.
I am just a dream,
In your endless night.
I am just a forgotten child,
Wandering through your streets.
And when I weep for you
My tears
are just a drop
in your ocean.

day to day

From day to day and every day
And Yesterday and never day
To stay to say to go away
And yet to choose to stay today

To come and go and never know
The sky above the ground below
Moving gentle still and slow
grow and grow and grow and grow

And growing left the world behind
Out of sight and out of mind
Blinking blighted eyes are blind
Fumble fingers features find

Darkness draws and darkness drains
In the dark a truth remains
Darkness pulls us from the light
Darkness takes away the sight