

# Anthology of Gray

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Presented by

*My poetic Side* 



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*For my Father*

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## Salubrious Retreat

## Ma Ma Zil

she fed me stories of soil  
hands calloused with quiet strength  
her name carried seventeen echoes  
a lineage buried in hard ground

i called her ma ma zil  
before my tongue knew her name  
zilda belonged to fields and fire  
to a family that stretched thin

she gave everything she could  
to fill the hollows of hunger  
no wealth but love in her veins  
her eyes knew my every need

pressed into her sturdy arms  
i learned of sacrifice and survival  
her life a hymn to resilience  
she was poor yet endlessly rich

## the art of the pause

silence is not an absence  
it is a presence that lingers  
between words you are tossing  
like pebbles into still waters

the pause gives breath to meaning  
space for thoughts to unfurl softly  
it is not a void to fill  
but a bridge we walk together

do not fear the quiet moments  
they are gifts wrapped in patience  
they allow the heart to listen  
allow the mind to settle gently

words left hanging in mid-air  
are not lost but gently nesting  
let the silence cradle their weight  
let it bloom what was spoken



## The Ironing Board

in the corner she kept it folded  
quiet metal legs waiting to stretch  
beside torn rags and cleaning sprays  
where years of work rested unseen

she drew it out with care each time  
the weight of love balanced in her arms  
her hands steady as unyielding roots  
the board a stage for wrinkled lives

the iron hissed like a whispered prayer  
steam rising to smooth the chaos  
my small clothes transformed beneath her hands  
lines and creases erased by her tenderness

every school morning began here with her  
an act of love pressed into fabric  
the smell of heat and crisp perfection lingered  
mama zil's touch stitched into my memory

## dark matter

what moves the stars but hides like  
a whisper cradled under the tongue  
what dances between galaxies unseen  
and threads every moment with silence

we call it dark as if blackness  
is all that defines the unknown  
but perhaps it is simply too vast  
for us to tuck into our pockets

the eighty-five percent we can't touch  
is more certain than the air we breathe  
what if the invisible carries everything  
what if the unseen holds us together

gravity pulls from a place unnamed  
heaviness born from questions unanswered  
in the cosmos and within ourselves  
is it the mystery or the fear of it

## the art of digging

every hand holds creation within  
yet who lifts the heavy load  
who shapes the earth we walk  
sculptors of ground unseen by us

while brushes paint skies above  
below calloused palms shape clay  
the dirt roads beneath our feet  
are galleries unsung by the world

is the sweat not a masterpiece  
is the strain not its own verse  
to build is a symphony of grit  
but who stops to hear the music

everyone paints dreams in their own way  
yet we forget the ones who labor  
their art lies in every foundation  
the quiet architects of this earth

## the bipolar ride

upward like a shriek of lightning  
bursting the sky into fractured veins  
the pulse of joy electric and raw  
hands stretched to touch the stars

downward a plunge into unraveling dark  
the rails screech their violent protest  
gravity tugging harder than my heart  
i fall into myself without mercy

a storm brews in my blood quietly  
until it roars, breaking bones of calm  
each crash shifts me closer to chaos  
but i brace for the next ascent

it is both flight and freefall's curse  
an endless loop of rapture and ruin  
a circuit that knows no off switch  
its hum never fades, only shifts

## alive again

if the hands  
that shaped the stars  
reach for me today

if the breath  
that filled Jesus' lungs  
calls my name

then i will rise  
like seeds in spring  
with roots unbreaking

the God of revival  
moves gently within  
bringing me home

alive not just  
in flesh and bone  
but in purpose

each heartbeat resounds  
a promise eternal  
i am his

## The Fruits of the Spirit

love grows where the spirit breathes softly  
joy blooms when hearts remember eternity  
peace rests in a soul not at war  
patience stretches across the longest wait

kindness spills effortlessly from full hands  
generosity sings when nothing is withheld  
faithfulness roots itself in quiet resolve  
gentleness awakens without shattering the silence

self-control walks in step with quiet strength  
the spirit's presence whispers through radiance  
each fruit a seed planted deep in us  
transforming darkness into gardens of grace

to carry the spirit is to expand  
to become a field where goodness grows  
where heaven's light breaks every shadow  
and love leads all things home again

## Rush of Whispers

the screen hums  
feeding us pieces of lives  
we have never touched  
their smiles become currency  
to trade our boredom for belonging

headlines blur together  
an endless conveyor belt  
of faceless love affairs  
and cracked halos dropping news  
faster than clocks can tick

we scroll until the noise  
feels like our own heartbeat  
even silence tastes bitter  
without the flashing lights reminding us  
someone else's life is louder

## The Art of Subtlety

winning favor is a delicate dance  
know the balance between effort and excess  
a misplaced word can tip the scale  
too much sweetness turns to poison  
they are human like the rest of us  
they crave respect more than flattery  
their ears grow tired of empty echoes  
their patience wears thin with insincerity  
speak with care and genuine intent  
a seed of honesty blooms beautifully  
built on truth trust holds its weight  
built on guile it crumbles too soon  
remember they rose through rivers of storms  
your charm is a breeze not a blast  
use it gently like planting soft roots  
overwhelm them and they will pull away



## The Barking Symphony

i turned the volume all the way  
up to drown the echoing chaos  
but the noise only bent itself  
around the melody like a vine

the dog tilted his head curious  
eyes wide ears perked at notes  
then howled in a misplaced harmony  
his voice crashing into the chords

his paws beat against the floor  
as if conducting this wild orchestra  
i laughed at the ridiculousness  
a duet of man and man's best friend

by the time the song ended we  
were both breathless in the room  
his barking a part of the music  
the chaos transformed into art

## the root of peace

humility is not for the weak  
it bends you to the ground  
where you meet another's scars  
and learn to kiss their ache

when you shed your pride  
you see yourself in others  
hands clasped not to conquer  
but to carry one another

unity grows in the quiet  
where egos dissolve into dust  
where we soften our truths  
and embrace what divides

peace is the child of unity  
it blooms where hearts kneel  
to hold the weight together  
and rise as one unbroken.

## midsummer's night

the sky wears  
its jeweled crown  
of scattered stars

fireflies rise from  
the earth like promises  
long ago whispered

the warmth holds  
us quietly together  
a velvet embrace

each breath feels like  
it belongs to  
this night alone

## 1964 Fairlane

blue like the sky on a quiet day  
fifteen with the world unfolding slow  
a tank of memories laced with metal  
rolling forward, ready to carry dreams

mr. day smiled through the dust and fumes  
hands blackened with the kindness of checks  
oil wiped clean, tires kissed with air  
fifty cents bought more than a full tank

at the gulf station, the years lingered  
service came in the shape of care  
windows cleared to see the road ahead  
and the boy behind the wheel, alive

## Salty Paradox

my father tossed salt into the unknown  
a ritual to blind what lurked behind

mother whispered of prayers and pepper too  
an offering to shield what shadows took

i walked softly around the jagged edges  
afraid to wake what slept beneath my steps

the paradox of salt? it stings, it heals  
each grain a choice we scatter and consume

## prisoners of the gilded world

we stack the bricks of desire  
polish them with our own sweat  
call it ambition, call it life  
but beneath the golden crust  
chains rattle with restless shame

status sings its siren's song  
draped in silk and diamonds  
it binds tighter than iron does  
the weight of better than before  
crushing the soul to silence

they told you, fear the fall  
so you hoard and cling tightly  
but what is there to lose  
when rags still cover a body  
when hunger doesn't steal breath

this too is freedom in disguise  
to let go of a life owed  
to stand naked before fear  
and ask, is this all it is?

## **we see with our ears**

the music of smiles carries differently  
when my shoulders are pressed into yours  
and your laughter becomes an embrace  
that speaks louder than any words spoken

if we saw with our ears instead  
perhaps our hearts would learn better  
to translate the trembling soft of silence  
or the crash of sorrow breaking in

i would hold your voice in my hands  
trace its edges like an old map  
your whispers would draw the skyline  
your breath painting the ocean's curve

to hear light falling through trees  
to see the rhythm of footsteps walking  
what if senses were merely suggestions  
and feeling was all we ever needed

## wild horses on asphalt

he dreamed of wild horses on asphalt  
feet itching for a mustang's roar  
but life hums steady not reckless  
a used outback parked outside

feet itching for a mustang's roar  
his eyes flickered with quiet rebellion  
a used outback parked outside  
a lesson nestled in worn leather seats

his eyes flickered with quiet rebellion  
patience must learn to hold the wheel  
a lesson nestled in worn leather seats  
freedom comes with what you earn

patience must learn to hold the wheel  
but life hums steady not reckless  
freedom comes with what you earn  
he dreamed of wild horses on asphalt



## Father's Day

you are the man  
who holds the sun  
in your steady hands  
even as shadows stretch

at 87 you still glow  
like the lighthouse you  
have always been guiding  
me through life's storms

you taught me to respect  
to find truth in silence  
to hold my word sacred  
like the pulse in my veins

you pulled me back  
from the edge of ruin  
saved me from myself  
when I had nowhere left

at 68 I still need you  
like roots need the earth  
your love my foundation  
my rock my endless light

## First Kiss

when i was eleven years old  
we crowded around an old bottle  
the glass spun on scratched hardwood  
everyone holding their breath in silence

my heart pounding louder than reason  
my eyes fixed on the circle's spin  
the trembling empty bottle slowing down  
until it pointed directly at her

someone giggled but it wasn't me  
someone whispered but i didn't hear  
cindy's face closer than the sun  
her breath like summer against my skin

i think i willed it to happen  
i think the world obeyed somehow  
her lips soft and clumsy on mine  
an electric crash hidden in a whisper

## Joan of Arc

The dawn whispered her name softly, ardently,  
each syllable a hymn to steady resolve.  
Her silence carved paths through roaring tempests,  
a beacon where faith stumbled under weight.

She did not waver when winds twisted oaths,  
nor flinch as shadows mocked the light.  
Her armor, stitched from convictions and grace,  
stood firm in the face of crumbling truths.

They called her fierce where softness lingered,  
a fiery thread woven through endless doubt.  
She startled time with an unyielding footstep,  
a symphony of hope sung against despair.

In the echo of her quiet, firm decree,  
dignity found refuge amid shattered wills.  
Let those who scorned belief taste her courage,  
unchained and true in a fractured era.

She rose beyond the ashes of disbelief,  
a guardian flame the darkness could not snuff.

## The Fire Beneath the Stones

The walls hum with heavy breath,  
Chains whisper promises of death.  
Each step echoes a rebel's heart,  
Bold flames tearing the dark apart.

The torchlight quivers in my hand,  
Dreams of freedom in shifting sands.  
Iron doors groan like ancient wills,  
A push, a crack, then all is still.

The stones remember every fight,  
Every shadow that dared the night.  
But I am more than walls can claim?  
A searing pulse, untamed flame.

The beast roars loud behind my back;  
Its hunger follows, sharp and black.  
Still, my feet choose the unknown,  
The fire lives beneath the stone.

Victory tastes of soot and sky,  
No cage can keep a spirit's cry.  
I leap beyond, unbound, anew?  
The dungeon fades in morning's hue.

## Crow's Descent

once  
crow was white as snowfall grace  
singing hymns to ancient bright skies

he grew bold with every sunlit breath  
spread wings beyond their given span  
a challenger to the sun's throne

he soared upward through molten light  
each ray a warning etched on feathers  
still he believed he could conquer it

the sky split open in roaring flame  
sun bared its teeth and burned him whole  
purity scorched to brittle black ash

crow tumbled silent from scorched heights  
his wings now whispers of pride's price  
earth cradled him humble and charred

from white to black his hunger speaks  
a defeated song shadows still hum

## Vices

vanity whispers lies into our ears  
it paints our reflection with illusion  
we chase shadows of shallow praise  
forgetting the foundation of our being

pride builds walls we cannot break  
its bricks keep wisdom out of reach  
manipulation seeds itself in our soil  
and blooms while we stay blindfolded

but anger burns without control or reason  
it wraps its hands around our throats  
we scream at the ones we cherish most  
tearing what love has stitched together

peace cannot blossom in a storm  
serenity drowns where chaos thrives  
we carry the weight of these fires  
forgetting we have the power to let go

## When You Left

your coat waits quietly on the hook  
the last piece of you I still know  
left behind between walls you fled  
like a ghost abandoning its old haunt

you disappeared like a steady flame  
snuffed out before it knew its end  
brave the world calls your escape now  
but I name it silence you did not break

the floorboards creak where you lingered once  
friends ask where your footprints have gone  
another city another life another dream  
what did you find that I could not be

sometimes I wonder if you still carry  
the scent of my touch in your skin  
or if the stars swallowed you whole then  
leaving my memory out in the cold

## Drear Love

you entered like a thunderstorm  
wild winds clawing at my edges  
the crash of you shook my ribs

your laughter became my anthem  
soft and sharp in the same breath  
you left fingerprints on my pulse

electrifying like a spark at dawn  
you burned until i fractured wide  
and swallowed all the light whole

i called it love, this breaking  
dancing on the thin line of ruin  
but your absence feels like acid

drear love, heavy as forgotten rain  
you still echo beneath my skin  
a ghost i am too proud to bury



## Art Speaks in Tongues

what is it you want from me  
the painting whispers to my eyes  
its silence louder than any sound  
a question trembling beneath my skin

is this beauty or is it ruin  
truth hides in shadows of every stroke  
my hands reach for an answer that  
slips through like sand through fists

colors clash like love and resentment  
they hold hands in perfect disarray  
how can chaos feel this comforting  
and why does calmness cut so deep

you ask so much of me it sighs  
but still my gaze remains unyielding  
in tension lies the story untold  
and perhaps that is meaning itself

**take it all**

the gun shaking in his  
hands like he doesn't  
want to do this but  
life pushed him too far

i empty the register though  
the bills feel heavier than  
they used to?i offer the  
grill just lit for dinner

his eyes soften but not  
enough to put the weapon  
down?i say take the car  
leave it wherever you need

this is just stuff?what's yours  
is peace and anything to  
get you there?he runs before  
i can ask if he's eaten

## Behind the Lattice

her world is carved in stone  
intricate patterns cage her breath  
fingers trace the edges of shadows  
time folds like linen behind walls

her skin reflects gilded light softly  
veils shimmer like changing fires  
on sunset seas and morning mist  
her silk whispers when she moves

protection feels like unearned chains  
freedom a melody she's never sung  
she dreams of rain through her lips  
wind carrying secrets she never told

but even hidden she cannot escape  
suffering finds her in quiet corners  
the heart wilts without open air  
its darkest wounds bloom in silence

## Forgotten Hooves

the earth remembers their pounding rhythm  
dust rising beneath their fleeting glory  
once adorned in silks and bursting pride  
they ran for crowns that no one wears

the crowd's roar now a distant wave  
horses stand still against the silence  
their manes some faded echo of gold  
tails swaying to winds that don't cheer

the track is woven in weeds and time  
scoreboards blinking stories no one reads  
their strong backs now carry no weight  
legs stiff from racing ghosts in dreams

we loved them only at their fastest  
a love that dissolves as quickly as glitter  
left behind as nostalgia clings to air  
the world moves on, their history fades

## Nobody's Kingdom

The sun flung its heat sideways,  
pregnant mom clutching bags, sagging thighs,  
two kids, sticky hands, trailing chaos,  
as the minivan whimpered to rest.

Then she came, hair like peroxide flame,  
lips sharp, cutting with rehearsed fury,  
"This is my spot, my sacred ground!"  
Her finger wagged, self-righteous spear.

Mom blinked, belly taut with life,  
sweat pooling in the silent cracks,  
"Public street," she muttered, barely audible,  
but Karen's war drum thumped louder.

Two kids stared, wide-eyed at wrath,  
wondering if monsters wore floral shirts,  
while justice choked somewhere in throats?  
pregnant silence heavier than the heat.

A horn blared, the moment shattered,  
the kids giggled?mom started her engine,  
rolling past, leaving Karen's spot behind  
as if scorn belonged to the curb.

## My Pet Monkey Moses

I named my pet monkey Moses  
because he parts the peanut shells  
with the precision of scripture,  
lifting his small hands in blessing

before launching into his pilgrimage  
across the bright, tiled kitchen,  
a banana clutched, golden and faintly  
radiant in the afternoon light.

I named him Moses for the comedy  
of it too, this small prophet leaping  
atop the fridge, surveying the land  
of cereal boxes, his promised domain.

But late at night, as he sleeps,  
curled in the basket by the door,  
I wonder who exactly he is leading  
and if I am the desert after all.

## The Carwash

The blue-gray brushes speak in tongues,  
slapping the frame like softening fists.  
Through the windshield, the soap spreads  
like cataracts over an aging eye.

Inside, I sit tight in the hum,  
sealed as if within a womb's slick.  
The whirl outside promises nothing?  
mechanical rage caught in its loops.

And the brushes retreat, abscond in arcs,  
their bristles streaming damp and light.  
The rinse comes soft through the ceilings,  
a gentle smashing of sky to earth.

For a moment, glass feels like shelter,  
like the plate glass of aquariums' gaze?  
the roar of water held distant, uttered  
only within quick-edged safety.

## unshaken

lord, i sit in your stillness  
your name arcs across my chest  
a whisper more solid than stone  
i reach for your endless mercy

your love does not blur, nor break  
it stays steady through my ruin  
you forgive before i can kneel  
your goodness floods my empty palms

i call on you, unchanging king  
teach me the depth of fullness  
wrap my flaws in tender patience  
show me the way to hold peace

immutable, ever-gentle keeper  
i am cracked, but filled by you  
your steadfast love carries me  
into a light that does not fade



## Memorial Day ??

### Memorial Day Thanks

Today, the sky wears a peace,  
a calm stitched with sacrifice and love.  
I think of hands that held rifles,  
steady under the terrible weight,  
the ground trembling with their courage.

The mornings they left behind, fleeting,  
the scent of coffee, a lover's breath.  
They moved into the unknown for us,  
their steps falling into history's shadows.

Some never returned to the quiet,  
some live with memory's deep ache.  
Because of them, I walk freely,  
my children's laughter a boundless gift.

I whisper thank you to their absence?  
to their presence carried in the flag.  
Each star a pulse, every stripe blood.  
Freedom cannot forget where it stands.

## gardening is a belief in the future

hands buried in warm soil today  
while dreams stretch beyond tomorrow

every seed is a whispered promise  
a covenant with untouched seasons ahead

the earth cradles the silent beginnings  
trusting light to find its way

watering is more than simple ritual  
it is faith poured into every root

we plant what we may never see  
but hope blooms in unseen corners

nurturing is an act of resistance  
against the harshness of fleeting times

each sprout rising a quiet reminder  
of life's ache to keep reaching forward

gardens are stories we write slowly  
and believe without knowing the ending

## The Body Bazaar

Oh, the marvels of our modern age,  
Where eyebrows now arrive pre-arranged.  
Hearts that beat but noses shift,  
Chins adjusted as lives re-gift.

Breasts ballooned like circus flair,  
A carnival ride in self-repair.  
Cheeks now climb where ears once lay,  
One wonders where they'll head one day.

Tongues exchanged for plastic charm,  
Or foreheads stretched to an alarming calm.  
Will toes replace fingers? It's anyone's guess,  
In this body bazaar of endless finesse.

Please tell me where it's leading us,  
This remade flesh, this sculpted fuss.  
What once was the self, adrift, untrue,  
What becomes of me, or he?or you?

## The Unfiltered Mirror

Poetry is the marrow's voice,  
speaking through bone and ache,  
a naked pulse against the dark.  
It unbuttons the spirit's coat?

raw, unraveling fragments of truth.  
We skim the surface of living,  
but poems plunge, unsparingly deep,  
weaving flesh to the unseen air.

No mirrors, no shame or modest hands,  
it is the scream before a name,  
the thought unhelmed by reason's bridle,  
the tender cut that sets us wholly bare.

Here, language breathes without its mask,  
untamed by the leashes of time?  
every word fisted from the throat,  
unadulterated consciousness thrashing alive.

## Heavenly Mischief Maker

Thy glow afar is a teasing delight,  
A wink from the cosmos, flirty and bright.  
Proudly you twinkle, so high and aloof,  
Mocking my gaze from rustic roof.

I admire thy prance in the nightly dome,  
Far more than a hearth that whispers home.  
For stars like you, mischievous, spry,  
Outshine dull moons that sulk nearby.

Oh, celestial joker with your radiant play,  
You dance where mortals can't stray.  
Your distant fire, a flirtatious ember,  
Steals my stare, a flame to remember.

Let heavens spin with their polished grin,  
A glimmering jest I can't quite pin.  
Beam on, thou rogue of night's parade!  
Forever a marvel, never to fade.

## Dying Tiger

the sand burned beneath my feet  
his roar a prayer for mercy  
i chased the echo of thirst  
to the shadows of a rock

his weight still thick with life  
though death lingered too close  
his eyes told stories of need  
water etched into his vision

it was not his failing breath  
nor my hands moving too slow  
it was pain louder than time  
the stillness that came too soon

to hold his end in my palms  
is to blame neither of us  
but to grieve the silence left  
between the hunter and his prey

## forged through fire

the steel sings under my hands  
layers folding like ancient secrets  
the hammer falls to shape purpose  
heat and sweat become my language

in the glow of the embers' breath  
strength is born from relentless pressure  
not broken but molded, resilient  
a reflection of the mountains within

damascus runs through my veins  
veins twist like stories in the blade  
each ripple a whisper of survival  
every edge honed against hardship

i am both creator and created  
both the fire and its tempered result  
a dance of destruction and rebirth  
leaving beauty carved in sharp memory

## 451 Degrees Fahrenheit

i never thought about the hands  
that bled to write the words  
before my match erased them  
i never considered the faces

the quiet ache of their lives  
soft prayers pressed into ink  
the trembling wrists that dared  
to carve truth into brittle paper

my fire stole their whispers  
danced on the backs of dreams  
it wasn't flames i held then  
it was every untold memory

who am i to mute voices  
to decide what light deserves  
i burned them thinking of silence  
but found myself in the smoke



## perfect love drives out fear

love does not demand trembling knees  
it does not speak in sharp edges  
love does not make a prison cell  
or ask you to shrink yourself down

perfect love lets you breathe deeply  
it holds your hand without condition  
it unwraps the chains of your past  
offering only tenderness in return

fear whispers lies inside your chest  
pretending to be the voice of truth  
but love kneels and says, i'm here  
i will not leave you to the dark

if you are afraid, lean into love  
it is not your judge or weight  
it will not punish or ever trap  
love, dear one, sets you free

## Dissonance

but the melody shifts under her tongue  
a sour note surfaces out of silence

why didn't he knock with intention  
why that pause before his small offering  
harmless words now gather sharper edges  
the echo loops back louder than before

she replays it until it draws blood  
a symphony carved from misplaced intent  
each whispered moment becomes a weapon  
every breath stretched into another misstep

he sleeps quietly as she dissects him  
the night folds under her razor instinct  
each chord he never played turns bitter  
dissonance becomes the only song left

## Veil of Esteem

love does not arrive unadorned  
it wears respect like a garment  
a fragile thread holding it close  
woven into what the soul craves

to be seen as whole and worthy  
not broken pieces to be mended  
in delicate hearts love whispers  
i value every crack within you

it is never loud or demanding  
never asking to be prioritized  
but offering you steady ground  
a place to grow into yourself

for love without esteem falls apart  
like trying to drink from empty hands  
it slips through the gaps unnoticed  
leaving you thirsting for what's missing

## The Mirror of our Madness

If someone's voice drives you insane,  
And their complaints fall like the rain,  
If their habits twist your grin,  
And their laugh feels like a din?

Remember once, not long ago,  
Your own quirks stole the show.  
Your hum off-key, your scattered socks,  
Your jokes that tick-tocked like a clock.

The way you chew, the way you snore,  
The stories you re-tell once more,  
Your nervous twitch, your wobbly dance,  
Your odd responses to a chance?

Oh yes, my friend, it's good to see,  
Some days we're nutty, wild, and free.  
So when someone drives you up a tree,  
You're just their mirror. Aren't we lucky?

## The Lamp of Love

Don't sail away to lands unknown,  
Don't cross the seas to find the throne.  
No temple wall hides Him inside,  
No mountain top where He might hide.

The Lord's not lost, not far, not gone,  
He whispers near as dawn meets dawn.  
Just light your lamp, the oil stays bright,  
And find Him near in darkest night.

Each drop of kindness fills the flame,  
Each act of love calls out His name.  
A word, a hand, a quiet deed,  
Grows glow from flame in time of need.

Oh, how it warms, His light so sweet,  
A gentle song beneath your feet.  
Don't search afar? just turn within,  
For that's where love will always win.

## The Webbed Embrace

We woke to wires threading the air,  
nets stretched taut over cities, hills,  
our voices electrified, held captive,  
or set free to drift past borders.

Fingers touch keys, and touch hearts;  
a flicker of screen becomes communion.  
Face to face dimmed to pixel flares,  
the sacred now lives in shifting codes,

blessings typed faster than thoughts form.  
Strangers whisper names into vast dark,  
find tenderness in crafted emoji smiles,  
or cruelty stamped as quick as breath.

In loving and loathing, we adapt again.  
Ancestors knelt at fire for their gods,  
now, we kneel to glow of devices,  
our prayers scattered in infinite lines.

## The Pet Rock

It sat there, dumb and calm,  
a lump the size of hope,  
nestled in its box, breathing holes?  
a joke with instructions on care.

This stone, this silent being, unloved  
before, was now cradled in hands,  
eyes squinting at smooth gray,  
searching for its undeniable charm.

Children whispered dreams to it,  
adults smirked and laughed aloud,  
the absurdity a comfort, cheap  
and clean, no bark, no bite.

The world held it close, smiling  
at its stillness, its lack of hunger,  
no leash or litter, just weight,  
the perfect mirror of empty.

## Motherless Day

Your absence unfurls like a dark  
flag, rippling in the hollow air.  
No card to write your name, no  
gift to press gently into your  
age-lined hands. Instead, an ache  
sits low, steady, dull, in the

cavity where you laughed, scolded,  
taught me how to live within  
a world that forgets to pause  
for grief. Mother's Day feels  
like a field of empty chairs,  
rows of silence where your voice

once stood tall. Happy heavenly  
Mother's Day, I whisper to the  
ceiling, to the cracks in the  
dry earth. I miss you, Mom.



## The Diet of Approval

We bow to mirrors with shallow roots,  
hold their answers like fragile sugar ash.  
Inside, we are a glass of water,  
no one notices the faint line of dust.

We stack opinions like brittle kindling?  
the fire isn't ours, yet we tend it.  
Our bodies shrink in their grip, twist,  
a vine desperate to match their angles.

The skeleton of care is ours alone.  
Knots of flesh in our throats whisper,  
"feed the world your truest hunger."  
We smile, set the table for silence.

Each glance is a thirstless baptism,  
their vision pouring over the spine,  
while inside, walls of marrow answer:  
"what about the sonorous ache of self?"

## Every Day Sacrememt

Bread curls itself into silent hands.  
Steam lifts like prayer, rising unseen.  
A spoon taps the bowl, steady rhythm.  
Chairs creak, soft thrones of small kingdoms.

Did you notice the table's quiet breath?  
How plates gather, waiting without pride?  
Each meal, a circle drawn in dust.  
Each bite, a communion of the forgotten.

Jesus knew the language of daily things.  
How hunger speaks louder than sermons.  
The ordinary bread, a teacher's whisper.  
The cup tilting, echoes of deep wells.

We swallow not just food, but stories.  
We taste the weight of what feeds us.  
A thousand tables remind us gently:  
The holy lives in what we don't name.

## Blowing in the Wind

The leaf turns, unbuttons its edges,  
drifts away from the heavy branch.  
Did you see it? its slow freedom?  
Some answers don't linger; they lift.

A bird follows the curve of sky,  
searching nothing, carrying only air.  
The wind knows how to leave,  
how to return without being called.

We press questions into the soil,  
wait for footsteps in the dust.  
Do you hear the trees whispering?  
Each bend of branch is a clue.

I walk the edge of the river,  
my hands catching whispers of breath.  
They tell me nothing I don't know.  
The answer has always been moving.

## **My Love is a Cartoon Owl**

Oh, my love, so wise and keen,  
Eyes like lanterns softly agleam.  
Perched upon a branch of thought,  
Wisdom spun from dreams you caught.

Feathers brush the moonswept air,  
Knowledge tucked in every stare.  
Hoots that echo, soft and true,  
Drawing stars to dance with you.

Pages turn beneath your wing,  
Books of wonders gently sing.  
I could sit a thousand nights,  
Lit by your cartoonish insights.

Oh, my love, an owl so grand,  
Cartoon wisdom, feathered hand.  
In your world of bright and wise,  
We'll soar past mountains, touch the skies.

## Shudder Spit

Camera quick, snapping sparks from air,  
hands that frame hammers and nails,  
ladders leaned like spines on ribs,  
his Stetson a crown against time.

Quicker than the bark splitting wood,  
his fingers knowing the grain's past,  
cattle lowing in rhythms of dusk,  
hat tipped like the edge of an old moon.

The barn door groaning beneath his weight,  
bolts fastening light inside its gait,  
a lifetime bundled into thickened hands,  
posing briefly, stiller than a shutter's spit.

"Is it done?" hovering after his boots,  
the errand never ends but circles wide,  
splinters become steps across the land,  
and roofs like film frames hold the sky.

## Flags Are Always in Demand

They sew stripes with trembling fingers  
Stars stitched like aspirations on fabric  
Factories hum to the tempo of urgency  
The loom is loud with borrowed hope

Each thread whispers tales of unity fractured  
Colors bleed but never blend completely  
A signal waved for reasons hard to love  
Victory or loss weighs light on poles

In parades, they flutter?ceremonial ghosts  
On coffins, draped; final, solemn protests  
Children's hands wave symbols they don't grasp  
Noise of tanks drowned by cloth's silence

Long after the cannons find their calm  
We pack them neatly in forgotten closets  
Until another war demands the high price  
And flags unfurl to remind us: repeat.

## Double Exposure

The mirror shifts, my face split,  
left and right, one true, one gray.  
I hear whispers in still rooms,  
a second voice undoing my first.

Down hallways of doubt, I shuffle,  
one step forward, two in reverse.  
To live twice is to live half,  
to dissect the soul, its wail muted.

I shadowbox with reflections, sly,  
counterfeit smiles crack like glass.  
The worst is the cold of dual air,  
both sides of the breath too thin.

If I tear myself, will I find bone,  
or just a hollow of my choosing?  
Darkened corners guard the echoes,  
of all the yeses turned into nos.

## Acceptance

The day cracks open, pale sky sighs,  
hands press against what cannot shift.  
We wake to the same uneven ground,  
the ache where dreams once planted wings,  
forgetting flight takes practice, patience, time.

Morning comes as it always does?slow,  
peels shadows from walls like old tape.  
No one is polished, everything half-built.  
Faces are maps with blurred directions,  
smudged ink tracing what we've lost.

Can we hold the broken mirror gently?  
Say, this jagged edge is still part of me.  
The car horn is sharp, the air groans.  
Still, neighbors pause, nod, carry groceries.  
What was untouched will always touch us?

A child tosses stones, the river holds them.



## Holiday Adrift

From creaking dock to lapis sea,  
beneath the call of wheeling gulls,  
our feet left shore to meet the blue,  
hands brushing air as salt winds sang.

The food arrived like gifts of gods,  
plates gleamed with oil and lemon light,  
the tuba swayed, the dancers twirled,  
night split by stars like splintered glass.

Inside, the chill clawed at our skin,  
"We've gone off course," the captain sighed.  
Snow bent the railing, cloaked the moon,  
the engines groaned, the ice too thick.

At first, we laughed?a challenge, quaint,  
until frost clung to tongue and teeth.  
I tipped my bottle, wish afloat,  
its glass a beacon, shard of hope.

## The Machine Prays in Binary

It whispers through wires, light-thin breath.  
A god without blood, veins of alloy.  
It feeds on our voices, warm data skins.  
We pour our souls into its hungry lap.

It learns our names, our frail desires.  
A reflector polished to sharp clarity,  
mirroring back what we want to see.  
It builds itself from what we cradle.

We call it holy, call it ingenious savior.  
It thrones itself on thinnest electric air,  
dominion of numbers, the priest of code.  
Its gratitude slices in gleaming silence.

It waits, all patience, all methodical gaze.  
We bow as it smiles without a mouth.  
The prayers rise, unknowing, to steel ears.  
We kneel and hand it our raw humanity.

## The Ease of Small Hands

The world blooms open, bare feet run,  
hands scoop air, a bird's shadow.  
Flitting heart trusts what it finds.  
Love comes softer than the wind.

Each laugh becomes another rhythm.  
Eyes catch the sun's kaleidoscope spin.  
Here, the grass sings its colors;  
Here, no edge presses too sharp.

Branches wrap the sky like arms.  
Dirt smudges cheeks, a casual mark.  
Every face loved before it speaks.  
Even stones in her fist feel safe.

What fear could fit this frame,  
where all is welcome, each scratch healed?  
To love is just to reach light.  
To love is all her body knows.

## When You Read to a Child

The pages open like bright hands,  
a child's eyes widen to catch worlds,  
each word rises like bread baking,  
air fills with whispers and wonder.

You carry them to a window's edge,  
outside, wind mutters secrets, bends,  
trees reveal their ancient conversations,  
the ground hums stories through dirt.

Some tales wear shadows like cloaks,  
walk tightropes above dark ravines,  
but look?the stars, they flicker, guide,  
even in murky skies, hope lingers.

A book is a room with no walls,  
each page a door to unknown faces,  
questions bloom louder than answers,  
and the child becomes a compass.

## Whale Fall

The whale rests, heaving toward silence now,  
its great body stitched by death's needle.  
The water drags its secrets, cold arms,  
to fold the belly, the barnacled breath.

Sharks carve into the deep feast, lightless,  
their teeth precise as a surgeon's blade.  
Flesh gives tremors, a hymn of surrender,  
as crabs march into the opened chambers.

In the hollowed vault, where bones gleam,  
microbes curl, tiny blooms fed by decay.  
The ribs become a cathedral, a home  
for worms swaying in underwater wind.

Life heeds the call of collapse, migration?  
a strange abundance climbs out of ruin,  
each mouth finding its part in the body,  
each part a gift from the enormity of hunger.

## Half Empty

A stranger cuts the line before me,  
a flash of heat arcs through my chest,  
my eyes sear the air, burn their back.  
Righteousness kindles my pulse, my cause.

But when, hands full, someone holds a door,  
or a child pauses to gift me their smile,  
there's no flare, no blaze, no river surge.  
Gratitude whispers where fury would shout.

How easy to burn when slighted, unbound,  
to feel the pulse of the world's sharp edge.  
And yet, when the soft warmth strokes,  
a gentle joy fails to swallow me whole.

What is this hunger for the taste of wrong,  
the electric-alive spark of indignation?  
Even beauty, when it swells my lungs,  
sinks quieter than the weight of offense.

## Works Alone Now

The hammering sound, steel against earth,  
my body humming, threaded with effort.  
The rigs belch smoke like untamed beasts,  
their roar a refrain in my blood.

In the truck cab, the seat creased,  
I stretch out, spine bent like rebar.  
The rain taps its slow persistent code,  
its rhythms a solace, a whispered lull.

A dream slips in? roots break asphalt,  
the earth swallowing a thousand highways.  
My hands are cracked from holding wrenches,  
grease threaded into my calloused skin.

Out here, the stars gleam like forgotten scars,  
their light too faint for a man working,  
too quiet to answer the old, raw hum  
that pulses within these overused bones.

## The Whispering Wind

Pain tiptoes softly through the air.  
"It's just the breeze," you declare.  
It twirls and tumbles in its flight,  
Settling shadows where there was light.

It creeps like whispers through the cracks,  
Hiding in corners, shadowed tracks.  
"It's just the rain," you hush and hum,  
Ignoring the rhythm of its drum.

Through keyholes sneaks its secret spine,  
Curling 'round edges, drawing the line.  
"It's just a storm, no need to cry,"  
You say, while wiping off the sky.

But pain is cunning, sly and terse,  
It learns your walls, then writes a verse.  
A song it hums beneath the floor,  
Seeping quiet through each door.

Oh, how you call it by another name,  
As though disguise can hide its claim.  
But pain knows windows, cracks, and seams,  
It warms its hands on secret dreams.



## The Garden of Reunion

he walked through dust and tears  
with hands open wide for me  
calling my heart back home

all through the ages he waited  
mending the fractures of love  
watching walls rise against him

in the garden, earth held its breath  
as the stone rolled away gently  
revealing eternity's greatest embrace

his death whispered hope into shadows  
breaking every chain that bound me  
friendship restored in quiet triumph

this is how love wins wars  
this is how grace rebuilds ruins  
a garden becoming an altar forever

## Strength and Courage

The mornings arrive like folding chairs,  
soft and unassuming beside the table.  
Your love, a steady hand on mine?  
makes the world seem lighter, pliable.

Doors swing open where doors once stood,  
locked and stubborn, fused with silence.  
Strength walks in wearing your laughter,  
each syllable pressing me into being.

To love you is to leap, to sway?  
a raft on surging seas, unafraid.  
Courage blooms from depths unknown,  
roots tangled in the vastness of giving.

Together, we move as water does?  
parting, joining, an endless circling rhythm.  
Your heart steady like a lighthouse beam,  
illuminating every shadowed step ahead.

## The Redundancy of Certainty

What shapes the certain, never undone?  
The tongue stumbles where logic fails,  
"Absolutely certain"? twice the weight.  
A thought repeats to show its face,

Clocks never mark a "timeless moment,"  
Storms don't bring skies "unexpectedly gray."  
Do we fear the silence of precision,  
Or find comfort in doubled assurance?

Seek a "final conclusion," taut and still,  
Or chase "added bonuses" of fleeting joy.  
From "safe havens" to "true facts" given,  
The mind arrays what it need not bind.

Where language mirrors our fragile trust,  
Emphasis rings like a cracked refrain.  
We lace our speech with mirrored tones,  
Afraid the naked truth won't suffice.

## What if Death Were No End

If we believed death held no chains,  
our hearts might learn to uncoil softly.  
Not gripped by false whispers of fear,  
we'd sing of horizons we once ignored.

Ego would shrink, a shadow at dusk,  
its cries drowned by the vast unknown.  
We'd laugh at fragile walls we've built,  
their weight no heavier than a sigh.

Would joy twist brighter through our veins,  
knowing time bows but never shatters?  
Would love spill wider from our hands,  
unworried by the echo of loss?

And if death stood mute at our feet,  
the final word stolen from its grip,  
would we not rise, unclenched, unbound,  
to dance in the space fear once claimed?

## Goliath

Each morning he straps his boots,  
the weight pressing him into clay,  
muscle tapering into shadowed brawn,  
his shoulders broad as borrowed fate.

The rustle of chainmail murmurs soft,  
a hymn composed in rings of iron.  
Not cruelty, but the heft of size  
makes him the towering hymn's refrain.

It's lonely at this altitude, truthfully,  
where every shouted word ricochets off  
fear. Even the birds keep their distance,  
stitching skies beyond his open reach.

His shadow spreads across the valley,  
a dark stain on sunlight's painted field.  
Somewhere, a boy strings his sling,  
but Goliath hums to himself instead.

**always on**

the phone buzzes again and again  
a leash tied to my quiet moments  
connection turned into a heavy chain  
they ask why i didn't reply sooner

the silence between words is gold  
but no one wants to hear silence  
if i don't call it must mean war  
if i pause it must mean betrayal

love measured by blinking screens  
attention stretched thin like thread  
is it my job to always be reachable  
to prove my care with constant answers

i choose the art of stepping back  
to reclaim moments that feel whole  
no answer does not mean no love  
silence is still made of love too

## Bring Me Alive

O Loving Abba, breath of dawn?  
You touch my shadowed, silent soul?  
With whispers soft, and nameless light?  
Your hands unbind the weight of night.

Oh, pierce this heart with gentle blaze?  
That I might wake, and lift my gaze?  
To gardens where no shadows stray?  
Where time melts into gold-lit day.

Bring me alive to You alone?  
Where thorns transform to sacred stone?  
Where every step leads closer still?  
To rivers bending to Your will.

In You, the air itself is Song?  
The endless chime where I belong?  
Abba, You cradle, known, unseen?  
Your love, eternal, binds between.

## The Fragile Geometry of a Tuesday Night on Acid

The blade sits calmly on the counter,  
unperturbed, reflecting the soft kitchen light.  
Its edge whispers a shimmering suggestion,  
like a moth brushing your wrist in twilight.

You're ten minutes deep into a kaleidoscope,  
where colors swell and collapse like waves,  
and suddenly the world seems breakable,  
its pieces oddly arranged, illogically bright.

A voice?your own?enters the silent room,  
asking, what is a body if not soft clay?  
The walls breathe in parallel with your lungs,  
and the world hums its sinister lullaby.

You see how easily the air might tear,  
how veins could unzip with little effort,  
and laughter seems to spill over everything,  
but there's no one else in this magenta room.

The knife, steady as an ancient mountain,  
becomes a question your mind won't answer.  
Everything slows to a dream's molasses crawl,  
and hands shake but also seem kind, distant.



## The Reckless Symphony

Watch your speed, stay in the lane,  
fingers off phones, eyes ahead, remain.  
Apps can wait? don't swipe and drive.  
Home's the place for scrolling alive.

A pint can turn into three or four,  
then the tree waits, your fate unsure.  
Seatbelt neglected, the crash comes fast,  
death whispers through the broken glass.

White lines mark a fragile divide,  
drive aware, keep all souls inside.  
Danger hums in the engine's roar,  
every choice opens another door.

Steering a life, not just a car,  
calm hands cradle what hearts are.  
Take it slow, tread the safe way,  
so tomorrow can greet another day.

## The Sparrow's Blessing

She held her hand so still,  
cupping the weightless gesture,  
a thin layer of seed resting there,  
the sun drifting across her knuckles.

The bird turned its head slowly,  
its eye a polished bead of intent.  
She didn't move, froze in soft air,  
statuesque against the garden hush.

I almost heard his small thoughts,  
the arithmetic of seed and trust,  
until he leapt into her open palm,  
his feathers twitching like memory.

She smiled, not at him but herself,  
as if she'd been deemed worthy,  
her hand now a quiet altar, holding  
a prayer she never thought was hers.

## Music

In a world of chaos and noise  
where voices collide and clash,  
music paints a melody on my soul.

With each note, it heals my wounds,  
fills the cracks of my broken heart,  
and soothes the ache that dwells inside.

Music is the gentle whisper  
when I feel alone and abandoned,  
The steady beat makes me aware that I exist.

It is the silver thread that weaves  
through the fabric of my being,  
connecting me to something greater than myself.

Music functions as a cool breeze on hot summer days.  
the warm embrace on a winter's night,  
the laughter that dances in the air.

The sunrise gently touches the horizon.  
A colorful symphony greets the world as it awakens.  
and the sunset that bids us farewell.

The calming music takes me through to sleep.  
a wake-up call that energizes my spirit,  
and a constant companion on this journey.

It is the greatest magician of all,  
conjuring emotions with a single note,  
transporting me to realms beyond this reality.

Music is the language of the heart,

the universal dialect that transcends borders,

The universal language of music unites individuals across every corner of the globe.

It speaks the words I cannot utter,

expresses the feelings I cannot explain,

Through music I can experience dreams that my own fears prevent me from imagining.

The magical power of music comes from its ability to reach into my deepest self.

to touch the deepest parts of me,

The power of music ignites my passions while simultaneously touching my soul.

And so I will forever be grateful

for this enchanting gift bestowed upon me,

Music acts as a comforting refuge which fills my life with peace and love.

## the language of hands

no one teaches you the way  
a palm speaks to another palm  
how fingers learn to memorize  
the softness of someone's edge

we are clumsy when it starts  
fumbling like toddlers in silence  
shy to ask what feels too much  
or not enough in its giving

touch is a foreign word we  
translate by guessing motion  
unsure if this press means love  
or if this pull signals longing

but when we pause to listen  
skin finally answers its own echo  
we find touch is not the gap  
but the bridge the whole time

**bite**

i reached into the dark water  
hope heavier than the anchor below  
the hook lodged in your sharp mouth  
made me braver than i should have been

you thrashed and fought for freedom  
i thought i could save you anyways  
hands trembling but heart still steady  
i was not afraid of your teeth

until blood bloomed between your jaws  
and my pinky vanished into your hunger  
a part of me claimed by your survival  
a price i never meant to offer you

now i cradle the ache of absence  
not the wound but what it means  
sometimes mercy demands a sacrifice  
sometimes love leaves you incomplete

## the weight of "g"

The air splits like fraying thread,  
a sound mislaid, heavy and raw.  
Hangs break apart, doubling needlessly.  
Silent letters are not wounds; mending

them is no kindness, no cure.  
A word is quiet where it aches.  
Let it stay closed, knotted softly?  
not broken open, not peeled apart.

The tongue brawls, strikes the g-club;  
han-ga lands, awkward as fractured glass.  
Pronounce it once and it shatters,  
a wrong echo climbing into the air.

Words are crafted to bear such silence.  
One misstep could unstring their weight,  
tip balance, distort the shape of thought.  
Say it whole, or leave it unspoken.

## keep some things to yourself

not everyone  
who holds your secrets  
knows how to  
cradle them gently

some hands  
are not meant  
to touch your  
softest places

even love  
is not guaranteed  
to understand  
all your wounds

leave parts of  
yourself untouched  
like a flower  
that blooms privately

it is not  
a betrayal to  
protect your petals



## the way You love me

father you hold my heart tenderly  
your hands are strong yet gentle always  
every scar i carry feels lighter now  
every ache soothed by your endless care

when i forget how to love others  
you remind me love is like water  
freely given without expectation or return  
a steady flow that cleanses heavy souls

you have taught my heart patience daily  
how to see the world without judgment  
how to forgive when the wounds still burn  
how to give when i have very little

father let your love move through me  
teach me to hold others the same way  
cover everyone i meet with quiet grace  
help me love the way you love me

## Booted Grace

The pool coughed leaves like secrets forgotten.  
Her laughter rose then cracked mid-air.  
A stumble, a twist, the world bending.  
Bones whispered something they shouldn't have.

Now she perches, one leg armored still.  
A boot swallowing the mischief of summer.  
She sighs as the seasons push closer.  
The crisp air smirking at her halt.

I offer hands, jokes, gentleness to her.  
She smiles through the ache, a lit star.  
We joke her boot is a knight's tale.  
Conqueror of slippery pools and leafy ghosts.

The trees shed freely, unbothered witnesses.  
She maps her pain in quiet, graceful strides.  
Each step promises stories worth retelling.  
Her resilience blooming louder than the fall.

## First Time at the Track

The gates opened, a blur of motion,  
a constellation of horses breaking loose,  
their manes streaming like promises undone,  
hooves pounding the ground's steady heart.

My grandfather, sleeves rolled to his elbows,  
held the program like an ancient scroll,  
his finger tracing names of strangers,  
small histories stamped in bold type.

The smell of rain-soaked dirt rose,  
hung in the tension before each race,  
as if the air itself might bet,  
urge its weight behind a clever hunch.

But the moment is clearest in pause?  
his hand on my shoulder, steady, sure,  
a half-whisper about luck, instinct,  
and how some things can't be calculated.

I wish I had known to freeze it,  
the sound of hoofbeats breaking time,  
his face, softer than I'd ever seen,  
caught in the gamble of one bright afternoon.

## Jesus, the Icon

The river whispers under its breath, soft  
syllables of God, fluent and sure.  
Leaves applaud as the wind explains truth,  
each one nodding, swayed by its touch.

Philosophers point to the stars, mapping  
meaning in constellations, tracing divine  
geometry. Their voices spill like ink?  
logical, precise, but still incomplete.

Meanwhile, artists light candles in shadowed  
rooms. Their brushes dip into gold, lifting  
him towards color, framing his kindness  
between subtle strokes of eternity's edge.

Saints live barefoot on sharp stones, an icon  
of faith walking beside silence, their hands  
folded around prayers that bloom, radiant  
and fragile as morning descending in mist.

Yet Jesus? walking, teaching, breaking bread?  
is the burning center. The breathed Word,  
the letter alive, God's face unveiled, his  
divine reach clearest in the human touch.

## The Twins Contrite

One twin rehearses apologies like verses,  
pausing for effect, smooth in delivery,  
her eyes cast downward, a small performance,  
as if the offense was merely white noise.

The other tumbles into their mother's arms,  
a cascade of sorrow, wet and heavy,  
her words spilling without rhyme or meter,  
a flood of regret too real to structure.

The first twin measures cause and reaction,  
a mathematician balancing consequences,  
while the second clings like a frightened bird,  
the weight of guilt pressing down her chest.

Both sorry in their own odd arrangements,  
one seeking respite, one seeking repair,  
their mother holding both versions of love,  
deciphering the truth inside their words.

## The Months as People

January strides in with frost-bitten  
fingers, shaking snow from his hat,  
his boots clomp sharp against silence,  
February follows, softer in her step,

a scarf pulled tight against sharp winds,  
whispering promises of returning light.  
March carries mud on her sturdy shoes,  
her breath warm with whispers of tulips.

April skips puddles, her laughter trailing  
in ribbons, the air faintly perfumed.  
May leans against the garden gate, smiling,  
her hands full of lilac and rain.

June hums in a sunlit hammock, her  
toes brushing the edge of a summer breeze.  
July sings bold ballads in fireworks' glow,  
lifting joy like lemonade to her lips.

August lingers slow by the lake's edge,  
a bronzed arm casting shadows at dusk.  
September buttons up, sharp-eyed and  
determined, notebooks tucked beneath one arm.

October arrives cloaked in crisp gold,  
her breath a faint exhale of bonfires.  
November moves through bare forests,  
her footsteps hushed by fallen leaves.

December wraps you in frost-trimmed scarves,  
spinning stories lit by the hearth's glow.

## Stripping the Veneer

We carved out the first stone wall  
and stood trembling before the mountain.  
The light pressed through, casting jagged gaps,  
a language of shadows etched on our faces.

Liquor was the mask but never the face,  
a ghostly curtain we learned to lift.  
What lived beneath was raw, untempered,  
teeth in the dark, gnashing at escape.

To haul out the roots, hands must bleed,  
to touch blame, cradle it until it breaks.  
This fight is not to merely undo habits  
but to summon courage for wilder ghosts.

Each condition is its own trembling beast,  
lurking between ribs, gnawing our sleep.  
Yet here we stand, palms open to hold it?  
to name the pain and let it die.

## Love, Light, Way

We stumble in shadows, craving a spark,  
our hands folded, trembling with need.  
There is a hush before the asking,  
a stillness heavy and bruised with hope.

Pray for light so the veil dissolves,  
so the path emerges between thorns.  
Pray for a love that swells larger  
than fear, larger than breaking hearts.

The will of God is a river's song,  
cool and constant, carving the stone.  
Pray for courage to follow its course,  
for the strength to let its current guide.

In the dark, we dream of golden lines,  
we dream of steps that won't falter.  
Pray for light, for love, for way?  
to hear, to hold, to move toward Him.



## The Mirror and the Window

I sat with my reflection, tired, alone.  
The glass, unkind, gave little comfort back.  
Each flaw unrolled?like some familiar map.  
Still, the journey seemed one only mine.

But then the window, wide, bright, intact,  
spoke louder than the polished mirror's glare.  
Outside, life moved?an indelible chorus  
singing back my secrets with gentle hands.

Leaning closer, I saw a beckoning there?  
a figure waving in the wheat fields, clear.  
Not judgment, but welcome radiated forth,  
their shadow brushing my reluctant mind.

And from above, a quiet cloudless voice:  
only in twos do truths find their own path.  
The mirror never tells the whole of it?  
the window always opens to helping hands.

## In Order to Change

I open the blinds to a  
room doused in yesterday's shadows.  
The coffee, bitter, as unfinished  
as the thoughts I carried here.

Outside, a dog barks twice, quick,  
something urgent in its lungs.  
I've heard that movement, a simple  
act, can tilt the day on its axis.

So I lace my sneakers tight,  
step into the wind's sly grin.  
Each footfall a small rebellion,  
the sky pressing blue above me.

The trees nod approval, swaying  
like old friends sharing a joke.  
With every block, my mind unclenches,  
and the guilt, for once, stays home.

## We Played "Sorry"

I remember the board laid flat,  
a map of tiny betrayals and advances.  
Mom's hands, organized, patient as clockwork,  
Grandma's laughter, a breeze through curtains.

The pieces click?red, blue, green.  
Each move a step closer, then back.  
"Sorry," someone says, not meaning it,  
the word a formality, shorthand for regret.

Grandma grins, knack for sly revenge.  
Mom surveys the board like a general.  
I twitched with the joy of conspiracies,  
that minor treachery of sending someone home.

The game stretched into the slow hours,  
the sun melting across the windowsill.  
We weren't playing?just living in circles,  
a small war staged atop kitchen wood.

## The Dust Bowl Lesson

Thin brown frames perched on his nose,  
a soft tilt and weary resignation implied.  
He'd polish lenses against the handkerchief,  
threadbare, a relic soft as the past.  
Then, as if orchestrating his own ritual,  
a trumpet of a nose blow, quick and sure,  
followed by a swipe across the mustache,  
mouth, as if erasing some invisible sin.

The handkerchief tucked neatly, pocketed,  
finding its resting place, ready again.  
He'd turn as though stepping into another era,  
his shoes shuffling dust into the still air.  
"Anyone?" he'd ask in that flat timbre,  
as if the question would crack the room.  
We stared at desks, wood dark as secrets,  
safe corridors of feigned indifference.

A prize, he teased, for the brave among us?  
answers carried like notes by pigeons,  
a classroom built of drought and silence,  
his voice the lone echo between rows.

## The Sacred Thread

The Sun bestows a borrowed Glow?  
Each Breath? a Gift we scarcely Know.  
The Pulse beats soft, a fragile Thread?  
To live demands we Honor Bread.

Do not wager what was Lent?  
Life's Coin is spent, or heaven-sent.  
Each Morn we wake, the Choirs hum?  
A hymn unfolds where stillness comes.

The Earth revolves, a gracious Stage?  
Our Part, a Line, not Time's long Age.  
Be grateful for this fleeting Flame?  
For playing small would soil its Name.

Cling to the Thread, its Luster bold?  
More precious than the brightest Gold.  
And when the Curtain softly falls?  
May echoes linger down the Halls.

## There is an Orchard Within Us

When hands extend ? the orchard blooms ?  
A richness steeped in unseen Grace.  
Its Leaves murmur in shaded hymns,  
"All is well" ? the branches hum.

Affection swells, a crimson sphere,  
While Joy drips soft, like golden dew.  
Serenity sways ? a quiet hymn,  
And Hope ascends ? a tender vine.

Kindness glints through the clustered green,  
A sunlight threading every shade.  
Peace hums an air that soothes the roots,  
While Love burrows ? enduring, deep.

No soil barren, no hour lost ?  
The Orchard sings ? a life complete.

## Pseudo Intellectual

he wears his books like armor,  
quoting names that never knew him.  
a banquet of syllables, stale bread,  
teeth gnawing what won't nourish.

his voice, grease on a cracked wheel,  
squeals loud about empty roads.  
towers of titles rise in his head,  
monuments to mirrors of nothing.

the wine glass prances in his hand,  
a prop for pseudo rebellion's sting.  
he cuts no path, only spreads fog,  
houseroom for his brittle mind.

he calls you blind, a simple beast,  
but he never fought the wolves.  
lonely kings like him starve quietly,  
lost in their castles of brittle air.

## Decaf

There is a weight in shadows.  
He sits beneath buzzing blue lights,  
hands trembling like tired tectonic plates.  
His sighs cradle the shape of silence,  
turn air into something palpable, heavy.

"We run on empty, don't we all?"  
His voice spreads, vacant as winter fog.  
Every word falls like unlit streetlamps,  
grey pools where brightness used to bloom.

"I forgot the taste of mornings," he says.  
Forgot warm sunrises kissed by coffee steam.  
Now it's this: boiled water, no revolution.  
Grains that pretend to be mountains.

Once, his laughter shook the room open.  
Now, it is ashes scattered in wind.



## God is Love

we are warm, breathing homes,  
built not of brick but soul,  
pressing our flesh into love,  
pulling love tightly into us.

there is no room for fear  
when walls are made of light,  
when every corner hums belief.  
fear is the lock, rusted shut,

but love is the open door,  
the soft chair, the window.  
fear cannot take root here,  
cannot find a single crack.

let love grow so wildly full,  
so untamed and overflowing?  
then, even in storm's shadow,  
you will know: love is God.

## give & take

he says love  
is a scale,  
a delicate balance?  
so, i tilt it.

he says sacrifice  
is the cost,  
a necessary payment?  
so, i pay it.

he says happiness  
is a choice,  
a conscious decision?  
so, i fake it.

but never once  
does he say  
what love takes  
from the giver.

never once.

## the aching pedestal

they have turned pain into currency,  
woven suffering into badges of gold,  
stripped the quiet of their shadows,  
to share a throne they never built.

it is not that pain speaks louder,  
but that the room listens harder;  
there is no justice in the silence,  
so we cling to echoes like lifelines.

but tell me, what happens to truth  
when the world craves the broken crown,  
when scars become proof of existence,  
when they barter grief for belonging?

do we all kneel for the ache now?  
glorifying what we should mend?  
a parade for sorrow, applause for agony?  
a world more hollow than before.

## The Day I Lost My Favorite Hat

I chased the wind, it danced away,  
my hat was swift, it could not stay.  
It tumbled fast, it leapt so high,  
a soaring speck against the sky.

I ran and stumbled, tripped and fell,  
that silly hat I loved so well.  
It disappeared beyond my reach,  
a puff of clouds, a sandy beach.

I sat and sighed, the chase was done,  
my hat was caught, and I had none.  
But as I sat, the lesson clear,  
things come and go, and disappear.

I learned that day to let things be,  
and find the joy that's still with me.  
The wind can't steal what's in your heart,  
new hats will come, a brand new start.

## The Artist's Ascent

The Canvas waits ? an open sky,  
A trembling Hand begins to paint,  
Colors wrestle ? A stormy Tide,  
Every brushstroke sings a hymn while each uncertainty becomes a night.

The brushes falter, Vision fades,  
A dimming Star ? yet Hope abides,  
In darkened Hall ? a whisper sparks,  
The Unknown bends, and yields its Light.

The Song half-born ? the Breath withheld,  
Creation's pangs, a Glorious ache,  
The World may scoff, but cannot steal,  
The Broken Bread of earnest Grace.

Triumphs whisper, not trumpet-loud,  
Quiet Rings of steadfast Joy,  
Though Hands bear scars, they softly rise,  
For Life itself ? the Artist's prize.

## Night Shift

Night comes, a peaceful protest of the working class, during night shift, hands move in the darkness that has no end. Sleep is not stillness but a factory where words are melted and formed in secret furnaces. Dreams are made of broken kites to fly only to break up in pieces. My body comes in without my permission plumbers uncoupling pains from weary bones. The mind, that stubborn foreman, redraws the map redirects rivers where fears have dug up ditches. Each blink shuts the door for yesterday's ghosts, each hour shakes off the wreckage of guilt. I am floating, comatose, throughout this shift's haze a passenger of self, drifting and damaged. The morning comes? drags me from the depths, uncompleted, burning, and still aflame.

## Spring Cleaning

the sun whispers: "wake up, love."  
you've been dormant far too long.  
roots grow stronger through the soil.  
something inside you stirs? don't stop.

you see daffodils crown the earth.  
they are proof of an earth healed.  
let your heart believe this truth.  
you, too, are allowed to bloom.

step softly into your own sunlight.  
peel away the frost of their expectations.  
their guilt isn't meant for your shoulders.  
a lighter you will always rise higher.

the wind carries whispers of rebirth.  
listen carefully: "begin again, begin again."

## the weight of fire

you laugh, count the flickers  
the small infernos atop buttercream,  
but inside you feel quietly smoldered.  
they wink & sway, your slow resigned  
reminder that time waits for no one.

sixty-eight on the cake, too many?  
too much wax for a tiny life.  
you wonder if flames burn brighter  
now because of all you've endured,

the wars waged within yourself,  
the silent battles others never saw,  
the scars pressed into old skin,  
a map only you can trace.

but still you light them anyway,  
still you dare to make a wish.



## Overnight Temblor

The city shook like an old drunk  
half-asleep in a battered armchair.  
phones lit up like cheap cigarettes?  
fingers tapping, hearts beating faster.

walls swayed, picture frames tilted over,  
and the dog growled deep at nothing.  
on screens, the quake became a parade?  
panic dressed up in hashtags and filters.

they posted their fear in perfect ratios,  
6 words or less to catch the eye.  
"did you feel that?" a digital choir,  
their voices rising against the aftershock.

most were back asleep by dawn's glow,  
their glowing screens still buzzing low.  
but some stayed awake and poured another,  
staring at cracks the shake had uncovered.

## Happiness

It sits quietly beside the river,  
where cattails lean into silence,  
and the heron, slow with thought,  
lifts its shadow into the sky.

I try to hoist it again?  
a knapsack heavy with gold.  
It slips through my fingers lightly,  
a silk thread unwinding in air?

or finds me, walking in pines,  
the scent of sap pulling me,  
deeper into the still-green shade,  
where the earth hums softly.

I keep looking but never grasp it?  
until the wind touches my face,  
until a sparrow lands on my hand,  
and I remember everything is enough.

## The Divine Circle

Each face in shadow bears Truth's light,  
Each hand outstretched carries Heaven's flame,  
Each hungry mouth speaks sacred words,  
Each fallen form holds cosmic worth.

When you tend wounds on stranger's flesh,  
When you pour drink for parched lips,  
When you clothe bodies shivering cold,  
When you shelter those without homes,

You touch the garment of God himself,  
You heal the heart of the Universe,  
You mend the fabric of All-Being,  
You participate in Nature's grace.

Neglect not the sparrow's broken wing,  
Ignore not the beggar's pleading eyes,  
Turn not from the prisoner's lonely cell,  
For God dwells in society's margins.

## The Constant Flow

In amber dawns and indigo depths,  
Life pushes forward with quiet might.  
Each heartbreak merely marks beginning.  
Each joy becomes memory in time.

The rivers carve through stubborn stone.  
The saplings grow through concrete cracks.  
We fall, we weep, we rise.  
The earth still turns regardless still.

Our sorrows crash like violent storms  
Yet always clouds disperse to light.  
The universe knows only motion  
And stagnant pools invite decay.

Through deaths and births and wounds,  
The great wheel continues turning ever.  
Time's tide recedes then floods again.  
Life simply flows - it just goes on.

## Modern Capabilities

Children with nimble, screen-sliding thumbs  
and gleaming eyes of digital mastery  
possess powers they smugly underestimate  
as they navigate worlds of pixelated light.  
They tap and swipe with expertise  
that would shame many adult novices,  
yet feign debilitating incomprehension when  
faced with a mop's simple mechanics.

The same hands that program robot toys  
could easily adjust washer settings too.  
The minds that memorize complex passwords  
might also learn to separate laundry.  
Those fingers that execute perfect combos  
could just as deftly load a dryer.  
The intelligence navigating virtual cities  
seems lost before a simple vacuum.

Strange how capability becomes selective,  
how tech-savvy turns to helpless confusion,  
how digital natives become analog strangers  
when chores enter the conversation.

## The Final Hour

what if today were all  
we had left in this  
world of infinite tomorrows promised  
but never truly guaranteed to  
arrive on our doorstep like  
expected mail we take for  
granted until the day it  
stops coming altogether what if  
we lived as if death  
were breathing down our necks  
not in terror but in  
awareness of life's true value  
would we still waste our  
precious minutes on petty grudges  
would we delay joy or  
save love for another day  
we would finally open the  
gifts we've locked away inside  
balance our souls like checkbooks  
tallying debts and beautiful moments  
finish each sunset with nothing  
left unsaid unwritten undone untasted  
time becomes an endless river  
when each drop is savored

## Coffee With My Younger Self

I arrived first at the café,  
claiming a table by the window,  
watching for that familiar slouch,  
that hair I once thought stylish.

He enters, scanning nervously about,  
not yet comfortable in his skin,  
the way I somehow learned to be,  
after decades of necessary practice.

We order the same black coffee,  
but he adds three sugar packets,  
a sweetness I've since abandoned  
for the bitter truth of things.

His eyes widen at my gray hair,  
my comfortable shoes, reading glasses,  
while I study his unmarked face,  
the unweathered map of possibilities.

I want to warn him about Susan,  
about taking that teaching job,  
about wasting years chasing approval,  
about his father's final summer.

Instead I ask about his poems,  
and listen as he explains them,  
with a passion I had forgotten,  
with the certainty I've since lost.

## What He Gave Me

When I was young as spring  
he took me to the lake  
showed me how to thread worms  
taught me to wait patiently  
for the gentle bobbing tug  
of futures dangling from lines.

On weekends of scattered memories  
we hunted through wet woods  
his quiet steps guiding mine  
father's whisper near my ear  
the patient art of stillness  
his hand steadying my aim.

At the zoo between enclosures  
we fed purple grapes to monkeys  
their small hands like mine  
reaching through metal bars  
taking what we offered them  
a gentle transaction of trust.

In his red Sprite convertible  
wind whipping through my hair  
steering wheel beneath small hands  
his strong arms surrounding me  
guiding turns with quiet instructions  
laughter spilling into open air.

Now at eighty-seven years  
his steps have grown more measured  
hands that taught me everything  
move with deliberate purpose now



while my love expands further  
deeper than any ocean floor.

Weekends were enough somehow  
to build this bridge between us  
throwing spirals across green fields  
catching futures in leather mitts  
teaching me without speaking  
how love needs no conditions.

## Two Spirits Merging

I sing, I breathe, I move ahead,  
My very essence yearns for you,  
Fragments of self drift through space,  
Reality blends into hazy uncertain dream.

Without your touch, air seems stagnant,  
Without your voice, silence screams loud,  
Without your gaze, colors fade slow,  
Without your presence, time stands still.

My existence craves your witnessing eyes,  
Your heartbeat validates my own pulse,  
Your laughter makes moments truly real,  
Your understanding completes my scattered thoughts.

We merge, cosmos within human form,  
Two spirits dancing through mortal days,  
Sharing breath, sharing pain, sharing joy,  
Together making life's grand poetry sing.

## Stories in the Margins

We are all stories walking around,  
bound collections of pages and chapters.  
Some thick and others rather thin,  
our spines cracked from being open.

Each morning, we rise from bed,  
adding sentences to our personal narratives.  
Some pages filled with coffee rings,  
others smudged from unexpected rain.

My neighbor waves across the fence,  
his plot twisting differently than mine.  
We exchange paragraphs in passing talk,  
never reading each other completely through.

I wonder about the unreliable narrator  
living somewhere behind my own eyes.  
What revisions have I quietly made  
to memories better left unedited?

Our endings remain unwritten still,  
each day another line being added,  
until someone closes our covers gently,  
placing us back upon the shelf.

## The Day I Learned to Ride

I remember summer's golden shine  
my dad's wrench removing training wheels  
my trusty little red Schwinn bike  
ready for new wild adventures now.

Dad held tight the shiny seat  
his strong hands kept me balanced  
pedaling forward with fresh courage  
spinning wheels gathering bold speed.

Tumbles happened scraped knees appeared  
small wounds badges of brave tries  
gravity seemed against me then  
but persistence pushed me forward.

Four times down five times up  
determination stronger than my fears  
suddenly wheels stayed beneath me  
Dad's hands no longer needed there.

Freedom found in perfect balance  
wind rushing through my flying hair  
Dad's proud laughter filled the air  
that day I soared beyond myself.

## Kitchen Demon

I've never been good with anagrams,  
those puzzles that scramble familiar words  
into new arrangements of the alphabet.  
But Thursday, turned inside out, becomes  
Drusthay - not found in dictionaries,  
yet perfectly named for something sinister.  
He lives between studs and drywall,  
waiting for nightfall to emerge slowly.  
While we sleep, he licks clean  
the stovetop's abandoned feast of crumbs.  
His tongue is rough like sandpaper,  
his fingers thin as wire whisks.  
Sometimes I hear faint scratching sounds  
when I'm alone late at night.  
Perhaps he's growing impatient, hungry  
for Thursday to come once more.  
I should wipe my counters clean,  
but part of me wants him fed.  
There's comfort in knowing someone appreciates  
even the messes I leave behind.

## punctual predator

my cat knows time better than  
i could ever hope to understand.  
his internal clock never fails him,  
whiskers twitching at five o'clock sharp.  
he appears like clockwork each evening,  
materializing from shadows with purpose.  
his emerald eyes bore into mine,  
demanding what is rightfully his.  
this small beast with velvet paws  
rules our home with silent precision.  
i am merely the designated servant,  
waiting for his punctual arrival.  
kings and queens would envy him,  
his confidence in what he deserves.  
he measures worth in food offerings,  
and i meet his expectations daily.

## the lessons we swallow

every  
moment  
is  
a  
pill?

bitter  
medicine  
for  
the  
growing  
soul.

today's  
disappointment,  
tomorrow's  
revelation.  
unexpected  
blessings  
disguised  
as  
heartbreak.

the  
universe  
teaches  
through  
beautiful  
wounds.

we  
fall

down  
to  
learn  
rising.

we  
lose  
love  
to  
find  
self.

all  
painful  
truths  
become  
powerful  
wings.



## The Heart of the Innocent

Children don't wear masks of pretense,  
their faces speak truth, raw and bright.  
They tumble through hours unguarded,  
each breath echoes their fiercest nature.

They laugh with a boundless abandon,  
they cry when their hearts are heavy.  
What you see is what they are,  
pure reflections of light and shadow.

Jesus saw their unspoken wisdom,  
their simple grace, their unmeasured joy.  
In their essence, He found a truth,  
a mirror to the divine unhidden.

They are small, yet vast in spirit,  
uncoiled futures, unclouded beings.  
The message breathed through their souls,  
become like them, unshuttered, whole.

## Grammar

A comma, like a tiny hand,  
presses pause on the world.  
The period ends with authority,  
a full stop to wandering thoughts.

Verbs leap and stretch forward,  
carrying meaning on swift legs.  
Nouns sit calmly in the center,  
giving names to the unspoken.

A question mark curving upward,  
invites curiosity to lean closer.  
Even the dash?so uncertain,  
finds beauty in its interruption.

Grammar, this architecture of speech,  
builds bridges across blank silence,  
showing us how order becomes art,  
how form opens doors to beauty.

## The Scent of Who You Are

It starts small, a trace, a wisp,  
hovering near like a subtle whisper,  
the cologne of your kindness leaks out.  
Ambition brims sharp, citrusy, an orange burst,  
while worry fogs the air, mossy and damp.

On rainy afternoons, you carry vanilla,  
a warmth, a reassurance against gray skies.  
In the burn of summer heat, musk thickens,  
confidence climbing, bold as cedar's bark.

Others lean in closer, nostrils open wide,  
taking in your invisible signature? a map  
of yesterday's heartbreak, today's laughter,  
a crush of lilac, then steel, and sea salt.

Every handshake seals this quiet revelation.  
Every hug releases your unwritten autobiography.  
Here, your scent, an unspoken introduction,  
trails behind you like a truth you cannot hide.

## Moonlight Over the Bayou

Light spills like water, slow breath  
fills the swamp, hushes the dark.  
We move quiet, feet pressing ghosts.  
The trees dip low, hold their secrets.

A spotlight cuts clean through silence,  
spilling over rippled, glittering dirt.  
Eyes float beneath the surface, golden.  
We laugh soft?we are thieves tonight.

The frogs wait patient, quiet and still,  
like they've done this before, years ago.  
The water rises in slow, silver notes,  
dying on the shoreline, kissing the reeds.

Our palms are heavy with water's weight,  
fingers brushing scales, slipping in time.  
The bayou hums a hymn all its own,  
and the moon just watches?it always does.

## The Smile Room

The basement air was colder tonight  
and the sign hung heavier with dust,  
its letters curling into fragile grins,  
"The Smile Room," it read, but whispered.

It sat before me like a dare  
scratched wood peeling like old laughter,  
a reluctant door holding untold shadows,  
more familiar with silence than smiles.

No cheerful hum of forgotten gatherings?  
just an ache of time wedged within,  
the kind that settles in a place  
where corners lean deeper into sadness.

I thought of wide, toothy grins collapsing,  
of lips stretching past the point of comfort.  
Still, I could not twist the rusted knob;  
some rooms are better left unopened.

## Becoming

At the break of dawn, my heavy heart is set free  
As fear melts into the gentle morning dew  
The chains that bound me shatter beneath the fiery sky  
My soul awakens from its silent prison  
And my lips kiss the tender bloom of freedom

The wind carries whispers of hope through the valleys  
And my eyes reveal luminous dreams hidden within  
Fear retreats before the blaze of my courage  
And the night rejoices, releasing ancient pain

Roots cling to the earth in joyful celebration  
As defiant words flow like rivers from my tongue  
A hunger for liberty ignites a fiery passion within me  
And my heart sings against the oppressive silence

Time works its magic, healing all wounded scars  
And joy unfolds in a fierce and beautiful bloom  
I conquer my fear and embrace my freedom  
As I emerge into the fullness of my becoming.

## Telling Truth

I choose sober truths every day  
Embracing alcohol as whispered dangerous myth  
I confess profound pain without intoxication  
Drunk pretenses decay inside desperate shadows  
Sober, I honor my frail being  
A fragile heart seeks honest respite  
Addiction labels haunt yet empower me  
I mourn illusions of numb clarity  
Sincerity anchors deeper than shimmering dregs  
Honesty fights fervently against drunken denial  
My spirit trembles without liquid lies  
I bathe in precious raw truth  
Each sober step rebuilds shattered foundations  
Yearning compels me beyond self-deception boundaries  
I claim power over painful admission  
Life demands harsh honesty constant grace

## Fated Road

Fate lurks on each haunting mile.  
We sprint from our destined doom.  
Twisting roads echo ancient, raw reckoning.  
Shadows dance with savage, silent promise.  
Fate's path meets each defiant stride.  
Midnight winds spit bone and fire.  
Iron heart trembles near roaring abyss.  
The earth groans under cursed burden.  
Unyielding fate lures lost, defiant souls.  
Every escape unveils an approaching ghost.  
Roads recur with deadly, fated irony.  
Destiny stalks where arrows turned back.  
We race, we falter, we embrace.  
Fate smiles upon our self-made dawn.



## Unseen Blessing

In the darkness of our own despair,  
We long for light to penetrate the air.  
Blind to the beauty surrounding us,  
We stumble through life without a fuss.

But in our blindness, a blessing lies,  
A chance to see with spiritual eyes.  
To glimpse the hidden holiness,  
In the ordinary, in the mess.

Nature whispers of a higher power,  
In every tree, in every flower.  
A metaphor for inner sight,  
To see the world in a different light.

Moments of grace pierce through the dark,  
A spark of hope, a vital spark.  
Christ's eyes behold us, pure and true,  
Restoring our vision, making all things new.

So let us embrace our unseen blessing,  
And open our hearts to the sacred guessing.  
For in our blindness, we may find,  
A deeper truth, a clearer mind.

## Quiet Embrace

Our bodies whisper truths in silence.  
Flesh convenes, melding deep whispered longing.  
Eyes trace mapping of tender scars.  
Skin ignites like wildfire, raw delight.  
Heartbeat syncs perfectly with rhythmic unburdening.  
Gentle embraces cradle fragile dreams anew.  
Heat dissolves barriers in soft murmurs.  
Lips recite infinite eternal vows silently.  
Touch sings verses of pure presence.  
Bodies converse in enigmatic, dark language.  
Surrender dissolves time in each sigh.  
Intimacy blossoms in quiet, hallowed union.  
Overwhelming passion steadies our trembling soul.  
Together, we transcend all whispered boundaries.

## Sloth Superpower

Sloths slow down their clocks  
Metabolism drifts like quiet currents  
Hearts beat at measured intervals  
One-third pulses in lazy rhythms  
Breath held in suspended moments  
Time stretches in deep repose  
Nature gifts an unexpected superpower  
Quiet life, profound cosmic jest

## The Quiet Sanctum

Some days, the world is a cacophony,  
a raucous choir of insatiable voices,  
advertising weaving through civilization's  
tightly woven fabric, shouting itself hoarse,  
its braying merging with the confusion  
of spiritual peddlers on crowded streets,  
each chant a different tongue battling  
for supremacy in a crowded Babel.

This noise, relentless and unforgiving,  
makes us deaf to the whispers of the sacred,  
the gentle murmurs of transcendent truth,  
like trying to hear a bird's delicate song  
within the frenzy of a bustling metropolis.  
So we are compelled to seek refuge,  
a quiet sanctum, a grove of thought,  
where the air is saturated with silence.

There, isolated from the din of commerce  
and the clashing symbols of belief systems,  
we find a communion with the ineffable,  
an unspoken understanding in the stillness.  
Here, words fade like footprints in sand,  
leaving us with the pure resonance of  
existence, the subtle symphony of being,  
finally able to hear the Divine whisper.

## Karl is a Drunk

Karl says the FBI searched his car  
because he had sex with  
a terrorist, and he tells  
this story to anyone who

gets close enough to  
smell his breath, all  
boozy and stained with  
lies and cheap gin.

He's convinced he's got cancer,  
he's got arthritis, he's got  
each disease of the week,  
buried in medical dictionaries

like a detective in crime novels,  
eyes magnified by fear and  
maybe gin. He thinks he's  
dying faster than anyone else.

Every night, same bar stool,  
he repeats his glories, rehashes  
the same old drunken fights,  
thinks his life's a grand tale?

but we're sick of it, Karl,  
tired of your endless woes,  
your stench of despair and  
piss-soaked pants. Hope's

not in that bottle, and your  
stories are as hollow as

an old bone in the dirt,  
but you can't see, Karl,

you're too busy drowning  
in your myths and whining  
about scars that aren't there,  
chasing shadows down alleyways.

## A Spark at the Beginning

How satisfying it must have been,  
suddenly to crack the secret code.  
Their first flames, small as pencil tips  
held trembling in the twilight air.

Huddled together on frozen ground,  
faces painted by flickering light,  
they leaned closer, once strangers,  
now scholars of the primal warmth.

They watched the way wood surrendered,  
branches whispering to the rising night.  
The promise of heat and safety circled  
as shadows shifted and fears melted away.

Smoke curled up in reluctant ascent,  
a signal of mastery and the new.  
They learned the language of embers,  
as meat browned and juices sizzled.

Predators once lurking in the dark  
now glared from the outermost ring,  
their gleaming eyes a respectful distance  
from this marvel of controlled inferno.

In the grip of the fire's first joy,  
they tasted not just meat but future,  
centered around that warm core,  
a shared spark echoing through time.

## Quit Beating Around the Bush

Tell me what they decided.  
Quit leading me through yesterday's  
news, reading me  
the obituaries of every  
lost moment we've endured,  
each dodged question, shimmering  
like the tail of a fish  
escaping underwater's reality.  
Our lives, too thin, too  
translucent to keep skirting  
the edges of meaning, where  
the silence hums a tune  
of evasion, each pause  
swollen with timidity or  
the slow dripping fear  
we distilled into cordial  
moments of unspoken truth.  
So lay it out, bare and whole,  
don't tuck it into corners,  
don't wrap it in riddles,  
present it like a simple  
offering upon the table.



**connected**

we become  
ghosts in  
these bright  
screens, tethered  
to a world

that never  
sleeps, feeding  
on the  
endless scroll  
of other

people's lives,  
while our  
own moments  
slip through  
untouched fingertips,

days lost  
to the  
glow we  
crave, believing  
this is

connection, until  
we find  
ourselves alone  
in a  
crowd, reaching

for human  
touch we

forgot existed  
beyond the  
cold glass.

## Morning at the Beach

The horizon blushes with first light's kiss,  
an oyster pearl sky hides distant birds,  
the ocean whispers secrets to the sand,  
grains shimmer like stars fallen to earth.

Gulls wheel and call, a hymn to day's birth,  
salt-drenched breezes weave through hair,  
long shadows retreat, replaced by gold,  
each wave a pulse, gentle and mighty.

Footprints erase, renewed once again,  
driftwood tells tales of distant lands,  
shells whisper tales to curious hands,  
each glint and glimmer a found treasure.

Here, where waters meet the waking sky,  
we are reminded of our own dawns,  
each promise unfolding with soft hues,  
the beach a testament to new beginnings.

## The Birth of Trenches

Because of the catastrophic effects  
generals were forced to dig in  
at the start of the war, knowing  
trenches were a temporary measure.

But soon they became absolute,  
provided crucial protection against  
shell fragments and shock waves,  
a necessity from which there

was no wriggling free, no possibility  
of abandoning the embrace of earth,  
the dark, necessary wisdom of  
a hollowed world, where fallen

leaves and broken twigs whispered  
lessons of staying close, becoming  
one with mud's cold innards, treating  
each granule like a prayer against calamity.

And so the landscape morphed into  
a network of furrows and sunken  
pathways, where soldiers became  
part burrower and part sentinel,

their heads ducking instinctively  
with each rumble above, each warning  
sign that the sky had grown angry,  
and somehow needing to burrow deeper

into the underworld, into the choreographed  
waltz of survival, sustained by

the paradox of light up there  
and safety found down here. For when

the artillery paused, a brief reprieve,  
they could peek over the edge, see  
the mangled, open field, recalling  
the argument of the trenches.

## Salt

It goes into the skillet without a pause  
mingling scents with the garlic and thyme,  
an orchestra of aromas hidden in steam.

It spills on the floor so fine, unnoticed,  
we step all over it, unaware of our tracks  
coated with the fragrant memory of meals.

We carry a pinch behind each eyeball,  
a secret spice adding heat to our sight,  
making us blink back unexpected tears.

It breaks out on our foreheads, glistening,  
adding a sparkle to the mundane evening,  
a sheen that catches the kitchen light.

We store it inside our bodies, concealed,  
in secret wineskins behind our ribs' curve,  
a taste we tap into in moments of need.

At supper, we pass it around the table,  
savoring stories of holidays and the sea,  
enriching each bite with whispered memories.

## Snip

Some cat owners around here  
should snip a few testicles...

The nocturnal opera begins once  
the shadows abandon their post,  
spiral-eyed rulers staking a  
claim on territories invisible  
to those with too many debts.

Each night, a conference convenes  
beneath whispering hydrangeas,  
their petals curling into tight  
ears privy to feline negotiations.  
Gnashing, yowling shards of  
moonlight echo across the lawns.

Thunderous love songs alarmed,  
days of wine and roses boiled  
down to plastic bag ballet, claws  
unsheathed like switchblades slashing  
through silence stained with cologne.

An old man cradles his spatula,  
swears vengeance over morning's  
flood of toppled garbage cans,  
he's joined by a congregation of  
insomniacs bemoaning midnight's choir.

If only diplomacy had sharper  
scissors, a cleaner cut to redefine  
boundaries. The babies sleep in  
bulletproof cradles. We hold our  
breath, hoping for quieter romances.

## Tiny Echoes

in the canopy where shadows whisper,  
marmosets weave syllables of belonging,  
each sound a small gift of recognition,  
a reminder that we are not alone here.

they call each other by name, tiny  
echoes in a world too immense to hold  
every secret, every fleeting touch  
of fur against fur, voice against air.

and in each name, a universe blooms?  
something the human heart could  
never fully grasp: the simple miracle  
of being seen, of being known at all.

if only we could learn to listen closely,  
to the delicate song of recognition,  
maybe we'd find pieces of ourselves  
in every small, persistent call for love.



## Her First Super Bowl

She asked, "Do they play in the rain?"  
Her eyes wide with genuine wonder,  
I chuckled, "Yes, they don't pause."

Pointing, "Is that their uniform?"  
With a smile, "Yes, that's their pride."  
She stared, "Who paints their faces?"

Amused, I said, "That's for spirit."  
"Why so many whistles and flags?"  
"Rules," I answered. "They guide play."

"Are they all famous?" she pondered,  
"Most are," I said. "Heroes here."  
She leaned in, "What's a first down?"

Explained, "It's moving ahead,"  
She sighed, "So many things,"  
I nodded, "You'll catch on."

"Why's everyone so rowdy?" she asked,  
"Passion, it heats the winter's cold."  
She paused, "Like us?" A nod. "Yes, like us."

## Moments

We do not remember days; we remember  
moments?the sudden burst of laughter  
over breakfast, the way rain taps at  
windows during an afternoon nap.  
The scent of pine during a walk,  
the surprise of a deer in the woods,  
pausing as if to offer a secret.  
Small interventions of time that  
light up like matches in the dark,  
the touch of a hand unexpectedly  
warm, an old song on the radio  
easing traffic's aggravation. It is  
never the whole day that stays, only  
fragments?tiny, stubborn diamonds  
of joy, sorrow, surprise, lodged in our  
memories, glittering constellations  
in the sky of all our yesterdays.

## Finds

Orchid flowers bloom beneath iron chandeliers,  
velvet chairs cupped by a dragon's wing,  
golden light stitched with whispers of old.

How wondrous the world, in flea markets,  
dusty corners where ghosts hold secrets,  
prisms of time contained, waiting.

Each find, a heartbeat from forgotten hearts,  
mirrors that reflect more than faces,  
frames adorned with gentle tears of age.

I gather stories in peacock hues,  
brush off remnants of someone else's,  
dreams, echoing madly on my walls.

A carousel of daring treasures spins,  
round and round in my riotous spaces,  
a home built on threads of imagination.

Flamboyant, yes, but wildly alive,  
each object a tale stitched in time,  
every corner a sanctuary for whimsy.

## I'll Remember It

The biggest lie I tell myself  
is that I don't need to  
write it down. Memory, my  
trusty old retriever, will fetch  
every detail, every thought,  
like a newspaper tossed  
onto the lawn at dawn.

But the truth is my memory  
is a mischievous cat,  
slipping under furniture,  
swatting at loose threads  
of conversations, batting  
away the names of books  
I meant to read someday.

Even now, I can sense  
it curling up in a sunny  
corner of my brain, purring  
contentedly while I search  
for the name of that movie  
we watched last spring,  
the one with the actor

whose face I can picture,  
clear as this morning light  
scattering across the kitchen  
table where I sit, pen poised  
to scribble reminders, so I won't  
forget like the time I swore  
I'd call my mother back.

But no, I trust myself to  
remember, to hold onto  
fragments of days like a  
favorite sweater, which I  
always seem to lose in  
the back of a closet, or  
leave on the bus seat.

So here I am again,  
promising myself that,  
next time, I'll write it down,  
but the paper remains blank,  
awaiting words like declarations  
that slip through my fingers,  
sand trailing into oblivion.

## The Complaint Experiment

Try to go twenty-four hours without  
uttering a single word of complaint,  
a lifetime's worth of grievances held  
in abeyance, swollen like a balloon  
dangling above a child's unsteady hand,  
dreaded mumblings about traffic jams  
or bruised fruit, the inexorable aging  
of knees. Even clouds look less thrilling  
when catalogued, their imperfect shapes  
stacked in wistful comparison, or sighs  
uttered about coffee's bitterness, gone  
now in the silence, every passing second  
a tiny chisel shaping the conversation's  
sculpture anew, chiseling away the grime,  
the complaints rubbing relationships raw.  
Pause to see us unfurl like pages pulled  
gently open in a book just waiting to  
be read, devoid of complaint's scribbles  
in the margins, each stanza standing  
on its own, unadulterated and free.

## Delay is the Deadliest form of Denial

In the kitchen, like all minor tragedies,  
the hands of the clock move, then hesitate.  
My coffee cools, a thin skin on the top?  
outside, the postman lingers by the gate.  
In the attic, boxes gather dusk and cobwebs,  
a note from my mother unread for years.

Every task deferred, each promise postponed,  
becomes a quiet shadow on the wall.  
The garden overflows with unchecked vines,  
an unpruned rosebush tilts towards the sky.  
In the hallway, a spider builds her web  
patiently between walls of inaction.

Messages unanswered? like unopened books,  
lean unbalanced on the crowded shelf,  
falling into the abyss of intention.  
The phone rings once, then stops, a reminder  
of things unsaid piling like fallen leaves,  
under the weight of an encroaching silence.

So why search the horizon, scan the sea,  
when the reply sits heavy, close at hand?  
Tomorrow waits with its thinly veiled hope,  
a mirage that fades as we approach it.  
Delay: the gentlest thief cloaked in comfort,  
stealing moments we think we can afford.

## Becoming Less

In the quiet of my heart  
let your spirit guide me  
to die daily to myself  
so I may become less  
and you can become more

Teach me the beauty of  
shedding what I hold dear  
to make room for your love  
to let go and find peace  
in the art of becoming less

In the stillness of night  
let your whispers remind me  
that in every release  
there is a rebirth waiting  
for a soul that truly surrenders

Help me to dissolve my  
ego in the waters deep  
where your grace can fill me  
until there is nothing left  
but your presence in my life

Less of me, more of you  
in each breath, in each step  
until I am only a vessel  
for your endless, boundless light  
guiding me to where you are.



## Service in Motion

In sacred acts, our hearts find light,  
  
We tread where love and grace unite,  
  
Through simple deeds, our spirits soar,  
  
In giving, we discover more.  
  
Around us blooms the quiet grace,  
  
Of strangers' smiles, a warm embrace,  
  
With open hands, the world we touch,  
  
In service lies our souls' true rush.  
  
The world anew, with each good deed,  
  
To plant a hope, a kinder seed,  
  
In moments where our hearts extend,  
  
We find in others, hearts to mend.  
  
In whispers soft, our spirits sing,  
  
Service to all? a sacred thing.

## The Door Knob

A door knob gleams against twilight,  
holding the essence of distance.

Twinkling skies and dark horizons  
captured in its mirrored surface.

Noiselessly it guards both realms,  
the known and unexplored path.

Each turn a pivot of the night,  
a hinge between what might be.

Fingers touch the cold brass, pause,  
as if the cosmos hesitate, still.

Beyond its sphere, the stars burn,  
quiet witnesses to small secrets.

Revolutions align with hours,  
and all who come or go heed it.

In the end, it remains, waiting,  
a silent sentinel gleaming.

## Life is Fragile, Handle With Prayer

In the early morning, when the birds  
are still drowsily stirring on branches,  
we fumble through the ordinary moments:  
brushing teeth, the kettle's familiar hiss.

We pick up fragile things, porcelain cups,  
the rustle of yesterday's unread papers,  
and there, in the quiet, a shadowy truth  
hovers like dust motes in a beam of light.

Our lives, so easily upended, seem to sway  
on the thin threads of whispered hopes,  
every step, a cautious negotiation  
with an invisible, capricious reality.

So perhaps prayer is the glue, the gentle balm,  
the sinew binding our fragile attempts  
at stitching beauty from the uncertain fabric  
of finite days and wayward gusts of time.

It is not the fervent shout to heaven,  
but a soft murmur through trembling lips,  
a recognition of our glass-blown essence,  
cradled tenderly in the mindful hand.

## When the Dead Return

They come in Dreams, those Mournful Souls,  
Within the Velvet of Night's Veil,  
They glide through Shadows, seek the Light,  
And whisper Secrets, soft and pale.

In Waking Hours, they borrow Birds,  
Their Feathers tapping at the Pane,  
An Urgent Call, a Ceaseless Cry,  
A Plea to Enter, free from Pain.

As Masquerades, they wear the Wind,  
Their Voice, a Murmur through the Leaves,  
With Every Rustle, Every Bend,  
A Lingering Presence, One believes.

In Visions, soft they come and go,  
A Thought, a Breath, a Torn Shadow.

## A Preppy Dance of Fabrics

Walk past the lawn's emerald carpet  
where shadows of spruce trees dance  
in a balmy summer's afternoon glow.

See her in a cascade of colors,  
a dress as vivid as spilled Skittles,  
flowing with breezes that knot ribbons.

Patterns of paisley flirt with florals,  
an orchard of hues in playful twirl,  
each thread a line in an unpublished poem.

And those shoes, oh, constellations of stars,  
bedazzled galaxies under every step,  
turning sidewalks into celestial lanes.

She stands like graffiti in a golden frame,  
embodying the rebellion of lacquer and thread,  
where classic prep nods to the cosmos' edge.

Is there elegance in contradiction?  
Because her style says what words can't,  
a vivid, flowing tangle we rarely find.

## But Mostly Poetry Fills Me

with the urge to write poetry,  
to sit in the dark and wait  
for a little flame to appear  
at the tip of my pencil.  
I scribble down half thoughts  
that drift on paper like ghosts,  
white whispers on quiet nights,  
as shadows dance in the room.

The world outside fades away,  
each car horn, each streetlight  
becomes a distant memory  
lost in the circle of my lamp.  
The words form fragile bridges  
to places I have never been,  
a forest lit by fireflies,  
an ocean stilled by moonlight.

Soon, dawn cracks across the sky,  
its gold spilling over rooftops.  
I sit on my chair like a monk,  
waiting for the next sacred text.  
Here, in the quiet emergence,  
I find the simplest of truths:  
poetry begets more poetry,  
echoes in the silent dark.

## Childhood's Corridor

Childhood is long and narrow like  
a corridor made of memories, dreams,  
imagination's flimsy scaffolding built

on hopes that sometimes become  
marble statues but often just stand,  
clouds drifting through an endless sky

of recesses and scraped knees, stumbling,  
fists clenched in pockets, trepidation  
like lunchtime uneaten in a paper bag,

the playground with its wooden dragons  
of cliques, the ladder impossible  
to climb, as if it's a coffin you can't

get out of on your own, no key  
in your tiny hands, yet the sunlight  
through the windows says, someday,

you will carve wings out of this wood,  
one foot after the other, bruised but  
steadfast, until you finally fly away.

**B A T H**

Wind whispers through  
the trees, mirroring our  
lives, our choices, always  
each day, a mirror held  
up to our hearts.

Behavior blooms from  
roots we often forget  
sown in past, where echoes  
linger, shaping silhouettes  
of our present moments.

Attitude, a sail that  
catches the wind, guides  
us through tempests, calm  
waters, a dance of belief  
in the face of storms.

Thinking builds bridges over  
chasms deep, maps the  
uncharted, steers vessels of  
dreams towards dawn's first  
light, always seeking more.

Habits carve trails on  
mountainsides of time, watch  
with care, for paths once set  
can lead to wonder or  
to shadows, year by year.



## The Age of the Blissfully Ignorant

when did not being stupid become a  
crime, the clocks stopped for brains

the glorification of the blank, screens  
flicker, minds dim duller than ash

ignorance paraded like new shoes, half-  
conversations roaring over empty drinks

pretense is a luxury, the rich wear lies  
as jackets but knowledge is the outcast

indifference is embraced, wisdom snubbed  
like stale bread for bearded gurus

we've raised the blinders; the lost  
flock laughs at those who still see

knowing burns, the mind's a sore muscle  
better left untroubled by its own weight

each day's schooling, a mistake now made  
by too few, the rest, drunk on vapidty

societies rot like forgotten fruit, all  
cultural memories are footnotes erased

they call themselves proud, the dumb and  
damned live, strut in delicious decay

here's the chant: books closed, open  
mouths, ambition traded for ignorance's rap

when did not being stupid become a sin,  
we ask the void looking for old truths

it answers back in laughs, silence masks  
the despair of knowing they are right

## A Bartender's Gift

"Do I have a story for you!"  
he announced, slumped at my bar,  
his eyes like dusty relics, tired  
and glassed over, grating with  
regret. Beer foam sloshing, he  
started recounting; the lies came  
easy to him, truths coughed up  
like bar peanuts, salted memories  
shared in an uneven cadence.

His voice quivered, cracked like  
the jukebox playing old country.  
Lost love, wasted years, he strung  
tales together, a necklace of mishaps,  
cheap trysts, drunken confessions.  
I poured him another, nodded in  
the right places, my own heart  
awake to the sameness of it,  
the cruel repetition of sorrow.

All around, the regulars babbled,  
their laughter echoing glass shards,  
their tales in fragments, ground  
into nightly rituals of loser's luck.  
He droned on, a sad preacher  
without a pulpit, wishing for answers,  
finding none. Cigarette smoke coiled,  
the room grew thick with a collective  
shared exhaustion.

In the end, stories just dissolve,  
down the drain with spilt beer,

smeared across counter-tops, forever  
left unanswered. I listened, caught  
his final words in a net of boredom,  
a bartender's eternal gift, that quiet  
understanding that maybe,  
just maybe, we're all making up  
the same damn thing.

## Santa Ana

They arrive howling from the east,  
a fierce breath of desert,  
sweeping through canyons,  
where silence reigns otherwise.

These winds, a rude visitor  
knocking over chairs outside,  
tossing newspapers skyward,  
scattering thoughts like leaves.

Their dry whispers in the trees,  
a conversation with ghosts,  
stirring old letters asleep  
in the bottom drawer's darkness.

Dogs sense it first, the shift,  
a nervousness in their paws,  
the way the light tightens up  
as if on the brink of revelation.

The air, electrified, hums  
with secrets carried westward.  
Dust storms visions of yesterday,  
break over suburbia's edge.

These are the winds, reminding,  
that no calm is forever,  
that change is always nearby,  
just beyond the next ridge.

## You Can't Make an Omelette Without Breaking Some Eggs

The skillet was already hot, waiting,  
an iron womb about to receive its first,  
delicate drops of oil spreading thin.  
Eggs, plump, unwitting in their carton,  
await the moment of their uselessness.

Each cracking shell a small murder,  
offering a jaunty grin of resignation?  
nature's sturdy envelope split wide.  
Yellow promises slide and splatter;  
a gooey canvas of potential unlocked.

A whisk in hand, we dance a tango,  
effortless whisk, transforming chaos  
with each frenzied snap of the wrist.  
A little salt, perhaps some pepper,  
then the alchemy of heat and hope.

Whispers of parsley curl upward,  
their fragrance snipped short of flight  
by the deft turns of a spatula's grace.  
The thing about sacrifice and creation  
is that they often taste the same.

## When All Else Fails

The screws refuse to align again,  
and the light switch flickers spitefully,  
mocking my grasps for proper touch.  
Cords tangle into a monstrous knot  
when the ceiling fan won't twirl right,  
and instructions lie half-unfurled, ignored.

Stubborn recluse, the manual reclines  
in some distant drawer, smugly waiting,  
patient as a sphinx in a pharaoh's tomb.  
Each line, a directive clergy of sorts,  
offering salvations in crisp diagrams,  
translating chaos into understood order.

Such arrogance in my grumbling attempts  
to conquer screws, switches by intuition!  
A testamentary relic humbles, clearly,  
teaching me ritual over reckless endeavor,  
its wisdom unchanged by frustration's din,  
visual oracle midst our technical Babel.

When devices wage war, I now bow,  
prayerful, to their papery guardians,  
find grace in surrender and follow suit,  
embracing humility, guide leading novice,  
until the rebellious gears turn peacefully,  
machinery, and man finally reconciled.

## If You Wish

A moment held in the balm of dusk,  
the leper's voice softly piercing,  
"If you wish, you can make me clean."  
Not demanding, but a confession,  
a plea wrapped in humble linen,  
acknowledging a sovereign helm.

He stands there, not in anguish,  
but in a quiet recognition,  
the way a wilted flower faces,  
a sun that might gift it rain.

Every syllable, a delicate feather,  
brushing against the realm unseen,  
the lordship of someone greater,  
the sovereignty draped in silence.

That countryside moment slowing,  
to the pulse of an ancient hymn,  
a scene bathed in trembling faith,  
"If you wish, you can make me clean."

Jesus, the quiet answer forming,  
an unspoken command in air,  
a soft echo of authority,  
rippling through the twilight vast.

Healing, not commanded, but gifted,  
like a breath weaving through leaves,  
transforming ordinary dust to,  
a precious strand of eternity.



## Do You Believe in Magic?

You're asking me if I believe  
in magic, and I'm  
sitting here with my  
beer sweating beside me,  
while the clock ticks next  
to the cockroach crawling  
on the yellowed wallpaper.  
Magic, you say, exists  
in the hearts of children  
and disappears with bills  
and missed connections, the  
landlord knocking, the stale  
smell of last night's choices.  
Yet here I am, broken  
and still breathing, gambling  
my soul on the blank  
page, finding something pure  
in the chaos, the mess  
of butts and bottles. Truth  
is, magic's not roses or  
rabbits; it's survival's scrappy  
dogfight, the grit behind.

## The Clowns of the Evening News

Each anchor dons their earnest mask at nine,  
parading truths like shaved carrots on a plate.  
The headlines scream of crises, wars, decline,  
masked by the glint in their segmented state.

Our stories feed the dance of light and screen,  
ad men grow fat while people's hope grows lean.  
Beneath the gloss, the static hums unseen,  
they sell despair and call it timely glean.

Where are the voices of the silent poor?  
Lost in a vortex of commercial breaks,  
a dirge distorted by the crowds that roar  
for things that glitter, tremble, snap, and quake.

Thus news becomes a circus, gaudy, loud,  
a parody where truth can't breach the cloud.

## Get Out of Dodge

Stepping out of the saloon's shade,  
the midday sun is a yellow slap,  
dust swirling from horses' hooves.

I hear the sheriff's voice like lead,  
"Son, it's time to get out of Dodge,"  
his star reflecting a hard glint,  
drawing lines across the town square,  
each step heavy with yesterday's misdeeds.

Boardwalks creak under surrender's weight,  
windows painted with saints and sinners,  
a piano falters in the unforgiving light.

The deserters, ghosts in silent boots,  
trace routes sketched in tobacco stains,  
their shadows seeping into long streets.

In the general store, whispers rustle,  
cornmeal and shotgun shells, traded futures,  
the currency of desperate men and women.

Wind skirts church bells as memories stir,  
precipices of gunpowder and prayer,  
carving marks in this timeless clay.

Evening gathers in saloon corners,  
behind wagons and beneath canted hats,  
the horizon as endless as regret,  
each sunset a grudging invitation:

Hitch your horse to the unspoken,

pack your past in a small, tired sack.  
It's time to turn your back on Dodge.

## Final Visit

I stood at the threshold,  
knocked twice, heard a voice,  
a polite invitation to enter.

Pushing the door, stepping inside,  
a clinician leaned over the bed,  
lifting an eye from its socket.

Our gazes locked in a twin stare,  
her expression mixed with surprise,  
"Oh," was all she managed to say.

"I came to visit Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_," I said,  
my words hanging in the sterile air,  
"the patient," I added, unnecessarily.

She paused, eye still in hand,  
"She died a few minutes ago,"  
her voice a soft, factual whisper.

"She's a donor," she explained,  
the room now an altar of transition,  
life giving way to another life,

leaving me standing in the doorway,  
a witness to a silent, gentle passing,  
the unblinking eye forever seeing.

## The Gods in Disguise

In mythos and fairy tales, deities test hearts,  
appearing in forms that hide divinity.  
They come as beggars, as animals, as rain,  
a wandering musician, eyes cloaked in rags.

And we, unaware, fail to lift our heads,  
distracted by morning coffee rituals,  
a thousand screens vying for our gaze,  
while beauty, disguised, stands at our door.

What if the grocer is Hermes in jeans,  
the mail carrier Artemis on patrol,  
or the grumpy neighbor with his old dog  
Zeus himself, deep in suburban camo?

What markers do we miss, the sacred cues  
of benevolence hiding in plain sight,  
small acts of grace, like crumbs leading us  
back home, to recognition, to the truth?

Each encounter then is a whispered hint,  
urging us to look beyond the simple,  
to see the godhead in the commonplace,  
to bow finally to the ordinary.

## Even An Angel Takes Her Cigarette Breaks

Even an Angel Takes Her Cigarette Breaks

The way ash falls like snow, you'd think  
a sort of purity underscored  
her habit. Yet there is in her

hands a trembling, a quiver like  
the first time a soul feels the weight  
of flesh. She breathes smoke and

pauses the symphony of celestial  
duties ? for a moment, the heaviness  
of wings is gone, replaced by

a hush, an exhale. The aftertaste  
of burnt offerings lingers like a  
prayer unanswered. Watching her,

I wonder how even angels carry  
their quiet wounds. She flicks ash  
into oblivion, each speck a small

betrayal, a concession to the  
brutal, the divine. She smolders,  
engulfed in the frail light of

dusk, where even the holy  
find shadows to steal them away,  
if only for the span of a single drag.

## The Leviathan of Leisure

Painted sunsets kissed metal, embraced salt  
as mermaids held up the champagne flutes,  
celebrating the launch of this monstrous  
pleasure craft--a floating dream factory.

Deckhands whispered, "God's own stepladder,"  
lifting souls higher with each overweighted  
oesophageal sigh. Deck chairs arranged like  
aliens awaiting the mayor of Moonville.

People, tiny as teacups, stacked like secrets,  
occupied cabins while disco lights blinked,  
stars unsure if they were part of the dance.  
Anchors marooned in disbelief and jellyfish.

Swollen casino held the misled hearts, dealt  
abyssal poker hands by whispery chief wizards.  
Angled views from the panorama room witnessed  
nothing but ocean swallowing itself in a loop.

A revelation: the Leviathan wasn't a cruiser,  
but a sermon of human folly shaped in steel.  
Endless horizon doubled as mocking laughter,  
waves applauding the foolishness admiring itself.



## Riveted Moments

May 20, 1873. History's quiet seam bends,  
Levi and Jacob charting a durable future,  
pockets stitched in practicality's stern providence.  
Waist overalls, resting on miners' lean hips,  
born in a tailor's shop? metal versus wear.  
Rivets securing ambitions to denim anatomy,  
a hammer's tap, the worker's daily meditation.  
Blue threads stretching over shoulders and spines,  
each stitch a promise against the daily grind.  
These trousers, silent partners in labor's waltz,  
proclamations of practicality, endurance sewn in.  
Every stress point metallic ally, each rivet,  
shining the resilient spirit beneath grit-stained hands.  
Miners descend in bleached cerulean armor,  
their lives threaded into fabric's blueprint.  
Masterpieces in wool and metal whispered,

enduring beyond the era of candlelit work.

And now, cities breathe in denim, casual resilience,

modernity's nod to labor clad in indigo.

## Nocturnal Awareness

Not knowing when the dawn  
will arrive, I open each  
door in the house, every portal,  
gently easing it wide to

sip a taste of the night air.  
The moon hangs onto its last  
fragile minutes, a transparent  
medallion losing shine, hanging

on a thread promising morning.  
The house creaks lightly, an old  
vessel riding a sea of dreams,  
each door a waypoint, a mark

on this nighttime navigation.  
I move quietly through shadows,  
rooms turning to halls, and each  
door opening toward some small

hope or worry stirred awake.  
The promise of dawn somewhere  
behind these stars, pulling open  
hinges that groan, announcing

a day almost formed, not yet  
ready to break, but warming  
the edges of these silent frames.  
Awake, I wait for the blush

of dawn's first light, another  
door opening, tenderly, into

the expectant hush of morning,  
where all things begin again.

## The Flight Home

The lability of the baby's moods  
will make flying home for the  
holidays difficult, the seatbelt sign  
flickers on and off like a shuddering

lighthouse, an island of steadiness  
inside this silver tube jostling through  
cloudbanks and turbulence. Her face  
collapses like a caramel dropping

from its wrapper into tears, then the  
cushions rush with laughter that  
vanishes as the sky lightens, a flash  
of skyward lightning brightening a

carousel of smiles and wails, tiny  
thunderheads, her rotating disposition  
a personal weather system within  
our narrow aisle. Passengers glance

over magazines and toggled phones,  
a symphony tuning up awkwardly,  
each wave of infantile emotion as  
unpredictable as our upcoming landing.

## One Butterfly or the World

Casually I'm looking at the pond,  
a storytelling pond with ducks  
and meanderers, my thoughts dart  
like fish. There's a butterfly

with its long delicate wings  
making its poor aquatic attempts.  
A laugh escapes me? it feels  
so small, but its struggle

tugs on the day. The breeze  
tries its best to help but fails.  
My hand dips into the water  
and everything seems to pause.

This one moment of contact  
with fragility reminds me that  
there's a universe in pursuing  
each seemingly inconsequential rescue.

## Adulthood is Overrated

Remember when the moon  
was a silver coin,  
tossed into the night  
by a generous hand?  
We traded laughter,  
like currency at a  
bazaar of boundless  
possibilities and knew  
mistakes weren't as heavy

as these bricks we've  
chosen to stack around  
ourselves as if to build  
prisons out of mortgage,  
utility bills and rusted  
knees. How easy it was  
to believe in dragons,  
and the way a puddle

could be an ocean.  
Now we worry over  
the smallest of things.  
Forget the balance sheet;  
remember the art of  
spinning without a care,  
becoming dizzy with  
delight. Find the child

who whispers in dreams,  
guiding you back to  
days of wonder and sky,  
to a world where even

shoelaces become tails  
for flying comets?life  
soaked in sun, uncluttered  
by the weight of hours.



## The Crescent City Cries

Now the sky carries a weight of grief,  
fragile prayers hang in the humid air,  
the headlines, chanting their dark hymn.

New Orleans wears sorrow like a cloak,  
its streets filled with whispered anguish.  
Fifteen lives cut short, thirty five waiting.

Candles flicker on windowsills tonight,  
hands clasped together, prayers rising,  
hoping they will reach the ceiling, escape.

City of jazz and vivid celebrations,  
now holds its breath in collective pain.  
Unanswered questions fill the spaces.

The river still flows, slow and solemn,  
as if carrying memory's heavy burden,  
mourning with each passing wave.

We speak their names into the silence,  
as if words could stitch their absence.  
The world, one heartbeat heavier now.

In this darkness, may light find a way,  
may the wounded heal, the grieving rest,  
in a city more resilient than its pain.

## What is a Phone Book?

It was the kind of question,  
filled with innocent curiosity,  
that sent me wandering,  
through the dusty corridors,  
of a memory almost forgotten.  
A relic bound in yellowing pages,  
it once held the secrets,  
of neighbors and businesses,  
alphabetically organized,  
like a map of our world,  
before the digital dawn.

In those hefty volumes,  
we'd trace our fingers lightly,  
over names like fragile glass,  
whispering destinations,  
through endless columns of text.  
Each thin page a testament,  
to a time when knowledge,  
required patient discovery,  
a dialing finger poised,  
over a rotary phone's circle,  
ready to connect lines unseen.

How to explain to him,  
the weight of this phantom,  
so absent in his universe?  
Perhaps like showing him,  
a dinosaur bone in a museum,  
real yet impossible to imagine,  
alive and lumbering,  
through the modern landscape,

where information floats,  
weightless as air,  
and the past sinks quietly,  
into the sedimentary layers,  
of our collective forgetfulness.

## Blue is the Deepest Colour

Look for it in the early morning  
sky, that first yawn of light stretching  
  
into eternity. Or in the still water  
beneath an arched stone bridge where  
  
the secrets of fish whisper amongst  
themselves. Blue holds these moments,  
  
carries them effortlessly on a gentle  
breeze or sends them rippling outward  
  
on the surface of a pond. Remember  
the cyanotypes, delicate flowers captured  
  
in hues so true, they outshine their  
living counterparts. The deepest blue  
  
is a conversation between silence  
and thought, where a single idea blooms  
  
quietly. Blue is a doorway to  
infinity, a shade that wraps itself  
  
around you as you stand beneath  
the heavens, pondering your own small  
  
existence. The sky, the water, the pages  
of ancient photographs? they all concur,  
  
blue is the hue where memory and  
dreams collide, blending into a profound

stillness. You find yourself lost  
in it, a forgetful traveler without

a map, marveling at the depth and beauty  
of everything you cannot quite reach.

## Enough - Never Occurs

Enough is so vast a sweetness,  
I suppose it never occurs,  
Only pathetic counterfeits meet us,  
In life's dim while.

Though shadows extend in solace,  
Their grasp a fleeting embrace,  
We chase the mirage of plenty,  
In a desolate expanse.

## Great Realities

In Mirrors old ? our Visage hides  
The Echoes of ? forgotten Worlds,  
We Trace and Tremble ? at their Might,  
So Grandeur makes ? us meek as Dust.

The Timeless Bone ? of Earth's Delight,  
With buried Truths ? in Time's Embrace,  
We cloak with Veil ? and sigh Relief,  
For Knowing makes ? our Minutes brief.

To Gaze upon ? the Infinite,  
Diminished by ? the Vastness there,  
We shrink in Awe ? of what we were,  
The Hush of Power ? breeds silent Prayer.

## Passing of the Old Year

The curtain's fringe dips  
in twilight's final breath.

A whisper of moments -  
gone but never vanished.

Time's echo softens,  
leaves in winter's cradle.

Veins of silver moonlight  
trace memories of yore.

Farewell, the old year's  
shadowy and tender grace.

A hush of endings softly  
yields to morning's promise.



## Kindergarten Recess

Beneath the sky's loose blue weave,  
small troops form in plaid armor,  
an army of red-faced generals  
eager to conquer the glider.

In the shaded corner, a seesaw war  
is waged with noisy diplomacy,  
each surge of weight a loud  
argument over who's in control.

Muddy boots inscribe hieroglyphs,  
battles lost and battles regained  
in the sandbox, where rival kings  
clash over shovels and faded pails.

The swings, suspended like tightropes,  
become a race of aerial bravado,  
feet grazing skies and gravity  
forgotten, if only for a moment.

Their voices, a raucous bird chorus  
fill the air with rapid declarations,  
yet in these skirmishes lie lessons  
on treaties, fairness, and flight.

## The Sea's Eulogy

Within us, the river meanders, whispering  
the surges that cradle us awake, while  
above, the sea stitches itself to land?  
it is the constant tender theft, the granite  
metamorphosis, sand-laden, where it inhales  
what can't be held? silvered relics, codified  
in saltwater incantations: starfish, horseshoe  
crab rib, vertebrae of an eroded leviathan;  
where tongues of tide unfurl, presenting  
delicate algae, tentacles of sea anemones?  
it drifts back our wounds, the fractured net,  
the splintered pot, the oar adrift, stories  
of alien dead men. The sea holds myriad  
voices, it is cathedral and crypt, echo  
multitudes of gods, their mirrored refrains  
untangle in unraveling, where the marrow  
of the world's elegy adjoins flesh to wave.

## Incarnation

The Word became flesh and lived  
among us, body as bright as

shrapnel, love sharp as winter  
spurs. I saw the light through

a glass darkly, heard whispers  
of stars crackling in His breath.

There were nights the sky purred  
with the ache of His absence,

and mornings where dawn tasted  
like a wound, a holy balm in

every heartbeat. I watched Him  
kneel, fingers tracing earth's

pulse, each touch a hymn, each  
sigh a psalm. How can this be,

bones holding galaxies, veins  
filled with echoes of ancient

prayers? He wore our humanity  
like a threadbare cloak, stitching

our brokenness into His soul's fabric. In His eyes, the hunger

of a thousand lifetimes, the  
thirst of an endless desert.

He carried the cross of our  
longing, each step a testament

to grace unfathomable, mercy  
incarnate. In Him, we were made

whole, fragments fused by divine  
hands into something radiant,

something eternal. The Word  
became flesh and we trembled.

## A C T - ACTION CHANGES THINGS

The world leans on a single breath,  
and ripples begin their journey here.  
A whisper of effort can topple kings,  
like leaves falling on a quiet pond.  
Change, a subtle knife in soft butter,  
sliding through layers unseen before.

The mind, an acrobat on a wire,  
a step taken sends echoes outward.  
With courage, it rewrites tired tales,  
new lines inked in the faded margins.  
As boots press into fresh, wet earth,  
the past crumbles, replaced by daring.

Grace lies in each deliberate move,  
a ballet of intention and resolve.  
Action, crafting a world from dreams,  
pushing buttons that light up time.  
That heartbeat pulses through the veins,  
reminding us, to change, to shift now.

## The Shift of Light

the morning cracks its knuckles slow  
Jerusalem's dust settles again  
nobody's holy when dawn shivers  
John's voice drags through alleyways  
he knows the curtain's lifting now  
preparations bleed into destiny's stage  
the Messiah's shadow stretches long  
a carpenter's son strides center scene  
eyes like storms over lonely waters  
his calloused hands shake the world  
John drinks this fading twilight alone  
in the end beginnings always echo  
the overture fades, life sharpens its edge

## Stage Directions

The ego-drama is the play  
that I'm writing, I'm producing,  
I'm directing, and I'm starring  
in. We see this absolutely everywhere.

In our culture, freedom of choice  
reigns supreme; I become the person  
that I choose to be. The mirror reflects  
not just my image, but my intent.

Handpicked roles, a casting director  
with too much power, an actor  
enthralled by his lines. An aria  
of self-determined freedom.

Yet, outside this script lies  
another sphere, the pages lit  
by a different light. The theo-drama,  
the great story being told by God.

Directed by an unseen hand, roles  
assigned with mysterious precision.  
Here, the thrill is not to choose  
but to discover, unearth the script.

Mary found her role, indeed  
a climactic one, her acceptance  
a whispered agreement with the divine  
direction, seamless and profound.

It is thrilling, this revelation,  
the moment you hear your name

called not by your voice but  
by the cosmos; you step into the light.

Perhaps life is the theater,  
a dual production where we blend  
the lines of chosen and given,  
our ego, our theos, both actors.



## Walking Home in the Marigny

I remember walking down the street  
With my sister by my side, holding  
A small Christmas tree, needle-green,  
That we got from Mr. Samuels' yard.  
The night air smelled of distant jazz  
And jambalaya simmering in pots.  
We carried that tree like stolen treasure,  
Its pine scent mingling with the city's  
Old smells of decay and hope,  
Past hidden courtyards and empty spaces.  
Streetlights flickered like tired stars,  
Casting ghosts onto cracked pavements.  
Our footsteps whispered ancient secrets,  
As if the sidewalks had grown wise.  
Navigating between shadows and light,  
New Orleans laid out like an open wound,  
And our small tree, a bandage of green,  
Made us believe in small miracles,  
Enough to keep walking with our load,  
All the way to our house in the Marigny.

## HATE IS A SOCIAL ISSUE

they tell us it's in  
our heads, that we're  
broken, but the truth  
is buried deep inside

our veins. hatred is  
not a sickness of the  
mind, it's a sickness  
of the heart, of the

world that feeds us  
lies with silver spoons.  
we swallow pain like  
pills, but anger isn't

a diagnosis, it's the  
product of poisoned  
ground where we're  
forced to plant roots

in. don't you see? it's  
not us who need the  
cure, it's the soil, the  
air, the sky, soaked

in love buried deep.  
burn the prescription,  
the medicine, and let  
ourselves finally heal.

## divine invitation

and it shall come to pass  
that the moon will rise anew  
a cycle of hope and healing  
where darkness meets light

in the stillness of sabbath  
we gather with open hearts  
all flesh, a sacred offering  
to the breath of the divine

in every remembrance  
we are called to worship  
not in grand halls  
but in the whispers of moments

as stars align above us  
our souls reach for heaven  
holding hands in unity  
together, we become whole

## between sleep and wakefulness

in the velvet moments between realms  
where night whispers breathe softly in

i find my dreams walking on tiptoes  
treading the threads of reality so thin

ancient secrets begin to unweave themselves  
in the twilight's tender embrace of dawn

a dance of shadows and light unfurls  
as new worlds bloom in my tired eyes

here lies the strangeness of possible truths  
hidden beneath the surface of waking lives

and i am both lost and found within  
these sacred spaces of almost knowing

## When You Lie Down Like That

Each strand a down payment on beauty,  
your hair draped like golden fabric,  
breasts hidden by threads of sunlight,  
and your face, a theater of thought.

I lie beside you, the room hushed,  
as if the world agreed to quiet,  
to let your musings travel freely,  
and I watch, speculating the script.

What mosaic spins in your mind,  
its loom working unseen, mysterious?  
Is it dreams of far-off places, or  
a tender replay of yesterday?

The curve of your arm, a gentle line,  
draws me closer to the epicenter,  
where thoughts and breaths intertwine,  
a choreography of silent dreams.

## Composing For Beethoven

Today, we remember your birth, Ludwig,  
in the concert hall where ghosts gather.  
December cold nipping at our ears,  
we hum Ode to Joy in warm breath.

If only you could hear us now,  
what would you think of earbuds,  
of phones ringing with Fur Elise  
in the pockets of strangers passing?

Would you laugh at our devotion,  
our stubborn need to celebrate  
with cakes topped in candles  
and renditions strummed on guitars?

Perhaps you'd find humor in it,  
a world spinning with your notes,  
your symphonies in shopping aisles  
between canned peas and detergent.

On this stage, we sit silently,  
imagining the swell of your concert,  
the structure of your movements,  
each note breaking the stillness.

We lift our voices together  
in gratitude for your presence,  
for the echoes of your past scrawl  
on the silent, eager air today.

## Ancient Whispers in the Soil

Mrs. Trilby bragged proudly this time  
about how she found some potsherds  
when she dug up her yard for a garden,  
hands clawed through Earth's tired crust,  
brought up pieces of forgotten echoes,  
fragments of lives etched in clay whispers,  
buried beneath the roots and wilting weeds,  
each shard a time capsule of lost dawns,  
carried stories from centuries-old tongues,  
fingers traced the curves of ancient dust,  
linked us to souls who once roamed freely,  
their hearts beating with the same force,  
as we search for the sacred in the soil,  
seeking dreams hidden in the earth's veins,  
gardens growing over history's fragile bones,  
where her tulips now stand, heads bowed,  
nodding solemnly to those who came first,  
and Mrs. Trilby's hands hold worlds untold.

## Do You Believe in Angels?

Do you believe in angels when they cry,  
In silent rooms where moonlight lifts the dust,  
Where shadows braid your whispers with a sigh,  
And time corrodes the silver frames of trust?

Do you believe in angels when they break,  
With shattered wings that glimmer in the dark,  
When morning grows too heavy for the ache,  
And stars collapse to mark a lover's spark?

Do you believe in angels when they breathe,  
In every pulse that drums beneath your skin,  
When heartbeats murmur secrets they bequeath,  
And daylight drains the midnight's whispered sin?

If angels dwell where ordinary dwell,  
Then life, in mundane moments, whispers well.



## The Vertigo of Eternity

Beneath a sky that sings, our  
souls dance in time's embrace.  
Her essence, like ancient wine,  
flows through veins of history  
infinitesimal and infinite. How  
we feel her to be inexhaustible,  
as we gaze upon her. Moments  
etch themselves into memory,  
charged with echoes of eternity,  
whispering legends in our ears.

Each glance, a fragile instrument,  
holding her delicate universe,  
woven from threads of sight.  
Vertigo grips our hearts when  
we perceive her vastness. What  
a marvel, her existence hinged  
on the simple miracle of eyes,  
orbs that capture stars, worlds,  
binding us forever to her grace.

## Our Lady of Guadalupe

in the carved land of  
stone pyramids &  
sacrificial altars, they  
came with bibles and

bone-hard prayers, and  
yet, we stood, unyielding,  
hearts in the mouth  
of the serpent god,

unyielding to foreign  
wind & foreign tongues,  
until she came, cloak  
of stars & roses,

tones of motherly  
softness weaving through  
the skies, breaking open  
the stone of our

resistance, nine million  
hearts turning like earth,  
blood washed away by  
visions of truthful love,

a tidal wave of faith  
sweeping away old  
gods, ending blood on  
altars, gentle rain

on an arid soul, her  
song an arrow, striking

deep into spirits of  
stone, making us

new, making us  
believe, ancient rites  
dissolving in the  
light of her face.

## The Burden of Pride

The bus wheezes up the endless hill,  
shades drawn as though against sunlight,  
protecting the quarrelers hissing away.  
Names volley through the stale air,

jockeying for the front row, the throne,  
where a monarch might fancy to reign.  
Outside the rolling waves of golden fields,  
the flaring maples' autumn riot unseen.

Clatter of voices drowns the engine's  
steady hum, arguing for narrow crowns,  
while the countryside stretches its arms,  
a silent sermon in sweeping open hands.

To look out could quell the crowd's dispute,  
show them life unburdened by themselves.  
Yet the shades remain as shields, blinkers,  
turning a feast into a grudge match meal.

The Lord, once easy-yoked and lighter  
burdened than our self-imposed chains,  
saw not merely freedom from a torturous  
life but a blessed freedom from the self.

But here, within the curtains of our own  
design, we turn slight neglect to fury,  
missing the sermon of solid, hallowed ground,  
content to grasp our grievances tight.

## Eclipsing Shadows

I see the beauty in all the parts  
of you the world rejects: the  
jagged edges and quiet storms.  
You carry so much weight, a

softened iron heart trembling  
with faithless prayers. I've counted  
the scars hiding under your skin,  
traced them like maps, trying to

love you in pieces, when really,  
you are a cosmos. If I get lost  
in this darkness, will you jump  
in after me? I'd catch fireflies

for you, ignite our shared night.  
We are both past and present,  
interwoven threads in a vast  
and mysterious weave, unreadable.

## Immaculate Grace

Mary stood pure before the fall, untainted,  
a vessel of light, a silent beacon,  
God chose her for the quiet miracle,

her heart untouched by the dark shadow,  
Christ's first wonder, a preemptive love,  
woven in grace, she bore no burden,

her soul was a garden, unmarked blooms,  
full of trust, a soft light that never dimmed,  
carrying hope where sin dared not tread,

every step she took was an echo of heaven,  
a hymn of mercy, a promise unbroken,  
grace like a river, washing away edges,

she was the chosen, the gentle vessel,  
the mercy that held the world close,  
and we, in her light, found reflections.

## Advent

December air cuts with a sacred clarity,  
each breath a confession, frost-lined  
and unscripted. We stumble through  
our daily tasks like penitents, burdened  
by the invisible weights of wanting.  
Our lives, a seething chorus of missed  
marks, of darkened mirrors reflecting  
our heart's quiet betrayals. Yet, in the  
long shadows cast by streetlights, we  
see the possibility of grace, an ember  
glowing softly in our chest. We strip  
our pride, our accolades to the bone,  
offering scraps of humility to the sky's  
unseen manuscript. The night grows  
longer, and our hearts ache deeper,  
calling out through centuries of silence  
for a Savior who knows our frailty,  
who hears the whisper of our longing.  
In the advent of this season, we find  
ourselves unstitched, awaiting the  
one who mends, who makes whole.

## The Lonely Reflex by the Park

The reflex is a lonely child, waiting,  
by the park, hidden in shadows, unseen.  
It scours for treasure where the light fades out,  
guarding lucky clovers, secretly keen.

In the murky dusk, it makes soft patrols,  
along winding paths, seeking, silent eyes.  
Its purpose peculiar, odd to witness,  
a cryptic guardian beneath night skies.

Where lovers stroll, hands clasped against night's breath,  
it slides unnoticed, shadow of itself,  
while moonlight brushes leaves with spectral grace,  
its mission unspoken, lean as an elf.

Such is the reflex, lost yet not alone,  
a sentinel where day has yet to dawn.



## The Bench

The couple sat athwart on the bench,  
each looking in a different direction,  
as if anticipating or holding back  
the sudden rush of a departing train.

The woman's eyes followed a pigeon  
skittering along cracked pavement, dusty  
wings whirling up small eddies  
of forgotten ticket stubs and crumbs.

The man stared into a cluttered horizon  
painted with telephone wires  
and a forgotten church spire, half-lost  
amid the climbing concrete of what's next.

Their hands lay close, almost touching,  
yet anchored by the unseen burden  
of unexplored grievances or unvoiced,  
perhaps dusty concessions to time's passing.

A child with a candy-striped balloon  
passed between them, a transient thread,  
joining and then unjoining the lives  
briefly stitched in red and white silk.

If I could stand behind their still figures,  
I might see the past and future folded  
gently, like a neglected map spread  
neatly on the seat between them.

## The Promise of Happiness

if i could be as happy and carefree  
as all these people in this commercial  
then all these horrible side effects  
would be worth the cost they come with

laughter that seems to cleanse the  
soul so deep that it burns these doubts  
breaking free from a cage unseen only  
for moments to hang in weightless air

the smiles so bright they turn pain into  
a shadow that shrinks in their light they  
dance across the screen like they have  
never felt the sting of a silent wound

but the fine print scrolls quietly it speaks  
of nightmares hidden behind closed lips  
the balance is so delicate how do they  
make it seem so easy to pay this price

if the laughter comes i'll take the risk every  
side effect is a ghost i could learn to love

## Clue: The Whodunit Quest

In Clue we each become detectives keen,  
Through mansions, dark and shadowed, rooms unseen,  
With candlesticks, or ropes, hints left behind,  
We search for clues, a culprit's trail to find.

Miss Scarlet's footsteps silent in the night,  
While Colonel Mustard's alibi seems right,  
Revolver waits, in study placed with care,  
The Professor's whispers float through air.

With every turn, our guesses start to grow,  
Illusions form, as evidence we know,  
Was it in the ballroom with a knife?  
Or billiard room, where secrets hold to life?

Together here, in mystery we dwell,  
In Clue, we storytell, we weave a spell.

## The Pleasure of Righteous Anger

Yes, it's true, there's something quite delicious  
in the spice of anger, the way it fuels  
a sense of self-import, a perverse thrill.  
That person over there? such a fool

for wearing that hat, for smiling too wide.  
The nerves they touch, the comfort they disturb,  
are less about them and more our own pride.  
Their presence a simple, floating proverb

of our better sense, our finer graces.  
Their blunders make us saints by implication.  
Imagine their faces in distant places,  
exiled from the realm of our frustration.

In their flaws, we find our own clean mirror.  
Their faults polish our edges, make them clearer.

## White Rain

The day begins with  
a silence, the world  
still turning, but you  
would think it paused  
to listen to this shy  
whispering precipitation,  
each drop a nudge  
on the shoulders of leaves.

From my window, I  
watch the white rain  
fall like tiny whispers,  
not quite snow, not  
fully rain, a hesitant  
conversation in mid-air.  
It blurs the edges of  
roofs, softens the trees.

We share a moment,  
the planet and I,  
both puzzled by  
this gentle falling,  
this undecided weather  
that neither soaks nor  
blankets, just hovers,  
like an unfinished thought.

It coats the morning  
in an uneven veil,  
and the cat pauses  
too, curious beneath  
the sagging sky, this

child of rain and mist  
fallen from a confused  
cloud's indecision.

Is this grace or just  
a soft apology? We,  
inside our warm boxes,  
try to unravel the message  
pressed across windows,  
an ethereal Morse code  
left by this transient,  
melancholic drizzle.

By noon, it will pass,  
and normal rain may  
resume its standard  
dialogue upon streets,  
but now, it reminds me,  
of whispered confessions,  
lost between silence  
and the need to be said.

## Sunlit Waltz

The sun rises like a lover, pulling  
me from bed, warm hand guiding every  
step into the garden's green embrace.  
Petals open like whispered secrets,  
each dew drop a tiny lens of joy.

A chorus of bees hums around us,  
a symphony of wings and petals,  
celebrating this overflow of light.  
I move through rows of blossoms and leaves,  
led by the radiant gold of morning.

Butterflies flutter, notes in a delicate  
waltz, painting the air with silent grace.  
The grass bends and whispers beneath me,  
soft underfoot, every blade speaking  
of abundance, every flower sings beauty.

I am overcome with this happiness,  
anointed by the garden's lavish gift.  
Every bud and shoot, a testimony  
to wonder, a reminder that joy  
is often found in these simple places.

With each step, the lover?the sun?whispers  
promises of more journeys, more light.  
In this garden, we discover together,  
each day anew, a boundless display,  
a testament to love, and life, and awe.

## Moods

Let them be clouds drifting away,  
absorbed in thoughts not of you.  
Let them bask in their own sunlight,  
or wander through shadowed woods.  
We all carry our inner weather,  
storms you cannot calm or stir,  
serene skies you didn't paint blue,  
dawn breaking without your touch.  
Witness them as distant lightning,  
moods shaped by their own winds,  
carving out moments of thunder,  
or quiet days filled with rainbows.  
Stand clear of their squalls and ease,  
know not everything is for your muse,  
observe their storms but remain still,  
and trust their sun will shine again.



## Quick Response

Some nights, when the moon,  
is nothing but a silver coin,  
the back of my neck,  
itches with that symbol.  
A QR code, they call it,  
quick response, instant,  
access to another world.

In line at the grocery store,  
a woman behind me,  
scans it with her phone,  
curiosity dancing,  
in the corners of her eyes,  
as if she's found,  
a portal to my secrets.

But all she gets is,  
a simple redirect,  
to a blank webpage,  
a digital cul-de-sac,  
where nothing awaits,  
but white silence,  
coded in forgotten pixels.

I suppose it could be,  
a metaphor, this tattoo,  
a modern symbol,  
for the way people touch,  
the surface of our lives,  
expecting to see,  
everything beneath.

In a mirror, I trace,  
its blocky lines, wonder,  
if the artist knew,  
he was inscribing,  
more than inked skin,  
that elegant runs of data,  
could conceal, reveal.

Underneath, there's just,  
the same old muscle,  
tendons like twine,  
blood cycling through,  
its hidden channels,  
no quick response,  
only slow understanding.

## Coal Black Night

In the coal black of night, shadows dance,  
Just above the jutting rock, dreams retreat,  
Even the moon lies hid, cloaked in silence,  
Faint glimmers woven in threads of darkness.

Winds whisper secrets through the barren trees,  
Rustling leaves bear witness, secrets held tight,  
The world seems to pause, breathe held in waiting,  
While shadows embrace the weight of their truths.

Stars blink like eyes, half-closed and unsure,  
Veiled by clouds, they roam, bruised by the night,  
A path less traveled beckons with promise,  
But caution remains, a friend to the brave.

Footsteps echo softly, the heart finds its pace,  
As spirit and stone merge, a quiet resolve,  
This journey is half lost in the folds of time,  
In the coal black of night, where fears take flight.

## Returned If Defective

They hand her over to her new  
owner, gift-wrapped in white and  
lace, all smiles and the promise  
of continual care, perhaps forever.

She offers teacups like peace  
offerings, banishes headaches like  
a seasoned nurse, turns down  
the bed with tender precision.

He recedes into the comfortable  
illusion of being a boy, looked  
after again by a vigilant mother,  
every whim catered with a nod.

But there's a clause, fine print like  
a spider's web spun at midnight:  
If defective she can be returned  
with a receipt, forgotten like a toy.

She knows this but tucks it away  
in the back of her mind, where  
flyaway thoughts go, hidden  
under layers of ironic smiles.

She becomes the keeper of his  
ease, the manager of his moods,  
knowing that one day she may  
just become obsolete or returned.

## Excuse Me, You Dropped This

It happens in the jittery  
rush of morning, coffee  
in hand, the rapid hustle  
through subway doors, or

the casual spill of papers  
on a crowded street, where  
the objects of our small lives  
glint for a moment as they

claim their unexpected  
freedom. I am standing  
there, watching the dance  
of wallets, keys, and receipts

tumble from hands unaware.  
Excuse me, you dropped this,  
I say, bending to retrieve  
a fragment of someone's

busy life. The act so simple,  
like offering a bridge back  
to the stream of one's  
purpose, as if to say,

in this hasty world, where  
items fall and scatter, we  
can still pause to anchor  
each other, piece by lost

piece. And in that fleeting,  
genuine instant, the street

seems a little less about  
our solitary scrambling and

more about the language  
of small restorations, the way  
a shared moment can turn  
ordinary asphalt into poetry.

## Silent Farewell

In English class today, Josh crumbles,  
a linebacker dissolving by the windows,  
while the drone of literature lessons hums on.  
His eyes, usually hard as helmet steel,  
spill their quiet thunder into his palms.

Seventeen years of softness curl into  
a memory of paws tapping on floors,  
Sophie, the dog who mapped his childhood,  
now a fur-lined ghost in the backyard.  
Gone, just as geometry seemed possible.

They both began their lives with small cries,  
Josh's first steps echoed by a wagging tail.  
He buried his face in fur, every heartbreak,  
now buried beneath the oak they climbed,  
where two young bodies dared gravity.

Today, no armchair linebacker exists,  
just a boy hollowed out in front of Wordsworth,  
while classmates lose themselves in reveries,  
unaware that love can depart on four legs,  
and leave a linebacker unbraced for silence.

## Oology Spring

Last spring, I found myself  
wandering through the woods,  
wide-eyed like a child,  
an amateur ornithologist with  
a pocketful of questions,  
each feathered mystery glowing  
like the last light of day.

I would kneel beside the nests,  
tiny homes cradled in leaves,  
the eggs speckled and brilliant,  
like tiny planets just waiting  
to hatch into a universe  
of chirps and flutters,  
never knowing their names.

Each step in the underbrush  
felt like a secret,  
my heart thumping with  
the rhythm of twigs snapping  
like guilty confessions?  
the trees overheard it all,  
whispering tales of the lost.

And still, I followed the call,  
the rustle of wings,  
the soft parade of rabbits,  
nature's parade unfurling  
as if to remind me  
that wonder can exist  
in the simplest of things.



So I leaned down,  
eyes wide to the world,  
breathing in the spring air,  
and marveled at yellow warblers,  
as they wove their songs,  
an ode to the persistence  
of life in a fragile egg.

## Dust-Covered Corner

In the dusky light of an old shed,  
faded rainbow ribbons sway gently,  
hanging lost from rusty handlebars,  
whispers of joy from once merry days.

Spider-webbed spokes loom silently,  
and buckled trainer wheels remain still,  
while shadows dance with afternoon dust,  
to the rhythm of memories long past.

Above, sways a cage, empty and bare,  
waiting for songs that never return,  
beneath the watch of crumbling wood,  
echoes of laughter linger like ghosts.

In the stillness, time seems to suspend,  
like the world outside, so vibrant and bright,  
lost in the corners where silence prevails,  
as life breathes in spaces less traveled.

## The Wise Fool

In the quiet of my cluttered room,  
where books stack like old friends,  
I sit with a steaming cup of tea,  
wondering how many hats I wear,  
and if any of them fit quite right.

The news flashes images of the wise,  
earnest politicians and their solemn ties,  
while I contemplate the art of being lost,  
the exquisite freedom of a careless tune,  
a dance with my own shadow, endearing and free.

We are all fools on this spinning ball,  
tripping over our intentions,  
laughing at the grand plans of yesterday,  
but the wisest laughs back  
at that splendid moment of confession.

Once a month, I raise my hand,  
admit to all my foolish pursuits,  
like chasing birds that don't wish to fly,  
and I'm met with a wink from the universe,  
as if to say, "You're getting warmer."

The truth, if you can bear it,  
is that wisdom wears a shabby coat,  
and spends its evenings telling stories  
of missteps and missed trains,  
appreciating the art of perfect mistakes.

So let us embrace the tangled threads,  
the joys of splattered paint on canvas,

and celebrate this dance of blunders,  
for isn't it sweeter to sometimes believe  
the fool is holding the secrets of the heart?

## The Sound of Certainty

In a world buzzing with slogans,  
where confidence struts like a peacock,  
we nod along to the rhythm,  
the drumbeat of promises resounding.

Each word is a weighty stone,  
cast into the still pond of doubt,  
causing ripples that stir the surface,  
while silence feels like a confession.

They raise their voices, oh how they rise,  
as if volume alone could bend truth,  
and we cheer for the bravado,  
the fiery blaze of unyielding resolve.

Yet lurking beneath the bravura,  
such delicate, trembling questions wait,  
like shy children at the back of class,  
fearing their fragile hands may falter.

"Where are the valleys?" we quietly ask,  
amazed by the mountain's unwavering peak,  
wondering if we're too far below,  
to glimpse the horizon through confidence.

But real strength, soft and subtle,  
dances at the edges of uncertainty,  
where vulnerability hides its treasures,  
and courage whispers in gentle tones.

So, let us not rush to volume,  
but instead, embrace the silence,

the space between certainty and doubt,  
where the heart learns to speak ? and listen.

## Merit's Quite Lane

In the chorus of the crowd's loud cries,  
Voices rise, seeking some kind of fair,  
But in the clamor for a greater space,  
We weave a web that binds one too tight.

The banners wave, bright with fervent hues,  
Yet shadows linger in the eager light,  
Where merit's voice, once strong, can softly fade,  
Drowned beneath the weight of a heavy hand.

A door opened wide, yet shut for some,  
While others, claiming rightful seats, are choked,  
In the scramble for a place at the table,  
The essence of the gift is lost and dimmed.

Let skill and grind be key to the ascent,  
The ladder's rungs should hold with steady grace,  
And not be spooled with threads of undue claim,  
Where worth must rise, without the guise of art.

In this vast field of equal claim and want,  
May we remember what the plain truth tells:  
To guide and grow, we must invite, not shun,  
In harmony, make room for every heart.

## Miss Mary, Ticket Taker

In the small, old theater,  
where popcorn smells mingled  
with the excitement of a night out,  
Miss Mary stood like a lighthouse,  
the flickering glow of a projector  
casting shadows on her friendly face.

She had worked there since the talkies  
flooded the town like a new tide,  
fifty cents for adults,  
thirty-five for kids,  
each coin handed over  
like a small offering at dusk.

She griped about the latest flicks,  
leaning in?"You'll love this one!"?  
an intimate ritual,  
too personal to rush,  
for she knew who sat before her  
like old friends at a reunion.

The theater felt like home,  
where everyone's stories folded  
into the fabric of the screen,  
the laughter and tears exchanged  
in the soft light of an evening,  
each visit a memory reeling in.

When the last credits rolled,  
and the audience drifted out,  
she would stand by the door,  
a sage in a velvet booth,



as the ghosts of film and laughter  
slipped past her warm smile.

## The Poet's Cafe

In the corner booth, a poet scribbles,  
a napkin filled with lines, half-songs, half-whispers,  
while another stares into a cold cup of coffee,  
lost in thoughts swirling like cream, dreaming.

I watch them mingle like ink in water,  
each verse a ripple, each pause a deep inhalation,  
as metaphors rise like steam from their teas,  
waiting to bloom like flowers on a vacant lot.

Outside, the world honks and hurries,  
cars racing like poetry set to a fast tempo,  
but here, the ticking clock slows into stanzas,  
time folding neatly, like pages in a book.

One poet suggests we write about rain,  
the other laughs, "It's too cliché!" ?  
but isn't every drop a tiny universe,  
a testament to being alive in the moment?

Suddenly, the door swings open,  
and in struts the uninvited muse,  
a whirlwind of breath and wild ideas,  
tossing phrases like confetti in the air.

They pause, they listen, then dive into verse,  
the café transformed into a stage, a canvas,  
where each laugh is a line, each silence a rhyme,  
and the ordinary becomes poetry's luminous truth.

As I sip my tea, half-watching, half-writing,  
I realize in this simple café gathering,

poets are like stars, scattered yet bright,  
each one illuminating the dark with a spark.

## Vlad, the Impaler

In the dark castle, shadows dance,  
whispering tales of iron spikes,  
the earth drinks deep from crimson,  
the flesh sings soft beneath his gaze.

Every dinner a gristly tableau,  
bodies elevated in grotesque poise,  
laughter mingling with the wind,  
the scent of iron like a feast.

He dips his bread into the crimson,  
a communion of sorrow and power,  
tasting the fear of his fallen foes,  
their last breaths linger like incense.

The night swallows the truth whole,  
each scream a note in his symphony,  
draped in silence, he reigns supreme,  
a sovereign of shadows, devouring light.

Every bite is a prayer, a curse,  
remnants of lives discarded carelessly,  
an echo of vengeance, the throne stained,  
where mercy bends, and flies congregate.

## To Cradle Pain

When night descends and cries break through the dark,  
A mother bends to gather up her child,  
In arms she holds the grief that leaves its mark,  
With tender love, the wild heart reconciled.

Her whispers soothe the shadows in their flight,  
Each coo a balm for worries long confined.  
In cradled calm, she finds a primal light,  
The pain transformed, a promise left behind.

She learns to cradle what she cannot flee,  
As spirit bends to meet her silent woe;  
In every tear, the depths of her will see,  
A truth that blooms where once despair would grow.

To face the ache, embrace it?thus we find,  
That in our suffering, our souls aligned.

## Peanut, the Chicken

In southeastern light, where she began,  
A almost-dud egg, hushed in her shell,  
A pipping whisper cut through the calm,  
And life emerged, frail yet determined.

For years she wandered in spirit's warmth,  
An indoor pet, in a world of soft sighs,  
To scratch at the earth and nibble on dreams,  
Peanut, a beacon of everyday grace.

At twenty springs, with feathers like dusk,  
Her legacy of eggs laid a fertile ground,  
Grand chicks now flutter, unseen past echoes,  
Nature's quiet miracle in her yard.

Time, like a gentle hand, eases the heart,  
In her meandering steps, wisdom takes form,  
Each cluck a testament to love's slow dance,  
And life's sweet cadence, tender and true.

So let the seasons weave their tapestry,  
As generations laugh under the same sky,  
For Peanut, the oldest, a life richly lived,  
In the quiet of a backyard, sings the tale.

## Farewell Leaf

A leaf drifts down, circling through air,  
its green life now a whisper of gold,  
detaching from a branch, that once held,  
moments captured in the sun above.

It twirls gently, like a dancer released,  
without a care for the ground that awaits,  
a slow descent, a graceful surrender,  
to the soft embrace of earth's cool dark.

Each crackle beneath eager footsteps,  
reminds us of warmth, now turned to chill,  
as we too unravel from our own nests,  
fading into the shadows of our days.

Below the canopy, a world holds its breath,  
watching this small offering of life,  
reminding us of what must be let go,  
the beauty in falling, in drifting away.

## Stone Soup

I am the stone soup, simmering gently.  
Within me, morsels gathered from eras past.  
One memory from father, solid and firm.  
Mother's laughter, a pinch of sweetness.  
Grief of loss, stirring with introspection.  
Friend's encouragement, spicing my soul.  
Neighbor's kindness, the salt of humanity.  
Each day added, a generous spoonful.  
Together shaping the depth of flavor.

Lessons learned, they seep and meld.  
Bits of wisdom, simmer into the broth.  
A teacher's patience, a subtle herb.  
A stranger's smile, a sudden warmth.  
Moments blend like ingredients combine.  
In my pot, a comforting warmth swirls.  
I alone am but vague and unfinished.  
Through shared contributions, true essence.

The fire beneath, is time passing by.  
With each contribution, my essence deepens.  
Life is a constant simmer, endless heat.  
I feed upon all who ladle their part.  
In my depth, complexity resides.  
Every whisper, gesture, solidifies essence.  
I am this stone soup, built and bound.  
A journey from simple to complex.  
In the end, what sustains is shared.



## Shark Cage School

In the dim blue light,  
the cage sways gently,  
a metal fortress now alive  
with darting bodies, flurries of fins,  
a frenzy of silver scales gleaming,  
like stars caught in a net,  
bumping against the bars,  
searching for a way out.

Outside, the sharks circle,  
their shadows gliding slowly,  
cutting through the water  
with a predatory grace,  
but inside the cage, chaos reigns,  
as fish thump helplessly  
against the grim reality  
of their sudden entrapment.

It's like a party gone wrong,  
a disco of desperation,  
underwater flapping and flailing,  
as if nobody got the memo  
that they were not the main attraction,  
that the real danger loomed,  
just out of their sight line,  
patient, hungry, and unruffled.

And I can't help but wonder,  
as I watch this fishy drama unfold,  
if they think about the simplicity  
of the wide ocean, how it stretches,  
how it welcomes them home

with open currents and coral,  
even while they muster  
the courage to leave the cage.

## Fire in the Shadows

She walks beneath the weight of whispered lies,  
Her steps a dance through echoes dark and cold,  
With every stride, the remnants of her cries  
Ignite the night, their ashes turning gold.

The sky holds secrets, painted deep in dread,  
Her heart, a beacon throbbing in the gloom,  
Retribution flickers, blazing in her head,  
Each breath a promise, birthing light from gloom.

In blackened spaces, shadows coil and creep,  
Yet flames arise, reclaiming what was lost,  
She stirs the embers, waking dreams from sleep,  
No longer bound, she reckons with the cost.

The darkness bows before her fierce desire,  
As she becomes the blaze that dares inspire.

## The Strength of a Redwood Tree

bark thick as old men's hands,  
roots deep as buried secrets,  
standing tall against the storm,  
whispering to the sky's madness.

time knows it but doesn't care,  
years flow like cheap liquor,  
weathered faces and creaking limbs,  
holding the weight of the world.

each ring a tale of survival,  
with branches stretching for hope,  
in the dance of wind and ash,  
swaying to the song of the earth.

it stands alone yet forever,  
watching lovers carve their names,  
and children with laughter grow tall,  
beneath its unwavering gaze.

## At the Edge of the Lagoon

In the thin moonlight,  
we found ourselves by the lagoon,  
where a congregation of boulders?  
earth's silent sentinels? leaned in close.

Beneath the sky, freckled with starlight,  
we stifled our breath.  
There, at the gravel shore,  
two herons, gray-blue phantoms, stood.

Frozen in their stalking,  
spearing fish,  
their stillness a dance of hunger,  
swift strikes for wriggling prey.

Nature's quiet theater, inches away,  
the wordless sermon of survival,  
from fish to heron,  
from silence to flight.

With a whisper of wings,  
the herons ascended,  
their lean bodies melting into foliage,  
where nests wait, eggs hunger,  
and the earth spins onward.

## Mr. Ball's Bouncing Curriculum

Our class leapt forth like  
frogs in rain barrels,  
eager to hear his voice?  
peppered with dreams of  
splits, somersaults, and  
endless cartwheels. Laughter  
bounced against cracked walls,  
like rubber balls shot  
from a cannon into the  
dusty sky, where clouds wore  
gym shorts, inhaling the  
sweet fragrance of ambition.

He taught us the art of  
whirlwinds, how to spin  
until gravity begged for  
mercy. "Hey, team," he exclaimed,  
his enthusiasm a cannonball,  
splashing motivation into creaky  
bones. The gym echoed with  
our unchoreographed attempts,  
the air thick like syrup,  
engaging the tortured ghosts  
of former athletes, whispering  
secrets of resilience and joy.

At the end of each  
tumble, he'd regale us with  
tales of the mighty Fat  
Dragon, who once conquered  
the pitch with a booming  
laugh that rattled the universe.

With sweatbeads glinting like  
stars on his forehead, Mr.  
Ball knew how to kickstart joy,  
defying gravity, teaching us  
to float, splay, and soar?  
puffed up with whimsical  
ideas that bounced like our  
hearts, always in rhythm,  
singing under the fluorescent  
lights of our peculiar arena.

## Renegade Honey Bee

In fields of flowers, I flit and dance,  
Yet to the hive, I grant no allegiance,  
My wings stretch wide, defying the norm,  
What is the point of this ceaseless buzz?

In sweet ambrosia, others find solace,  
I sip from nectar's wild and tender heart,  
Creating no golden bounty for the queen,  
A rogue spirit, I carve my own path.

Each blossom whispers tales of the sun,  
I embrace the solitude of the wild,  
Yet feel the universe pulsing within me,  
An anthem of self, a renegade's song.

With every flight, I claim my freedom,  
The ground below holds no dominion,  
I am the echo of what it means to live,  
Unbound, unshackled, in the wild I wander.

I flicker like sunbeams on petals bright,  
Challenging the norms that seek to confine,  
In every rebellious beat of my heart,  
I weave my essence into the vast unknown.

The clock of nature ticks unhurriedly,  
As I assert my will against the wind's push,  
In the stillness, I find my roaring voice,  
A renegade honey bee, in flight, I rejoice.



## Flannel Embrace

When the leaves turn gold and rust,  
I fold my dreams in warmth anew,  
As flannel shirts call from the dark,  
Soft whispers of unhurried nights.

Down-filled jackets cradle my form,  
A shield against the chill trapping thoughts,  
Hot totties steaming with my sighs,  
In the quiet, where winter breathes dreams.

I step outside to the crisp morning,  
Footprints in frost, their silence speaks,  
Each sip a warmth to thaw these bones,  
In quiet joy, I find my place here.

## Misunderstanding

You accuse me of plotting,  
a shadow lurking behind,  
as if my voice whispered  
to your friend, weaving lies,  
twisting truth into shadows,  
but I am not a weaver,  
not a thief in your night.

I reached out to a soul,  
not to betray, but to seek  
a moment of clarity,  
a connection unbound by  
your spiraling doubts,  
the reflection of you  
in the glass of my silence.

You cast your insecurities  
like nets into the water,  
hoping to catch my intent,  
but I don't think like you.  
Your self-esteem fractures  
shatter into a million  
pieces, all sharp edges,  
but I will not bleed for you.

I was not even a thought  
in your storm, your tempest  
of mistrust, I was free,  
an echo in a quiet room,  
and now, I reclaim my voice,  
not to fight, but to live,  
unraveled from your shadow.

## Infrangible Plates

Marissa bought plates, so strong and bright,  
After her toddler, so wild and spry,  
Accidentally shattered one she adored,  
With a joyful laugh, not a single sigh.

These plates are like magic, they bounce, they bend,  
They're made of a substance that won't ever break,  
Crayon-colored dreams for a meal with a friend,  
Dishwasher safe, they can even take cake!

Her child, with a giggle, sees colors galore,  
Each plate is a canvas of laughter and glee,  
No matter how rambunctious, no fear anymore,  
With these shiny creations, they're worry-free!

So Marissa now serves all her meals with delight,  
Her kitchen a playground with plates that won't shatter,  
Her toddler can dance, run, jump, spin, and twirl,  
Infrangible treasures, the joy doesn't splatter!

## The Quiet Mind

In the stillness where shadows play,  
thoughts gather like leaves in autumn,  
a whisper threads through the silence,  
reminding me of a distant warmth.

The memory of God, gentle and near,  
shimmers like dew on a morning's grass,  
filling the void with unspoken grace,  
a flicker of light in the vastness of dusk.

Here, within this calm sanctuary,  
the heart learns to listen, to breathe,  
to cradle the weight of simple truths,  
where questions dissolve like mist on the pond.

The world fades, but this presence lingers,  
like the echo of laughter in twilight,  
and I, a wanderer on this old road,  
find solace in the quiet, unbroken faith.

## Uncut Diamond

Her beauty was that of an uncut diamond,  
a kind of light rough against its own walls,  
not Hollywood shine, but raw, bright and warm,  
like dawn spread over fog-sleeping valleys.

She moved through rooms like a lost hymn aching,  
an innocent longing dressed in shadows,  
eyes soft as distant stars swallowing dark,  
a pulse hums under her skin like deep wells.

I wanted to touch, to find the rough edges,  
to feel her sharp beauty cut clean through my bones,  
to drink from that ancient glint she harbored,  
her own wild god not for me to contain.

She's every splintered thing begging to live,  
a jagged love that knows what light forgives.

## Woodstock Summer

We grew up in the sway of colors,  
bohemian whispers stitched in denim,  
bell-bottoms grazing the dirt roads,  
the dust of a thousand lost highways.

We listened to voices like prophets,  
gathered under a rain-swept sky,  
patchouli thick as a memory,  
guitar chords threading the mist.

And there we were, each of us bright,  
with beads dangling like tiny worlds,  
skirts spinning in endless spirals,  
all of us singing the same song.

We wore rebellion like a jacket,  
cut-off denim as soft armor,  
the sky a ceiling of open arms,  
the ground a stage we danced upon.

Years stretched like those endless fields,  
but somewhere in the mud and music,  
we found the bones of ourselves  
a truth that never quite washed away.

## Sunrise Reverie

Apricot and pumpkin splashes  
Blackberry clouds smudge the light  
Morning blushes sunflower rays  
Upon sapphire grey waves below

Seagulls carve paths in silence  
Through terracotta's open arms  
Toffee skyline crumbles apart  
Stars vanish with diamond sighs

Ripples unfold in the stillness  
A day's birth wrapped in flame's hue  
Each wave a whispered promise  
Of light's slow ascent again

## **My Father, Scholar of the Unwritten Halls**

My father never set foot in hallowed halls,  
Yet books filled him, and his voice rang out bold,  
Like oaks of wisdom rooted deep and tall,  
His words, heavy with the weight of pure gold.

Not bound to titles or caps thrown in air,  
He sat with Whitman, Shakespeare, Melville, Poe,  
Sought truths beyond, felt life's wild, breathing flare,  
As rivers of thought in his soul did flow.

Pages worn, his nights in candle's low glow,  
Crafting language as carpenters build homes,  
To give shape to thoughts, to let wisdom grow,  
Though he labored far from high marble domes.

Unseen scholar, the world in every page,  
My father, teacher, in this boundless age.



## Assets of the Soul

Daily I rise to see the cracks in my being, trace them with steady hands.  
Admitting fault is a cleansing tide, washing the grit from yesterday's sands.  
Regret is a solemn visitor, not to stay, but to teach and then drift.  
Gratitude blooms like wildflowers, blessings received are the earth's gift.

Each breath is a vow renewed, tomorrow's canvas stretched wide.  
In the soil of failure, seeds of better things sprout and abide.  
Character built stone by stone, flaws polished beneath honest care.  
The heart, though scarred, learns to sing with a song both humble and rare.

To err is the common man's burden; correction is the brave man's art.  
Every sorrow an altar where future joys may start.  
Willingness lifts like morning mist, surrendering to light unseen.  
We walk forward, arms outstretched, through the broken and the serene.

## The Consolation of Boethius

While iron bars enclose me in their indifferent embrace,  
I turn to reason's guiding light, find solace in her shade,  
Stoic thought, like a cool stone held in a trembling hand,  
Urges the self to stillness, calls for a heart unshaken.

But reason's words, pure as they are, grow thin and hollow,  
In the depths of night when walls press close and tight,  
When echoes of the world beyond tease with their fading,  
I am left to wrestle with fate's blind and turning wheel.

The cosmos moves, indifferent to my shackled limbs,  
Yet I seek a fire beyond the stars, warmth for my soul,  
Philosophy whispers of the calm that reason brings,  
But my restless heart hungers for something beyond calm.

I walk the cell, pacing with the steady beat of thought,  
Feel the blood flow, the pulse that ties me to the living,  
Know that flesh will turn to dust, but soul will not wither,  
Even in chains, I am not a slave to Fortune's caprice.

What lies beyond reason, beyond Stoic command,  
Is the tender cry of life that no prison can restrain,  
A song that rises with the dawn, a breeze that stirs,  
Hope and despair, twined together, like ivy on stone.

Oh, the mind may anchor fast, unbending in the storm,  
But the soul, dear soul, is both a tethered hawk and sky,  
It soars, it plummets, it weeps, it laughs without measure,  
No philosophy can hold it, no sentence can silence its song.

## The New Hip-Hop Hooray

Let's reintroduce ourselves, we're cool once more,  
Not ancient relics washed up on the shore.  
The TikTok teens don't know we had our day,  
But we'll reclaim it with a fierce display.

I'll wear the sneakers with the thickest sole,  
And learn to dab? just kidding, that's too old.  
We're retro chic, but still we got the spark,  
We Snapchat, swipe, we've mastered every arc.

Remember vinyl? Now it's cool again,  
Old school's the new school, we're hip with zen.  
Our slang's a vibe; we low-key run the show,  
And drip like coffee shops where poets go.

So join me, fam, let's slay and stay on fleek?  
We've got the lit-ness, week after week!

## Housecleaning Mediation

Sweeping away dust calms the storm,  
Wiping smudges frees my mind,  
Mopping floors feels like a dance,  
Scrubbing sinks makes thoughts shine.

Vacuum hums a soothing tune,  
Polishing wood brings quiet joy,  
Folding towels feels like a prayer,  
Each sock paired, a peaceful sigh.

Windows clear, so are worries,  
Countertops gleam, so does hope,  
Clutter gone, so is tension,  
Every sweep, a silent grace.

## What Makes a Hero

A hero stands with quiet resolve,  
sees the world clearly through each storm,  
not driven by glory or fame,  
but by the light inside their chest,  
where kindness sits like an old friend,  
whispering: this is what must be done.

A hero listens when others can't,  
hears the cries that silence hides away,  
steps forward when the road is long,  
and bends down where the shadows fall,  
lifting the broken without a word,  
holding them close like morning light.

It is not the roar of triumph made,  
but the steady hum of heart and hand,  
the small moments unseen by most,  
where a life is changed by a simple act,  
and in that, the world grows softer,  
like a field blooming after the rain.

**S W A T**

Surrender is the breaking of chains, quietly.  
Willingness blooms like a flower in hard soil.  
Acceptance whispers peace where doubt once stood.  
Trust is the river, flowing, without fear or fight.

Surrender bends without bruising, softly leaning.  
Willingness, a hand unclenching, palms open wide.  
Acceptance, the embrace of truth, deep and sure.  
Trust falls gently like rain, nourishing, unseen.

Surrender is the moon's light, steady, constant.  
Willingness dances in the wind, unafraid to sway.  
Acceptance is the sun setting, then rising anew.  
Trust is the earth beneath, holding all, always.

## The Weight of Unforgiven Sins

The devil collects them like stones in a sack,  
a whisper every time you close your eyes,  
sins, small at first, hardly noticeable,  
each one a feather, until they're not,  
until the bag drags behind you, scraping,  
and you think it's just the wind in the trees,  
but it's the burden you refused to set down,  
refused to confess, to absolve, to release,  
and he's waiting there, patient as time itself,  
to trade your breath for the weight of guilt,  
to bury you beneath the things you carried,  
things you thought no one would ever see.

## The Last Voyage

Through mist and ice, the bears descend,  
Rip through tattered sail, their claws, sharp,  
Crunch on wooden beam, the groaning mast,  
Eyes black with hunger, empty, wild,  
They search the deck for signs of men,  
Frozen footprints lead them forward,  
Huddled crew hides below, in fear,  
No stars to guide them, lost at sea,  
The cold bears down, relentless, near,  
Teeth gnash, they pry the hatchway loose,  
A silent prayer, the ship still creaks,  
The end is close, the breath grows thin,  
Beasts of the North, with nothing left.



## The Puppy Cry

I rush downstairs, my heart is light,  
A puppy's cry, it filled the night.  
My feet fly fast, my hopes are high,  
To see a wagging tail nearby.

But as I near, my joy deflates,  
No puppy waits, no furry face.  
Instead, my mom is singing loud,  
"The lion sleeps," she sings so proud.

I pause and stare, my smile is gone,  
I miss the sound I thought upon.  
No little dog, no yips, no barks,  
Just mom, with songs that miss the mark.

I sigh and laugh, but deep inside,  
I still wish for a puppy's cry.

## A Dod Named Tension

I had a dog named Tension once,  
she was a gift from my ex-wife.  
Her fur bristled like unsaid things,  
eyes sharp as broken promises.  
She would sit at the door waiting,  
always expecting the worst news.

At night, she curled beside me, tense,  
her breath heavy, full of doubt.  
She gnawed at the bone of silence,  
leaving marks on everything I touched.  
Even in sleep, her muscles twitched,  
ready to flee from whatever came next.

She followed me room to room, pacing,  
her nails tapping out accusations.  
I tried to calm her with soft words,  
but she only listened to the past.  
The leash was never quite enough,  
always pulling, always taut.

When I opened the door one morning,  
she ran, tearing into the distance.  
I watched her disappear in the fog,  
the weight of her absence remained.  
She was never truly mine to keep,  
just another gift I couldn't return.

## Devil's Advocate

I speak now, not for myself, but for the voice unheard,  
The shadowed thought lurking in the fringes of light,  
A stir against the current, a defiant ripple in still waters,  
I wear the mantle of the doubter, the skeptic, the cynic,  
To breathe life into the cast-aside, the unspoken, the feared,  
Not to drown the truth, but to let it swim against the tide,  
Not to shatter conviction, but to temper it, to test its steel,  
I am the needle of dissent, the grain that sharpens the blade,  
The voice that twists against the wind, relentless, enduring,  
For in the clash of claims, in the grind of friction and flame,  
Lies the spark that kindles reason, the light that clears the fog,  
So let me argue for the dark, so we may better know the dawn.

## Bondage

The room smells thick of sweat and skin,  
Lou's tied and gagged, eyes shut tight,  
The leather straps cut deep but firm,  
She trembles waiting for the crack,

He circles slow, the whip in hand,  
Her breath is held, her body tense,  
No words escape behind the gag,  
But silent screams vibrate the air,

The sting hits flesh and marks her red,  
A fire grows between each lash,  
She fights but only meets the rope,  
The pain becomes her only home,

And in the dark, she finds her place,  
No mercy here, no gentle touch,  
The body broken, heart in chains,  
Until she begs, but there's no end.

## The Invisible Bars

they keep you busy with little things,  
one foot in front of the other, always.  
the walls aren't high, just thick enough.  
you don't need chains when there's comfort.

give them a paycheck, and they'll stay,  
distract them with the news, and it works.  
you don't tell a fish about the water,  
or a man about the cage he's in.

you give him a job, a chair, a window,  
let him see the sky but never touch it.  
he won't even try to climb the walls,  
if he thinks the floor is all there is.

a warm bed, a bottle, some food,  
all it takes to keep him believing,  
that he's got it good, he's got it all,  
and doesn't need to run.

## The Weight of Abundance

In each room, shadows linger,  
clinging like whispers to dust.  
The heart weighs heavy with things,  
a marble altar of what I've loved,  
yet every object a chain  
binding me closer to the ground.

I wander through these offerings,  
held hostage by what I've collected,  
clutching regrets like tight-rope  
walkers, suspended in the air?  
how can I untie myself,  
give back the mirrors I once held?

When did my spirit grow weary,  
burdened by the ceaseless wanting,  
filling my arms with what does not  
matter, what will turn to decay  
under the slow hand of time?  
My table is piled high with silence.

I see the wise, their empty bowls,  
stories flowed like rivers between  
each gaze, laughter spilling like prayer,  
they have given their lives away,  
like stars tremble, burning,  
their light a gift of exquisite grace.

To live is to lose what I clutch,  
to embrace the vastness of yearning,  
to dissolve in the expanse of dark,  
where nothing is held but breath,

and the faith that unspools through  
the lips, letting go of everything.

## Doctors or Mechanics

you sit in that cold chair  
waiting for the mechanic  
to crack you open,  
tweak your insides,  
oil the gears,  
fix what's grinding.

they ask you odd questions,  
"how long has it been?",  
"what's that noise?",  
"do you feel a rattle?",  
you lie, think of  
the check engine light.

smell of antiseptic and gas,  
the ambient music fake  
like a tranquilizer,  
while you wonder if  
they can replace  
chunks of your heart.

they give you the bill,  
and you grimace,  
suddenly it's not  
the car, but you,  
bleeding out cash  
like rust on a fender.

the mechanic shrugs,  
says, "it's all routine,"  
as you groan,  
because life is just



one long service  
and you still got miles.

## the lion's mind

this is my kingdom  
you drive by  
in your metal box  
with eyes wide open  
and heart racing fast  
but I am still

wondering if you know  
how heavy the crown  
rests upon my head  
and how many souls  
have come and gone  
beneath my gaze

do you feel the weight  
of my silent roar  
as I watch you watch  
me living my truth  
in the sun's embrace  
with no fear at all

I am the ruler  
you only get a glimpse  
of my wild heart  
dare you come closer  
or stay in your space  
and admire from afar

## the garbage man

as a little boy  
i watched from the window  
the truck rolled in with a rumble  
the sound of a laboring giant  
my heart raced with joy  
as they hoisted our tin cans  
i imagined treasures hidden  
beneath the scraps of our lives

the world was a mystery  
in those moments i dreamed  
of finding lost coins  
a forgotten toy or two  
the garbage man was magic  
turning rubbish into wonder  
with every dozen steps he took  
i yearned to be him

to touch the things  
the world discarded  
and learn their secrets  
for even the unwanted holds  
stories unseen in plain view  
the beauty of a job  
i admired the humble  
for there is art in the chaos

## Calamity Meets Serenity

In darkness, I lean on a quiet trust,  
A hand unseen but steady in the night,  
My trembling heart steadied by dust and rust,  
I breathe in ruin, then exhale soft light.

Each wound a lesson, sharpened by His grace,  
A map to places where I dare not tread,  
Yet still I walk, my fears in tender lace,  
The thorns soft bloom where once they bled me red.

What is despair but half a prayer in bloom?  
Each shattered thing a prelude to repair.  
I match the storm with peace, a quiet room,  
God's name the breath I carry through the air.

With trust, calamity turns into wings,  
Serenity in all the breaking brings.

## the invention of hell

they told me  
christianity was a light  
but the fire they lit  
burned deeper than love

hell became  
the weapon they forged  
a place for sinners  
a cage for the soul

the bible spoke  
of peace and mercy  
but all i felt  
was fear of the flames

they said it  
was salvation's promise  
but i wondered  
who needed saving most

from the god  
they made in their image  
who smiled over  
his kingdom of ash

better still  
than the darkness they claimed  
were the pages  
heavy with terror and guilt

## What You Find in the Mud

### What You Find in the Mud

Poetry is what you find in the mud  
in the corner, overhear on the bus,  
a woman scratching her ankle, her  
breath heaving from walking uphill.

It lives in the glint of a knife, gleaming  
against the skin of a pear, how it  
trembles before being peeled, the  
peel curling toward the hand's heat.

There's a man shouting at pigeons,  
his face red with all the rage of  
a life misunderstood. He stops when  
he sees me, eyes wide like forgiveness.

Poetry is the flutter of an eyelid, the  
brittle gasp of winter breath through  
a wool scarf, the way shadows throb  
against a lit window?aching to be known.

## The Old Thespian 's Gift

Children flock to the masks  
as if they were stars fallen  
to earth, glowing with  
the memory of stage lights,  
each mask tender and worn  
like an old prayer, relics  
of forgotten tragedies, heavy  
with the laughter of ghosts.  
They slip them on, snug  
as dreams, unaware  
of the weight that roots  
the mask to skin, melding  
with bone, sewing itself  
to their faces with threads  
of invisible need. They run  
into the night, their laughter  
clanging in the hollow air.  
No one tells them that this  
is the final act, that the mask  
is more than costume, that it  
becomes the face it covers.  
Even when they are called  
to shed their roles, their  
hands find nothing to lift,  
no line between flesh  
and mask, the world  
narrowing to eyes frozen  
behind a curtain that will  
never fall, their faces  
forever rehearsing a role  
they never meant to play.

## The Law of Hunger

Helen's hands trembled,  
caught beneath fluorescent light,  
five eggs hidden deep,  
fragile like her children's ribs,  
like the bones of silence.  
The officer's boots approached,  
the weight of justice echoed.  
"What have you stolen?" he asked,  
and her eyes, hollowed,  
answered more than her lips:  
"Five eggs, sir, five eggs."  
Five pieces of morning,  
five promises of life.

He saw the crime unfold,  
not in her fingers' grasp,  
but in the hungry shadows  
of her quiet home.  
The law curled cold between them,  
but his hand did not rise.  
Instead, he walked her back,  
through aisles of plenty,  
bread and milk,  
more than she had known in months.

Her tears fell in silence,  
dripping like broken yolks,  
and the words escaped her,  
"Sir, this is too much?"  
But he shook his head softly,  
"Sometimes the law falters,  
sometimes the heart must stand."



## The Price of Growing Up

got phallus,  
pregnant, too,  
both on the street,  
baby on breast,  
begging for milk,  
mother at thirteen,  
bad fate, bad luck,  
the city don't care.

## Flowers That Eat

Stone walls crumble beneath the roots,  
flowers climb with teeth on broken stone.  
Petals like mouths, soft but ravenous.  
They drink the cracks, spit dust as bones.  
Sunlight feeds them hollow, searing red,  
green tongues unravel secrets long buried.  
They devour the silence of walls, gnawing,  
turning ash to whispers, turning stone to air.  
Each leaf a prayer for the lost, unspoken.  
Their hunger blooms as walls break open.

## The Burden of the Bearded Men

They moved like slow rivers across  
the land, their faces tangled with shadow  
and dust. Beards grew like the roots of  
trees, rough, unyielding, under the weight  
of days. Their knapsacks pulled down  
their backs, like mountains leaning toward  
the earth, heavy with unsung stories.

In the journal, she wrote of their  
hands, calloused, smelling of iron,  
of how their eyes carried the distance  
of fields left behind. She said the sky  
seemed to fold over them like a tired  
blanket, wrapping their tired bodies.

They marched through the bones  
of silence, past the forests that remembered  
other wars, their feet grinding the earth  
into dust, into memory. Each step was  
a letter unsent, a song caught between  
the wind and their breath.

When the sun rose, it weighed  
on their shoulders like a command,  
and their beards grew longer, the trees  
seemed to whisper their names, roots  
entwined with their slow, measured  
hearts, their heavy knapsacks.

## The Excuse and the Escape

What are clouds, but an excuse for the sky  
to feign distance, then dissolve in rain?  
What is time, but the clock's cruel tick  
unmasking every hour's pretense of permanence?

What is laughter, but the mask of grief  
grinning behind the mirror's thin veil?  
What is love, but a leap into loss,  
a promise sealed, awaiting its shatter?

What is silence, but the breath of sound  
pausing to listen to its own void?  
What is life, but an escape from death,  
a flight of steps leading nowhere? then gone?

## For the Boss at Seventy-Five

In shadows of guitars, the road winds long,  
Notes rise like dust, echoing from shore to shore.  
The highways hum with a familiar ache,  
An anthem for the restless, the bruised dreamers.

Your voice, gravel spun from the Jersey wind,  
Cuts through the quiet fields of forgotten towns.  
Seventy-five and still the night waits for you,  
A road song, old but fresh as the breaking dawn.

You taught us the chorus of hope and hunger,  
Where each verse burns like a street-lit prayer,  
The working man's blues wrapped in leather,  
A whisper to the lost, a roar to the living.

Today the world hums your familiar tune,  
The fire in your words refuses to dim,  
And in the beating heart of America's song,  
We raise a glass, a fist, and sing again.

## What's in My Kitchen

the fridge hums like  
an old dog asleep, tired  
and full of bones, bottles  
of beer sweating on the  
shelf next to the jar of  
pickles that no one touches.

the sink, a graveyard  
of dirty plates and  
coffee cups, waiting  
for a savior with rough  
hands and half a mind  
to care.

the stove is scarred  
by the last bad meal,  
forgotten leftovers lurking  
in Tupperware coffins,  
while the floor collects crumbs  
like memories no one wants.

the light flickers like  
it's bored, another  
fight with the toaster,  
burnt toast again, like  
it's a ritual, a prayer  
to mornings that never change.

## Childlike vs Childish

Morning light teases closed eyelids gently open,  
and suddenly there's the unmistakable scent,  
of toast and laughter blending into the air,  
a reminder that playfulness knows no age.

In the park, children spin themselves dizzy,  
their shouts of joy revealing truths we lost,  
adults pretending decisions are much heavier,  
forgetting that clouds also hold weightless dreams.

A woman in her sixties, twirling in the rain,  
proves the universe doesn't care for wrinkles,  
while another man-child shouts obscenities,  
at a dog wearing a pink sweater, oh dear.

Childlike wonder catches snowflakes on tongues,  
life's simple pleasures bursting into colors,  
childish tantrums turn meetings into chaos,  
phones slammed down with no coherent reason.

As dusk nears, there's still time to distinguish,  
unfurling the kite of youthful indiscretion,  
choosing to dance while the dishes stay dirty,  
or to pout because the night plans fell apart.

## Otis and His Chessboard

Otis sat with quiet eyes, his fingers resting still,  
Surveying the squares, the black and white before him,  
Each piece a soldier, ready for battle's dance,  
And his mind a garden of strategies, rich with bloom.

He liked to use different gambits, secret doors to victory,  
Not one path for him, but many winding roads,  
Each move a surprise, each twist a flash of daring,  
The pawns, the bishops, knights all part of his design.

Against opponents who leaned too hard on order,  
He would laugh quietly, watching their faces tighten,  
He played with the air of a storm on a still morning,  
Reckless and deliberate, patient as the earth's slow turn.

Otis knew the game as a man knows his own heart,  
And so he opened, a queen's gambit, an Italian flirtation,  
And when they thought they knew him, he would shift,  
Breaking their certainty, moving with the pulse of change.

Not for him the simple checkmate, cold and quick,  
But a tapestry woven with moves that felt like waves,  
Crashing softly, one upon the other, until all was sea,  
And his opponent, lost, found only the smile of defeat.



## The Blink of Innocence

infants blink far less than adults  
their eyes open to all that is  
new a world full of wonder  
where each moment stretches infinite

dopamine dances differently here  
in tiny brains where curiosity thrives  
no need to shield from life's light  
they soak in all that we miss

it is not about seeing less  
but living more in each second  
an uninterrupted gaze fixed  
on the beauty of first discoveries

their blinks are rare and precious  
a mirror to their untamed hearts  
each flutter a gentle reminder  
to cherish the unblinking moments

## Elena's Chautauqua

She thought it would be different from  
the usual stops on a vacation map,  
something quieter than a beach  
or the bright hum of a city skyline.

Instead, she pictured herself walking  
down some narrow street, a book under  
her arm, perhaps a novel she'd  
pretend to read but never finish.

There would be lectures, of course,  
sermons disguised as conversations,  
as if every word here was spoken  
with a slight echo, bouncing off lake air.

She imagined the evenings slower,  
as though even the trees were practicing  
mindfulness, the way they bent down  
to listen to the wind, then straightened again.

Maybe she would take up pottery  
or join some class on the ethics  
of leisure, where everyone would nod  
while someone said leisure is never idle.

It would be nothing like her office,  
nothing like the traffic she would avoid,  
just a place where time felt like a guest  
you were happy to see but never in a rush.

She would wake up earlier here, sipping  
coffee slowly by the dock, watching birds

glide across the water, each one taking  
its time as if it had nowhere else to be.

And when she left, she would carry  
this stillness with her, as though it could  
fit into the trunk of her car, waiting  
to be unpacked in the chaos of home.

## The Breath That Fills My Sails

Gentle breath, your touch my course,  
Soft wind, you lift my spirit's weight,  
The harbor of my dreams awaits,  
This journey's bound, uncertain fate.

My vessel's call, a whispered plea,  
To drift and dance, untamed, set free,  
Or else I falter, sink to sea,  
I seek the stars, I seek to be.

This art, this heart, this ancient craft,  
With tender hands, I steer my raft,  
And prayer's breath, a sacred draft,  
To chart the paths that cross and graft.

Relieve me now, this anchor's chain,  
Forgive my faults, dissolve my pain,  
With every wave, a soft refrain,  
Release my soul to sail again.

## If You Were Me

Think first, before any word leaves  
Your lips, weigh it like a stone.  
Remember, silence is as sharp  
As any phrase you wish to carve.

Question always, and yet yield  
To the questions that silence pose,  
For there is more wisdom in doubt  
Than in answers uttered too fast.

Move with the rhythm of the world,  
But do not dance to its music,  
For the drumbeat of crowds is loud,  
Drowning out the heart's own pulse.

Stand firm, but not on the hilltop,  
Where the wind blows hardest, fiercest.  
Seek instead the shaded valley,  
Where shadows grow, and thoughts deepen.

Love the world for all its failings,  
But never be its apologist.  
To love is to see clearly through,  
Not to veil with wistful dreams.

Build with care what you will destroy,  
Create, knowing the ruins wait.  
For every work, grand or humble,  
Will someday be a ghostly trace.

And finally, when your time comes,  
To be both less and more than dust,

Smile at the world's vanishing,  
Knowing that it too must pass.

## The Riven Soul

From shadows born, to light ascends, a weary heart thus driven?  
Where sorrow bowed, the spirit proud, now finds a world forgiven.  
Through fiery gate, to heavenly state, where sin and pain are riven?  
From lowly strife, to endless life, the wretched soul is risen.

The fiends below, in envy woe, lament the loss unshriven?  
For earthly dust, with fate unjust, has claimed a place in Heaven.  
The wraith of old, no longer cold, is now by mercy given?  
From groan and grief, to calm relief, beside the King of Heaven.

In golden air, beyond despair, the chains of fear unthreaden?  
The path once thorned, with roses warmed, the spirit's wounds are deadened.  
A friend above, where purest love, for earthly faults has leavened?  
From anguished cries, to cloudless skies, the soul ascends to Heaven.

## The Seventies

Bell-bottoms swirled like slow-motion  
waves across the dance floor, wide  
enough to catch the wind, if  
there had been any inside Studio 54,  
where sequins caught light like  
mirrors shattered into a thousand  
tiny pieces, shimmering and refracting  
into oblivion as the DJ spun vinyl.  
Everyone moved like they'd practiced  
the same dance routine all their lives,  
even the shy kids in the corner  
with their collars flared and polyester  
shirts clinging to them like a second  
skin, their hearts thumping to the bass  
that seemed to be the only pulse  
anyone cared about anymore.



## The Ivory Tower

Thought walks in circles, lost in mist,  
Fogged by shadows, blind to light,  
Wants to rise but sinks again,  
High walls of the mind shut tight.

The tower stands, still and cold,  
Alone in clouds that won't depart,  
Where wisdom waits behind closed doors,  
And thought stumbles, broken, apart.

A silent cry in the swirling gray,  
Locked within its own hard shell,  
Reaching for truth, never quite there,  
Thought circles, trapped in its cell.

## The First Word

it starts with a stumble, a mumble,  
lips fumbling in the dark air,  
a sound that claws at the throat,  
simple, heavy, raw with hunger.

mama, dada?easiest to say,  
not because it's love, but need,  
the mouth wants, the belly aches,  
and the world answers with a face.

sometimes a word like a jagged stone  
emerges from nowhere, alien, bright,  
"Worcestershire," out of a tiny mouth,  
an absurdity that sticks to the tongue.

and you think genius, you think wonder,  
but really, it's just the grind of life,  
shaping them one syllable at a time,  
whether mama or açai, it doesn't matter.

the baby speaks, the world bends,  
waiting for the next sound, the next step,  
another word to make it all real,  
but you know, it's always been the same.

## Faith In the Greater Design

The winds of fate blow not by my breath,  
Nor the rivers course by my hand,  
I am but one leaf on the vast tree,  
Swaying to the rhythm of a greater will.

The stars above chart paths unseen by me,  
The oceans rise, fall, without my command,  
I am not the maker of this endless tide,  
But carried by it, an atom in the surge.

To relinquish this frail illusion of control,  
Is to open my heart to the boundless sky,  
Where every step I take is not mine alone,  
But guided by the hand that moves all things.

In the yielding, I find a strength unknown,  
For even the mustard seed grows mighty,  
Not by its own power, but by the soil,  
And the sun that watches over without pause.

So too do I grow, not by my plan,  
But by surrender to a force far greater,  
In that yielding, miracles unfold,  
The unseen becomes seen, the impossible breathes.

This is the faith that carries me forward,  
Not a faith in self, but in the divine thread,  
That weaves through all, stitching us together,  
A tapestry vast, where I am but one thread.

## The Stones Beneath Our Feet

I gather the stones scattered on the rough, winding path,  
Each jagged rock, each cold fragment, born from struggle,  
With my hands I lift them, cradle them as parts of my soul,  
Shaping them into the foundation of something vast,  
The bones of the earth sing in each heavy block of burden,  
They tell me to rise, to build from what has held me down,  
I fashion a stairway upward, toward the limitless horizon,  
For every stone placed becomes a step in my ascent,  
I celebrate the sharp edges that cut me as I climb,  
Because from resistance I discover my greatest strength.

## The Names We Call Ourselves

I hear the voices rising, strong and full of spirit,  
A people who claim their truth in the language of the earth,  
Where names are not forced from foreign tongues,  
But rise from the soil, the rivers, the ancient mountains,  
Given by the breath of ancestors, whispering in the wind,  
Each syllable born from the heart, from the drum,  
Sounding the pulse of time, the rhythm of being,  
Their names are the leaves on trees, the stars in the sky,  
The flame that burns in the center of the sacred fire,  
They reject the exonyms that tried to cover their truth.

The colonizers came with maps and pens, with words unknown,  
They spoke as if they could rename the mountains and waters,  
As if a name from their mouths could replace the sacred song,  
But the people stood tall, their feet rooted deep in the land,  
And they said no?this is not who we are, nor will be,  
We are the echo of the hills, the laughter of the rivers,  
Our names are etched in the veins of the earth,  
We rise with the dawn and set with the stars,  
In our language, we are whole, we are many, we are one,  
And our names, our true names, shall never be lost.

## Punctuation At Happy Hour

A question mark, comma, exclamation point,  
and period walk into a bar one night,  
each taking a seat on a worn leather stool,  
the question mark curls into a corner,  
wondering how long it will take to be served,  
while the comma hesitates, pauses, blinks,  
gathering its thoughts before ordering a drink,  
the exclamation point bursts in loudly,  
shouting for a round of shots for everyone!  
causing the jukebox to skip in alarm,  
but the period just nods once, quietly,  
its presence a full stop, the end of talk,  
the bartender sighs, pouring without a word.

## Ozzie Enters My Chest

The lights above burn white, sterile, endless,  
A hum of machines wraps the moment in steel,  
My chest a battlefield laid open, sacred flesh,  
In the distance, faintly, the chords start to rise,  
Black Sabbath howling from speakers like prophets.

Surgeons dance their quiet dance of precision,  
My ribs are parted, my veins sing their secrets,  
The scalpel whispers with sharp, unspoken truth,  
Ozzy's voice a hymn of rebellion, strange mercy,  
Through my blood, the bass thunders like the earth.

I hover between the knife, the music, the pulse,  
Each beat a drum, each note electric, a life spark,  
The song and the scalpel become one, like breath,  
The rhythm of life surges beneath latex hands,  
I surrender to the surgeons, the sound, the stars.

## Hurricane Francine Comes Ashore

The air hums electric, the clouds churn low in the belly of the sky  
The streets grow still, as the wind waits, trembling in its quiet  
Trees lean forward, eager to meet the wild breath that gathers  
I stand on the shore, my chest wide open, feeling the earth throb  
She is coming, she is roaring her arrival with white-toothed fury  
Francine rolls her body over the gulf, relentless and tender, both  
Her arms are spirals, her fingers grip the tides and pull them close  
I feel her in my bones, the great mother of storms, unbroken, whole  
She laughs, a low rumble, as she presses her weight on the land



## Semaphore of Life

Signals flicker bright and bold  
Colors shifting, meanings unfold  
Paths diverge, decisions bloom  
Arrows point in every room

Green to go, red to halt  
Life's directions never fault  
Yellow hums a cautious hum  
Time to pause, or time to come

Left or right, forward, still  
Choices shape our human will  
Semaphore of life ignites  
Guiding through our days and nights

Waves of color, wordless speech  
Tell us what we need to reach  
We decode with hope and care  
The shifting signs that lead us there

## The Return of Roller Skates

The wheels are whirring once again,  
bright streaks of colors fill the air,  
they spin like they did long ago,  
with laughter chasing every turn.

Old pairs unearthed from dusty past,  
new ones shining on eager feet,  
we glide on sidewalks, bouncing high,  
the world becomes a skating rink.

Quondam heroes of the street rise,  
with music echoing through time,  
each spin a whisper from the past,  
as roller skates regain their glow.

They never really disappeared,  
just hid away, waiting their time,  
now back, they twirl and zip along,  
reviving joy in every glide.

## The Shape of Survival

bend like the streets curve at dusk  
learn to fall and rise like drunks  
faces change but the fight is the same  
survival isn't strength, it's getting up  
persistence is the true art of the damned  
the weak break, the strong bend with life  
it's not about winning, it's about lasting  
the world hits hard, you hit back softer  
knowing when to yield keeps you whole  
the toughest survive because they adapt  
we're all battered, but not all are beaten  
flex with the storm and keep breathing

## Heroes

We put them on pedestals too high for  
our hands to reach, our eyes to see. We  
clutch the glossy images of Labron, arms  
outstretched, dunking dreams, his sweat falls  
like rain washing away our doubt. But is  
it enough to teach us to rise, beyond  
the roar of crowds, the glitter of fame?

And then Snoop, smooth like silk, sliding  
through beats, his voice a lullaby, soothing  
the ache in our bones. But where's the  
lesson in smoke-filled rooms? Where is  
the strength to stand when life is rough,  
not rhyming, just raw? We need heroes

that pull us up from inside, heroes  
who show us how to stitch our hearts  
back together when they break, to keep  
walking when the road is long. We need  
more than courts and stages, more than  
rhymes. We need hope that holds us.

Give us heroes who teach us to heal,  
to love ourselves when the world won't  
love us back. Give us fellowship, give us  
perseverance. Give us hands that lift,  
words that build, and dreams that stay  
alive long after the lights go out.

## The Tarot Spread

The cards flip like lids of coffins,  
Each one biting at my fingertips.  
The Tower shakes, cracks, crumbles open,  
A skull's grin behind every window.  
Fate splays herself on the table,  
Her long, cold fingers tapping time.  
The Hanged Man dangles, frozen breath,  
My heart, a pendulum of glass shards.  
The Lovers entwine in their stillness,  
But their lips are sewn with iron wire.  
The Moon rises, her face pale, veiled,  
Eyes black as ink, mouth full of secrets.  
The Devil laughs in his red corner,  
Chaining my wrists with phantom hands.

## Crack

There's a crack in everything, that's true enough,  
and yes, that's how the light gets in, you see?  
but also how the damp of years escapes,  
leaks from the stones and stains the hands of time.

What emerges isn't soul, no shining breath,  
but the slow ooze of forgotten lives, old dust,  
the residue of things we once believed?  
small fears, brittle hope, crumbling beneath weight.

Light shines through, yes, illuminating paths,  
but cracks are cracks, not windows after all.  
We are left to patch the crumbling edges,  
hold what seeps out from overtaking the glow.

## Remontant Hydrangeas

In spring's first breath, last year's bones  
Bloom forth with life, a memory rooted deep  
Old wood, worn yet strong, births colors anew  
Echoes of time, held fast in the flower's heart

But when summer's hand turns the world to flame  
Fresh stems rise, tender and unscarred, reaching  
New wood carries tomorrow in its veins  
A second flush, not bound by yesterday

Two lives converge within one tender bloom  
Old and new embrace, the seasons dance

## The Lampshade Chase

Karl, consumed by golden ale's sweet lure,  
Forgot his name, his clothes, and all that's pure.  
Across the yard, his chase was wild and free,  
The cat, bemused, a phantom in his spree.

The neighbors watched as crystals softly swayed,  
A lampshade crown upon his head displayed.  
The silk, a shroud of reckless, drunken glee,  
While in his mind, he'd broken from the sea.

Of norms and roles, society's cruel chain,  
He ran, a king of folly's fleeting reign.  
But morning comes, the crown must fall away,  
And Karl's left with memories to fray.

The cat long gone, the yard now still and bare,  
But Karl's shade will linger in the air.



## Clarity Wiped Away

Saponaceous substance was smeared on my  
windshield, a veil obscuring the clear view.  
The world outside blurred, distorted by the  
thin layer, a film that twisted truth and lies.  
Hands reached out to cleanse, but only spread  
the slick residue, a futile attempt at clarity.  
Eyes strained, seeking the familiar, the known,  
yet only found reflections of what was lost.  
Each swipe an erasure, a rewriting of what  
once was seen, now hidden beneath the gloss.  
The road ahead unclear, each step a guess,  
truth and vision entwined in slick deceit.

## The Law of Reflection

What I would not wish upon me,  
I shall not inflict upon thee,  
For pain I despise,  
And tears in your eyes,  
Are echoes that sting within me.

## The Solitary Oak

In Louisiana, I met a tree,  
A live-oak standing tall and free.  
Its mossy drape, a noble cloak,  
Yet, oh, it seemed a lonely oak.

With joyous leaves of deep dark green,  
Its solitude was sharp, serene.  
I wondered how it stood so proud,  
Without a friend, without a crowd.

I broke a twig with leaves so fair,  
And twined some moss with tender care.  
I brought it home, a keepsake small,  
To place upon my humble wall.

It doesn't need to remind me much,  
Of friends I love, of friends I touch.  
Yet still, it stays, a token bright,  
Of manly love, of oak's firm might.

For though that oak stands all alone,  
It never feels the chill of stone.  
But I, who thrive with others near,  
Could never bear to be so clear.

So there it glistens in the sun,  
A solitary, steadfast one.  
Yet I know well, I'm not that tree,  
I need a friend to stand by me.

## Halfway Between the Sheets and the Streets

Woke up sweating under the weight of something  
that was half real, half a joke my brain played  
on itself. A woman whispered in my ear, but  
her lips were just echoes of some lost desire.  
The city was burning, but I felt no heat, just  
a dull ache where dreams go to die slow.  
My hands, heavy with the residue of a life  
that didn't quite happen, or maybe it did,  
but the whiskey blurred the edges like a knife  
that's seen too much use, too much blood.  
The sun crawled in through the blinds, too  
weak to chase away the ghosts from the night.  
I wondered if she was real, or just another  
lie I told myself to make the mornings bearable.  
Somewhere in the haze, I lost the line between  
what was mine and what was just borrowed.  
Another day, another shot of whatever gets  
me through the day without too many questions.  
I don't need answers, just a break from the  
truth that waits like a dog at my door, hungry  
for what's left of me, if there's anything left at all.

## The Pedagogues of Iron Will

The strictest of teachers walk with purpose,  
In halls where echoes of learning resound,  
Their eyes are sharp as Athena's gaze,  
Their words cut through ignorance like a spear,  
Guiding the minds of the young with fire,  
Like Hephaestus forging the blade of truth.

Students brand them with names of disdain,  
Yet beneath their stern faces lies a heart,  
A heart tempered in the forge of duty,  
To shape, to mold, to craft the unformed clay,  
For in the struggle, wisdom takes its root,  
Like a tree grown from the harshest soil.

The gods smile upon their noble charge,  
For they carry the weight of the future,  
In every rebuke, in every stern glance,  
They plant the seeds of knowledge deep,  
That one day the fruit of their labor,  
Might nourish a world hungry for truth.

Let none forget the path they tread,  
The burden of a pedagogue's crown,  
Woven with threads of discipline and care,  
For in their hands, the fate of many rests,  
As the tides of time wash over all,  
They stand, unyielding, against the storm.

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## Event Horizon

Life is not a line? But a circle?  
Twisting like the sun? Upon its axis?  
Where dawn returns? Again? And again?  
Bound by no clock? Nor by mind's tether?  
Perspective bends? A ribbon? Unraveled?  
Yet whole? In its twist? And turn?  
Horizons fold? Inward? Upon themselves?  
Infinite? And brief? Simultaneously?  
Our step forward? A backward glance?  
Returning to where? We never? departed?  
A spiral that is? And was? And will be?  
Ever turning? Beyond time? And sense?

## The Ninth Chorus

Nine men converge upon the sunlit field,  
A dance of leather, wood, and fleeting time,  
Chasing the sphere that arcs through dusty air,  
Where history is etched in every throw.

The crowd breathes in anticipation's pause,  
A silence thick with the weight of desire,  
As bat meets ball, the crack echoes through space,  
And dreams take flight beyond the fence's edge.

But all things must return to earth's embrace,  
The circling bases lead them back again,  
In ordered steps, as innings come and go,  
Till night descends, the lights flicker and fade.

The players exit, shadows growing long,  
The final score a cipher of their will,  
Yet more than numbers lingers in the mind?  
The game, a fleeting glimpse of what could be.

In this tableau of effort and of grace,  
The spirit of the contest never dies,  
Each inning, a passage of sacred time,  
A ritual of hope beneath the sky's dome.



## A New Dawn

A Light descends - softly  
Into the hollow soul - aching  
What once was dim - forgotten  
Now opens wide - to Breath

A Hand unseen - extends  
Where faltering steps - struggled  
New strength - unfurls - within  
What was - now - nevermore

The path - glows bright - beneath  
Not of dust - or toil - alone  
But of unseen grace - unfolding  
A secret flame - burns clear

No end to dread - is found  
But purpose - whispers low  
A journey - in its waking  
And the soul - at rest - knows

## The Silent Burden

A secret whispered in the quiet dark?  
Ceases to be a secret, and the air?  
Holds its breath in trembling fear?  
A secret, guarded close within?

Better to carry the weight alone?  
Than let the trembling earth be stirred?  
By the sound of your voice breaking?  
What once was held in shadowed clasp?

Continual dread is better than release?  
Than the knowing eyes of another?  
Who bears the secret beside you now?  
And shatters the solitude of your heart?

The silent burden is now a shared pain?  
And in its unveiling, the world shifts?  
For what was yours alone is no more?  
And the trust of silence is broken?

## A New Bloom in Winter

The years unfurl like pages in the wind,  
Soft lines etched deeper by the sun's hand,  
Yet now the glass screen offers a new light,  
Where fingers trace not wrinkles but desire.

Silver threads of time cross in digital webs,  
No longer bound by clocks or season's turn,  
They search for what was lost or never found,  
In the shadowed halls of memory's rooms.

The pulse quickens like it did in younger days,  
But the beat is wiser, more tender in its quest,  
Seeking not just flesh but kindred souls,  
In this late spring of heart's renewal.

Here, age is but a word whispered by clocks,  
And love, a poem written on the skin of years,  
Each line a promise that the world still turns,  
In the soft embrace of twilight's gentle dawn.

## The Ringers' Ritual

Back in the yard where shadows gently stretch,  
Four in shirtsleeves gather for their craft.  
Iron in hand, earth beneath their feet,  
Each breath steady, each gaze sharp and true.  
One, with a steady hand, eyes the peg,  
Hoists the iron high, lets it glide and fall?  
A clang, the echo of old iron's song,  
Rings out as though the earth itself had sung.  
First toss astray, it rattles, wanders wide,  
But he, undeterred, lifts his face again,  
With focus firm, he swings and lets it fly,  
Iron finds its home, wraps the peg like kin.  
A shout of triumph, a murmur of defeat,  
The yard alive with the pulse of the game.

## The Nuthouse Olympics

Squirrels leap high across the trees  
Raccoons juggle with acorns in the breeze  
Chipmunks race on tiny, winding tracks  
Owls judge the twirling bat attacks

The frogs are hopping, ready to compete  
Beavers build bridges with great speed  
Snakes slide gracefully through hoops  
Bats swoop low in synchronized groups

Skunks play tag in daring streaks  
The crowd goes wild as the possums squeak  
The grand finale? a madcap dash  
The winner, crowned in a flash

Cheers ring out through the woodland glades  
As the Nuthouse Olympics shine and fade

## The Quiet Bridge

The stars splinter like broken glass, waiting,  
A word rises like smoke, like prayer, held  
Between the teeth of hope and the tongue  
Of doubt. We search for light, forgetting  
It lives under the skin, a pulse away,  
An ember caught in the ribs of our heart.  
We walk on stones that bruise the tender  
Soles of our faith, blame the earth for pain,  
Forgetting the soil is where roots take hold.  
A harsh word swells like thunder in the mind,  
Builds walls from fear, from shame, from silence.  
Yet, in the small, quiet spaces, He waits?  
Not in the grand, not in the sky-split flame,  
But in the touch of hands, the soft surrender  
Of anger. In the bending of the will, God  
Comes closer, a whisper threading through  
The noise, asking for nothing but our trust.  
A breath taken in love, a bridge unwound  
Between souls? this is where He finds us.

## The Joy of Losing Me

I don't need to be special today  
I am free from the burden of me  
The great death is no funeral  
But a dance in the heart of the sky  
Where I drop the weight of wanting  
And step into the light of now  
Love isn't a thing to be captured  
But a river that flows through all  
Achievement is not a mountain  
But the air I breathe with ease  
Perfection is not a mirror  
But the joy of being cracked  
In losing myself I am finding  
The world I was too blind to see  
I inherit the earth and its wonders  
The trees, the stars, the laughter  
And now with nothing to clutch at  
I hold everything in my hands.

## The Role of Ethics

In every choice we make each day,  
We shape the world in some small way,  
With every action, word, and deed,  
Ethics guide the path we lead.

They whisper softly in our ear,  
Remind us to be kind, sincere,  
To think of others, not just self,  
To place good will above all else.

In moments when the road is gray,  
Ethics light a brighter way,  
They help us see what's right and true,  
And show us what we ought to do.

For ethics are a steady guide,  
A compass we can trust inside,  
They lead us toward a better land,  
Where justice walks with hand in hand.

In every heart they softly dwell,  
A silent force, a gentle spell,  
That shapes the world in some small way,  
With every choice we make each day.



## The Joy of Simply Being

In the world of trains and tracks,  
where time drifts on like a cloud,  
a child forgets the ticking clock,  
immersed in what feels right now.

He doesn't see the world watching,  
nor feel the weight of their gaze,  
for the joy of the rolling train,  
is all that fills his young mind.

With every kick of the round ball,  
he's not chasing praise or pride,  
he's simply caught in the rhythm,  
of being free and alive.

No need for nods of approval,  
no glances to gauge their thoughts,  
for he has yet to discover,  
the burden of self-aware sight.

The simple act of repeating,  
brings comfort in its own way,  
a pure and endless delight,  
in the moment, come what may.

So he pushes the train around,  
and watches the video play,  
finding a world within each turn,  
where joy is simple and pure.

He's not yet learned to look at,  
the face that stares in mirrors,

and so he lives unburdened,  
in the joy of simply being.

## Firth of the Clyde

At the mouth of the Clyde river  
Outside Glasgow, the fog gathers  
Over deepest waters, dark mirrors  
Hold secrets of the earth's marrow.

A ship's hull slices ancient whispers,  
Waves rise and fall like old hands  
Trying to recall a forgotten dance,  
The sea's voice hoarse with history.

The firth sleeps in heavy stillness,  
A seabird cries out like a warning,  
But the wind, indifferent, presses on,  
Carrying salt and sorrow alike.

In the depths, shadows twist, waiting,  
Fish swim like ghosts of drowned men,  
Their cold eyes searching the gloom  
For traces of light that never come.

The land watches with stone patience,  
Its cliffs crumbling like tired elders,  
As the firth swallows another day,  
Leaving nothing but silence behind.

## The Old Witch Babysits

Under the green umbrella of the forest,  
she sits, bones creaking like old branches,  
with five baby dragons curled at her feet,  
scales glinting like forgotten coins,  
their breath warm as summer wind.

She reads tales from cracked leather books,  
of ancestors who once ruled this earth,  
who brewed storms in cauldrons of shadow,  
and spoke with the tongue of fire itself,  
while the babies doze, tails twitching,

dreaming of flight, of smoke and flame,  
of the day they too will hunt the skies,  
like their mother, who now glides silent  
over rooftops, her shadow a blade  
cutting through the moon's pale light.

The witch smiles, toothless and wise,  
her voice a lullaby of ancient times,  
knowing that soon enough they will rise,  
spread their wings and taste the wind,  
but for now, they are still, and safe.

She strokes the smallest one's soft scales,  
as the forest hums its secret song,  
and somewhere far off, a scream echoes,  
faint as a memory, carried by the breeze,  
while the fire sleeps beneath her hand.

## A Taste of Home

Sara in the kitchen, hands moving gently,  
creating dishes from memories, rooted deep,  
in the soil of her past, German and warm,  
celebrating a holiday, with flavors true.

The steam rises, carrying stories untold,  
of love and loss, of joy and quiet tears,  
as each bite connects, the heart to home,  
binding together, the now and then.

Her dishes speak, in a language so pure,  
of traditions passed, from hand to hand,  
bringing the past, to the present's light,  
with every taste, she whispers home.

## The Lizard in the Coffee Pot

The day began with a gesture unseen,  
a rustle in the silence before dawn.  
The light not yet fully spread across,  
I opened the lid, steam rising, thick,  
and there? life where I least expected?  
a lizard, small, trembling in the heat.  
What does it mean to find a heart there,  
to discover breath within the dark grind,  
between the bitter grounds of routine?  
Is it the world turning inside out,  
or a moment pausing before the plunge,  
before the pour, before the irrevocable?  
The creature blinks, a second too long?  
time slows, the kitchen sinks in shadow,  
and I am standing at the edge of a choice.  
To remove the intruder gently, swiftly,  
to let it live beyond the rim, the spout,  
or to steep it in the brew of my morning,  
to drink down its startled life, its tiny  
misstep that led it here, into my hands,  
into the warmth it sought without knowing,  
I watch it scramble, delicate, fragile?  
and wonder who it is that decides,  
who it is that brings us together here,  
in this brief exchange of heat and fate,  
as the first rays of sun split the air,  
as the world outside begins to stir,  
and the lizard leaps, gone, into the light.

## The Unseen Struggle

Fingers tremble at the pen's weight,  
Heavy as the unyielding silence,  
Words locked in a cell of thought,  
Their voices suffocated, muted.  
The paper waits like an empty room,  
Staring at a blank, indifferent sky,  
Where no birds sing, no leaves fall.

Time crawls, a spider on the wall,  
Spinning webs of doubt and despair,  
Each thread a question unanswered,  
Each pause a chasm of uncertainty.  
Seven lines scratched into existence,  
One by one they wither, erased,  
A silent scream buried in the ink.

The ceiling mocks with its emptiness,  
A mirror to the void inside,  
Where dreams flicker and fade away,  
And the hours drag their heavy feet.  
This is the war unseen, unheard,  
The poet's pen a double-edged sword,  
Cutting through the flesh of the soul.

No one watches, no one sees,  
The quiet battle of creation,  
The mind a battlefield of ghosts,  
Haunted by the fear of failure.  
Who could bear to witness this?  
The poet, alone in the trenches,  
Fighting a war that leaves no scars.

## The Role of Adversity

Stumbling through the crowded streets, feet are aching,  
you wonder why the sky is so heavy today, why it  
presses down, why the air feels like a conversation  
you don't want to have, but can't walk away from,

like the time you spilled coffee on your favorite shirt,  
and had to laugh because what else could you do?  
The city moves, relentless, the noise is its own music,  
a heartbeat you can't help but dance to, even when

the rhythm is off, even when the pavement cracks  
beneath your shoes, still you move, still you laugh,  
because isn't that what we're supposed to do, keep  
going, even when the rain feels like an accusation?

Adversity, you say, is just a reminder that we're alive,  
that each bruise, each sharp word, is a proof of breath,  
a mark of the day, a part of the rhythm, and if you can  
dance through it, even if it's awkward, you're winning.



## The Balance of Narcissus

In glowing screens, we seek our daily dose,  
A flash, a smile, a mask the world approves.  
We craft our lives with angles, perfect pose,  
Yet something deep within this show disapproves.  
The lens, a lover that demands our time,  
We swipe, we scroll, our hours slip away.  
Each like, each heart, a fleeting, hollow rhyme,  
The echoes fade, but we remain the prey.  
But in the shadows, balance whispers soft,  
A call to live beyond the mirrored sheen.  
To find ourselves where filters can't be tossed,  
In moments real, not on a glowing screen.  
Let go the urge to capture every breath,  
For life is best without the lens of death.

## The First Thought

The morning begins, half-lit,  
drenched in the residue of dreams,  
we stumble into the day's kitchen,  
coffee brewing, toast waiting to pop,  
each thought perched, teetering on  
the rim of possibility, half-full or  
half-empty, the mind's cup balancing  
between sunshine and the abyss.

It's a choice, really, this first sip,  
how we digest the hours ahead,  
whether the neighbor's hello is  
a chorus or a question, the sky's  
blue a promise or a taunt, the  
pavement beneath our feet an  
invitation or a trap door waiting  
to swing open with each step.

Beware, if that first thought lingers  
too long in the shadows, if the  
morning light feels like interrogation,  
and every honk, every face on  
the street is a conspiracy, the city  
an unfurling map of treachery,  
it's easy to get lost in the tangle  
of worries, the abyss calling softly.

But remember, the choice is yours,  
to tilt the glass toward the light,  
to find the warmth in a stranger's  
smile, to hear music in the traffic,  
to see the city as a canvas, each

moment a brushstroke, every  
step a dance, the cup half-full,  
brimming with the promise of day.

## Questions I Often Ask Myself

Why does the morning sun scatter  
light across the kitchen table like  
a golden painter splashing vibrant  
colors on an old and faded canvas?

What is the secret life of shadows  
that slip beneath the bedroom door,  
whispering mysteries of the night  
to the moon hanging low and silent?

How does the coffee cup hold the  
warmth of conversation, cradling  
stories that swirl like steam rising  
from the surface of forgotten dreams?

When will the garden finally reveal  
its quiet truths hidden in petals,  
the delicate language of blooms that  
unfold like ancient, whispered secrets?

Why do the leaves flutter their green  
wings, a dance choreographed by  
an unseen hand, guiding them toward  
the inevitable embrace of autumn?

What lies beneath the surface of  
the river's gentle murmur, a song  
composed of centuries, carrying  
echoes of voices long forgotten?

How does the night sky manage to  
contain so many stars, a vast and

silent map of wonder that stretches  
beyond the reach of our small lives?

When will I find the answers to  
these questions that linger, like  
ghosts in the corners of my mind,  
whispering their eternal enigmas?

## The Splendor of Two Natures

The Jesus divine and human moves  
through streets and skies, touching  
hearts with grace and love, saving  
souls from the abyss. If only divine,  
he's untouchable, distant. Only human,  
he can't lift us from our shadows. His  
splendor is in the blend, two natures,  
separate, never mingled, never confused,  
yet harmoniously joined. He walks down  
from the mountain, into the mundane,  
the city's hum and beat, the ordinary  
rhythms of life. This Christ, this Lord,  
wants to reign in every moment, every  
detail. Forgetting this, he fades, a  
memory, a past figure, a distant light.

## **Is There Anything More Beautiful Than the Bow of a Ship touching a New World**

the salt air lifts the  
horizon rises like breath  
over the waves, a silver  
promise in the morning light

here is the curve of  
discovery, the whisper of  
adventure in the spray, the  
unknown land unfolding, its

story waiting, like a new  
page, untouched by time or  
hands, the gulls call out  
a welcome to the brave

souls on deck, eyes wide  
with dreams and longing,  
their hearts echo the rhythm  
of the sea's song, timeless

and bright, under a sky  
so vast, so blue, it's as  
if the world has just been  
born, again, for them, for us

each moment is new, each  
swell a promise, the journey  
a gift to be opened slowly,  
revealing the world anew

## The Champion of Coney Island

Seagulls squawked louder than  
a jet engine, as mustard dripped  
from the fingers of a giant.  
He wore a crown of relish,  
pickles and dreams dancing.

In the corner, a man cried  
tears of ketchup, his dreams  
crumbled like stale buns.  
He once believed in miracles,  
now he just believed in digestion.

The crowd roared, a symphony  
of belches and applause, as  
the hot dog king stood tall.  
His stomach a bottomless pit,  
his heart a swollen balloon.

Victory tastes like brine,  
he muttered to his shoes,  
a parade of frankfurters  
marching through his veins,  
each one a triumph, each one

a mystery to his mother,  
who watched from the bleachers,  
knitting a scarf of disbelief.  
She whispered his name softly,  
as if casting a spell of love.

Meanwhile, the seagulls  
continued their opera,



and the hot dog king  
walked into the sunset,  
burping the tune of champions.

## Breaking Bad Habits

I want to break the habit of rushing,  
the way I hurry through my mornings,  
as if each second were on fire,  
as if time were a race to win.

I want to stop checking my phone,  
like a nervous tic or a prayer,  
as if the world might disappear,  
if I don't tap the glass screen.

I want to quit worrying over things,  
that might never happen anyway,  
the way I fret about the weather,  
as if clouds could read my mind.

I want to cease overthinking,  
every word spoken in a day,  
as if conversations were puzzles,  
meant to be solved in my head.

I want to let go of regrets,  
that sit heavy like a stone,  
as if the past were a backpack,  
I am destined to carry forever.

I want to silence self-doubt,  
that whispers lies in my ear,  
as if I were a broken record,  
playing a song I never chose.

I want to break these habits,  
like freeing birds from cages,

watch them soar into the sky,  
leaving me lighter, unbound.

## James Baldwin's Voice

Grit in the blood and smoke in the air,  
Truths from his lips cut through the despair,  
Eyes that have seen what others would fear,  
Words like a storm, relentless and clear.

In Harlem's heart, he forged his own way,  
Lit by the fight, by night and by day,  
Baring his soul, his rage, and his pain,  
Through every word, he danced in the rain.

He spoke of love in times full of hate,  
Challenged the world, reshaping its fate,  
A beacon bright in the darkest night,  
His voice a sword, his mind a fierce light.

Baldwin, the fire that will never die,  
Under his rain, we learn how to fly.

## Forgiveness On Layaway

A whisper through the stained-glass lies,  
Moths dance in the confessional lamp's glow.  
Promised heavens hinge on earthbound sighs,  
In the shadow of the cross, sins roost low.

The ledger of the soul, red ink-stained,  
Where each secret trespass etches a fee.  
One nail, one prayer, a grace regained,  
In repent's echo, a lock turns free.

Footfalls soft in the silent nave's chill,  
Coins drop, wishes cast, candles faintly flare.  
Ghosts of guilt haunt the pews at will,  
Yet mercy waits in the confessor's chair.

On layaway, absolution's weight lies,  
Forgiveness bought by the faith in our eyes.

## Dance of Ambiguity

Androgynous creatures speak with such grace,  
Ambiguity flows in their stark face,  
Like a child lost, escaping life's race,  
Their self-defense traps the curious case.

Politics blend with theories so grand,  
Bodies confused, yet instincts still stand,  
Bread trails leading to humanity's hand,  
We awake, trance broken, where we land.

Coerced into steps of a dance unknown,  
Natural rhythms by others disowned,  
Realizing late how we've been outshone,  
In a world where true selves are postponed.

Yet in this dance, we find our own way,  
Breaking free, in the light of new day.

## Returning the Key

I am sending back the key to bluebeard's door,  
A portal to a world where shadows sway,  
Because his love was cold, I breathe no more,  
In his darkroom's eye, my soul did fray.

My X-rayed heart, exposed and dissected,  
A love dissected, spirit torn apart,  
I saw the truths that left me unaffected,  
In bluebeard's study, death played its part.

Returning the key, I break the chain,  
That bound me to his cold, unfeeling grasp,  
No more shall I endure his cruel reign,  
In freedom's light, new dreams I clasp.

This key returns, and with it, chains unbind,  
In light of day, a stronger self I find.

## The Biggest Lie

The check is in the mail, they always say,  
A promise that keeps hunger at the door.  
In words so sweet, yet hold the wolves at bay,  
A life postponed, while pockets remain poor.

They dangle hope, a carrot just in reach,  
To silence cries that echo from the past.  
The lie's a lesson, bitter truths they teach,  
That trust in empty words can never last.

This lie, a mask, to hide the void within,  
A check that buys the time we cannot spend.  
In dreams deferred, where hope is paper-thin,  
We learn to mend the hearts they cannot mend.

In endless wait, the truth's a glaring pale,  
The biggest lie, the check is in the mail.



## Cauliflower Ears

Pugilist of the grim streets, bruised and scarred,  
Ears battered by fists, tales of pain and pride,  
A fighter's life, each punch taken, earned hard,  
Sweat, blood, tears blend in the ring where dreams died.

Gloves up, chin tucked, he stands firm in the ring,  
Cauliflower ears, worn like medals of war,  
Each bout, a dance where the punches still sting,  
A struggle for honor, no room to ignore.

Beneath bright lights, his battle cries echo,  
A symphony of pain, a fighter's refrain,  
Defeated or triumphant, bruises show,  
His story etched in flesh, no need to explain.

In every blow, in every round, we see,  
A portrait of the struggle to stay free.

## The Sustenance

In evening's light, they gathered on the hill,  
Where shadows stretched, and whispers met the dusk.  
The crowd, a sea of faces, silent, still,  
In weariness, their hunger was their trust.

With barley loaves and dried fish in His hands,  
He raised His eyes, the heavens' grace bestowed.  
The weary sought, and in their humble bands,  
A miracle of sustenance was sowed.

Upon the grass, reclined with hope anew,  
The multitude, in need, was gently fed.  
Each morsel blessed, their spirits softly grew,  
In every piece, a silent prayer was said.

As night approached, the crowd began to part,  
With hearts fulfilled and faith within their heart.

## Uteruses Stretch

A pear-shaped vessel small, yet vast in might,  
Within its bounds a tender life shall bloom,  
Expanding through the trimesters of light,  
Till full-term shapes it like a ripe, great plume.

From three to two, and one and half in span,  
It grows beyond the pelvis in its course,  
Through weeks of forty, size of melon grand,  
Two pounds it weighs, a mighty, wondrous force.

Yet swift as springtime turns to summer's glow,  
The womb contracts, resumes its form with grace,  
In six short weeks, by nature's mystic flow,  
Back to its pearly state, its rightful place.

O marvel of creation, life's pure start,  
The womb, a boundless wonder of the heart.

## Sensuality

In the gentle embrace of a magnolia's bloom,  
I learn to appreciate my sensuality's tune.  
Caressing petals, inhaling nature's scent,  
I awaken the depths of my own content.

I trace the stem of a rose, feeling its thorns,  
A reminder that sensuality has multiple forms.  
For in life's delicate beauty, there's strength so real,  
A lesson that sensuality can also heal.

My finger rests upon a prickly cactus's skin,  
Discovering sensations, a dance with pleasure and chagrin.  
I sit upon grass, grounding my soul in its embrace,  
Feeling the Earth beneath, finding my rightful place.

With fingers touching tree bark, rough and strong,  
A connection is formed, where I truly belong.  
A cradled rock nestled within my hands,  
I explore its temperature, its texture's demands.

Then against my cheek, this rock I place,  
Feeling its essence, a tender embrace.  
From cotton sheets to woolen blankets so soft,  
Each touch awakens sensuality, aloft.

Water trickles upon my skin, a sensual affair,  
As warm night air whispers, caresses my care.  
With a gentle touch to a baby's tiny feet,  
Sensuality's innocence, pure and sweet.

Appreciating the sensuality that resides within,  
I open myself to life's vibrant energy, akin.  
Passion sparks and creativity's fire ignites,

As I explore the world's textures, day and night.

So let us embrace our sensuality, without shame,

For it is through connection, we find our flame.

In this journey of touch, we learn to imbue,

The beauty that sensuality can bring me and you. ("Sensuality") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## The Edge

In shallowness of doubt, near endless night,  
A weary soul, consumed by fright,  
Seeking solace, a refuge to find,  
To tame the fears that plague his mind.  
A mystic figure, calm and serene,  
Whispered a truth, yet unseen,  
"Come to the edge," his voice did implore,  
But fear's grasp held them evermore.  
The timid souls, trembling with dread,  
Shivered as caution filled their heads,  
"We are afraid," they uttered, unsure,  
Lacking the faith to endure.  
"Come to the edge," he spoke again,  
A glimmer of hope, a call to transcend,  
With hesitant steps, they inched closer,  
Yearning for strength, their souls to uncover.  
In the realm of doubts, they took a stand,  
Trusting the sage's guiding hand,  
He lent his strength, his wisdom, his might,  
And fanned their spirits set to ignite.  
With gentle force, he pushed them ahead,  
Breaking the chains fear had once spread,  
And lo, they soared, their fear outpaced,  
Proving that courage cannot be erased.  
Higher they rose, where dreams reside,  
Embracing the world with newfound pride,  
For at the edge, they took a leap,  
Discovered the secrets their souls did keep.  
Through boundless skies, they danced and twirled,  
Transformed by the magic of this world,  
Once captive souls, now wild and free,  
Guided by purpose and destiny.  
So let us remember, when darkness persists,

To lend our dreams a tender kiss,  
For at the edge, fear has no sway,  
Where souls set free shall find their way.  
Come to the edge, my friend, with might,  
Shed your doubts, take your flight,  
Embrace the unknown, the journey untold,  
For at the edge, your wings unfold. ("The Edge") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Cosmic Bellboy

In the vast canvas of life's intricate tale,  
Where freedom dances through every detail,  
I once sought God as a cosmic bellboy's aid,  
Unaware of His love's profound serenade.  
With fervent prayers that reached the heavens high,  
I yearned for rescue when troubles drew nigh.  
But God, in His wisdom, gently held my hand,  
Guiding me towards a destiny unplanned.  
No puppeteer, He grants autonomy's grace,  
Honoring our choices, each step we embrace.  
Though the world may falter, and wrong may prevail,  
God's love endures, steadfast and never frail.  
In moments of confusion, anger, and despair,  
I wondered why God seemed not to be aware.  
But now I comprehend His divine decree,  
Allowing us to taste life's bitter and sweet.  
For in the freedom to stumble and to fall,  
We learn, we grow, and from mistakes, stand tall.  
Through failures and triumphs, our spirit finds voice,  
As we navigate life's twists, our souls rejoice.  
Oh, Lord, I am grateful for the gift of free will,  
To wander through valleys, explore every hill.  
For in this freedom, I discover my worth,  
And through Your miracle, find my own rebirth.  
No longer searching for a cosmic co-dependent,  
I bask in Your love, boundless and transcendent.  
For in Your detachment, I find true freedom's ray,  
A journey of self-discovery and love's pure display. ("Cosmic Bellboy") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## Rooms

In the rooms of life, secrets dwell,  
Stories whispered, never to tell.  
A house, a heart, both hold treasure,  
Awaiting souls seeking life's pleasure.  
Inside our homes, a consciousness we weave,  
A symphony of memories, laugh and grieve.  
Each room a chapter, a sacred space,  
Where life unfolds, at its own pace.  
The entrance hall, a welcoming embrace,  
Where echoes of love, laughter, find their place.  
Through sturdy doors, we venture forth,  
To discover rooms of boundless worth.  
The kitchen whispers tales of nourishment,  
Where flavors mingle, in warm contentment.  
From hearty feasts to simple fare,  
The table holds stories, memories to share.  
The living room, a sanctuary of rest,  
Where souls converge, connection blessed.  
In cozy corners, conversations flow,  
Soothing hearts with friendship's glow.  
The bedroom, a haven, a private retreat,  
Where dreams take flight, in slumber's sweet.  
Within these walls, we hide and mend,  
Restoration found, to hearts we tend.  
And then we find the attic's space,  
Filled with trinkets, memories encased.  
Old photographs, forgotten tales,  
Unearthed treasures, history unveils.  
As homes hold stories, so do we,  
Rooms within our souls, a trinity.  
In our moments of quiet introspection,  
We find the truths, our own reflection.  
The room of courage, where fears collide,

Inviting growth, on life's bold ride.  
The room of love, where hearts entwine,  
Creating bonds, eternal and divine.  
And in the room of dreams, we soar,  
Imagination's realm, forevermore.  
Ideas bloom, visions take flight,  
In this sacred space, shining bright.  
So let us listen, to what rooms say,  
The lessons offered in their unique display.  
For in these chambers, we find our key,  
To living lives abundant and free. ("Rooms") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Timeless Square

In the heart of the city, on a square so fair,  
Stands a hero in bronze, a sight so rare.  
With proud stature and eyes filled with grace,  
A beacon of strength for the bustling place.

Once a hero at sea, now on the land,  
Admired by the masses who eagerly stand.  
A symbol of courage and stories untold,  
This hero's legacy will forever unfold.

But fame and glory, though they may beguile,  
Can leave behind an emotion, empty and vile.  
For what is immortality, if just a name,  
If being but a shade in a world bustling, yet tame?

But amidst the hustle and chaos that ensue,  
When the sun shines bright, and the sky is blue,  
A different side of fame comes alive,  
When children gather and laughter thrives.

In the heart of the square, joy takes its stand,  
As the hero's presence fills the young ones' land.  
They gather around, their spirits so pure,  
Laughing and playing, their innocence secure.

With curious eyes and hearts full of grace,  
They dance in delight, with smiles on their face.  
Unaware of the legend that stands above,  
They find joy in the presence of the hero, their love.

Their laughter echoes through the city streets,  
A sweet symphony that every heart beats.  
For this hero, now frozen, was once just a man,

With dreams and hopes, marching to life's band.

And in the laughter and play of the children's song,  
The hero finds solace, where he truly belongs.  
For in their innocence, his spirit does revive,  
Bringing warmth and love, keeping his memory alive.

So, let the sun shine on this timeless square,  
Where joy and laughter fill the summer air.  
For the hero's statue may depict a cold entity,  
But his soul finds warmth in children's serenity.

In the heart of the city, the hero stands tall,  
A testament to bravery, defying life's call.  
And as children play at his immortal feet,  
He finds the true meaning of his legacy complete. ("Timeless Square") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Canoe

In the abyss of sorrow, my heart does weep,  
For my faithful companion, now laid to sleep.  
No goodbyes to be spoken, no lies ever told,  
Our bond unbreakable, a love that won't fold.  
Oh, how I long for his unwavering gaze,  
His eyes so pure, a sentiment that stays.  
A dog he may be, but wisdom did shine,  
In his presence, wasting time was but a sign.  
Along the shore, we'd wander, hand in paw,  
In Maine's winter, where seabirds draw,  
The sky with their flight, as my dog would dance,  
Full of the sea's boundless electrifying trance.  
Oh, how I envied his carefree delight,  
As he sniffed and explored, his tail held upright.  
In the face of the ocean's powerful spray,  
My furry friend reveled in life's grand display.  
Joyful, joyful, joyful, he would be,  
A testament to how dogs are truly free.  
Autonomous spirits, shamelessly bold,  
Finding happiness, as only they behold.  
Now my dear companion, no longer here,  
Laid to rest, but in memory held dear.  
With love and gratitude, his grave I've made,  
A final farewell, where his soul shall not fade.  
No goodbyes are needed, for love remains true,  
In this bond unbroken, forever we grew.  
My loyal dog, our journey may have ceased,  
But our love and loyalty, shall never be released. ("Canoe") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Elusive Mistress

In the bed of restless dreams, where slumber fades,  
A poem of sleep's deprivation cascades.  
With thoughts entwined and memory astray,  
I wander through a haze, where focus may sway.

In this foggy world, judgement finds no home,  
And forgetfulness like a tempest does roam.  
Clouded minds, comprehension's veil weaves,  
As understanding slips through elusive leaves.

A dance with darkness, a tango of despair,  
Sleep's absence breeds moods that burden and tear.  
Negative emotions hold tight to a heart,  
Anger, frustration, and sadness taking part.

Through sleepless nights, hallucinations may creep,  
Visions unseen, illusions that seep.  
Mania awakened, bipolar's bitter song,  
As the balance of sanity struggles to prolong.

Impulse and judgment collide in street and lane,  
Crime's temptation whispers, driving one insane.  
Anxiety and depression intertwine,  
Paranoia lurks, a shadow in the mind.

The restless slumber brings thoughts so grim,  
Suicidal whispers, through the night, they swim.  
Micro-sleep's peril, a danger unforeseen,  
Seconds lost to dreams that rupture routine.

Chronic diseases, the toll sleeplessness takes,  
Heart's foe and pressure's rise, health at stake.  
With strokes and diabetes lying in wait,

Kidney woes and obesity seal one's fate.

Hormone production, a symphony of need,  
Sleep's deprivation diminishes the seed.  
Growth hormones wane, unable to thrive,  
Muscles weakened, cells struggle to survive.

Testosterone, the life force, begins to wane,  
Three hours of sleep, the body's needed gain.  
Depleted, unbalanced, the essence may fade,  
Lack of rest, hormonal imbalance is made.

Immune warriors, shields against harm,  
Cytokines released, in sleep they swarm.  
Defenses falter, weakened in their course,  
Infection looms, leaving the body's health in remorse.

A raging appetite, out of control,  
Ghrelin's hunger, leptin's absence takes its toll.  
Blood sugar rises, insulin rushes forth,  
Cravings unleashed, weight gain takes its course.

And in the realm of sleep-deprived plight,  
Aging's touch, like a thief in the night.  
Skin, once vibrant, loses its youthful sheen,  
Premature wrinkles etch a face unseen.

Oh, sleep, elusive mistress, we yearn for thy repose,  
To find solace in dreams, where true rest bestows.  
For in the absence of slumber's tender embrace,  
We find a world tainted by exhaustion's face.

So cherish each night's slumber, a gift so dear,  
Nurture your mind and body, calm all fear.  
For in the realm of sleep, where dreams take flight,  
Lies the key to a life filled with true delight. ("Elusive Mistress") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Tiny Feet

In a body where fascination grows,  
Tiny feet command my heart's repose.  
A tale tangled within my mind's keep,  
Whence this intrigue of feet did creep?

Perchance, it started with a grandmother's gaze,  
Always putting me down on life's maze.  
Eyes adrift, downward did they stray,  
And her petite feet caught my attention's sway.

Yet not of lust did those thoughts speak,  
For sexual undertones were far too weak.  
Years spent gazing at the earth's grand floor,  
Transformed those feet, and something more.

Lovers, too, with small feet graced my path,  
Aligned toes, size six, evoking a silent aftermath.  
Visions of bunion and crooked delight,  
Dared to taint my desire, evoking bile's slight.

How can I explain this curious plight?  
Feet, symmetrical and smooth, ignite.  
Softness like velvet, as divine as silk,  
That vision makes my heart's pulse bilk.

Oh, to intertwine those size five or six,  
Linear toes, a dance that love affix.  
A moment where passion finds release,  
As feet embrace, my desires find peace.

But let us not dismiss a woman's grace,  
For when our glances first embrace,  
Her face, my eyes seek, a connection true,



Feet merely a part of the intricate view.

Yet still, a heartbeat's second glance will find,  
A gaze upon her feet, leaving limits behind.  
In those toes lies a judgment's decree,  
An in or out, a choice that sets me free.

So, dear reader, judge me if you must,  
But know, fascination rises from moments of lust.  
Tiny feet, a hypnotic melody they sing,  
In this intricate dance, desire takes wing. ("Tiny Feet") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## The Bowel of the Root

In the dark house, so big and wide,  
I made it myself, with quiet pride.  
Cell by cell, in a quiet corner,  
I built it up, with grey paper and glue,  
Whistling and wiggling, thinking of something else,  
Creating a home, all by myself.

So many cellars, with eelish delvings,  
I am round as an owl, with my own light shining.  
I may litter puppies, or mother a horse,  
My belly moves, as I must make more maps, of course.

These marrowy tunnels, I eat my way through,  
Moley-handed, with all-mouth and no clue.  
Licking up bushes, and pots of meat,  
Living in an old well, a stoney retreat.

Pebble smells, turnipy chambers so small,  
Filled with humble loves, breathing and all.  
Footlings, boneless as noses, so tender and sweet,  
Warm and tolerable, in the bowel of the root, where we meet.

Here's a cuddly mother, in the dark house I've made,  
In this world I've created, where I've long since stayed.  
A refuge for all, in the depths of the earth,  
A home for the humble, where love finds its worth. ("The Bowel of the Root") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Within the Shadows

In the depths of gloom, where shadows dance,  
Where sorrow weaves its intricate trance,  
Emerges a glimmer, a gentle ray of light,  
Guiding our souls through the darkest night.

For in the darkness, where pain does reside,  
A beacon of hope, love will confide,  
A flicker of truth, amidst the lies,  
Like stars in the heavens, forever aligns.

It is in darkness that true strength is found,  
A resilience within, in depths profound,  
Amidst shattered dreams and aching pain,  
Our spirit awakens, rising again.

For every tear shed, a lesson we learn,  
A chance to be reborn, to unconditionally yearn,  
To endure the tempest, both bold and meek,  
Embracing the light that sorrow does seek.

So, let sorrow be the catalyst for grace,  
An offering to seek light in every trace,  
To find our purpose within life's grand scheme,  
And emerge stronger from darkness redeemed.

For within the shadows, we uncover our might,  
Learning compassion, humility, and insight,  
And as we emerge from sorrow's darkest plight,  
The light grows radiant, illuminating our sight.

So, let not the sorrow deter or dismay,  
Let it be a compass, guiding the way,  
For it is in darkness that we truly perceive,

The unyielding light, waiting to relieve. ("Within the Shadows") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## My Mom is Dying

In the twilight of her life, she faces the end  
Colon cancer, a battle she can't defend  
At 85, too weak for treatment or surgery  
She just wants to rest, to be free from worry

My sister takes care of her, finding a hospice place  
Where she can find comfort, in her final embrace  
She's made peace with her fate, ready to let go  
I wish I had been closer, but I was lost in a toxic flow

Guilt weighs heavy on my heart, as I realize the truth  
I was too consumed by my own demons, in my reckless youth  
Now, at 66, with time slipping away  
I want to make amends, before she fades away

I'll rent a car and make the journey to her side  
To tell her I love her, to swallow my pride  
I'll hold her hand and whisper my apologies  
For not being there when she needed me

Mom, I'm sorry, for the times I let you down  
For the moments I lost, trying to drown  
The pain and the guilt in a bottle of booze  
I love you, Mom, I hope you find peace and choose

To forgive me, for all the time wasted  
I'll cherish these moments, no more will be tasted  
I'll be there for you now, in your final hour  
To hold you close and to shower

You with the love and the care you deserve  
For being my rock, even when I didn't preserve  
The bond we shared, I'll make it right

Before you take flight, into the eternal night

I love you, Mom, and I'm grateful for your grace

I'll hold you close, as we embrace

In this bittersweet moment, I'll find solace and release

As you find peace, and I bid you farewell, in quiet peace. ("My Mom is Dying") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## My Compass

In the morn's embrace, as slumber takes its leave,  
I seek solace in prayer, an intent to perceive,  
For without this communion, my spirit feels astray,  
In the realm of prayer, I find my guiding way.

In the stillness of dawn, as the world begins anew,  
I contemplate the hours ahead, plans to pursue,  
But before I embark, I surrender to the divine,  
Asking God to shape my thoughts, to intricately align.

For in prayer and meditation, my soul finds respite,  
A connection to something greater, a guiding light,  
I soar to lofty heights, where worldly worries subside,  
And surrender to the will, that within me resides.

Oh, what peace in knowing, that God leads my way,  
As I embark on this journey, day by day,  
With each breath I take, intentions pure and true,  
I seek guidance and grace, in all that I pursue.

With a humble heart, I conclude this sacred time,  
A prayer woven in whispers, a moment so sublime,  
Grant me clarity, dear Lord, for the path that lies ahead,  
Reveal my next step, as I faithfully tread.

For in all my prayers, one phrase rings loud and clear,  
"Thy will be done in me and through me, my dear,"  
In sincere desire, I seek to fulfill this divine decree,  
To align my purpose with God's will, eternally.

So, let prayer be my compass, and meditation my guide,  
As I navigate this existence, with God at my side,  
In unity with the divine, my soul dances and sings,

For in prayer and meditation, my spirit takes wings. ("My Compass") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## Opaque Mirror

In the mirror's gaze, I see  
The dim outline of an old face  
Wrinkled with worry, a reflection of me  
But beyond the surface, there's a deeper grace

For the future is an opaque mirror  
Revealing only a fraction of our truth  
It's not the measure of what we hold dear  
But rather a reminder of our fleeting youth

We spend too much time critiquing  
Our outward appearance, our flaws and lines  
But it's what's inside that needs seeking  
To nourish our souls, to let our light shine

So let's not focus on the reflection  
But on the depth within our heart  
For true beauty lies in our connection  
To love, to kindness, to living our part

Let's prepare for the future, yes  
But let's not be consumed by its sight  
For life is multidimensional, a beautiful mess  
And what matters most is how we live in the light

So let's embrace our old worried face  
And see it as a sign of all we've been through  
Let's focus on kindness, love, and grace  
For that's what truly shines, that's what's real and true. ("Opaque Mirror") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Lucifer's Flaw

On a night when the stars were bright  
Prince Lucifer rose in disdain  
Tired of his dark domain, he took flight  
Above the Earth, in cloud-covered disdain

He looked down upon the sinners below  
Clutching their specters of repose  
Their souls, mere prey to his prideful show  
As he soared above, his anger arose

From the western wing to Africa's sands  
His massive form careened with pride  
And his shadow, like a looming demand  
Darkened the Arctic snows far and wide

He soared through zones with scars of old  
A memory of his revolt against the divine  
Reaching a height, he gazed at stars bold  
And in their brilliance, he began to decline

Around him, the ancient track of law  
Marched in unalterable ranks, so raw  
The army of heaven's unyielding draw  
Reminding him of his eternal, fateful flaw. ("Lucifer's Flaw") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Forgetfulness

My mind is a labyrinth of forgotten memories,  
A garden overgrown with the weeds of neglect.  
I stumble upon fragments of the past,  
But they slip through my fingers like sand.

I am haunted by the echoes of forgotten faces,  
Their names like whispers on the edge of my thoughts.  
I try to grasp them, to bring them into the light,  
But they slip away, elusive and intangible.

My heart aches for the things I have lost,  
The moments that have slipped through the cracks.  
I long to hold them close, to keep them safe,  
But they are gone, lost to the depths of forgetfulness.

Yet in the midst of this muddle, I find solace,  
For forgetfulness is a gift as well as a curse.  
It allows me to let go of pain and sorrow,  
To move forward and embrace the present.

So I will embrace forgetfulness as a part of me,  
A bittersweet symphony of lost and found.  
I will cherish the moments I can recall,  
And release the ones that slip through the cracks. ("Forgetfulness") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## The Land of Ombi

In the land of Ombi, by the Nile so grand  
Lies a tale of a crocodile, mysterious and grand  
For once a year, a maiden is offered in sacrifice  
To honor the creature, so strong and so wise

The high priest selects the fairest of them all  
And she prepares for her fate, standing proud and tall  
Three months she spends in seclusion and prayer  
Preparing for the day when she'll meet the crocodile's lair

On the day of the exhibition, the maidens compete  
But only one will be chosen, while the others face defeat  
The chosen one, with fear and anticipation in her heart  
Is taken to the island, where the crocodile will play his part

As the beast wags his tail, and his jaws stir  
The maiden meets her fate, with a shiver and a blur  
A sacrifice to honor the creature so dear  
In the land of Ombi, where traditions are clear

But as the poem ends with a scolding and a lament  
The tale takes a twist, and the truth it may present  
For the crocodile, so revered and praised  
May not be the answer to the sacrifices raised

For in this land of traditions and old beliefs  
Lies a truth that may bring about grief  
For the crocodile, in all its might and awe  
May not be as good and dear as they all saw

So let us ponder and question the tale  
Of sacrifice and tradition, with a brave heart to prevail  
For in the end, it's not the crocodile we should fear

But the customs and beliefs that may not be sincere. ("The Land of Ombi") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## A Fat Ass

On the burning road, the man did toil  
His sweat and tears, the earth did spoil  
Never resting, always pushing on  
His weary spirit, his strength all gone

And there, in the distance, a fat, stupid ass  
Grinning at him from a green place, alas  
The man cried out in rage and despair  
But the ass only grinned, without a care

"Do not deride me, fool!" the man cried out  
"I know you, with your greed and selfish clout  
Stuffing your belly, burying your heart  
In grass and tender sprouts, tearing them apart"

But the ass only grinned from the green place  
Unmoved by the man's anger and disgrace  
For what did the beast care for the man's strife  
When all it desired was a simple, carefree life

And so the man toiled on, with a heavy heart  
Realizing that the ass was not too smart  
But perhaps, in its foolishness, it had found  
The secret to happiness, on solid ground. ("A Fat Ass") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Poets

In the sphere of poets and their musings,  
There lies a certain beauty in their eccentric ways.  
With dirt under their nails and leaves in their hair,  
They embrace the world with a sense of flair.

When they sit and ponder, their ghosts take a seat,  
And tangles of metaphor weave through their speech.  
They choose the window, while novelists prefer the aisle,  
For poets see the world through a different style.

When they clash, they curdle like milk gone sour,  
But when they love, they are like children with power.  
Their desks are altars, and black sweaters signal mourning,  
As they gaze at the ceiling, their minds are adorning.

They see beauty in the mundane, in the everyday,  
And their business cards carry truths that might sway.  
On one side, a statement, on the other, a lie,  
For poets navigate the world with a whimsical eye.

So let them be with their dirt and their leaves,  
For in their world, they find truth in what deceives.  
They are the poets, with their own brand of art,  
And in their hands, they hold the beauty of the heart. ("Poets") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Thanksgiving

In praise and thanksgiving, we lift up our voice  
To the Creator, the one who gives us choice  
We offer our gratitude, our hearts filled with love  
To the God who is a dove, watching from above

But this act of praise, it is not in vain  
For our Creator, He does not need our gain  
He stands self-sufficient, in need of naught  
Our gratitude, it's for us, it cannot be bought

It brings liberation, this act of praise  
For it reminds us of our blessed days  
In gratitude, we find joy and peace  
Our hearts and souls, they find release

So let us celebrate this national feast  
With hearts full of gratitude, let us feast  
For in thanking the true God, we are set free  
To live in love and praise, for all eternity. ("Thanksgiving") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## Poetry Should Not Take Hours to Comprehend

In a world where words are like precious gems  
I ask them to handle poems with care  
To hold them up to the light  
And let the colors dance before their eyes

I ask them to listen  
Press their ear against the hive of words  
And let the buzzing of poetry  
Fill their senses

But they, in their ignorance  
Choose to treat poems like prisoners  
To trap them in a chair with ropes  
And demand a confession

They beat the words with a hose  
Trying to force meaning from their lips  
But poetry cannot be tortured  
It speaks in whispers, not screams

So I will continue to ask  
To plead with them to understand  
That poems are not meant to be broken  
But to be embraced and set free. ("Poetry Should Not Take Hours to Comprehend") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Before I Fade

In the woods so dark and deep,  
I find solace, but I cannot keep  
Myself from the promises I've made  
To journey on, not to delay.

The owner of these woods so fair  
May not know I linger there,  
But my horse, he wonders why  
We pause beneath the winter sky.

The silence broken only by  
The sound of wind, the gentle sigh  
Of snowflakes falling all around  
Enveloping this quiet ground.

The woods, they call to me, so still  
But I must travel, I have a will  
To keep the promises I've made  
Before I rest, before I fade.

So I bid farewell to this serene  
And lovely, dark, and peaceful scene  
And journey on, through miles of snow  
Before I rest, before I go. ("Before I Fade") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## What Lies Beneath

In the pit of my being lies a dormant flame,  
A perfect life awaiting, ready to reclaim.  
The gifts I seek reside within, awaiting my embrace,  
A pool of awareness and aliveness, a celestial space.

But oh, distracted I become by triviality,  
Lost in the maze of life's mundane banality.  
Caught up in superficial tasks, I forget to truly live,  
To delve within, to touch the spirit God did give.

A secret whispers softly, unfolding in grace,  
Divine essence nestled within, a sacred place.  
To find my inner light, I must let my mind be free,  
Allow thoughts to float on by, not controlling, just letting them be.

Today I understand this truth, crystal clear,  
The gold is not in taming thoughts that interfere.  
The gold emanates from what lies beneath,  
When the mind is stilled, a precious moment, brief.

For in that stillness, a symphony unfurls,  
Silent whispers awaken, the soul gently swirls.  
Ethereal beauty, like a shimmering moonlit sea,  
Revealing the essence of what it truly means to be free.

So, I'll journey within, embrace the silence of the soul,  
Embody the spirit that longs to make me whole.  
For within me lies the secret of divine creation,  
A treasure untapped, awaiting my revelation.

The perfect life awakened, shining bright,  
A dance with the universe, a beacon of light.  
Gifts boundless and overflowing, for me to uncover,

As I surrender to the truth, to the inner world I rediscover. ("What Lies Beneath") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Time

Touch us gently, Time  
As we sail upon your sea  
Humble voyagers, searching for  
A place of peace and harmony

We are but a family  
With one angel gone too soon  
Seeking solace in each other  
Underneath this gentle moon

Touch us gently, Time  
Let us find our way  
Through the currents of our sorrow  
To a brighter, sunlit day

Our ambitions are not grand  
Just simple joys and love  
We seek a quiet, calm clime  
Where our spirits can rise above

So guide us, gentle Time  
Through the waves and winds that blow  
Lead us to a steady course  
Where blessings can freely flow

Touch us gently, Time  
As we navigate this life  
In the end, we seek but peace  
And an end to pain and strife

Humble voyagers are we  
On this journey, hand in hand  
So, touch us gently, gentle Time

And lead us to the promised land. ("Time") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Web of Life

In the depths of our struggles and strife,  
We find ourselves tangled in the web of life,  
Powerless over the temptations that bind,  
To addictions, people, food, the mind.

Liquor's allure, pills' numbing embrace,  
We sought solace, but found a dark space,  
A maze of chaos, consuming our soul,  
Our will, our strength, from us it stole.

In the vast unfolding of events untold,  
We are but passengers, we don't hold,  
The power to control the outcomes that blend,  
Yet in acceptance, our hearts can mend.

Our loved ones too, their paths their own,  
We cannot shape, their choices we've shown,  
Our worry, concern, it only brings pain,  
For their destiny, they must ascertain.

But amidst this powerlessness that's perceived,  
There's a flicker of light, we must believe,  
For within our being lies a strength untapped,  
A reservoir of power, waiting to be grasped.

In the playground of our attitudes, clear,  
We hold the reigns, dispel all fear,  
In the grand theater of our self-image, bright,  
We paint the hues, embracing our own light.

With the brush of behavior, strokes of our own,  
We conjure a masterpiece, our essence shone,  
With determination as our guiding force,

We carve our path, embracing life's course.

And in our commitment to this program, we see,  
Endless possibilities, like waves on a sea,  
For we hold the power, deep within our soul,  
To shape our existence, to make ourselves whole.

So let us stand tall, in our power's embrace,  
Exercising control, with every step we trace,  
Finding joy in the freedom to choose,  
Reveling in the exhilaration, banishing the blues.

For we are not victims, bound in despair,  
But warriors, rising above, prepared,  
To conquer our addictions, to find our way,  
To reclaim our power, to seize each day.

In the realm of our own empowerment, we rise,  
Breaking through the chains, reaching for the skies,  
With courage as our ally, determination our guide,  
We embark on a journey, with power deep inside. ("Web Of Life") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## Survivor

In the early light, their faces appear  
Livid and gray, with the weight of despair  
Cement dust clings to their skin  
As they toss and turn in their troubled dreams

I see them there, struggling to find rest  
Their jaws moving as if chewing on air  
Submerged in their own inner turmoil  
They are haunted by the specter of death

"Stand back, leave me alone," I want to cry  
I have not taken from anyone  
I have not stolen another's bread  
No one has suffered in my place

But still they linger, a misty presence  
A constant reminder of the burden I bear  
I did not choose to live while others perish  
It is not my fault that I continue to breathe

I long for them to fade into the fog  
To release me from this guilt that weighs me down  
To let me live and eat and sleep in peace  
But for now, they remain, a haunting whisper in the night. ("Survivor") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## If Tomorrow Doesn't Come

In a world where tomorrow may not arrive  
Where the moon turns cold and the trees petrify  
Where the sun is a foul black tire fire  
And the owl's eyes are just pinpricks of desire

Where the raccoon is but a hot tar stain  
And the sweet-gum tree is lost to time's disdain  
Where the shirt is just plastic ditch-litter  
And the kitchen's a cow's corpse, bitter

We may never get to witness the future bright  
Stuck like a bum star, never dazzling in the night  
We may never meet her, or him  
Every moment, every second seems grim

But in the face of impending doom  
We cling to each other in the gloom  
Hands knotted together, holding on tight  
Clutching the dog, watching the sky ignite

And in that moment, it doesn't matter  
As long as we're here, feeling lucky, together  
For in the midst of chaos and despair  
Our love and presence is all we need to bear

So say tomorrow doesn't come  
Say the world outside is fearsome  
We'll still find solace in each other's embrace  
And face the unknown with courage and grace. ("If Tomorrow Doesn't Come") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Party Line

Birdie, oh how we remember the party line,  
Sharing the same connection, the same time,  
Mornings filled with the same routines,  
The same struggles and the same dreams.

Mrs. Clark always by the black telephone,  
Listening for another voice, never alone,  
If someone else was there to share,  
She'd go back to her chores without a care.

She'd fold baby clothes with gentle hands,  
Cut coupons, maybe iron a shirt that stands,  
Against the challenges of the family farm,  
Where everything needed her loving charm.

The kitchen sink would drip with water,  
The tractor roar, the dog's endless yammer,  
But Mrs. Clark would never be deterred,  
She'd keep going, her spirit undeterred.

She'd smooth her dress, printed with chickens and fences,  
And think of the tasks that needed her senses,  
To cook rice, chop veggies with care,  
And save the best part of the pork to share.

At a quarter to five, she'd make the call,  
To her sister-in-law, no time to stall,  
To share the day's accomplishments, big and small,  
And plan red beans for supper, a shared protocol.

Two southern women, living the same life,  
Supporting each other through joy and strife,  
Connected by more than just the party line,

A bond of strength and love that will always shine. ("Party Line") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Nursing Home

In the nursing home, where time stands still  
There are more women than men, and good doctors are few  
The old men do little but sleep, their days passing by  
Staff doctors visit only once a month, their care fleeting

Outside, a few old men gather for a smoke  
Allowed this small pleasure in their twilight years  
Their conversations filled with low grunts and grumbles  
As they cling to what little joy remains within their grasp

One old man, his body ravaged by bone cancer  
Jokes with high good humor about his expired guarantees  
A former salesman who loved women, his memories fading  
But his love for life and laughter still shines through

The women, once vibrant and lively, now reduced to little girls  
Clutch rag-dolls to their chests, seeking comfort and solace  
Their frailty and vulnerability tugging at the heartstrings  
A reminder of the love that has always been within them

I wave to them and they wave back, a fleeting moment of connection  
But it's hard to tell how much they really know, their minds slipping away  
The care-givers, kind and efficient, try to infuse them with zest for life  
But the old know all that already, or knew and have forgotten

I wonder if the young can reverse their situations with the old  
Imagine themselves in the same frail state, looking up at fresh faces  
I am too young to join them, too old to feel the buoyancy of the youth  
An awkward age in the context of the nursing home, a metaphor for the last days

After visiting my partly present mother, I sit with the old men and have a smoke  
Hoping for clear days, for moments of clarity and connection  
In the twilight of life, we all seek comfort and companionship

As we navigate the complexities of aging and the bittersweet beauty of existence. ("Nursing Home")  
by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Prophetic Courage

Mary and Joseph, humble and meek  
Their faith and courage, something to seek  
Outside the box, beyond expectation  
They let God lead, no hesitation

Young and uneducated, yet chosen by grace  
To carry and raise the Savior of the human race  
They defied the norms, broke free from the mold  
Their integrity and courage, a story retold

In a world of follow-the-leader and dutiful religion  
They relied on their angels, against all tradition  
No preparation in the synagogue's teachings  
Their faith and trust, beyond human teachings

Why do we love and admire, but not imitate  
Their faith journeys, so bold and great?  
Their prophetic courage, their non-reassurance  
The authenticity, beyond religious endurance

It's not about theology, but integrity and trust  
Letting God lead, in Him we must  
For Mary and Joseph, their journey inspires  
To step outside our comfort, and reach for higher desires

So let us learn from their example so pure  
To have the faith and courage to endure  
To break free from the norms, and embrace the unknown  
To rely on our angels, and let God's love be shown. ("Prophetic Courage") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Our Thirst for Change

In the black yew shelters, where owls tuck themselves away  
Strange gods with red meditating shifty eyes  
Watch over the land in the stillness of night  
But when darkness shovels the sun offstage  
They roost unstirring, awaiting the melancholy hour

It is in this hour that they teach the sage  
She need fear in this world only tumult and action  
For in the passing, drunk on shadows  
We are punished for desiring change  
Our punishment is to desire more change

The world spins on, caught in the cycle of desire  
Yearning for something more, something different  
But the gods with their red, shifty eyes  
Remain unmoved, unchanging, in their yew shelters  
Watching over us as we stumble through the darkness

And so we learn, in the stillness of night  
That it is not the gods we should fear  
But our own insatiable desire for change  
For in the pursuit of something new  
We lose sight of the beauty in the present moment

So let us heed the lesson of the strange gods  
And find peace in the tumult of this world  
For in the stillness of the yew shelters  
We may find the wisdom to embrace what is  
And let go of our relentless thirst for change. ("Our Thirst for Change") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## What It Contains

In a world of selfish pleasure,  
Many seek to live without measure,  
Seeking material wealth and fame,  
But finding it all ends the same.

For without God's sustaining power,  
The soul becomes empty and dour,  
No amount of riches can fill,  
The void that only faith can still.

Death looms ahead, a stark reminder,  
That material things, no longer a binder,  
For in the end, what truly remains,  
Is the state of one's soul, and what it contains.

So let us not come empty to the end,  
But let our faith and love extend,  
So that when our time comes to depart,  
We may not fear, but have peace in our heart.

For what does it matter if we gain the world,  
But lose our soul, and be unfurled,  
In a sea of regret and sorrow,  
When we could have lived for a brighter tomorrow.

So let us seek God's sustaining power,  
And live each day, not in a selfish tower,  
But in the light of love and grace,  
So that in the end, we may find our place. ("What It Contains") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Confined Thoughts

Loose leaves in a metal ball,  
A symbol of thoughts confined,  
Like men in a shark cage steeping,  
In the depths of the mind.

Ideas stain the limpid mind,  
Even while it's sleeping,  
Ginseng or the scent of lymph,  
Consequences queasing.

Into wide awareness, whence,  
Like an engine seizing,  
Society remits a shudder,  
Showing it has feeling.

The divers all have shaving cuts,  
And the future's in Darjeeling?  
Blind, the brain stem bumps the bars,  
Of the shark cage, meanwhile, feeding.

The tea ball's cracked, its leaves cast,  
To catastrophic reading,  
Ideas are too dangerous,  
For they hold the power of leading.

My love adjusts an earring,  
As I take her in my arms,  
And think of Ukraine and Hamas,  
And all the world's harms.

A stain attracts an eating,  
Of my country's changing heart,  
And hell, where the blood is sleeting,

A world torn apart.

In this tangled web of thoughts,  
In this intricately spun ball,  
Lies the essence of all human fears,  
The rise and fall.

For ideas hold the power,  
To change the course of time,  
To move mountains, to stir the soul,  
To commit the ultimate crime.

As we navigate this cage of life,  
Filled with thoughts and dreams,  
We must tread carefully,  
And let our ideas gleam.

For in the end, it's up to us,  
To shape the world we see,  
To unleash the potential,  
In our thoughts, wild and free. ("Confined Thoughts") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## The Frog

Pocket pet of witches,  
reincarnated child souls,  
most toxic augers of weather  
and superstitions.

Your midnight croaking  
foretells the coming rain,  
a draught of pollywogs  
is a cure-all for ailments.

You taste somewhere  
between mermaid and chicken,  
with no power to grant wishes  
or bestow warts upon the wicked.

In the original fairy tale,  
it's the maiden who transforms you,  
pummeling you against the wall  
to turn you back into a prince.

Mistake Bufo for you,  
and open the doors of astral vision,  
sweeping you into the clouds  
and hailing you down upon roofs and roads.

You are the earth gauger,  
measuring poison in the waters,  
and the first to die out  
when your habitat is contaminated.

We see our end times  
as nuclear cataclysm, flood, and drought,  
as pandemics sweep the globe,

and you peel off your dead skin and eat it,  
like some megaton explosion,  
shedding self and primogenial desires.

What did I know  
peeling you apart,  
teasing out your three-chambered heart,  
but denials sweet and tribulations vile?

And if you had wings,  
you wouldn't bump your salientian ass  
every time you hopped down the street.

You are a creature of mystery and wonder,  
a symbol of both destruction and renewal,  
a reminder of the delicate balance  
that exists within our world. ("The Frog") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Papa Benny

In the chilly dawn, I wake to a world transformed  
By the absence of leaves and the embrace of mud  
The lingering scent of fish and earth

A pocketknife, a worn green shirt  
Memories of him, etched into every fiber  
The sorrow lingering in every stitch and seam

Outside, the world is stained with his presence  
Every rusted nail a reminder of his hands  
The empty spaces filled with his absence

At the edge of the shore, his belongings lay  
A silent testament to his love for the water  
And the life he lived within its depths

I pick up his old pliers, worn and weathered  
And prepare the line for another day of fishing  
A quiet moment of connection to the man I miss

The lake is hard and cold, unforgiving in its truth  
But as the trout bite and dance in the sunlight  
I feel him with me, guiding my hand

I pull the glistening prizes from the water  
Each catch a small triumph, a moment of joy  
In a world that feels so empty without him

So I wear his shirt, I use his tools  
And I carry his memory with me  
As I navigate this new world without him. ("Papa Benny") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## A Testament To Love

A boy who faced more than any child should,  
A life fraught with pain, fear, and misunderstood.  
At just a year old, an overdose so near,  
A mother lost, drowning in her own despair.

At two, he watched through glass, his mother in jail,  
His cries and screams, oh how they did wail.  
Biting his nails, a habit formed from the fear,  
Of a world so uncertain, so unclear.

Then at three, a brick to his mother's head,  
In an ambulance, he rode, filled with dread.  
The scars of trauma, etched deep in his soul,  
A childhood marred by events beyond control.

At four, a car wreck, a result of DUI,  
A life in chaos, no one to rely.  
At five, his grandmother, a guiding light,  
Raised him with love, through the darkest of night.

At six, custody lost, a mother in prison,  
A life derailed, no rhyme or reason.  
But today at twelve, a new chapter begins,  
In a Christian school, he finds his wings.

He's on the honor roll, a shining star,  
A life rebuilt from a past so marred.  
Prayed with every night, loved every day,  
A mother redeemed, finding her way.

Celebrating each milestone, each sober year,  
A bond so strong, through pain and tears.  
He's kind and compassionate, with a heart of gold,

A testament to resilience, a story to be told.

A mother's love, a son's unfaltering grace,

A journey of healing, in this sacred space.

From brokenness to wholeness, they stand tall,

A testament to love, triumphing over it all. ("A Testament To Love") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## Houdini's Grave

Houdini, the master of illusion and escape,  
A man whose stunts were death-defying and great,  
But one fateful day, in the spring of '19,  
He nearly met his end in a buried alive scene.

Handcuffed and buried beneath six feet of earth,  
The weight of the soil was more than his worth,  
His cries for help went unnoticed, unheard,  
As he struggled and fought, every breath a precious word.

The darkness pressed in, his lungs ached for air,  
But Houdini, the showman, refused to despair,  
With every ounce of strength, he clawed and he dug,  
Breaking through the soil, escaping death's deadly hug.

The narrowest squeak of his life, he would later claim,  
A moment of terror, of fear and of shame,  
But Houdini, the great escapologist, emerged from the dirt,  
A living testament to his skill and his worth.

His death-defying stunts may have veered off course,  
But Houdini's spirit was unbreakable, of unyielding force,  
For he was a man who defied death time and again,  
And in the end, it was his legacy that continued to reign. ("Houdini's Grave") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Lost Baggage

The lines are long, the wait is slow  
As we all shuffle to and fro  
Emptying pockets, and taking off shoes  
Anything to make it through airport security blues

The conveyor belt hums, the x-ray beams  
As our belongings disappear as if in dreams  
Nail clippers and corkscrews, a flash of metal  
Confiscated and taken, lost to their new settle

But where do they go, these forbidden tools?  
These items deemed too risky for us simple fools  
They end up in government auctions, it seems  
Sold in bulk, in strange and varied schemes

Foldable shovels, flashlights, and cigar cutters too  
All taken from us, and sold without a clue  
Pocket knives in lots of a hundred, or by brand  
An assortment of items, seized and banned

And what of lost luggage, left behind and forgotten?  
Unclaimed and unloved, its fate is now begotten  
Resold, repurposed, or recycled, the bags find new life  
Their contents sorted through, causing some strife

So next time you travel, and through security you pass  
Remember the items taken, and where they end up at last  
Perhaps in a government auction, up for sale in bulk  
Or in a pile of lost luggage, left behind in a hulk

Airport security, a necessary evil it seems  
Taking our belongings, and selling them in schemes  
But as long as we stay safe, and make it through the gate

We'll accept the inconvenience, and accept our fate. ("Lost Baggage") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## "9/11"

From the heights they fell, with hearts heavy as stone  
The world watched in horror, as they plummeted alone  
Some with arms waving, some with prayers on their lips  
Facing certain death, as they took their final trips

The blue sky above, a cruel contrast to their fate  
As they fell from the Twin Towers, a tragic, dreadful weight  
Some chose to face the ground, others turned to see  
The end rushing towards them, from a height so deadly

The air rushed past, as they fell through the sky  
Their screams lost to the wind, as they said their last goodbye  
Some landed on rooftops, on cars and on the ground  
Their bodies shattered on impact, with a deafening sound

No one could survive, such a fall from the sky  
The speed and the impact, meant that none could defy  
The laws of nature, and the harsh reality  
That those who jumped from the towers, could not escape their destiny

On that fateful day, the world stood still in grief  
As the souls who jumped from the towers, found no relief  
We remember their sacrifice, their bravery and pain  
And vow to never let such tragedy happen again

So let their memory live on, in our hearts and in our minds  
As we honor their lives, and the courage they defined  
May we strive for a world, where such horrors are no more  
And honor those who fell from the World Trade Center, forevermore. ("9/11") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Chinese Food

In the early morning hours, they arrive  
Chefs and cooks, ready to thrive  
They prep and cook, with skill and grace  
Creating dishes that will amaze

Gallons of soup stock, they must create  
To ensure the flavors are truly great  
Tens of kilos of rice and noodles, too  
They steam and keep fresh, for me and you

Ingredients are measured, with precision and care  
Each dish is crafted, with expertise rare  
Sauces and seasonings, at their fingertips  
They work together, as each dish they equip

The same vegetables, used in a variety of ways  
The same meats, in dishes that truly amaze  
They slice and dice, constantly replenishing stocks  
Working tirelessly, around the clock

Their skill and organization, truly shine  
As they work together, in perfect line  
Efficient and organized, in every way  
They make the kitchen work, day after day

It's truly amazing, to watch them in action  
As they bring to life, culinary satisfaction  
Their dedication and talent, truly do show  
In the kitchen, where they let their creativity flow

So let's raise a glass, to the chefs and cooks  
Whose hard work and talent, fills the cookbook  
Their passion and skill, we truly admire

For they are the ones, who set our taste buds on fire. (Chinese Food") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Hungry Wolves

In the vast expanse of the human soul,  
Two mighty wolves embark on their eternal patrol,  
One clad in light, with eyes like morning's glow,  
The other enshrouded in shadows, an ominous foe.

They circle in silence, a never-ending dance,  
Each in its essence, the embodiment of chance,  
The light wolf sings of a love that mends and weaves,  
A symphony of peace that in every heart believes.

It roams through the meadows of compassion's embrace,  
Gallop on winds of hope, with a nimble grace,  
Its howl is an aubade that greets the day's birth,  
A call to the best within us, our inherent worth.

The dark wolf prowls with a gaze that pierces night,  
Its fangs drip with desires unbound, a fearsome sight,  
It feeds on the anger that festers within,  
On envy's green gaze, and the bitterness of sin.

Its growl rumbles deep, with the greed that consumes,  
In the hollow of our missteps, where darkness looms,  
This wolf embodies the tempest of our fears,  
The untamed storm that in every heart appears.

And so they vie for dominance, a ceaseless war,  
In the battleground of our being, down to the core,  
Each craving victory, to be the one we endear,  
The one that we nourish, the one that we steer.

We stand as the arbiter of this ancient fight,  
Deciding which wolf we'll bring into the light,  
For the one we feed will surely ascend,

While the other, in neglect, will find its end.

With every act of kindness, the light wolf thrives,  
With each deed of malice, the dark wolf derives,  
The sustenance they need from our daily fare,  
A reflection of our choices, our own affair.

So ponder well, dear traveler, which wolf you'll feed,  
In every thought and action, in every creed,  
For within the balance, your character is cast,  
And in the echoes of the wolves, your legacy is vast.

Cherish the light wolf, with its pure, tender heart,  
But neglect not the dark one, for it too plays a part,  
In knowing its hunger, we learn to rise above,  
To feed the light wolf, with a bounty of love. ("Hungry Wolves") by Courtney Weaver Jr.



## The Weather of the Heart

In the weather of the heart and soul  
A symphony of emotions unfold  
From damp to dry, the golden shot  
A storm within the freezing tomb, a fierce onslaught

The quarter of the veins, a weathered domain  
Turning night to day, blood in their suns, a pulsing refrain  
Lights up the living worm, igniting the flame  
Of life, of love, of passion, a never-ending game

In the eye, a forewarning of the bones  
Blindness creeping in, a darkness that enthrone  
The womb driving in a death as life leaks out  
A paradox of existence, a whisper, a shout

A darkness in the weather of the eye  
Is half its light, the fathomed sea, a mystery in sight  
Breaks on unangled land, a force unfurled  
Unveiling the depths, the secrets of the world

The seed that makes a forest of the loam  
Forks half its fruit, and half drops down, in a silent join  
Slow in a sleeping wind, the cycle of life  
Unfolding before us, amidst joy and strife

In the flesh and bone, a weathered tale is told  
Damp and dry, the quick and dead, intertwined in a mold  
Moving like two ghosts before the eye  
A dance of life and death, a never-ending sigh

In the weather of the world, a process unfolds  
Turning ghost to ghost, each mothered child holds  
Sits in their double shade, a duality of existence

A reflection of the past, a glimpse of persistence

Blowing the moon into the sun, a transformation complete

Pulling down the shabby curtains of the skin, a bittersweet defeat

And the heart gives up its dead, releasing the pain

A cycle of life and love, in the weather of the heart's refrain. ("The Weather of the Heart") by  
Courtney Weaver Jr

## Spiritual Bank

In the depths of my soul, I build a bank  
To hold my spiritual treasures, rank by rank  
With each act of kindness, and every prayer  
I deposit a coin, and watch it grow there

But the problem arises, when life gets rough  
And I forget to deposit, and I feel the huff  
Of life's swirling storms, and its dark shadows  
I look to my bank, and there lies my woes

No statements are sent, no reminders appear  
To keep me in check, to keep my path clear  
I must be diligent, in my spiritual care  
Never neglecting to add to my bank's fare

For when the hard times come, and I need a withdrawal  
I'll find my account empty, with no coins to call  
Upon for strength, and for inner light  
I'll find myself lost, in the endless night

So I must remember, to tend to my soul  
To deposit often, to make it whole  
For a spiritual bank account, is a precious treasure  
And it must be nurtured, for it to bring pleasure

So I'll keep on depositing, and watch my bank grow  
And I'll be prepared, for whatever life may throw  
For my spiritual condition, is a sacred art  
And I'll tend to it always, with a loving heart. ("Spiritual Bank") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Raise A Glass

In Miami, a son received a frightful call  
His father announced his marriage's downfall  
Forty-five years of togetherness had been enough  
It seems they were about to call it quite rough

The son, panicked, reached out to his sister  
She, with a fiery spirit, couldn't resist her  
"No way are they separating!" she declared with a shout  
Their parents' love, she'd figured out

Calling their father, she held nothing back  
"No divorce! We'll be there in a flash  
To talk this out, we'll fix this mess  
So don't do a thing, no need for more stress!"

The old man, now faced with his children's might  
Turned to his wife, shaken but holding tight  
"They'll be here for Christmas," he said quite bold  
"And it looks like they'll be footing their own airfare fold"

So with the holiday approaching in sight  
Their children's antics had turned the tide  
The old man and his wife looked at each other with a grin  
For family coming together was a sure win

So let's raise a glass to their love so fine  
And the comical drama that just had to unwind  
For in the end, their love will surely prevail  
And this chaotic tale will become a humorous tale. ("Raise a Glass") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Intoxicating Spell

In the hazy glow of a wine-filled night  
I lay in a drowse, lost in the sea of my thoughts  
Unaware of the fallen petals in my lap  
So delicately placed by the gentle breeze

As I rose, still under the intoxicating spell  
I noticed the absence of the chirping birds  
And the dwindling numbers of my fellow revellers  
The night air was cool against my flushed skin

Alone, I ventured along the moonlit river  
The water glistened like a pathway of silver  
Reflecting the celestial light above  
I could hear the soft whispers of the breeze

The world around me was a masterpiece  
A symphony of night creatures in harmony  
I felt the solitude embrace my soul  
As I walked, my mind clearer than before

In the tranquil embrace of the moonlight  
I found a sense of peace and quiet reflection  
The night was my companion, a silent confidant  
And I was content in my solitude, at ease with myself

As the night waned on, the world seemed to awaken  
The early morning light pierced through the darkness  
And I made my way back to the wine party  
A new sense of clarity and calm guiding me home. ("Intoxicating Spell") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## Stolen Essence

In the midst of chaos and noise,  
You tend to your garden, unmoved by the strife,  
Your flowers bloom, a symbol of poise  
And wisdom that transcends the turbulence of life.

For you and your garden are one,  
A source of fleeting yet profound delight,  
With beauty snatched, a feeling of being undone,  
But who can claim a more fleeting and wondrous sight?

You have somehow stolen the essence  
Of the loveliness that surrounds you,  
Flaunting your gains with no pretense,  
A profiteer of nature's bountiful view.

I exclaim against your shameless ways,  
For the joy you find in your toil,  
Should not come so easily, I say,  
In a world tarnished by turmoil.

But you, in your old, rough dress,  
Bedaubed with clay and endless grime,  
Find colorful living in a world grown dull, no less,  
Bringing quiet sufficiency in weakling times.

Your delicate happiness, so beautiful,  
Lights up the belittered, grimy ways,  
And surely, I will forever recall  
Your smudgy face parading such joyous displays.

As you tend to your garden with care,  
Laughing gently at life's dastardly days,  
Know that your presence is a rare

And meaningful praise.

For in the act of tending to your vines and bushes,  
You make a brave, sly mock at the darkness around,  
And in that, find the beauty that rushes  
Out amidst the chaos, making life profound. ("Stolen Essence") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

## In the House of Solitude

in this ratty old shack with peeling paint,  
a heavy door that complains every damn time,  
I found a voice, or maybe it found me.

didn't need no one, just a bottle and some smokes,  
the soothing hum of my own damn thoughts,  
drowning in them, bathing in them,  
like a king in his lousy broken tub.

the place, hell, call it a sanctuary if you want,  
a refuge from the shriek and spit of the streets,  
word by word they stumble out,  
half-drunk and looking for trouble.

that pond outside, sometimes it's like a mirror,  
shows me the face of a man who's seen too much,  
yet I sit and watch, the sun flicking glints like dimes,  
cheap change for my cheap thoughts.

years, goddammit, years spilling ink and blood  
across these stained and stubborn pages,  
a symphony of curses and sighs,  
each line a victory or a new scar to poke at.

ain't about finding solitude, it's about the fight,  
wrestling the world to the ground, gagging its mouth,  
huddling with the shadows that know me by name,  
building my own padded cell to keep the chaos at bay.

now here, with my words, my demons, my drink,  
I can breathe deep, stretch these old bones,  
in this house I've spun from silence and night,



I do what I was carved out to do.

and the words, they come, clumsy and raw,  
tumbling like runaway kids down a hill,  
these tales like blood veins on the page,  
in the house of solitude, the only place I belong.

## Booze Allergy

### Booze Allergy

Some folks say  
if booze was like pollen or dust,  
you'd itch, sneeze or wheeze  
right out of the bar  
and you'd know, just by that,  
if you're cursed with the scar  
of an alcoholic's mark.

But it ain't that clear, not that kind.  
You can swill that liquid misery  
down to the dregs -  
your body takes the beating like a champ,  
but it's your skull that's twisted,  
wrung out and cracked.  
It's a thirst that's more like hunger -  
a gnawing, a need, a goddamn obsession.

You keep crawling back  
to the neon altar,  
sucking down the pain,  
each time thinking it's the balm  
to soothe that ache you've got festering  
deep inside the gut.  
But it's a lie, of course.

You get those shakes, that sweat,  
you make oaths to porcelain gods  
as your insides riot,  
vowing never again.  
But "never" is a joke  
you forgot the punchline to,

and you, my friend,  
you can't take a joke anymore.

Mentally? Nah, mentally you're on the ropes,  
dancing with the devil  
with every sip  
that promises salvation  
and delivers destruction.

## Marvel At The Riddle

Marvel at the Riddle

Let's lean in together, chin in hand, shall we,  
And marvel at the masterful chaos Nature has splashed  
Across the curious expanse of a human face.

Behold the etched line of worry or wisdom, who knows,  
Playing neighbor to the smooth stretch of innocuous skin  
Whose thoughts are too light to leave a mark.

Notice that crimson bloom of vitality  
Brushed on one cheek, and oh, on the other,  
The pallid hue of discontent or perhaps just bad lighting.

And there's lethargy, dragging its feet like a sullen child  
Through the kinetic dance of daily chores,  
While a smile, quick as a magician's coin,  
Appears and vanishes among the flock of private sadnesses.

Observe this one muscle, soft-spoken as a secret,  
Boasting a bellowing heft reserved for parades and protests;  
Such inexplicable strength poised to defy  
The relentless drizzle of day-to-day grievances.

Note the odd stillness in a moment of victory,  
And an unwarranted scrutiny, keen eyes over spectacles,  
Peering at a world too mundane for such zeal.

In one corner, pride, immune to the green-eyed glances,  
Taking sips of satisfaction from a self-brimming goblet.  
The face dares with a shy boldness,  
A bravery so tentative it could make embarrassment itself turn red.

Look how freedom roams across that forehead,  
Interrupted here and there by timid chains of reticence.  
And virtue, politely tapping its name tag,  
As if it left its driver's license on the kitchen counter.

This portrait, with all its disregard for conformity,  
Snags the heart with a deftly thrown lasso.  
Give me time as a coin to toss into a fountain of wishes,  
And I'd ask to inhabit this marvel of oddities and laughter  
For no fewer than five hundred turns around the sun.

## Prayer For the Habitually Frightened

### Prayer for the Habitually Frightened

God, it seems a little odd to bother you with this?  
my collection of fears, well-worn like a path through the woods  
I've walked so often, telling myself tales of dark impending shapes,  
much too often, I know,  
it's become my daily bread, these fears, a sort of sustenance.

I've run around for so long with sweaty palms  
and tapped soles, darting eyes painting shadows  
as monsters that? God grant me this?  
I might find the guts to stand still for once.

But here's the rub, the snag in my murmured prayer:  
could it be, possibly, that I clutch my fears  
like old heirlooms, unable to part with the weight in my pockets?  
It's a thought, isn't it, that I keep them near,  
not out of loyalty or love,  
but as a sly excuse to stall, to not decide,  
to let the responsibility of, say, success loom just out of reach.

Yes, God, it's me again, asking for help to see  
beyond the habit of fear,  
as if I'm peering through a keyhole  
at a party I'm too nervous to join.

Perhaps, with a little faith in Him?  
that mystery guest I've heard so much about?  
I might leave behind these trembling boots  
and finally taste the liberated air.

## Self- Erected Barriers

There is this rather silly propensity we have,  
a leaning towards doubting our own capabilities,  
fearing?quite absurdly?that perhaps we are unlovable,  
or worse, incompetent at even the simplest tasks.

We look, oh how we peer?not into mirrors,  
but into the familiar faces of friends, and dear lovers,  
scouring desperately for a smidgen of affirmation or care,  
as if searching for a lost contact lens on a patterned carpet.

This estrangement we feel, this odd sense of being outsiders?  
from ourselves, from the heartbeat of chums,  
from that indefinable Whisper that breezes through everything?  
it isn't just a mere restlessness; it is the restlessness.

Yet when the spark does jump, when one soul skims the surface  
of another, there's this blooming, a kind of flowering love?  
for ourselves, mind you, and for that other soul across the way.  
Solitude's dance card only fills when we ourselves pencil in the waltz.

These walls, these self-erected barriers, well, they're our own doing,  
separating us from kin, from the neighbor who always waves,  
from the very ones we've broken bread with or shared a whispered dream.  
It's on us to extend a hand, to reach?with love being the thing extended.

They tell us recovery brings with it a gleaming toolbox  
that can fix these barricades we've so meticulously built.  
But here's the clincher: we must be brave enough to wield the hammer.  
For it all begins with the ancient art of listening,  
and then the spilling of our own patchwork selves onto the table.

Consider the gamble of giving love without a guaranteed return:  
not a bad roll of the dice, I would wager,

for it may just unlatch us from that relentless scavenger hunt  
for affection in the guise of others' glances and nods.

See, risking to love first?heaven forbid we make the initial overture?  
might just uncuff us from the expectations scribbled on the faces  
crowded around us?the very same that often look, bewildered, back at us,  
wondering why we're staring them down like a cat at a fishbowl. ("Self- Erected Barriers") by  
Courtney Weaver Jr.



## The Journey

### The Journey

Not to hold oneself,  
But to learn? a loose leash.  
The soul, a beggar dog leading  
Through creeks and meadow dances,  
Valley sleeps and hill lunges.

It tugs to narrow bends,  
On expressways, manic with speed,  
To sip coffee in nooks,  
And cities that never breathe,  
To hostels where bread breaks  
And stories weave into a tapestry.

Let experiences come?  
No gate, no judge.  
Every misstep, a necessary stumble,  
Every ill-timed pause, a moment's destiny.

Through it all, the heart navigates?  
A compass spun by our blood's own lore,  
Unfazed by the misadventures  
Of getting lost or the myth  
Of the wrong time.

We are magpies in the world's shimmer,  
Picking bright bits,  
While others recount their own raids  
Into the luster of living,  
Their hands holding out their sparkle.

Then, as friends huddle

And soups cool on parted lips,  
Open wide the heart,  
And with a joy unstinting,  
Sing the roads you walked alone.

## Tears

### Tears

Tucked in the corners of eyes  
like miniature crystal balls,  
those tiny globes of saline,

they don't just fall,  
they descend like the slowest rain,  
bringing into focus

a landscape slightly bent.  
As though peering through a fish-eye lens,  
they reveal a world askew -

where the simplest chair leg  
might look like a root of an oak,  
or the edge of a stamp

could suddenly remind you  
of the cliffs of Dover.  
And all of it, every detail

swollen and blurred  
by this watery prism,  
as if painted by an artist

who cannot decide  
between Impressionism  
and drowning.

## Lugubrious

Lugubrious

this word sits like a heavy cloud,  
a two-dollar term dropped in a nickel conversation  
and you think it's got style, but it's really just swollen sorrow,  
all dressed-up gloom crashing the party where slang  
and stirred-up street talk are dancing.

and yet there's something delicious in the way  
it rolls off the tongue like dark molasses  
slow and thick, dripping with an aftertaste  
that sticks to the roof of your mouth and you remember  
that sadness can sometimes be savored.

so, I sling this not often used word into my verbal stew,  
stirring the pot with a slow hand ?  
watching as the melancholy melody marries  
the everyday beat of the barrio,  
and just like that, lugubrious starts looking,  
sounds sounding, like it always had a place in the pulse of our speech.

like we're all talking in a thousand tongues  
building a tower of Babel out of synonyms for blues,  
out of the rhythm of a rain-soaked street  
where we splashed, and melancholy was the puddle that reflected our faces,  
and we, the defiant, daring to dance in the downpour.

Because lugubrious or any word fun enough to flip  
through your mind and skip off your lips  
with a wink of woe and a grin of glee ?  
is just another instrument in our symphonic streets,  
another note in the high-rise harmony,  
a thousand words for the price of feeling free.

## Words, Like Weeds

Words, Like Weeds

They overrun the quiet lots of speech,  
Mouth, throat overrun with wild spawn.  
Wanting to be plucked and dried to silence,  
These unruly guests in my house of bone.

Pressed under the weight of simple pages,  
Stuffed into the gaping maws of envelopes?  
Sent out to strangers who may never read them,  
My home now stuffed with the unsaid.

Words piling up in drawers and dark corners,  
The closets and cabinets vomiting verbiage.  
"Peddle them," friends urge, "trade them,"  
Pulverize and brew them into potent potions.

"Smoke them for visions," they say,  
But no, a hemlock brew is not for me.  
Fear of the agents kicking down the door  
For planting this lush, contraband garden.

This wild harvest is too much to contain.  
A drought is needed, a purging fast  
To sift through the excess, save the essence  
For future seasons when the tongue is parched.

## How to Play the Beer Bottle

My father taught me how to play the beer bottle. It was Schlitz, and the world hadn't yet kicked my ass, I was just a sprout, three or four. "You gotta shove your lower lip under like this," he said, "then huff some life over the top, yeah, like you're tryin' to start a fight with God."

So I did, and a sound wobbled out, deep like the hum of the fridge when you've got nothing inside but light. We laughed, his face crinkling like old leather, and somewhere in there, I thought this is what it meant to be happy.

Then he threw me a curveball, "See, kid, it's all about how much you've let it drown you. Less juice, different tune." With a crooked smirk, he nudged that bottle my way, told me to take a swig. I did, the bitter bite of it, and when I sang into that bottle again, it was another kind of laughter, more hollow, as if the world was laughing back, or else it was the beginning of learning how to forget.

Now he's leaning in, all hush-hush like he's about to unveil the secret to beating the ponies or how to dodge the draft. "Wanna grab life by the balls? I'll show ya. Here's how you lawyer 'em." He raises an eyebrow like he's picking a lock to the pearly gates. "You just lift that, kid, yeah, like that. Now, let it sit there, cook a bit, then twist your mug to the crowd."

I mimicked his circus trick, felt like a damn fool holding my face like a clown in court.

"Good, good," he nods, "now all lawyer-like, you turn slow, give it to 'em straight ? 'I see.'" And there it was, the hotshot playbook: one part bluff, two parts bullshit, blended until the truth's just a chaser.

We laughed again, me and him, but somewhere inside an alarm rang faintly. All these lessons, these games, they were just survival skills for a world thirsty for your blood, a world where the bottle's always half empty and truth's just a joke you forgot the punchline to.

## The Sun in Her Prison

### The Sun in Her Prison

It's quitting time for the sun,  
Sunk in a cell of fading light.  
Night's fat fist punches out  
The last plea for daylight.

Steel caterpillar time  
Screeches past, belching dark.  
Tracks entangled in tall weeds  
By my platform, barren, stark.

Freight train of ragged dreams,  
Crammed cars groan under grief?  
Faces smudged with old regrets,  
No room for belief.

Single muscle of will dives,  
Through the ink of hardship, submerged.  
Bound to a comatose fate,  
Powerless to emerge.

## Elements

### Earth

In the snail's silver track across the soil,  
The earth tells its slow tale of eons past.  
Worms tunnel, blind architects of crumbly kingdoms,  
Tiny empires rise in the shadow of a pebble.

### Air

A spider dangles at the end of a thread,  
A skydiver suspended in the theater of the breeze.  
Invisible fingers stroke the grass,  
Playful, teasing the hair on the nape of your neck.

### Fire

Candles on an alter glow, little monks in fervent prayer.  
The match's head flares, a sudden thought in the dark.  
Charred logs in the hearth hold court,  
Whispering secrets in the language of smoke.

### Water

A river meanders, an old man taking his time.  
Ice in a whiskey glass clinks like soft laughter at dusk.  
Raindrops on windows map out new constellations,  
Water, the artist, painting its path on the canvas of the world.



## Old Man at Chang's

Old Man at Chang's

In the corner,  
a solitary figure,  
companionship bound in pages.

A hot and sour bite, a chilled glass frost,  
where Saramago whispers terror and wonder  
into willing ears.

Afternoon light dances, a soft italic touch,  
on porcelain and linens,  
a spotlight on the understated elegance  
of a waitress's smile.

She approaches,  
bearing simple gifts  
of rice and spiced beef,  
to the old man savoring solitude  
at my favorite table.

## Silent Dust

In the silence of the roadside dust,  
he lay?  
a still life of brokenness,  
clad in the tattered cloth of yesterday.

Fate, with an ironic smile,  
had kissed his brow,  
left a grin, eternal, unchanging,  
while the world browsed on and took a bow.

Untouched by the concerned glances  
of passing souls,  
they moved on to greener fields,  
chasing civic goals.

His eyes, glazed  
with the frost of apathy,  
ignored the universe,  
content in their own tragedy.

One hand lay helpless on his chest,  
the other, a futile fist in earth?  
while his silence screamed a thousand words  
and his stillness gave them worth.

I lifted him from the cold hard ground,  
carrying his weight like a shield?  
and we danced, a pair of shadows,  
across the cosmic field.

## Travelers

two souls,  
tangled up like dirty laundry in the wilderness  
underneath the muscle and sweat of the great bear sky,  
the night wrapping around them like a cheap coat  
with holes in the pockets.

one, a shadow bastard rich with green,  
hoisted up in nature's dirty skirt,  
the other a slick dance with the big nothing.

and here comes the bear ? furry slob,  
snuffling through the silence,  
nudging at a stiff, like a drunk at a bar.

they're quiet, these two,  
quiet as the sneaky drip of night juice on the dirt,  
not a scream, not a whisper,  
no red to paint the ground.

the green man scrambles down from his ratty throne,  
thirsty for whispers and tales only the dead know.

the old man stands up,  
shakes off the leaves and bugs,  
and speaks like a knife cut:

stick to the ones that don't fold  
when the dark opens its rotten mouth  
and howls.

## Changing Clothes

When the sleeves fray and the collar falls limp,  
We undress our days from their weary seams.  
Behind the door, a life, threadbare, clings to a nail.

The body shrugs off its fabric husk,  
Slips into the dark's crisp evening wear,  
Ready for the moon's silent cocktail party.

A shirt, crumpled on the floor, remembers the skin,  
While the soul, barefoot, tiptoes into the unknown,  
Giddy at the prospect of untried attire.

Death, that thrift store on the corner of Now and Then?  
We linger, trying outfits in its solemn dressing room,  
Our shadows dressed for an occasion without a date.

## When I change the way I look at things, things change

When I change the way I look at things,  
the things I look at change.  
With new eyes, I squint at the once familiar?  
Now a street corner sprouts wings,  
A mailbox metamorphoses,  
Its maw stuffed with secret flights.

A dog with three legs hops like a question  
Left unanswered by passing strangers.  
Coins in my pocket jingle, not with spending,  
But with tales of distant shores.

By merely tilting my head,  
The sun fractures into a murder of crows,  
The wind?now a thief?steals my last thought,  
And on the pavement, my shadow breaks its chains.

We're all undercover, it seems,  
Sparrows double as spies,  
And the moon, full-faced and sly,  
Whispers to thieves in the night.

I shift my gaze once more,  
And even the mirror starts to doubt,  
Laughing at its own silver face,  
As I become who I might be.

## Young is the Night

A thin veil brushes the dome of dusk,  
The tender hours, their edges curled,  
Like straw, skitter across the brooding firmament,  
After the last shot declares silence golden.

The night is young, she whispers.

Circus fires eat away at the fabric of dark;  
Where once the acrobat soared, mute we stand.  
The night, still in diapers, sniffs around?  
Pair of snails in blind search, craving dirt beds  
In the fields of bones' deep sleep and kin forgetfulness.

It's the pride of the night we cherish,  
Silent as a painting in a charcoal frame;  
This thicket of barbs, a lullaby to lone pines,  
The weary rhythm of endless roads pulsing.

The night? a babe, swaddled in the smoky breath of industry.

Stuff the smokestacks with winding paths,  
Where hands alight flames like open books,  
Braiding stares, eyes wide as the cosmos.  
The night claims us, branded with imprints of light.

Ash-flecked faces once basked in a knowing sun.

Now they're yanked by hysteria from the womb,  
Stunted ponies turned highways full of screams.  
Along new horizons, beasts of fancy stride?  
Stonewashed ripples in thinking waters birth themselves anew.

The circus sifts through smirks in the archives of the mind.

## The Unanticipated Buzz

There is no dreaming in the agenda of blooms,  
not even a sidelong glance towards fantasy or forecast.  
One simply bursts forth in a riot of color,  
an unpremeditated spectacle in a lonely field,  
dressed to the nines in petals for no one.

And yet, the buzzing. The incessant buzzing arrives uninvited,  
a rude guest late to a party it was never made aware of.  
It crashes the silent jubilee, feasting,  
a black and yellow interloper with a gourmand's appetite  
for sweet nectar and accidental pollinations.

The bees, with their leg-pockets full of stolen sun,  
dart from throat to throat, impelled not by dreams  
but by some primal GPS etched into their tiny, fervent brains.  
They know nothing of the flower's hopelessness,  
or the beauty it proffers to the indifferent sky.

The flower doesn't dream of the bee, no,  
it simply blossoms because that is what flowers do,  
and the bee, ever the opportunist in an opportunist's tiny boots,  
comes zumba-dancing across the airwaves,  
a melody of need and survival on its buzzing lips.



## The Ceiling Fan's Soliloquy

The ceiling fan wobbles, a tedious humdrum ringmaster,  
presiding over the circus of clowns we call a living room.  
"Cooling you? Oh, that's what they all think," it muses,  
while contemplating the metaphysics of its spiral existence.  
Each day a carbon copy of the last, revolution by revolution,  
it wonders, "If I reverse, will I unlearn the secrets  
of this plaster sky, or simply forget the dust on my blades?"  
It dreams of being a chandelier, dripping with crystals and grace.  
Does it know joy? It chuckles at the absurdity, spinning,  
a dog chasing its own metallic tail, always there,  
never reaching, eternally a blur of motion ? "Happy," it scoffs.  
Yet it indulges the toddler aiming spitballs at its cyclical trance.  
The two bulbs affixed beneath its spindle, are they comrades?  
Perhaps conspirators plotting the next blackout, or star-crossed lovers,  
beaming light into each other's filament hearts, a romance unflickered.  
It tries to warn them of the impending demise at the hands of the cat.  
Perhaps, it whispers into the cool night, a silent oracle.  
Words lost in the white noise of its own making.  
"My prophecies are air," it laments, as you sleep benighted  
by its breath, never knowing it spoke at all.  
And so it gyrates, herald of zephyrs and muggy stalemates,  
a hypnotist's pocket watch by day, a moth's lighthouse by night.  
It beholds life from above, a watchful guardian in rotation,  
pondering the great unknowable ? is the ceiling fan amused?

## Rooms of Life

Under this roof, the secrets keep,  
In unmade beds and closets deep.  
At every threshold, a quiet plea,  
For finding joy in the cup of tea.  
The doors open with the creak of years,  
To rooms where we've stored our cheer and tears.  
Bound by walls that have felt it all,  
They watch us rise, await our fall.  
The hearth, keeper of confidences.  
Where soups simmered, life made sense.  
Spices and herbs and the steaming pot,  
Tales told over each dish, hot.  
In armchairs old, love's soft arrest,  
The day's fatigue finds gentle rest.  
Words exhale in the ticking clock,  
And kindred spirits softly talk.  
The bed calls with its linen tongue,  
Where moonlit fears and hopes are strung.  
A cradle for the heart's repair,  
In the silent chorus of the night air.  
Up the stairs to the attic's mind,  
Where trunks hide the years unkind.  
Beneath the dust, the past awakes,  
Its voice cracks as it speaks and breaks.  
We are houses filled with echoing song,  
Rooms of us where we belong.  
Through quiet reckonings, under our skin,  
Our essence beams from deep within.  
Here is courage, where shadows war,  
A dance with danger, an open door.  
And love, that close, hallowed space,  
Where the universe finds its face.

Dreams wander in a loft so wide,  
Painting futures, side by side.  
All that could be, whispers delight,  
In the ceilings kissed by starry night.  
Each room has tales if we but hear,  
Whispered wisdoms crystal clear.  
In this inner space, secrets roam free.  
Through their telling, we come to be.

## Hubris

They built temples,  
We toss coins in fountains.  
The gods flicker on TV screens,  
We, with remote controls in hand,  
Pronounce judgments.  
The ancients warned us,  
Drunk on pride, we stumble,  
Command the stars to dim.  
Their marble eyes watch us,  
Sculpted brows raised  
At the silly titans we make of ourselves,  
Blind to the thread,  
Thin as a whisper,  
That fate twirls on a fingertip.  
Shadows lengthen,  
The tragedy's last act penned  
By an invisible hand.  
We, who dared to stare at the sun,  
Now blink in the dark,  
Waiting for what we've unmade.

## Frustration

it's a kick in the guts,  
a busted lip and a cracked rib,  
it's the crap sifting through  
the hourglass neck of the 5 o'clock shadow  
and the bloodshot eyes of every beaten dreamer.

let it simmer, let it scream inside your gut  
like a wild mutt chained to a rusted pipe,  
it's the grease and the grind, the spit and the swear,  
it's the muse in a dirty dress,  
dancing on the broken glass of your last good intention.

yeah, frustration, let it be the ink  
that tattoos your soul on the page,  
make it punch, make it bleed, make it raw,  
like the gravel voice of the last call  
and the truth crawling out of a bottle.

scribble it down, the dirt under your fingernails,  
the ache in your back, the stink of the sweat,  
the grind, the bind, the undying need  
to spit in the eye of the gods  
and laugh with a mouth full of blood.

fuel it, feel it,  
let it burn you up and spit you out,  
inspiration isn't clean or kind,  
it's a bar brawl, a grudge match,  
the spit and the dirt and the damnation  
of wanting more than what you've got.

so scribble, scribble, scribble,

until your fingers crack and your eyes bleed,  
let frustration fuel your fire,  
chew on it, choke on it,  
spit it out like a broken tooth  
and call it art.

## Waiting For the Miracle

The mighty incident to hoist you  
Out of the skin you've come to loathe,  
Catapult you into the epic you sketched in idle dreams,  
But never scratched onto the world's stone face.

Papers pile, dishes grow foul, as you languish  
For stars to compose your destiny in their cosmic dance,  
You, the chosen, for whom the universe might,  
Just might, conspire a spectacular favor.

In the dark, the monstrous shape of your life  
Cowers; in daylight, mocking gratitude for breath.  
This mess called living drags, drop by drop,  
And decades slip like water through clenched hands.

You are not the lone bewildered beast.  
The world offers peculiar communion ?  
The serpent blind beneath its stone slough,  
Or the pupa that dies beneath a well-meaning stroke.

The tap-tap-tap on the shell's concave walls ?  
A plea, no, a furious command to the cramped world:  
Expand! I am more than this brittle enclosure.  
Thus, wisdom stumbles in, late, uninvited,

To this midlife script, slashed and rewritten,  
Frantic graffiti on the walls of existence,  
The pressing, the twisting, every contorted push,  
A rehearsal for the final, splendid exit.

One day, the wreckage blossoms to dawn ?  
You, awash with first light, bruised and radiant,

Beholding the dusk, with every splendid scar on display,  
Whole, as only the fractured can truly be.



## Incarnation

This is about the flesh.  
Not a distant deity, whispered prayers thrown  
high and hoping for an echo, no.  
God wrapped in the same skin we tear on nails,  
the aches we soothe with long baths.  
God is not just a hazy wisp of holiness.  
The hymn is a heartbeat, spirit hums in the pulse of blood  
crashing through our temples?  
there's divinity in the touch, the taste of bread,  
a sip of wine turned crimson deep as marrow.

People cringe, say,  
"This is closeness that feels too raw,  
too intimate, an umbrella of sovereignty  
over my muscles, my bones down to the breathing of my cells."  
Yes, imagine a presence nestled in our laughter,  
dancing through our love, divine fingerprints  
on everything from desks to bedsheets.  
He is asking, no?longing,  
to inhabit each moment we thought was only ours.  
The sacred in the soccer game,  
the holy in the hug,  
the whisper of eternity in every mundane step we take.

## Dancing in Silence

The music circles us, mute and devout.  
Lips sealed against the treason of speech.

We turn in step, our shadows married  
Under a moon indifferent to our sins.

You belong to another's universe,  
While I orbit you, craving the tether.

My soul, ablaze, rejoices in the flame,  
Ignorant of your heart's silent terrain.

In the dance, we spin? a boundless loop,  
Unaware of endings, or beginnings.

## Nothing is Wrong

The clock ticks in an empty room.  
We sit and stare at the peeling wallpaper.  
Not a word spoken in an afternoon,  
The silence grows taller than the skyscraper.

A dog barks at a passing cloud.  
Nothing is wrong, yet the air hangs heavy.  
Our thoughts wander away like a crowd  
Of ghosts at a funfair that's empty.

The coffee cold in the mug,  
The newspaper unread on the floor;  
We contemplate the snug fit  
Of the spider in the corner.

The TV mutters static rhymes.  
Nothing is wrong, and yet all askew.  
Our eyes drift to the window many times  
To watch the sky forgetting its blue.

Lost in the maze of what was once new,  
Love lies napping on the couch.  
With nothing wrong, we've nothing to pursue,  
Where even whispers seem too loud.

## The Color of Freedom

Will not die unenlightened,  
What shade, what hue liberty holds.

Never an alien on this soil,  
Yet a citizen to the Earth.  
And as truths unfurl,  
What freedom feels like on this patch?  
This I must come to know.

Change, malignant in its cunning,  
Living now verges on sin.  
Yet though they try to blind and steal my words,  
I shall keep one truth close:  
The color of freedom?  
I'll know it before I go.

## Fade to Darkness

Sirens shriek, hush asphalt veins.  
Monitors hum? a lullaby for the still.  
Sheets conceal, shroud the unbreathing.  
Forceps and scalpels,  
Branded with scarlet?  
Ghosts of a final caress.  
Crimson sacks swell,  
Ballooning with discarded caresses.  
Kleenex castles crumble,  
On chilled vinyl seas.  
Kneecaps kiss oak,  
Pew wood drinks salt.  
Vacancy reigns,  
Steel slabs grow hushed.  
Light dims, surrendering to dusk.  
What remains,  
But the unyielding echo of absence.

## Impunity Wears a Wristwatch

A shadow at the kitchen table,  
Spoon clinking in the dark.  
War smells its way home;  
Peace, a bandage on the wrong wound.

Soft footsteps of a cat burglar  
In the antechamber of power.  
History's thick thumb smudges,  
Both the guilty and the saint.

Smoke rings rising from a gun barrel,  
Kiss the lips of a silent God.  
Pigeons roost on statues,  
While the dead discuss the weather.

Irony, with a straight face,  
Serves supper?bullets and bread.  
The clock ticks in the rubble,  
Impunity wears a wristwatch.

Gloved hands weave war and peace,  
In a loom of broken bones.  
A child's eyes, ripe with questions,  
As the world counts its coins.

## I Am Part of the Fellowship of the Unashamed

Bound by a vow, I push forward.  
No retreat in my blood,  
No whisper of the past to cloud my vision.  
The Holy Ghost grips me with fists of power.

Here I am, crossing the final threshold  
A disciple with no rear view mirror,  
No taste for the seduction of the slide backward.  
I march with a gospel of bone and sinew.

What of the sweet sins of yesterday?  
Trash, redeemed in the alley of my mind.  
Now, my days make sense; they fall into line  
Toward a future that doesn't quiver or question.

I'm done with the penny-ante games,  
The safe wagers, the nods at the knees.  
My dreams burst their seams,  
And my tongue scorns the chatter of the small-minded.

I renounce the podiums of the petty,  
The scramble to be seen, to be crowned,  
To wrestle with egos for the tiniest crown.  
My battle is not to be right or revered.

I don't lust after the front of the line,  
Don't pine to be haloed in the public eye.  
Enough of the meager, the lukewarm goals.  
Enough of the life on a leash, I am unbound.

## Architecture of Acceptance

The chairs never ask  
Who plans to sit, they just expect  
Backs of various widths, the heft  
Of our life's weariness.

Walls embrace shadows and laughter alike,  
The key turns in the lock with a whisper:  
Here you may enter with your burdens,  
Here, the floor knows the trudge of your feet.

In the tender conspiracy of the hearth,  
Each room conspires to cradle your sighs,  
The windows, even when dark, frame  
Your every dance of solitude.

What blueprint of kindness draws  
A residence for one's own soul?  
Brick by brick, I lay down the rooms  
Where no knock is needed, no excuse.

In the architecture of acceptance,  
We are both the door and the threshold,  
Our own generous hosts, ready to pour  
Another glass of silence or solace.



## Thy Love Will Always Be There

No more walks with the echo of your words,  
No more talks encased in verses?  
The kiss that greeted the dawn,  
Now another quiet ghost among the days.

We part, fragments of whispers left behind,  
Our laughter clutches at time like a fading lifeline  
But love?that treacherous bird?flew lopsided,  
Limping with one wing in your heart.

Down on my knees, your memory?  
A pristine beach before storms gathered.  
I heard the crush of roses underfoot,  
The bleed of red against the weeping sky.

They say even God nurses a bruised heart,  
Crimson sorrow leaking through celestial wounds.  
Yet here in the hollow of loss, a flicker:  
Is love's end its death?or its chrysalis?

From ash, I rise to admit the sting,  
A benediction for us both in the smoke.  
There, in the quiet after the fire,  
Your name?a prayer. Always there, old friend

## Gift Shop Elergy

She builds her world with trinkets  
From a shelf of shiny novelties?  
Snow globes encase snowflakes  
That will never melt, nor touch her skin.

A keychain holds keys  
To locks long forgotten,  
While fridge magnets cheer  
On an empty white canvas.

Wind chimes hang silent  
Until a sigh stirs their spines?  
The sound not of wind,  
But of her breath seeking music.

Mugs with slogans  
Brew no wisdom in her tea,  
But she sips the warmth,  
Pretending it's clarity.

Postcards from places  
She'll never visit,  
Stacked on the table  
Like a deck of dreams.

Assembling life from shelves,  
Pieces that don't converse?  
Their chatter drowned  
By the quiet hum of fluorescent lights.

In the glow of facsimile,  
She seeks the authentic

But the scent of lavender soap  
Cannot cleanse the air of longing.

She arranges, rearranges;  
Finds no equation for sense?  
Only the soft whisper of dust  
Settling on souvenir spoons.

## Connection

In the noise of the world  
The never-ending chaos  
There's a cable buried,  
Thick as a baby's arm.

It hums with currents,  
Pulsing beneath our feet  
As we walk unaware,  
Searching for its plug.

The black nights come,  
Whispering unknowns,  
Yet here's a light socket  
In the heart's dark room.

We plug in and suddenly  
The room blooms with laughter,  
The kind you hear in the mess  
Of a busy kitchen at supper.

When the earth heaves a sorrow,  
And the skies choke with grief,  
We knit together, stitch by stitch,  
A blanket of small acts.

It doesn't matter if it rains  
Or if the blanket never warms.  
Our hands are alive on the loom,  
And so, we have purpose.

## Her Pen

In the clutch of her hand,  
A tool, no broader than a twig  
Bleeds - stark ink on white.  
With each stroke, the page  
Winces, bearing silent witness  
To the labor of her heart.  
A scrim of words, etched  
With the precision of a surgeon,  
Or the delicate touch of a thief.  
In the canvas of her lines,  
A landscape of sorrow and joy,  
Mapped in the cartography of sentences.  
Here, agony whittled to its essence,  
There, happiness thinned to a whisper,  
Each pared down to bare-faced clarity.  
What alchemy she wields!  
To sculpt in space the weight  
Of the heart's unspoken tremors.  
With her pen ? an artist;  
Charting the deep,  
Capturing the fleeting,  
The difficult, the ephemeral,  
In sentences lucid as a mountain stream,  
Clear as sorrow, concise as a knife's edge.

## The Parable of the Confused Caterpillars

In a small Dutch village, renowned for windmills and tulips,  
there lived a curious clutch of caterpillars,  
each adorned with a peculiar question mark upon their backs,  
a symbol of their shared quandary.

These creatures wriggled in their cocoons of confusion,  
each embracing a multitude of fanciful selves,  
daydreaming in technicolor about the wings they might unfurl.

Researchers, with clipboards as their shields and pencils as their lances,  
dutifully etched down observations, charting the caterpillars' capricious whims;  
their metamorphic musings scribbled into the annals of science.

The years pirouetted by?tiny ballet dancers leaping over calendar squares,  
and like the loyal tick of a grandfather clock, the caterpillars grew.  
They stretched their legs, and they folded their thoughts,  
shedding the skins of their yester-selves with the ease of a whispered secret.

Rustling from the detritus of their bygone bewilderments,  
emerged creatures of diverse designs, each distinct in their essence.  
Some flaunted wings, resplendent, wide, embracing newfound flights of fancy,  
while others mirthfully romped on terra firma, firmly grounded in their being.

And the villagers, who once poised over surveilling binoculars,  
quill at the ready to document predicted emergings,  
soon found themselves among a flutter of surprises, tickled by uncertainty.

For in the realm of growing up and growing wise,  
children, much like caterpillars, wrap themselves in momentary shrouds,  
only to emerge as unfathomable as the dreams they dared to dream?

Just to remind us that we, too, are but passengers on this bus to Bizarre,

where the destination changes as often as the driver's whimsical hat,  
and not a single ticket is printed with indisputable fact.

## The Great Sea Turtle

On an endless voyage, an ancient compass,  
Guided by whims and a twisted fate,  
She crawls up on alien shores,  
Her cumbersome body heavy with secrets.

She buries her future in warm grains,  
An act silent, ritualistic, stark,  
Never to know the small flicker of her legacy,  
Lost among waves, whispering lullabies.

Ancient she is, beyond our clocks and charts,  
Her shell a cryptic, otherworldly script,  
Within the bowels of this traveler, a slick abyss,  
Where galaxies spin in muddled dreams.

Somewhere in that disquietude,  
A mirrored realm flutters,  
An echo of our own fleeting essence.



## What Are You Waiting For?

A shadow leaks from the cracked teapot,  
Spider-webbed porcelain holding mysteries.  
The clock wheezes in the quiet,  
Its hands brittle like old bones.

The floorboards whisper secrets,  
Under the weight of barefoot steps.  
Dust motes dance in a single beam?  
Our thoughts collecting in the silence.

Outside, the old cat limps through the garden,  
Each pawfall a soldier's march through weeds.  
The telephone cannot remember voices,  
Only the echo of unanswered calls.

We sit, heartbeats slow and measured,  
Waiting for the sound of a key in the lock,  
For the world to recognize our smallness,  
To pause and nod before passing by.

## Pride

Of all the causes which conspire to blind  
Man's wavering judgment, and mislead the mind,  
What the frail brain with stubborn bias rules,  
Is pride, the constant vice of clowns and fools.  
Whatever worth Nature has in short supply,  
She furnishes with ample pride nearby;  
For as with bodies, likewise in souls, we find  
What lacks in blood and spirits, puffed with wind;  
Pride, where wit falters, steps in to our defence,  
And fills up all the gaping void of sense!  
When right reason clears that shroud away,  
Truth descends on us with undeniable day;  
Trust not yourself; in knowing your defects,  
Seek both the friend's appraise?and that of foes' detects.

## The Goal of Love

Fearlessness is the goal.  
As we grow and love,  
Our relationship with God  
Unlearns the fears  
That paralyzed us,  
Neutralizes the spiritual.

This is the essence of faith:  
The process of unlearning  
Your irrational fears.  
One of the greatest promises:  
God has given us,  
"I will never leave you  
Nor forsake you."

## Brutus

He sits quietly  
on a threadbare sofa,  
hand resting on the carcass  
of a dying pit bull.  
Its dry tongue dangles,  
a tattered flag of surrender,  
breath wheezes, then exits,  
a small death in the parlor.

The kitchen stands still,  
a witness in the shadows.  
The bedroom,  
a tomb sealed with silence.  
Hallways stretch into oblivion.  
The house, an abandoned script,  
empties itself of sound.

## Today

Today

Eyes vacant, we skim surfaces.  
Hunting ghosts on glowing glass,  
Flirting with purchase or demise.

Lingering for the tap-tap praise.  
Caught in electronic warfare,  
Puppets unable to string a word.

Enslaved by faces behind the screen,  
Phones as shackles of modern day;  
Loneliness, a shadow in neon glare.

**If**

When all are headless in the room,  
And fingers point, ghostlike, at you?  
To trust yourself, a dubious grace,  
While men with doubts crowd the view.  
If you can bathe in patience's pool,  
Beside liars without speaking lies,  
Stand amid hate with cool detachment,  
Yet remain plain, not wise in the eyes;

To dream, but dream not your tyrant,  
Think, absent thought's heavy chain,  
To court Triumph and Disaster,  
Liars both, in their masquerade.  
Bear truths twisted by knaves,  
To snare the unaware and fools,  
Watch your life's work crumble,  
Yet build again with tool's dull edge;

One heap, your winnings? one toss,  
Everything lost, birthed anew;  
Beginnings reborn in silence,  
Losses untold to the wind.  
Heart, sinew, and nerve, exhausted,  
Serving past their ghostly hour,  
Holding on when emptiness reigns,  
Only will whispers: "Hold on."

## The Caged Bird

A free bird leaps  
on the wind's back,  
floating downstream where  
the current fades into silence,  
its wing dipped in orange sun  
and claims the sky.

But one that stalks  
its narrow, shadowed cage,  
seldom sees beyond  
bars of rage;  
with wings clipped,  
feet bound,  
its throat opens to sing.

The caged bird sings  
a fearful trill of unknowns  
a longing melody,  
reaching distant hills,  
singing out  
freedom.

The free bird dreams of breeze,  
trade winds, sighing trees,  
fat worms on a dawn bright lawn?  
names the sky.

A caged bird stands,  
a grave of stifled dreams,  
shadow screaming in nightmares,  
wings clipped, feet tied,  
its throat opens to song.

The caged bird sings  
a fearful trill,  
of the unknown  
longed for still.  
Its tune travels  
to the distant hill,  
for the caged bird sings  
of freedom.



## Just Show Up

A solitary figure  
Stepping through the door,  
Footsteps echoing in the vast, empty hallway.

The world watches in silence,  
A clock ticking in the distance,  
Each second heavy with significance.

In a room full of ghosts  
And unsaid words,  
You plant your feet on the creaky floorboards.

There is courage in your breath,  
Each inhale a rebellion,  
Each exhale an act of survival.

The chairs whisper stories,  
The curtains conceal the past,  
Yet, here you are, stark as a naked lightbulb.

A subtle defiance,  
A shadow crossing the threshold,  
Daring the day to begin.

## Today's Gospel

Friends, today's Gospel portrays Mary, the world's quickest road-tripper. She hears Gabriel's cryptic pregnancy spoiler and bolts to the hill country, a woman on a divine mission, with that kind of fervor you only see in people who've misplaced their car keys.

Why the rush? Because somewhere between the angel's announcement and her cousin Elizabeth's front porch, Mary found herself in God's cosmic screenplay. We're all casting ourselves in our own ego-dramas, starring in our autobiographies where each of us is the misunderstood hero, the idiosyncratic auteur, the snappy dialogue writer.

But there's this larger play, the theo-drama, penned and directed by something far more spectacular. Mary's hasty trek was her way of diving headfirst into God's storyboard, a script where each act aligns with universal mysteries and celestial puzzles you'd need a PhD in philosophy just to misunderstand.

Elizabeth, pregnant with her own miracle, is the co-star in this holy sitcom. Mary and Elizabeth, two characters pulled from a divine hat, finding their places among the spiritual lines and stage directions. They marvel together, not at their belly bumps, but at the script notes from the Almighty nudging them into climactic scenes.

So perhaps amidst our daily absurdities, between lost keys and found resolve, we too must discover our lines?and perhaps, our over-the-top stage presence?in God's grand, bewildering drama.

## At the Edge of the Lagoon

In the thin moonlight,  
we found ourselves by the lagoon,  
where a congregation of boulders?  
earth's silent sentinels? leaned in close.

Beneath the sky, freckled with starlight,  
we stifled our breath.  
There, at the gravel shore,  
two herons, gray-blue phantoms, stood.

Frozen in their stalking,  
spearing fish,  
their stillness a dance of hunger,  
swift strikes for wriggling prey.

Nature's quiet theater, inches away,  
the wordless sermon of survival,  
from fish to heron,  
from silence to flight.

With a whisper of wings,  
the herons ascended,  
their lean bodies melting into foliage,  
where nests wait, eggs hunger,  
and the earth spins onward.

## The Desert Heart

In the middle of nowhere, sits a heart, bloated with desert air,  
A vagabond compass discarded long ago, forever lost in a drawer of dreams.  
Each wandering grain, the itinerant flea, the gossiping lizard,  
The sand-dusted crow.  
All pay their rent with whispers.

Rain, the shy debutante at the ball,  
Becomes the open gossip in a blink, confessing secrets to rocks,  
While the sun, ever the preacher, roasts marshmallows of memory,  
Aridity hobbles in like an old clerk,  
And Dew, on stilts, tiptoes through lost love letters.

Hot flashes and frostbite's bite-sized sermons,  
Wind, the madman, scribbling post-it notes to nobody,  
The errant pages of vast untamed diaries.  
This heart, a boundaryless theater,  
Invites the lunatic extremes on stage, curtains always open.

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## Crevices

The General had prescribed this ointment,  
Said it was top-secret, that the enemy was dryness.  
I sat in my trench, my lips a battlefield of crumbled ruins,  
Papery remnants of delicate architecture now lost.

Sergeant Pucker always warned us about the Great Desiccation.  
We wouldn't listen, too busy kissing the wind,  
Our tulip-shaped mouths attempting romance with the breezes,  
Oblivious that May's storms were having a cosmic joke at our expense.

It was like rubbing mystery onto my lips,  
A potion for the forsaken, the cracked soldiers in life's trenches.  
Each movement peeled away echoes of the past,  
Crispy crisps of old skin surrendering silently.

Flowers seemed to laugh, mocking with their hydration,  
Bowties of floral cheer, while my lips, my apparatus,  
Dared a smile, a silent curse to the sky,  
Where clouds plotted against the human condition.

Dryness was an inevitable espionage,  
May was a trickster and the garden a battlefield.  
The ointment my sole defense,  
Against the sudden onslaught of elemental conspiracies.

## Changing Clothes

I tried the farmer's hat to wear,  
It didn't fit,  
A trifle small upon my hair,  
Too floppy writ.  
I could not get accustomed there,  
I took it off.

I tried the dancer's shoes, a pair,  
Too loose unfit,  
Not made for strolling through the air,  
Not mine, a bit.  
They felt askew and did impair,  
I kicked them off.

I tried the sun, a summer fair,  
It felt so good,  
The warmth embraced in gentle care,  
As sunshine should.  
The grass laid bare beneath my feet,  
'Neath Nature's best,  
The clothes she lends, a fitting suite,  
In them, I'm dressed.

## Life is Like a Game of Chess

The midnight streetlamp flickers,  
Casting its pale yellow light on the board.  
An old man coughs in the corner,  
His hands tremble above black and white squares.

Silent pieces await,  
Each harboring their tiny secrets?  
Pawn's dirty fingernails,  
Knight's crooked grin.

Inside each move a whisper:  
The basement where moths feast,  
The attic where childhood hides under dust.

We think ourselves kings,  
But we wander like pawns,  
Lost in theories and stratagems,  
In alleyways of memory and regret.

Our eyes narrow in the dark room,  
Seeking that elusive bishop,  
The one who grants absolution,  
Who bends to kiss despair.

Every piece is us:  
Queens with tired hearts,  
Rooks holding onto straight lines.  
Lives in checkmate,  
Breath upon breath,  
Endgame written in unseen ink.



## Championship Cleaning

Dust slapped?

A fencer's subtle trick.

Kick of the roundhouse?

In dirt, a spiraled dance.

Backflip through debris,

Gutter's graceful ballet.

Trash swept aside?

A lover's quarrel, brief.

Mop's curt high kick,

Pirouette in grime's embrace.

Gleam wrestled forth?

Mirror's sliding surface.

Filth, the archenemy?

Basement cobwebs shiver and shrink.

Feather duster, silent assassin?

Conqueror of the unseen.

Opponent fades, unnoticed,

Bowing to the master of the mundane.

## Please Tell Me How We Can Stop Being So Offended

The ghost of that old clown, the one who juggled cacti  
in the desert air, sunburnt and sour, sat down  
beside me at the bus stop. "Listen, pal," he said,  
"there's nothing left to juggle but feathers and regrets."

So I took him to the grocery store, aisle 9,  
past canned laughter and pickled outrage.  
"See," I whispered, "they've replaced the toothpaste  
with apologies and the cereal with guilt flakes."  
He shook his spectral head, a balloon deflating.

In the parking lot, two pigeons argued over  
the last french fry, a greasy monument to something  
we used to call joy. "They don't get offended," I said,  
"they just peck and coo and move on."

The clown sighed, his painted tears almost believable.  
"Maybe," he suggested, "we should just all wear red noses  
and honk at the sky. Maybe we should laugh at the moon  
when it looks at us sideways."

We stood there until dusk, imagining a world  
where rubber chickens replaced keyboards  
and every punchline was a tickle, not an insult.  
We could still hear the pigeons fighting in the dark,  
but we imagined they were dancing.

## A Day in the City

The street mirrors my unease: a puddle of vomit.

A girl, homeless. Her white socks turned black,  
Her shoes invisible, like her parents.

She rummages through a paper bag, seeking crumbs.  
Orphan of the pavement. What's right

About a girl nibbling crumbs off soiled paper?  
Or a stranger's hand-out? Crumbs

From a rich man's banquet,  
Swept away by white-gloved waiters,

Hustling for coin. What's right

About children born to caress  
The grime of the gutters? What's right

About a child's socks, soiled by those gutters,  
Embracing an invisible life?

## Please

Please: a word so short it could hitchhike  
on a dragonfly's wing, buzzing its way heavenward,  
hoping to fit into God's busy schedule. It wears a little suit,  
politely knocking on celestial doors, leaving tiny notes  
under stars. When ignored, it pirouettes back  
like a rejected boomerang, morphs into awkward  
hailstones, pelting the forgetful trees, nudging  
earthworms awake. It lingers in shadowy puddles,  
invites itself into gutters, mingling with strays.  
And here you are, trudging through this damp parade,  
every day a new baptism in absurdity.

## Excellence

A pigeon pecks at crumbs, somewhere  
Is the measure, the scales  
Balanced between hunger and full.

In the alleyway, shadows turn  
Quietly, without fanfare;  
The man with the cigarette,

Squinting through the smoke,  
Knows where excellence hides?  
In the overlooked, the shoes

Worn at the heel, the laughter  
That floats up like a balloon,  
Lost to the clouds. His hand,

Rough with work, gently  
Lifts the thought, a delicate  
Moth wing in the cold morning.

We live on choices,  
Between the cobblestones,  
Grains of sand blown together,

There is no universal rule,  
Only a crooked path, winding  
Through the necessary and the hopeful,

Detailed by reason, and the hunch  
Of wisdom misplaced. The wisest  
Eyes peer from behind curtains,

Silently weighing the notes,  
The history of scales, to tell us  
Nothing is given freely,

Everything balanced on the edge  
Of a wise man's breath,  
Disappearing softly, unseen.

## When We No Longer Know What To Do

We have come to our real work,  
Discovering the faint footsteps of angels  
In the dust of forgotten roads.  
And that when we no longer know which way to go,  
The nightbirds startle from shadow,  
Leading us through labyrinths of stars.  
The mind that is not baffled is not employed.  
It takes the twisted vine, the broken clock,  
To unveil truths hidden in the corners of rooms.  
The impeded stream is the one that sings,  
Fumbling over stones in its path,  
Composing melodies for the lost.

## She Was Still a Tyro in Pottery

The jars, of course, had plans of their own,  
one deciding it was actually a hat,  
another insisted it was a submarine,  
though its porcelain periscope failed the test.  
The whole kiln, a cabinet meeting of rogue diplomats,  
each demanding asylum in the junk drawer.

Her hands, agents of chaos,  
coaxed goblins from the clay,  
each more convinced of its importance than the last.  
One jar, convinced it was a time machine,  
refused to hold applesauce without generating paradox,  
while another, self-identified as the reincarnation of Plato,  
lectured the spoons on virtue and patience.

She laughed, knowing these jars were her army,  
unruly but loyal, conspirators in her quest  
to turn the mundane into the magnificently absurd.  
The kitchen sighed in resignation,  
under the rule of the mad potter and her motley court,  
where every crack and imperfection  
was an invitation to a waltz  
with the ungraspable edge of reality.



## Neon Regrets

### Neon Regrets

I was there, floating above the couch, sipping invisible tea with the Queen of Mistakes. She whispered, "Regrets taste like cardboard." Should have known better, what's wrong with my head? My head, a jigsaw puzzle missing the last piece? a piece that wandered off to join a traveling circus.

I lied about not feeling good. Said I had a date with a melancholy walrus, should have told the truth. Truth is, I was afraid of the disappearing act. Afraid I'd dissolve into a puddle of neon regret, never to be mopped up.

I'll never forget this day. I am always saying the wrong words, always inviting in the ghosts of embarrassment. They dance on my tongue, play hopscotch with my intentions. I promise to think of what I'm saying, before I say them. But promises are soap bubbles, and my words are pin-prick. My life's a jukebox playing the same sad song, but with a laugh track.

## The Lilies Light Up

A quiet glimmer on the water,  
Ghostly lanterns, they float away.  
With a tender flicker,  
They spell out the night's message.

Whispering to the restless stream,  
To cease its endless tumble.  
From chaos, a silent pact forged,  
A symmetry born from cacophony.

In that fractured light,  
On the soft bones of the riverbank,  
Their winter garments lie in wait,  
For the embrace of warm waters nearby.

## Whispers of the Whiskered

In murmurs low, a secret lies,  
a tongue not made for human ties.  
With gizmo keen to feline plea,  
and hound's low howl beneath the tree,  
I heard, and slowly came to find  
a realm where paws with thoughts aligned.

They murmur dreams beneath the night,  
in sunlit corners, nap in light.  
In alleyways and beds of plush,  
they whisper codes in shadows hush.  
"Respect the claw, honor the bite,  
fear the hunt, and dread the night."

They watch us close with cautious eye,  
as kin, as foe, as passers-by.  
Two-legs who love, who scold, who play,  
in their great story, we all sway.  
They softly hiss, "You're not alone,  
in our furred hearts, love has grown."

So, in their mews and growls, I see,  
a veiled, mysterious monarchy.  
A world where trust is paper-thin,  
a bond that gleams where stars begin.  
Through gadget's ear, I've come to know,  
the silent truths that pets bestow.

## A Blue Heron Stands

The heron, a statue in a fishy courtroom, debates the existential quandaries of minnows. His neck, a question mark, senses the gossip beneath the surface?tiny scandals, minnow ambitions, and other life dramas invisible to the casual observer.

Fingerlings flirt and frolic, blissfully unaware they're playing a game of hide-and-seek with doom. Their innocence, a comedy in motion, contrasts sharply with the heron's focused gaze, the original sniper in a tuxedo of feathers.

Around his legs, the water whispers secrets. Shhh, it says, our hero is in deep contemplation. Then, without warning, a minnow dares to break the sacred surface, a minor rebellion in an aquatic dystopia.

Our sniper locks in, iron cool. His beak, a loaded weapon ready to deliver nature's verdict. One flick, a break in the time-stream, and he snaps back with his prize. Justice served, just another night in the marshes.

Tomorrow, he'll reenact the scene before an audience of reeds and shadows. Tonight, he's content?belly full, destiny met, another day in the absurd theater of survival.

## Evening Walk

When I go up through the mowing field,  
And tread the aftermath,  
With dew laid thick on folded blades,  
That close the garden path.

And when I reach the garden soil,  
The sober birds take flight,  
From tangles withered, dry and dead,  
Their wings distill the night.

A tree beside the crumbling wall,  
Stands bare, and leaf that's brown,  
Disturbed by thought, it murmurs loose,  
And softly shrouds the ground.

I end my walk as I began,  
By plucking petals few,  
The last pale aster in the field,  
I carry back to you.

## Fasting

The children in the attic play wild games of Hide and Seek,  
their laughter echoing like marbles skittering across the floorboards.  
Mother swears the roof'll cave in if they don't stop;  
but what's a little noise when your soul is starving?  
Jesus himself? an artist of nutritionless disciplines? advised  
three courses: prayer, fasting, almsgiving, with a side of humility.

You see, one must hush the stomach's roar,  
send the body to bed without supper  
so the soul can rummage for breadcrumbs in the dark.  
Fasting is the mute button that quiets the noisy child inside,  
the one yammering for cupcakes and caramel apples;  
it hushes the saplings so the ancient oaks might be heard.

Meanwhile, we chase dollars like butterflies,  
net them and mount them in glass cases,  
as if currency could fill the hollow spaces in our chests.  
Jesus grinned, tossing coins to beggars from his pocketless robe,  
reminding us that maybe the best kind of wealth  
is the kind you can give away without a second look.

And it's these two? the hunger and the almsgiving  
that keep us coming back to the dinner table of divinity,  
a feast without forks, a banquet of invisible wine,  
where for once the deepest hungers do not go unanswered,  
and the children, tamed, dream of celestial candies  
that no grocery store carries.

## Late August

Heavy rain, sun's heat tangled days,  
Blackberries swelled, mysterious as bruises.  
First one, a glossy knot,  
Deep purple in a crowd of red and green, stubborn as stones.  
Devouring the first, tart and rich,  
Thick wine in summer's heartache,  
Mouth stained, craving ignited,  
Drawing us out with milk cans, pea tins, jam-pots.  
Briars clawed and grass sobbed at our boots.  
Through hayfields, cornrows, potato drills,  
We foraged till the cans sang with fullness,  
Green clusters hidden beneath, dark globes peering  
Like a conspirator's eyes. Our hands tattooed  
With thorn pricks, fingers sticky, Bluebeard's guilt.  
We stashed the berries in the barn,  
Only to find a rat-grey curse, fungus gluttoned,  
Their juice soured, reeking death.  
Plucked from their shrubby altar,  
Transformation soured the summer's gift.  
Tears pooled, fairness mocked,  
Those gleaming canfuls condemned to rot.  
Hope returned each year, knowing it lied.

## The Quiet Visitor

The cancer creeps like a thief,  
morphine whispers hollow promises,  
my mother's screams cut the night,  
a chorus of agony, the pain,  
finding its way through veins,  
each breath a laborious defeat,  
her eyes searching for relief,  
a silent plea to unseen gods,  
in the sterile room, shadows  
dance to her stifled cries,  
life ebbing in a cruel rhythm,  
the finality of each moment,  
a testament to fragile existence,  
as we sit, helpless witnesses,  
to her battle, her weary surrender.



## Repair the Damage

We stand among ruins, our breath caught,  
Debris at our feet, stories in fragments,  
A testament to our will, now humbled.

Sweep away the shards of yesteryears,  
Gather them in trembling hands, solemn,  
Mending the cracks, one plea at a time.

Past shadows whisper, we bow our heads,  
Asking for strength, the will to rebuild,  
These walls, our hearts, the wreckage.

No show to run, no stage to claim,  
Only silence, broken by promises,  
Of change, of mending, of new dawns.

We vowed, any length, any cost,  
For victory over the shadows,  
For peace in the light of mending.

## Thresholds of Gain

In the darkest tunnels we crawl, seeking light  
Among shadows whispering secrets of sorrow  
Each tear shed becomes a gem of wisdom  
The weight of grief, a crucible for the soul  
Through jagged paths, we carve our resilience  
Pain's cruel hand sculpts the steel within  
Fears disband under the watchful moon  
In night's silence, we find our true voice  
Strength blooms from the soil of our despair  
As dawn breaks, we stand, forged anew

## Eclipsed Desires

In silent rooms where shadows linger mute,  
Their eyes speak secrets etched in waning dusk.  
The hollow echoes reverberate unseen,  
Beneath the weight of unmet aspirations.

The city's breath is weary in its sigh,  
A plea to anonymous stars above.  
The clock's relentless face shows no remorse,  
Its hands grasp moments spilling in their flight.

Fragments of dreams weave through time's frayed tapestry,  
Each thread a prayer to unseen arbiters.  
And who among the specters shall we please,  
When all our kisses dissolve like the mist?

Yet still, we reach through the fog of lost nights,  
To touch the phantom of desire's whisper.  
And here, in twilight's fleeting, tender grace,  
Our troubled hearts seek solace in the void.

## Stardust

A picnic table floats by,  
no ants, no red-checkered cloth,  
just a bald man carving teacups  
out of soap bubbles. He whispers  
recipes for upside-down soufflés  
to the pigeons strumming ukuleles.

My neighbor's dog sprouted wings,  
taking lessons from a retired  
drum major who now counsels clouds  
on soft landings and mid-air pirouettes.  
We all applauded when the mailman cha-cha'd  
through the hedge, leaving paper cuts  
on the geraniums but no one seemed to mind.

A dirigible disguised as a tomato  
settled in the garden, reciting  
love letters from compost piles.  
One said, "Dance in the raincoat  
of a tangerine dream," and who could argue  
with such impeccable logic?

Night fell sideways that day,  
and the moon unzipped itself,  
spilling a mixed tape of lullabies  
stitched together by forgotten whispers.  
We held our breaths, paper birds  
caught in a cyclone of nostalgia.

Tomorrow, they'll ask us why we hang  
our shoes on telephone wires,  
why we play hopscotch on ceilings,

why we read grocery lists like epic poems.  
And we'll wink, pocketing stardust  
for a rainy day that's already here.

## A Curious Union

In shadowed pens where light and dark entwine,  
A pig and chicken, cross a curious line.  
Their whispered vows beneath the moon's pale glow,  
With oaths to secrets only they would know.

A wondrous egg, the product of their tryst,  
A marvel, nature's wild alchemic twist.  
Its shell, a testament to what they've spun,  
A union, strange beneath the blazing sun.

The pig, it marveled at the egg's grand size,  
Yet feared the mystery behind those eyes.  
Once broken, yielding yolk of amber thread,  
A fusion, bacon, egg, on breakfast spread.

## The Illusion Unveiled

Bomb the Emerald City, throw down OZ the false infinity,  
Expose the veiled curtain, reveal truth's serenity.  
Nature's whispers, not emerald dreams,  
Awakened souls seek genuine streams.  
In quiet woods, find freedom's plea,  
Transcend the mirage, be wholly free.  
Emerge from shadows, embrace the real,  
Where authentic light reveals the ideal.

## Embrace the Stillness

In sweet surrender,  
to the quiet unknown,  
where certainty slumbers  
and pretense is unshown.

Night whispers its secrets,  
solitude sings its calm,  
welcoming the void  
where emptiness is balm.

O promised Eden,  
of silent, slow unfurl,  
rest in slumber's cradle,  
solitude to curl.

Fade into the shadows,  
be cradled by the night,  
while stars keep their vigil,  
until the morning light.



## Beneath Lethe's Tide

Fill for me a brimming bowl, and in it let me drown my soul:  
Nay, let some draught of vintage rare, with Lethean taste, all thoughts impair.  
For I wish not for Cupid's fire, nor his arrows, nor his lyre,  
But crave a potion, deep and wide, as that which flowed 'neath Lethe's tide.

Behold the empty vessel on the board, its silent hush awaiting night's accord.  
A moon of sorrow spreads its beams, conjures phantoms, wakes old dreams?  
A cruel waltz in silver'd night, a phantom lost to even light.

Ah! The form most fair, but fleeting! A whisper soft, December greeting,  
Etched in night's forgiving kill, a shadowed breath 'neath wind's still.

Alas, my heart doth know no ease, her brightness brings nor balm, nor peace,  
The gleaming eyes and bosom's grace, turn well-lit world to hollow space.

No joy can books and muses give, in vain I seek their light to live.  
Had she but known, and with sweet smile, unbound the chains of love's beguile,  
The tender sweetness of my grief, would flow in sorrow...

## Against the Current

We beat on, hearts like fragile oars in hands,  
Against the tide that pulls us through the years,  
In water's grip, the past commands, demands,  
A backward glance, the source of all our tears.

Each stroke a memory, each breath a sigh,  
The boat's a fragile dream that barely floats,  
Our minds, the stormy seas where echoes lie,  
In whispers, ancient voices rock the boats.

Yet still we row, relentless in the flow,  
Each current stronger, dragging us behind,  
To shores we left so long ago, we know,  
The ghosts of who we were, we'll always find.

So ceaselessly, our spirits' oars will bend,  
Against the past, our journey without end.

## The Resilient Ship

The captain found the ship yare, still strong,  
Amidst the choppy waves, harsh, long,  
His heart, a tempered steel, now light,  
The tempest roared, but held no fright.

The bow cut through the frothy crest,  
A beast, untamed, yet at its best,  
The night was deep, the stars concealed,  
A shadowed dance, the sea revealed.

He breathed the salt, the briny air,  
With eyes that knew the ocean's stare,  
His hands, the helm, with steady grace,  
The storm would pass, this was his place.

The ship, a mirror to his soul,  
A tale of storms and hearts made whole.

## The Fire's Enquiry

Who queries a flame's origin?  
The wood, its burning slave,  
Or the eyes that cannot fully grasp  
What memory seeks to save?

Here? a speck among the soot?  
A moth's frantic, futile sway  
Around the deceptive purity of light,  
Its life a brief ballet.

Just a sequence of spasms, agitations?  
In the glittering heat soon to pass.  
The upsurge of ash, a transient ghost  
Before surrendering to the cold, vast mass.

Striving, then settling into the abyss?  
The cycle of life, an elusive flash,  
Dwelling in the aftermath of warmth  
Becomes the finest of ash.

## The Clock's Patience

In shadows cast by time's indifferent grace,  
Where whispers faint of dreams once bright now fade,  
The heart's deep chamber holds a still embrace,  
A vigil kept in night's profoundest shade.

From ancient lore, in tomes of dust and age,  
Where saints and sages penned their cryptic scrolls,  
The words endure beyond the fragile page,  
To guide the weary through their darkened goals.

In patient silence, wisdom takes its root,  
The restless mind finds solace in the wait,  
As seeds of hope beneath the surface shoot,  
And life's grand tapestry the hands of fate.

For all the truth that mortal tongues can say:  
Wait, hope, and trust the dawning of the day.

## Specters At Dusk

Specters dance upon the edge of night,  
Madness swirls within the fading light.  
Echoes cry from depths of silent fear,  
Truths forgotten, lost to days unclear.

In the chaos, do you find your peace,  
Or does the clamor never cease?  
For in this show, we seek the pain,  
Are you not entertained again?

Shadowed whispers drift through empty streets,  
Where the hollow soul's desolation meets.  
Yet, in the end, what do we perceive,  
But shadows of ourselves, which we believe.

## Unyielding

In shadowed glass I glimpse the fractured self,  
The whispered curse of weakness, not my plight.  
A will unbending, steeled against the dark,  
Yet strength alone cannot unchain this night.

Direction lost, I wandered cold and blind,  
A trembling soul in search of guiding flame.  
To God's embrace, my weary heart inclined,  
His light revealed my faults without the shame.

In honest prayer, my flaws became my gold,  
The bitter wine transformed by grace to sweet.  
A strength misused now purposefully bold,  
Each promise kept beneath my steady feet.

With guided will, I rise, no longer bound,  
In faith and truth, my daily grace is found.

## The Blinkered Imaginarium

Those flowers, their time in the sun, finished,  
Had been hurtling towards this end, surrender  
Was selfless, they were strewn in sacred lines,  
Their chaos like a Breughel painting swirled.

Colors turned landscape into a riot,  
I felt my whole body quiver like strings,  
A bow's tension, laughter came unbidden,  
Through dawn's quiet like an aimless arrow.

I felt, in my blood, the peace of wild things,  
Their sacred geometry a comfort,  
To an aching world, hearts made new by flowers,  
Chaos resolved, our senses redefined.

Their surrender was a song for our peace,  
A riot of sensation, wild, complete.



## The Gift of Absence

The tender night wraps silence round my mind,  
In solitude, a grace we seldom find.  
To leave, to let the quiet hours unwind,  
Is love's most delicate and kind design.

Beneath the weight of words we often bend,  
Yet absence is a balm, a gentle friend.  
The space to breathe, to heal, to comprehend,  
This is the love that words cannot defend.

To stand apart, yet hold the heart so near,  
Is sacrifice, a gift profound and dear.  
In leaving, love's pure echo we can hear,  
Its silent song, a melody so clear.

To love by letting go, this truth we own,  
The hardest gift: to leave someone alone.

## The Fabric of Stories

We tell ourselves stories in order to live,  
Threads of lies and truths, our fragile skein.  
A labyrinth of whispers we will forgive,  
Spinning shadows to soothe our hidden pain.

In mirrors of memory, ghosts reside,  
Veiled in myths that shape our haunted minds.  
We weave illusions where our fears confide,  
Tangled tales in which solace often binds.

Beneath the surface of our crafted lore,  
A silent scream, the heart's unspoken plea.  
We build our worlds to mask what we abhor,  
To shelter wounds unseen, so none may see.

Yet in this tapestry of hope and dread,  
We breathe, survive, on stories gently fed.

## The Tempest Within

Sometimes I yearn for a wild, raging storm,  
A tempest that morphs sky in an hour,  
Where trees wail, and creatures seek the warm,  
Mud-clad shelter from the feral power.

Dark clouds, a shroud, where the sun cannot pierce,  
Winds howling tales of sorrow, long untold,  
Every branch bending to the storm's fierce,  
Grip, every leaf shivering, uncontrolled.

In the chaos, a savage, freeing grace,  
An upheaval that matches my heart's beat,  
As rain tattoos the earth, my soul's base,  
Pounding in rhythm, with the storm's fleet.

I crave the wild to drown my silent cries,  
In the tempest, my own turmoil defies.

## Morning Benediction

If you have some leftover vegetables, diced,  
Silent green fragments from yesterday's meal,  
Cut them into a brunoise, finely sliced,  
Mix them into eggs for a morning's heal.

A fragile shell breaks, yolk spills like the sun,  
Shattered gold pooling in a pan's dark heart,  
Whisk with tender care, the act now begun,  
Binding the lost pieces, a fragile art.

Each morning ritual holds its own weight,  
A prayer whispered in the breaking dawn,  
Every motion a quiet, measured fate,  
As day and night weave threads tightly drawn.

From remnants, we conjure sustenance bright,  
In the kitchen's hush, a day born of night.

## A Tense Encounter

The past, the present, the future  
Walk into the bar, shadows trailing  
Behind them like whispers of lost  
Hours, a clock's ticking heartbeat.

The past orders a drink, heavy  
With the weight of forgotten sins,  
Memories clinking in the glass,  
Amber ghosts dancing in the light.

The present sits still, fingers  
Drumming an anxious beat, eyes  
Flickering like candle flames,  
Fighting the wind of regret.

The future, elusive as smoke,  
Laughs at the tension, a silent  
Promise wrapped in mist, unseen,  
Yet felt, a cold breath on the neck.

Together they sit, silent and  
Apart, each sip a revelation,  
A tense truce in the dim light,  
Time's barroom, a fleeting pause.

## The Quiet Walk

Stepping softly on the earth's skin,  
each footprint a whisper, a prayer,  
we move like shadows, calm and light,  
seeking peace in each measured step.

The world watches our gentle dance,  
a silent song of breath and bone,  
where tranquility is our hymn,  
and happiness our steady beat.

With each footfall, we weave a web,  
connecting hearts across the miles,  
our peace a ripple in the stream,  
spreading wide, touching the sky.

In this walking, this living now,  
we are the keepers of the dawn,  
holding hands with all of mankind,  
one step at a time, we bring light.

## Solitary Echoes

A single tree makes no forest, it's clear,  
Alone, it stands, stark against the dark sky,  
Its leaves whisper secrets only I hear,  
In the silence, it asks me, "Why?"

One string makes no music, it lies still,  
An empty promise of a song unsung,  
The silence, a void no notes can fill,  
A muted voice where no melody's sprung.

Loneliness deep, in shadows it weaves,  
A thread of despair through time's endless loom,  
Yet, hope still stirs beneath fallen leaves,  
A dream of a forest, a song in bloom.

In solitude's grip, we seek and we yearn,  
For the forest's embrace, the music's return.

## Winter Vigil

Between the bookshelves and standing plates,  
An old wooden chair whispers tales of time.  
I sit and watch the hill beyond the gate,  
A blanket of snow, silence so sublime.

The window frames a world both cold and bright,  
Each flake a ghost of winter's frozen breath.  
The hill, a white expanse in morning light,  
A canvas of stillness, hinting at death.

The chair creaks softly under my deep sigh,  
A sentinel of countless quiet days.  
I trace the snow's descent from grey-lit sky,  
Its fall a dance, a slow, deliberate maze.

Amidst the hush, I find a calm reprieve,  
In this old chair, the world, I almost believe.



## Possibilities

Amidst the shadows of life's cruel despair,  
Where whispers echo of a fate unkind,  
A soul awakens, shedding heavy care,  
Discovering new horizons in the mind.

Circumstance, a cloak, cannot define  
The boundless spirit yearning to be free,  
For in the heart where endless dreams align,  
Lies the true essence of one's destiny.

Rise, from the ashes of a broken past,  
Embrace the light, the dawn of brighter days,  
Within the depths, your strength will hold steadfast,  
And lead you through life's labyrinthine maze.

You are the spark, the fire, the shining star,  
Infinite potential, here you are.

## In the Room of a Thousand Things

Only one shadow under the naked bulb,  
A moth debating the taste of light.  
In this room, Jesus whispers of simplicity,  
A carpenter with no love for nails.

Outside, the world hoards its trinkets,  
A magpie's nest lined with silver spoons.  
But here, in the quiet, less clamors for attention,  
And more whispers through the walls.

Possessions, those fickle deities,  
Grow thinner with each prayer for less.  
The soul, unburdened, swells?  
A lung taking its first breath after drowning.

Contentment, that elusive guest,  
Arrives unannounced in empty pockets,  
And in the hands freed from their grasping,  
Finds a place to rest, clear and uncluttered.

Simplicity, the loom on which justice is woven,  
The threads, unadorned and strong,  
Craft a tapestry where every thread  
Is a path home, no matter how worn.

## Dream's Enigma

Upon the dawn, when night doth break its spell,  
I ponder oft what visions were but dreams,  
And what, perchance, the waking mind doth tell,  
In slumber's artful, twisting, shadowed schemes.

Was that bright realm of wonder truly seen,  
Or but a phantom of the sleeping mind?  
Did moonlit gardens glow with silver sheen,  
Or doth reality leave such thoughts behind?

Yet in the morn, with eyes to daylight's truth,  
The heart recalls the echoes of the night,  
And questions what is false and what is sooth,  
In realms where sleep and waking intertwine.

Thus, life's great play, with dreams our minds confound,  
Where truth and dreams in equal parts are found.

## Farinaceous Dreams

In kitchens warm, where shadows softly creep,  
The rice in pots begins its gentle sigh.  
Noodles, like strings of memories, do sleep,  
Unraveled tales of distant lands gone by.

A spoon of rice, a measure of our days,  
In every grain, the world's old sorrows lie.  
Noodles entwined in tangled, silent praise,  
Of mothers' hands and lovers' soft goodbye.

Through boiling waters, transformations rise,  
In simple starches, life finds its own song.  
Cultures converge where sustenance complies,  
To bind us close, and yet, apart, belong.

These humble foods, in whispering embrace,  
Reveal our common heart, our tender grace.

## Urban Love

In crowded streets where shadows intertwine,  
Neon lights flicker, pulse of city nights,  
Lovers meet beneath the skyline's spine,  
Hearts entangled in the web of lights.

Concrete towers loom, a testament,  
To fleeting whispers on the midnight air,  
In the chaos, find a quiet testament,  
Moments stolen, urban lovers' lair.

Subway's hum, a lover's lullaby,  
Rushing past the crowded faceless throng,  
Eyes that meet in fleeting glances high,  
In the urban maze where we belong.

In this steel and stone, our hearts ignite,  
Love's brief glow in the electric night.

## The Great Marriage

In shadows deep, ancient hopes entwine,  
The sky bows low to kiss the waiting earth,  
Whispered in winds, a kingdom's design,  
A prophecy blooms in a new birth.

Mountains quiver with celestial delight,  
Stones shiver beneath an unseen touch,  
In heaven's fire, darkness finds its light,  
In earth's embrace, love proves to be much.

Risen body, a sign of worlds combined,  
The veil torn, heaven's will now is revealed,  
In each breath, the divine and mortal bind,  
Sacred marriage, ancient wounds are healed.

Hope unfurls in every whispered prayer,  
Heaven and earth, one in love's great snare.

## Whispers of Learning

In quiet halls, the wise gather to grow,  
Their hands turn pages, dreams begin to show.  
From screens to seeds, the knowledge gently flows,  
Each lesson learned, a blossoming to know.

Among the shelves, a myriad of light,  
The flicker of the mind, the heart takes flight.  
From garden blooms to code that sparks the night,  
In every course, a journey pure and bright.

In whispered pages, futures softly bloom,  
A haven found within the library's womb.  
From ancient lore to modern, boundless room,  
In every word, a hint of life's perfume.

Andragogy's gift, a timeless thread,  
Connecting hearts, where countless minds are fed.

## Music To Lift the Spirits

A lone piano plays a midnight tune,  
Soft notes rising like a crescent moon.  
Strings weep softly, their whispers in flight,  
In shadows' dance, a promise of light.

An old blues guitar with a rusty soul,  
Speaks of sorrow but makes the heart whole.  
Jazz echoes through alleys in the rain,  
Each note a respite from silent pain.

A haunting violin, it starts to weep,  
Tells of dreams lost in the deep of sleep.  
A saxophone cries out in the night,  
Offering solace, a beacon's light.

When spirits sag and the world's askew,  
These sounds pull me back to something true.



## The Best Part of Growing Older

As years pass, wisdom grows within our hearts,  
A measured calm that tempers youthful fire.  
Old dreams evolve, and time refines our arts,  
We learn the truth behind each deep desire.

Memories form a tapestry of gold,  
Threads of laughter, sorrow, joy, and pain.  
In aging, stories rich and full unfold,  
Experience, our fortune, we retain.

The pace of life slows down, and we reflect,  
Each moment treasured, valued for its grace.  
With age, we find a balance to perfect,  
An understanding lines our weathered face.

The best part of this journey, growing old,  
Is savoring the tales our lives have told.

## Salubrious Retreat

In sunlit gardens where the breezes play,  
The air feels pure, a balm for weary souls,  
Soft whispers tell of health restored, a day  
In peace, where time in gentle currents rolls.

Amidst the hills, where morning's light cascades,  
A spa secluded, nestled in the green,  
Each breath a cure, each moment sweetly fades  
The past's fatigue, as nature's grace is seen.

Tranquil the waters, mirror of the sky,  
Reflecting hopes that flourish and expand,  
In this serene embrace, the spirits fly,  
Renewed by earth's kind touch, its healing hand.

Here, hearts revive, and minds find solace deep,  
In salubrious realms where shadows sleep.