

Anthology of Gray

Courtney Weaver Jr



Presented by

My poetic Side 

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For my Father

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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.

Yellow Flower

In the heart of New Orleans' railroad yard,
I stumbled upon a desolate regard,
A tank factory, a bleak sight it seemed,
And in front of it, I sat, lost in a dream.

Beside me stood a switchman's shack,
And on a bench, I found my mind's track,
A lone flower rested on the asphalt street,
Its presence, a mix of dread and mystique.

The hay flower, oh how I perceived,
A brittle stem, black as night, indeed,
With spikes like Jesus' crown, inch-long,
And a tuft of cotton, soiled and long gone.

Oh yellow, yellow flower, industrial bloom,
Tough and spiky, defying nature's room,
Ugly it may be, to some eyes unkind,
Yet still, it possesses a beauty of its own kind.

For in its form, I see glimpses profound,
The great yellow Rose, my thoughts surround,
A symbol of resilience amid a concrete domain,
This is the flower of the world, a soul to sustain.

For even in the midst of factories and despair,
Nature finds a way to emerge and declare,
That beauty exists in the most unexpected places,
And that the human spirit forever embraces.

So let us not dismiss the flowers of industry,
For they, too, hold secrets, hidden majesty,
In their humble presence, a reminder to us all,

That amidst the chaos, there's beauty, standing tall. (Yellow Flower) by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Pebble

In the depths of my sorrow, I gaze at the lake,
Where ripples unfold, a reflection they make.
A pebble's embrace, though brief it may be,
I yearn for the solace that lies beneath the sea.
For I, too, have felt that desire to drown,
To let the burdensome memories never resurface, to disown.
Lost in the echoes of a corroded past,
Where pain and regrets lingered, a storm that amassed.
Yet not every day is shrouded in despair,
Some days, the lake's beauty makes me aware.
Its surface of blue, like a mirror so clear,
Reflects the light, the hope that is near.
With rugged rocks, the lake's brawny embrace,
A sanctuary it becomes, a sacred space.
But on those other days, when flames in me ignite,
Only the deepest depths can bear the weight of my fight.
Like a knife of flames thrust into my chest,
The past wraps around, refusing to rest.
In those moments, the water offers release,
A baptismal solace, a gentle embrace of peace.
The lake becomes an accomplice to my healing,
Its currents caress, their whispers revealing,
That pain may subside in the waters so vast,
Where the flames are doused, and my heart finds repast.
Through the ebb and flow of life's conscious stream,
I navigate the turmoil, chase a timeless dream.
For within the depths, as my sorrows converge,
I discover resilience, a strength to emerge.
So, let the pebble make ripples, and let it sink,
For I know that beneath lies the solace I think.
In the depths of the lake, my sanctuary of grace,
I find the courage to rise and embrace.

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.

Life's Crucible

Within the depth of life's crucible, we find,
A blend of experiences, intertwined;
Sunshine and shadow, a constant sway,
As we journey on, day by day.

Blue skies and gray, a dichotomy,
As laughter and tears shape our reality;
Hearts heavy with burdens, then light with delight,
Eyes misty with sorrow, then sparkling bright.

Losses and gains, in the heat of the strife,
Balancing the scales, each with their own life;
For it is through these contrasting days,
That our true selves emerge, in unique ways.

Into the crucible, time does it blend,
Our hopes and misgivings, fears without end;
Gladness and sadness, pleasures and pains,
Worries and comforts, losses and gains.

But fear not, for within this fiery mix,
Lies the potential for joy, an ember to fix;
Out of the crucible, it shall arise,
Contentment and peace, a precious prize.

From the depths of sorrows, anguish, and woe,
And the burdens that weigh us down as we go;
Out of the shadows, that darken our path,
And the failures that haunt us, invoking wrath.

Do not doubt, for within them lies the key,
To uncover true contentment, bold and free;
For when life's furnace has purified all,

We pour off the scum, to hear joy's sweet call.

Tinctured with sorrow, flavored with sighs,
Moistened with tears, that have flowed from our eyes;
Perfumed with sweetness of loves that have passed,
Leavened with failures, with grief's touch amassed.

Sacred and sweet, the joy that must come,
From the depths of the crucible, once we've undone,
The weight of the world, and shed the debris;
To find solace and light, in our hearts' sanctuary. ("Life's Crucible") 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.

Beyond the Flesh

In a world where the flesh conceals the bone,
And minds and souls are implanted, not grown,
Where women shatter vases against the wall,
And men drown in a sea of alcohol,

A search ensues to find that elusive one,
Yet beds become mere stations, never home.
For the flesh, yearning, searches for more,
Unfulfilled, as it transcends its physical core.

In a realm devoid of hope, of second chance,
We are trapped, captive to a singular dance.
No soul shall ever stumble on the one;
No destiny, no cosmic thread to be spun.

The city's dumps overflow without respite,
Junkyards and madhouses, where sorrows alight,
Hospitals teem with afflictions and pain,
As graveyards stand filled, a solemn refrain.

In this vast void, there is nothing to fill,
No substitute, no balm for this bitter spill.
Yet, amidst the bleakness, a voice shall rise,
A whispered echo of strength, that softly tries:

Beyond the flesh, beyond the bone and skin,
There lies a beacon, a light deep within.
Though the world may falter, darkness prevail,
Love's flame flickers, never destined to fail.

So let us seek within, our spirits entwined,
To find solace, connection, leaving fate behind.
For though the search for the one may seem vain,

The spark we ignite, invincible it shall remain. ("Beyond the Flesh") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Old Concepts

In an age of constant change and progression,
Where past ideals face harsh rejection,
There lies a question, a constant debate,
Should we embrace the new or reminisce and relate?

Some claim that all things modern are supreme,
And anything different is purely a scheme,
But history tells a different tale, my friend,
Of moments when the old did not offend.

When the pointed arch adorned the church's frame,
Did anyone dare to call it a shame?
No, for beauty transcends the test of time,
And innovation is not always a crime.

Plate-armour, glazed windows, verses profound,
Were they reviled when first they were found?
Certainly not, for they added to our story,
Enhancing the world with their touch of glory.

So let us ponder, let us genuinely reflect,
On the charms of the past, without disrespect,
For it is not mere archaic yearning we crave,
But a recognition of all that we've gained and gave.

If a swindler siphons away our wealth,
Comparing the present to our former self,
We cannot help but feel a pang of sorrow,
For all that is lost, today and tomorrow.

And if a quack doctor's negligence prevails,
Making us forget what our body entails,
Should we not acknowledge what once was,

And treasure the memories, despite the flaws?

So when our guides push us to look ahead,
Abandoning the past, they forcefully spread,
We can't help but question their true intent,
Do they fear that tradition might relent?

For in embracing the new, we must not forget,
That progress is built on old concepts, time beget,
So let us appreciate the worth of both,
And in the harmony of past and present, we'll grow. ("Old Concepts") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Once Innocent Children

In the dungeon of despair, I wandered through,
A flophouse, a place that tarnishes the view,
With only one light bulb, dim, barely bright,
65 men huddled together in the night.

The chorus of snores, a deafening sound,
From deep within, grotesque and profound,
Dark, snotty, and inhumane in their tone,
A symphony of suffering, an otherworldly moan.

The stench of unwashed socks filled the air,
Mingling with the scent of piss and despair,
Over it all, the stagnant breeze did flow,
Like the foulness emanating from garbage below.

Bodies, in the darkness, thick and thin,
Some bent, others limbless, a sight so grim,
Among them, the mindless, lost in their trance,
But the absence of hope, the worst, left no chance.

It's unbearable, the weight of their pain,
I couldn't bear it any longer, I had to abstain,
I stepped outside, into the cold, bleak night,
Wandering the streets, shrouded by darkest plight.

As I walked, I pondered the men I had seen,
Once innocent children, where had their dreams been?
And reflecting upon myself, I couldn't help but rue,
What had happened to them, what had happened to me too?

In the darkness and cold, my pen finds its way,
To write this poem, an attempt to convey,
The haunting struggle, the cycle of despair,

In hopes that empathy may be lifted from this air. ("Once Innocent Children") 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.

Where Darkness Abides

In a world consumed by fears untold,
Where shadows dance and doubts unfold,
I seek solace in verses, where poetry resides,
As I paint my fears, where darkness abides.

Fear of seeing sirens pierce the night,
As blue and red flicker, a chilling sight,
Fear of slumber's embrace, elusive and fleet,
The dread of restless nights, where dreams retreat.

Fear of the past, a ghostly apparition,
Haunting memories, an ever-present condition,
And fear of the present, slipping away,
As time sails swiftly, without delay.

Fear of the telephone's eerie chime,
In the depths of night, a chilling rhyme,
Fear of storms, lightning's wicked dance,
Cracking through the sky, nature's wild expanse.

Fear of the cleaning lady's blemished cheek,
A face marked by life, the fear turns bleak,
And fear of innocent dogs who won't bite,
Yet whispers in the wind question what is right.

Fear of anxiety, its relentless sway,
Controlling the mind, where peace should lay,
And the fear of facing the dead friend's end,
Identifying a body, a sorrow that won't mend.

Fear of lacking and fear of excess,
In a world that judges, we're left to confess,
Fear of psyches, superficially judged,

In a world of assumptions, cruelly grugged.

Fear of tardiness, yet fear of being first,
Anxiety's paradox, this fear-filled burst,
Fear of my children's handwriting, a plea,
That their lives surpass mine, forever free.

Fear that guilt may sting, when loved ones depart,
A haunting remorse, a heavy heart,
And fear of aging, with my mother in tow,
A burden shared, the fear of ebb and flow.

Fear of perplexity, thoughts astray,
Lost in the labyrinth, where reason may sway,
And the fear that the day will sorrowfully end,
Leaving wounds unhealed, a message to send.

Fear of waking to find you're no more,
An empty void, where love did once pour,
And fear that my love may harm those dear,
A double-edged sword, sorrowful and clear.

Fear of mortality, life's unknown door,
The fear of our essence, forevermore,
Fear of time's passage, a breathless race,
Afraid of living, yet fearing death's embrace.

In this cocafany of fears, I weave my plea,
To find solace in poetry, to set them free,
For in the rhythm of words, fear finds release,
An elegy of fears, where they may find peace. ("Where Darkness Abides") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Acceptance

In the mire of my being, emotions arise,
Anger and blame, they don't come as a surprise.
But today, I choose a different path to follow,
To accept these feelings, without judgement or sorrow.

For feelings, they're messengers, not to define,
But to inform me of what's happening inside.
They're not facts, nor should they control my way,
Just gentle whispers, guiding me through each day.

No need to beat myself up, or criticize,
For these emotions are simply passing by.
A storm that brews within, but soon it shall subside,
If only I allow them, without trying to hide.

For judgments and criticism make things worse,
Complicating emotions, like a neverending curse.
They linger and persist, ten times as long,
Until I find the strength to admit I was wrong.

So, why should I fight, resist, or deny?
When accepting them allows them to pass by,
Like rivers flowing on their natural course,
These feelings will ebb, without any force.

There's nothing inherently wrong with any emotion,
Anger and fear, they're just a part of life's motion.
So what if I'm angry, or feeling mad?
Accepting it allows it to dissipate, making me glad.

No longer tangled up inside with no way out,
I release the judgments, without any doubt.
For in the face of fear, I won't overreact,

Instead, I'll find the calmness, and gently interact.

My feelings need not toss me in every direction,
I have the power to choose my own reflection.
To let them pass through me, like waves on the shore,
Embracing their presence, but not anymore.

So, today I accept all feelings that may arise,
Without blaming myself or believing the lies.
For in this acceptance, I find peace and grace,
And navigate life's journey with a steady pace. ("Acceptance") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Fear and Dispair

In the darkest depths where emotions dwell,
There lies a chasm, a divide untold,
A boundary between Despair and Fear,
A contrast vast, a story to unfold.

Despair, with its heavy, suffocating weight,
A void that consumes, eroding all hope,
It grips the soul, in a relentless embrace,
Shattering dreams, like a shipwrecked boat.

Like an instant of collision upon the seas,
Despair strikes like waves against the shore,
Leaving wreckage and fragments of the self,
A wounded spirit, forevermore.

But Fear, dear friend, stands at a different shore,
A phantom that lurks in shadows unseen,
It haunts the mind, with whispers and doubts,
Projecting terrors where none have been.

Unlike Despair's instantaneous blow,
Fear lingers, evolving, shifting its form,
A continuous battle in the depths of thought,
A trepidation that withstands the storm.

The mind, in Despair, remains stagnant, still,
No motion, no progress, no chance to grow,
Like the serene eye of an ancient bust,
It resigns to accept what it cannot know.

Contentment lies in the face of the unknown,
The acceptance of what lies beyond our grasp,
For the mind, like the eye upon a forehead,

Finds peace in acknowledging its limitations, at last.

So let us navigate this intricate realm,
Where Despair and Fear weave their tangled threads,
Choosing to face these adversaries bold,
With strength and resilience as we tread.

For Despair, though a wreck that shatters the soul,
Holds potential for healing, for growth, for grace,
And Fear, though it whispers the tales of uncertainty,
Can be tamed, subdued, in life's intricate maze.

With minds open, and hearts unafraid,
We embrace the moments between joy and strife,
For in this dance of Despair and Fear,
We discover the beauty, the essence of life. ("Fear and Dispair") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

A Dance With Perception

In the depths of my mind, lies a disease,
A distortion of sight that's hard to appease.
It twists my perception, distorts what I see,
Showing a world that may not truly be.

"We don't see things as they are," they say,
"But as we are," in our own unique way.
A kaleidoscope of thoughts, colors, and fears,
Shaping our vision, mired in past years.

Is it a curse or a blessing, this flawed lens?
For in my perception, the truth often bends.
Yet, amidst the chaos and tangled view,
Lies an opportunity, a chance to renew.

I must put things in perspective, seek clarity,
Unravel the knots of my mind's disparity.
To understand that my thoughts hold the key,
To unlock the door and set myself free.

For it's not the world that's distorted, but I,
And it's through self-reflection, I'll learn to apply,
The wisdom of forgiveness, the power to let go,
Rebalancing my energy, allowing peace to flow.

No need for religion or spiritual belief,
Just a touch of street sense, to bring relief.
For self-forgiveness, the missing link they seek,
Intelligence's ally, who'll turn the tide at its peak.

So, with each gentle step and every breath I take,
I'll embrace self-forgiveness, my balance to make.
And as the burdens lift and my heart feels light,

I'll witness the benefits, shining oh so bright.

In this dance with perception, I'll find my way,
Through poetry's embrace, I'll learn to convey,
That amidst the disease, there's still hope to find,
A path to clarity, where true vision unwinds. ("A Dance With Perception") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Thumb Stump

In the thrill of the moment,
My thumb, like an onion, is cut.
The top, gone in an instant,
Leaving behind a flap of skin.

A hat of dead white,
And beneath it, a plush of red.
Like a little pilgrim,
My thumb is scalped, just as the Indian's axe.

The carpet of my flesh rolls,
Straight from the heart,
And I step on it, clutching
A bottle of pink fizz in celebration.

From the gap, a million soldiers run,
Every one a redcoat, but whose side are they on?
I am ill, my homunculus,
And I've taken a pill to kill
The thin, papery feeling inside.

I am a saboteur, a kamikaze man,
And the stain on my gauze darkens and tarnishes.
The balled pulp of my heart
Confronts its small mill of silence,
And I jump, a trespassed veteran,
A dirty man with a thumb stump. ("Thumb Stump") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Home

Home is a place of memories, frozen in time
Where every corner holds a piece of our lives
But when we leave, it feels like a crime
As the walls and the floors long for our presence to revive

The empty rooms echo with loneliness and pain
Aching for the laughter and warmth we once knew
The silence and stillness drive us insane
As each day passes, the home's spirit starts to brew

But time stands still, and the home remains the same
A ghost of what it used to be, frozen in the past
With no one to love, it starts to lose its flame
And the memories and moments seem to fade fast

Yet, the essence of our presence lingers in the air
A reminder of the love and joy we once shared
And though the home may seem sad and bare
It will always hold the moments that we once cared. ("Home") 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.

A Work of Art

Every event, every trial, every joy,
They all fit together, like a perfect ploy
Designed by God, to shape and mold
A masterpiece of a life, for us to behold

The struggles, the pain, the moments of fear
All have their purpose, and reason clear
To build us up, to make us strong
To help us realize where we belong

Each tiny stone, in the mosaic of our days
Fits together in intricate ways
To create a picture, unique and true
Of the person we are, and the things we can do

So let us embrace every moment, every test
Knowing that we are part of something blessed
God's plan for us, a work of art

A mosaic of our life, a masterpiece from the start. (A Work of Art") by Courtney Weaver

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.

Frozen Beauty

The world is frozen, trapped in ice
The moon has lost her wits
A star falls, a glimmer of light
In the midst of darkness, it flits

The farmers sweat, turning in their sleep
Like oxen on spits, they rest
But the world outside is still and cold
A mammoth of ice, frozen and possessed

But in the depths of the ocean
The cod swims freely, a key in a purse
And the trout chuckles in its hole
A sleeper in the depths, immersed

The deer roam the bare-blown hills
Their smiles like nurses, comforting and kind
And the flies, hidden behind the plaster
A lost score of a jig, they remind

The world may be frozen, trapped in time
But life still flows, in its own pace
And as the night tightens its grip
There's still beauty in this frozen place. ("Frozen Beauty") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Conflicted

A revelation came to me

About God and his love

But it made things complicated

And pushed me to rebel above

I spoke with a psychiatrist

But nothing came of that talk

I turned to a minister

But his words just made me balk

He said I didn't attend church

As often as I should

Blaming this for my troubles

But I couldn't believe it could

For when I was leaving high school

A revelation came to me

About God's vengeful nature

And I couldn't agree

If God was truly loving

Could he also be vengeful too?

It didn't make sense to me

And so I rebelled and withdrew

I couldn't comprehend it

So I stayed far from the pews

And that's why I rarely attended

A decision I didn't easily choose

So I stand here now, conflicted

Between God's love and his wrath

Seeking the truth within me

As I walk a different path. ("Conflicted") 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.

Mosaic

You may label me with careless words,
And brand me as eccentric and absurd,
But I am a tapestry of complexity,
A blend of traits, unique and free.
You may call me impractical,
And accuse me of materialistic whims,
Yet I seek beauty in the world around,
Blending the tangible with the ethereal sound.
Untactful and taciturn, you say,
But my silence holds wisdom and grace,
A frenzied passion within me burns,
Fueling my spirit, as the world turns.
I may seem superficial, a relentless aesthete,
With a love for all that glimmers and gleams,
But there's depth beyond the surface sheen,
An appreciation for beauty, both seen and unseen.
An aficionada of facts, polished and bright,
And a hoardess of vellichor, the scent of aged delight,
In the pages of old books, I find my solace,
In their stories and histories, I find grace.
Do not dismiss my actions as chaotic,
There's method within my varied ways,
No vagary in my objectives, no disarray,
For I navigate this world in my unique paracosm's sway.
So embrace my eccentricities, and see,
The wealth of colors that makes up me,
For I am a mosaic, a weaving of many parts,
A soul untamed, with a passionate heart. ("Mosaic") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Sweat The Small Stuff

In life's intricate web of toil and strife,
Lies the essence of our seemingly mundane life.
For though we tackle giants with courage and might,
It's the small stuff that haunts us, day and night.

The humdrum routines that burden our soul,
Like thorny pebbles, they take their toll.
Yet in the vast scope of mundane chores,
Resides strength untold, unnoticed, and mature.

So let us sway with grace to this rhythm profound,
A gentle cadence in the midst of life's sound.
For in these trifles, lies beauty untamed,
A treasure chest of lessons yet unnamed.

Amidst the chaos, let our senses take flight,
As we tend to the small stuff with all our might.
Embrace each task, no matter how they appear,
For it's in the ordinary, magic can appear.

With eyes wide open, we discover the sublime,
In sweeping the floors, in washing the grime.
For it's in the details that true artistry dwells,
A symphony of small things in which wisdom propels.

So let's not dismiss the everyday parade,
For it's in those moments that growth is made.
Attend to the details, every intricate part,
For greatness lies hidden, within the minor arcs.

Savor the sweetness of life's little things,
Like the buzzing of bees or the melody each raindrop sings.
Find solace in simplicity, and joy in the small,

For these moments are the ones that matter most of all.

With every spritz of cologne or neatly folded sheet,

We weave our existence, our story complete.

For when we sweat the small stuff with care and grace,

Life embraces us fully, in every single space. ("Sweat The Small Stuff") 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.

A Strange Epitaph

Drunk on the dark streets, lost in the night,
Where's your room, could it be in sight?
You stumble into a bar, seeking solace in the glass,
Ordering scotch and water, hoping time will pass.

But the bar is sloppy wet, soaking your sleeve,
The scotch is weak, a feeling of deceive.
Madame Death approaches, with a stench so foul,
Pressing her leg against you, her presence a scowl.

The bartender sneers, unsure of your intent,
As you order a vodka, the night feels bent.
Pouring it into your beer, an act of defiance,
Knowing your room is waiting, a place of reliance.

Leaving Madame Death and the bartender behind,
You remember where your room is, a haven in kind.
The full bottle of wine awaits on the dresser,
A dance of roaches, a sight of distress.

In the weird place, where love died with a laugh,
Perfection found in the chaos, a strange epitaph.
You sip the wine, feeling the warmth of the night,
In a world where madness and darkness take flight. ("A Strange Epitaph") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Fervent Glory

In a world of reason and control,
There lies a man with a passionate soul.
He asks for healing from a distant land,
With a faith so strong, only God can understand.

His servant is sick, his heart is in pain,
But he believes in miracles, not in vain.
He trusts in the power of a simple word,
And his faith in the impossible is truly absurd.

But Jesus sees his heart, filled with conviction,
And praises his faith, with deep admiration.
For in a world of doubt and disbelief,
This man's faith in the impossible is a beacon of relief.

So let us learn from this centurion's story,
And embrace our faith, with fervent glory.
For in the face of the unknown and unseen,
It is faith that gives us strength, serene and keen. ("Fervent Glory") 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.

Giving

In times of trouble, confusion and despair
Give of yourself, show them that you care
Your sympathy, your prayers, your time and love
Lend a helping hand, sent from above
Give your thoughts and your self, be a guiding light
Offer your support, help them through their plight
Share your confidence, your faith in their worth
As it was once given to you, from heaven's birth
Give without prejudice, without holding back
Offer what is needed, never showing lack
Remember, advice is valuable, but it's never the same
As giving of yourself, sharing your flame
So be generous and kind, to those in need
Give them your best, let your love take the lead
For in giving of yourself, you'll find peace and grace
And in helping others, you'll find your rightful place. ("Giving") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Fountain of Light

Within the depths of my soul, there lies
A fountain of light and wisdom that never dies,
A source of tranquility, a refuge from the fray,
Where the tumult of the world fades away.

In this hallowed space, I find a sense of fullness,
A deep and abiding peace, a haven of stillness,
Here, where the chaos of life subsides,
And my spirit finds solace, where it resides.

This sacred place within, a sanctuary for my soul,
A precious gift to nourish and console,
A wellspring of love and serenity, so pure,
Guiding me through moments both bright and obscure.

Daily, I seek to connect with this divine part of me,
To be still, to listen, to allow my spirit to be free,
It's a treasure to cherish, an oasis within,
This fountain of light, where true wisdom begins. ("Fountain of Light") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

A Rush of Blackness

In the silence of the night, a dream takes flight
A rush of blackness, a void without end
Yet a sense of movement, a feeling of fright
Leaving us with a question to comprehend

Are we hurtling towards the unknown?
Or is the unknown hurtling towards us?
A mystery that leaves our mind overthrown
A conundrum that we can't help but discuss

In the depths of our subconscious mind
The fear of the alien, the fear of the unknown
Leaves us wondering what we might find
In this endless void that we must atone

But perhaps it's not so scary after all
Maybe it's just a journey to something new
A chance to embrace the unknown's call
And see what wonders lie beyond the view

So let's embrace the thrill of the unknown
And let our dreams guide us to what will be
For in the rush of blackness, we are not alone

And something wondrous is hurtling towards me. ("A Rush of Blackness") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Friends

In the darkness, my friends without shields
Walk boldly on the target, unyielding
Late at night, the windows shatter
But they move forward, without a word

My friends without shoes, leaving behind
All that they hold dear, grief trailing behind
Like a fire among its bells
They turn on the dial and then part ways

Names like gloves, they set out bare handed
Unknown and unnoticed, but leaving their mark
Laying wreaths at milestones, cups at the wells
Chained up, their struggles unseen

Without feet, they sit by the wall
Nodding to the orchestra of the broken
Brotherhood, it whispers in the darkness
As my friend without eyes smiles in the rain

With a nest of salt in his hand
My friends without fathers or houses
Hear doors opening in the darkness
An announcement of smoke coming home

In common, we hold the present
A wax bell in a wax belfry
Hunger for the sake of hunger
Owls in our hearts, and hands
One for asking, one for applause

Leaving behind what we have in a box
My friends without keys, leaving the jails at night

Taking the same road, missing each other
Inventing the same banner in the dark

Asking their way only of sentries too proud to breathe
At dawn, the stars on their flag will vanish
The water will wash away their footprints
And the day will rise like a monument

To my friends, the forgotten
Whose struggles go unseen
But whose presence will not be forgotten. ("Friends") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Intwined Roots

In the heart of a tree, I see the story of a man
Veins and fibres, like bare boughs of bone
A trellised thicket, where the robin sings
A song of seasons, of blood and life

But in meadow and mountain, where can I find
The unique accent of speech, familiar to the ear?
To what sun can I attribute the warmth of a smile?
To which tree is the angel in the latticed eye related?

In the quiet of nature, I search for answers
To understand the connection between man and tree
The intertwined roots, the shared essence
That links us in ways we may not comprehend

So I look upon the tree, with its quaint pretension
And seek to unravel the mysteries it holds
For in its branches and leaves, I see a reflection
Of the beauty and complexity of the human soul. ("Intwined Roots") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Witches

In the marketplace, dry sticks are piled high
A thicket of shadows, a poor coat to wear
I am but a wax image of myself, a doll's body
Sickness begins here, I am the dartboard for witches

The devil can only eat the devil out
In the month of red leaves, I climb to a bed of fire
Blaming the dark, the mouth of a door
The cellar's belly, they've blown my sparkler out

A black-sharded lady keeps me in a parrot cage
The dead have such large eyes
I am intimate with a hairy spirit
Smoke wheels from the beak of this empty jar

If I am a little one, I can do no harm
Sitting under a potlid, tiny and inert as a rice grain
They turn the burners up, ring after ring
We are full of starch, my small white fellows, we grow

It hurts at first, the red tongues will teach the truth
Mother of beetles, unclench your hand
I'll fly through the candles' mouth like a singeless moth
Give me back my shape, I am ready to construe the days

I coupled with dust in the shadow of a stone
My ankles brighten, brightness ascends my thighs
I am lost, I am lost, in the roves of all this light. ("Witches") 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.

The Hunger Within

Love's language, spoken with gnashing teeth
The raw and primal expression of desire
A hunger that cannot be ignored or contained
A yearning for the taste of passion, burning like fire

But within this fervent longing, there lies a truth
A stark and unyielding reality, staring back with a cold gaze
A reminder that love is not always sweet or kind
That it can leave a bitter taste on the tongue, a harsh and biting phrase

Yet still, the ache of yearning persists
The need to consume and be consumed, to taste and be tasted
To surrender to the primal instincts of the heart
And to find solace in the saltblood, the fruit of tears, when love is wasted

So let us not shy away from the hunger within
But embrace it, devour it, and let it fuel our desire
For in the rawness of love, in the gnashing of teeth
We find a truth that is both bitter and sweet, a language that cannot be denied. ("The Hunger Within") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

A Secret Shrine

In the valley, where solitude reigns
A brown road winds, untouched by any pains
Leading to a mountain, standing tall and proud
Where gnarly trees sleep, their sweetness allowed

The stillness of the lagoon, a tranquil sight
A ruined homestead, hidden in the night
And there, amidst the decay and the gloom
Dwells Beauty's self, half-earthly, half-divine in bloom

In the emerald peaks, the cactus thrives
O'er falling rafters, where new life arrives
A miracle of flowers, bursting into sight
A symphony of resurrection in the moon's soft light

A slender ribbon of silver from above
Unfolds the green fronds, filling each bud with love
Bathed in the beaming flood, they come alive
As if a vision from immortal skies did arrive

Each flower, a chalice of snow filled with light
A mystical radiance in the still of the night
A secret shrine, hidden in the lagoon's embrace
Where beauty lies naked, adorned with grace

In the valley, through its solitude profound
A haven of beauty, waiting to be found
In the ruin and decay, where nature softly sleeps
A vision of ethereal wonder, the valley silently keeps. ("A Secret Shrine") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Beauty of Contradictions

In one human face, nature weaves
A tapestry of contrasts, so hard to believe
Thought and no thought, side by side they rest
Pale and bloom, in harmony they jest

Bustle and sluggishness, a dance of extremes
Pleasure and gloom, in ever-changing schemes
Weakness and strength, both vying for control
A paradoxical peace, a tempest in the soul

Indifference and attention, a curious pair
Pride without envy, joy beyond compare
Mildness and spirit, a dance of contradiction
Forward and coy, a blend of restriction

Freedom and a diffident stare, a complex display
Virtue with a question mark, searching for its way
But in this strange mix, a man emerges true
Captivating and kind, a soul to pursue

For five centuries, I'd gladly remain
As odd and as happy, in this world of disdain
For in the heart of this enigmatic being

Lies the beauty of contradictions, endlessly freeing. ("The Beauty Of Contradictions") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Look Within

The moon shines inside my soul
But my eyes are blind, I cannot see
The warmth of the sun, I cannot feel
But I know they both reside within me

The eternal drum beats in my heart
But my ears are deaf, I cannot hear
The universe sings its song to me
But I am lost in my own fear

When I let go of the I, the Mine
The work of the Lord is finally done
For in that surrender, I find peace
And the knowledge of the moon and sun

Like a flower that blooms for the fruit
I live for the purpose I cannot see
But when it comes, I will know
That the moon and sun were always inside me

Like the musk in the deer, I wander
Searching for something outside of me
But I must look within, and there I'll find
The moon and sun, the true beauty of mine. ("Look Within") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

John The Baptist

In the desert of our sin, John stands tall
A voice crying out, a prophet's call
Repent, he says, turn to a higher power
Seek forgiveness in this deserted hour

People flock to him, from far and near
Their hearts and souls desperately seeking to clear
A baptism of repentance, the message clear
To turn away from sin and draw near

John embodies our need for grace
In the barren wasteland, he takes his place
But he proclaims hope, a coming Savior
One who will baptize in the Holy Spirit's favor

Like Isaiah of old, he refuses to despair
He points to the One who will soon be there
In the desert of sin, amidst the dry ground
John prepares the way, for the Savior to be found

So let us heed his call, in this Advent season
To turn our hearts to God, and His precious reason
For in the desert of our need, in our heart of clay
The coming Savior will lead us to a brighter day. ("John The Baptist") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Cowboy

Oh, the joy of a cowboy, out on the range,
Where the water is clear, and there's no need to change,
For a drink from the pond, or a sip from the tank,
Is as good as it gets, and there's no need to thank.

Out in the deep water, where the flavor is pure,
Away from the cows, and their muck and manure,
A cowboy can sip, and not worry a bit,
For the water is cool, and it's a perfect fit.

Sure, there may be some bugs, and a few insecs,
But it's all just the same, down a cow puncher's neck,
And though some may say, it should be filtered and strained,
A cowboy knows better, and he's never complained.

So here's to the water, so clear and so cool,
And to the cowboy, who's nobody's fool,
For he knows that a drink, from the brim of his hat,
Is as good as it gets, and there's no need for any regrets. ("Cowboy") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Word

In the beginning, there was a word, a light
Sent from above, to guide us through the night
Prophets and sages, they spoke of truth and grace
But none compared to the one who would change the human race

For he was not just a messenger, a preacher or a seer
He was the very Word of God, the one we hold so dear
He came to show us love, to lead us from the dark
To bring us hope and salvation, to ignite in us a spark

So let us not diminish him, and make him just the same
As all the other prophets, who bore his holy name
For Jesus Christ is different, he is the Word made flesh
And in his light and truth, our hearts and souls are blessed.

So let us bear witness to the light, and spread his love and grace
For Jesus Christ is the savior, the one we must embrace
He is the Word of God, the light that shines so bright
And in him, we find our purpose, our hope, and our delight. ("The Word") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Mary

Mary, chosen handmaid of the Lord
A vessel of grace, obedient and adored
In her humble heart, the Word was sown
And through her, the Light of the world was known

With a yes so pure, she accepted the call
To be the mother of Christ, the Savior of all
Her faith, a model for all of us to see
A total and unreserved yes to God's decree

Through her, the Spirit descended and dwelled
In her womb, the Messiah's story was spelled
She bore the Son of God with love and grace
And in her, the world found its saving embrace

Oh, Mary, mother so gentle and kind
Your faith and obedience forever entwined
Teach us to say yes to God's will each day
And let his Light shine through us in every way

May we open our hearts to divine grace
And become instruments of God's love in this place
Like Mary, may we heed the call and be
A reflection of Christ for all to see. ("Mary") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Weight We Carry

The rain falls gently as he crosses the street
His movements cautious, his mind focused on one thing
His son, asleep on his shoulder, a precious cargo indeed
No car must splash him, no danger must his son bring

In the quiet of the rain, the man moves with care
His jacket not marked, but his heart is aware
Of the weight he carries, the responsibility he bears
For his son's peaceful sleep, his gentle breath, his tender care

Deep inside him, he hears the hum of a boy's dream
A dream of love and safety, of comfort and ease
And as he walks, he knows that this world, it seems
Must hold such care and tenderness if we're to truly be at peace

For if we cannot do what this man does, with one another
If we cannot protect and cherish, hold and support each other
Then how can we expect to truly thrive and be?
In a world where the road is wide, the rain never stops, where we are all free

So let us learn from this man, his selfless act
Let us embrace the fragility of each other, the world we live in
For in doing so, we can build a world of love and fact
Where the road is wide, but our hearts are wider, and the rain, it can never win. ("The Weight We Carry") 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.

Pure Disbelief

1974, the year of floral prints
And plummeting nylon bikinis
Like the bodies of birds
From the institutional open windows
Of a college dorm.

And then, a sight that made
All faces turn up in hushed wonder
Your mother's large white briefs
Like a mainsail, a flag of surrender
Slowly dancing down current
Cinematic, lithe.

It was the opposite of being lifted
Into the sky, the way I imagined
My grandfather ascending
After the long pain of illness
This large pair of underpants
Falling forever on the startled face
Of an undergraduate boy.

The scene, absurd and surreal
As if nature itself had played a prank
On the unsuspecting crowd
A moment frozen in time
As the world held its breath
Like those holding a hoop to save
A child burning.

It was a moment of pure disbelief
A break from the mundane
A dance of the absurd and the real
A sight that etched itself

Into the memories of all who witnessed
The fall of the oversized undergarments
In the year of floral prints
And plummeting nylon bikinis. ("Pure Disbelief") 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.

The Snail of Thought

The snail of thought, a slow and steady pace
Leaving a trail, a winding, curious chase
Crouching in shadows, hiding from the light
Refusing to answer, keeping to its own plight

Glistening in its shell, a liquid shimmer
Tasting the wind, a sweet and salty simmer
Smoke of fires, a scent that lingers on the air
Crackling thorns, a symphony of nature's flair

Rising temperature, a sign of change ahead
Considering options, every path to tread
Attending each phase, embracing the unknown
Crumbling into ground, feeling not alone

Losing place in sand and gravel, feeling displaced
Listening for the clash of weeds, in a tangled embrace
Wondering where the snail will go, on its mystical way
Following its journey, through night and day

The snail of thought, leading the way
Leaving behind a trail, in every moment and day
A symbol of resilience, in the face of all odds

The snail of thought, a journey to applaud. ("The Snail of Thought") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Juggler

In a flurry of motion, a spectacle unfolds
As seven balls dance with precision and grace
An artist of the air, a master of control
Swapping and twirling, in a mesmerizing embrace

The gap between trajectory and pace
A delicate balance, a moment of hesitation
The arc of descent, a dance in space
Where timing is key, a feat of concentration

Rehearsing alone, rehearsing being alone
A solitary pursuit, a quest for perfection
Searching for sense in the chaos of motion
A rhythmic flow, a seamless connection

What holds when there is no break from motion?
What holds when there is no break from emotion?
The gravity of the task, the weight of the art
The artist makes magic, with skill and devotion

But in a blink of an eye, a twist of fate
The balls are dropped, the spell is broken
The audience gasps, holding their breath
As the artist regains composure, words unspoken

They have yet to stop holding their breath
As the artist picks up the pieces, with a steady hand
A lesson in resilience, a lesson in grace
As the show goes on, a testament to the power of pace. ("The Juggler") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Sewer of the Soul

Emotions, a turbulent sea within
Overflowing like a toilet's spill
Regurgitated, digested refuge
A mess we wish we could refuse

Sewer of the soul, a dark place
Emptying into a pipe's grimy embrace
Unwanted debris in the bowl
Thrusting forth a sour smell of old

To the silver tongue, do not rush
For its throat may still be clogged
If you flush, there will only be a gush
Over the floor you just have mopped

The flood of feelings, like a river in flood
Rising, raging, a force to contend with
The overflow, a sight we wish to hide
But it cannot be denied, cannot be defied

So we face the mess, the turmoil within
Cleanse the soul, let the healing begin
For in the midst of the overflow, we find
A chance to release, to leave behind

The regurgitated, the digested refuge
To let go of what we wish not to use
And in the end, a sense of relief

As we unclog the drain and find our peace. ("The Sewer of the Soul") 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.

Savage World

In the stillness of the garage, I remember
The dance of death, the delicate balance
Of predator and prey, life and loss
As I brushed the corpses of flies
From the windows they mistook for freedom.

Their vibrant bodies, desperate and wild
Clung to the glass, their fluttering wings
A futile protest against the inevitability of fate
Until the spider emerged from its dank hole
Nervous and exposed, but driven by instinct
To claim its prey, to fill its sack with lifeblood.

As the world passed by outside, oblivious
I watched in horror and fascination
As the spider closed in on its victim
With a hungry determination, drawing blood
From the fly, now still and stranded
A speck of life clinging to the edge of existence.

I hurled the broom in an act of futile defiance
Facing the cold reality of nature's cruel game
As the spider, dull with spider-anger,
Left its broken prey behind, limping away
A broken hero, a killer of necessity
Leaving nothing behind but the remnants of life.

I ran, with God's anger chasing me
Back to the simple sunlight, a child once more
Left to wonder at the savagery of the world
At the dance of death, the web of life
Where predators and prey collide
In a never-ending cycle of love and loss. ("Savage World") 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.

Many Ways to Kneel

Let the beauty we love be what we do,
In every act, in every word, in every look.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground,
To show our gratitude, our reverence, our love.

We can kneel in the garden, among the flowers and trees,
Breathing in the earth's sweet scent, feeling the gentle breeze.
We can kiss the ground with our hands, planting seeds and tending to the soil,
Watching as new life blooms, rewarding our hard toil.

We can kneel at the water's edge, feeling the cool waves against our skin,
Serenaded by the rhythmic lullaby of the ocean's din.
We can kiss the ground with our lips, tasting the salt and the sand,
Immersing ourselves in the beauty of the sea, feeling its touch so grand.

We can kneel in the mountains, among the peaks and valleys so high,
Breathing in the crisp, pure air, feeling the earth touch the sky.
We can kiss the ground with our feet, hiking the trails and exploring the terrain,
Finding solace in the majesty of nature, releasing all our pain.

We can kneel in the city, among the hustle and bustle of urban life,
Taking in the sights and sounds, feeling the energy rife.
We can kiss the ground with our hearts, embracing the diversity and the culture,
Celebrating the human spirit, finding beauty in every sculpture.

There are so many ways to show our love for this world we call home,
So many ways to connect, to appreciate, to roam.
Let the beauty we love be what we do in every moment and in every way,
For there are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground, to honor each and every day. ("Many Ways to Kneel") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Dilation

Dilation has entirely dominated
the passage of time,
stretching and distorting
the once familiar landscape of life.

The past, once so clear and defined,
has come apart at the seams,
its events now vague and hazy,
fading into a distant memory.

The future, once a seedling of possibility,
now feels like a barren, seedless pod,
devoid of the promise it once held.

And in the present, there is only pain,
a relentless ache that knows no bounds,
a reminder of the passage of time
and the toll it takes on the body and soul.

Even pain itself has lost its precision,
no longer striking with the ruthless clarity
that it did in youth,
now a dull and constant companion.

Years pass like moths,
fluttering and eroding internal organs,
hanging and falling like tattered wings
in a spoiled and forgotten closet.

And in the mirror, a bedeviling image stares back,
a reflection of the impossible transformation
that time has wrought,
the once agile and slim self

now a bloated and unrecognizable stranger,
a bulbous specter haunting the present.

Is this the inevitable course of aging,
or is it simply the absurdity of senility,
the impossible made possible
by the relentless march of time?

How did the narrow silhouette of youth
come to contain this massive incognito,
this unrecognizable form,
only to be exorcised by the finality of death?

Dilation has entirely dominated
the reality of a long life,
stretching it thin and distorting it
until it is almost unrecognizable.

But even in the midst of this dilation,
there is a resilience that remains,
a steadfast spirit that refuses to be completely swallowed
by the unforgiving march of time.

And in that resilience, there is a beauty,
a reminder that even in the face of dilation,
there is still the power to endure,
to persist, and to find meaning
in the ever-changing landscape of life. (Dilation") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Resilient Threads

A spider, so patient and noiseless,
Standing alone on its little promontory,
Launching forth filaments into the vast unknown,
Ever unreeling, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And I, O my Soul, where do I stand?
Surrounded by measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, seeking the spheres,
Trying to connect them, to bridge the gap.

Till the bridge I need is formed,
Till the ductile anchor holds strong,
Till the gossamer thread I fling, catches somewhere,
O my Soul, I search and search, to find my place.

Like the patient spider, I weave and connect,
Exploring the vacant, vast surroundings,
I reach out, trying to make sense of it all,
Hoping to find my purpose, my connection.

The threads may seem fragile, but they are resilient,
They hold the potential to form a bridge,
A bridge that will guide me to where I belong,
A bridge that will lead me to my destination.

So, I will continue to throw and venture,
I will keep seeking and musing,
Till the gossamer thread I fling catches somewhere,
O my Soul, I will continue my search. ("Resilient Threads") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

A Moment of Connection

In the midst of battle, amidst the chaos and fear
A young recruit joined the regiment, a newcomer to the sphere
He knelt down to pray, seeking solace in his faith
But the other soldiers mocked him, they showed no grace

Steph, a sergeant drunk and worn from the fight
Saw the young soldier and lashed out with all his might
He threw his heavy boot, it struck the boy's head
Blood ran down his neck, a wound that bled

But in the dead of night, when all was still
The young soldier rose, with a determined will
He polished the sergeant's boots, with care and devotion
A gesture of kindness, a tranquil emotion

The sergeant was stunned, at the sight he beheld
A young soldier's compassion, a story to be held
He asked the boy about his faith, about his Jesus
A moment of connection, amidst the chaos and ruckus

The soldiers in the Gordon Highlander, strong and tough
But even in battle, there's room for grace, for love
In the midst of war, where bravery is the norm
A quiet act of kindness can weather any storm

So let us remember, in the heat of the fray
That compassion and faith can guide us on our way
In the darkest of nights, in the heart of the fight
There's still room for love, for hope, for light. ("A Moment of Connection") 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.

Technology

In the days before TVs, it was just us, you and me
Our time was filled with simplicity, heartfelt and carefree
We walked hand in hand, with no distractions to balk
Just the two of us, together, taking our time to talk

Meals were shared, and our conversations were real
No screens or devices, to steal the joy that we feel
Our bond was strong, our love was our guide
No technology to pull us apart, no secrets to hide

My friends were your friends, and yours were mine
No need for virtual connections, our bond was a lifeline
We lived in the moment, with no need for a phone
Just enjoying each other's company, never feeling alone

But as technology grew, it started to drive us apart
Creating a divide in our once united heart
We became consumed by screens and virtual space
Our once simple life now felt like a fast-paced race

I yearn for the days when it was just you and me
No tablets or cell phones, just pure, real company
I long for the simplicity of our past, our love undivided
When we were connected in a way that truly united

Let's put down the devices, step outside, and go for a walk
Let's have a real conversation, no more small talk
Let's reclaim the simplicity of our love, cherish each moment
And create a space where our love can truly foment

Let's disconnect from the virtual world that pulls us away
And bask in the love and simplicity of yesterday
Let's rekindle the flame that once burned so bright

And guide our love back to its pure and simple light. ("Technology") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Cecil

Oh Cecil, the Golden Doodle so fine,
A loveable and mischievous canine.
In his owners' Pittsburgh home one day,
He found something tempting in the most playful way.

There on the counter, a stack of cash,
Cecil couldn't resist, he made a dash.
\$4,000 of paper so green,
He devoured it all, a cash-eating machine.

His owners were shocked, they couldn't believe,
Their furry friend had a trick up his sleeve.
But Cecil just grinned, as if to say,
"I'm investing in myself in a unique way."

The vet was called, in a state of dismay,
They checked him over, he was okay.
The bills were gone, nowhere to be found,
Cecil had left only bits on the ground.

The owners chuckled, what else could they do,
Their clever canine had quite the breakthrough.
They never expected this twist of fate,
But Cecil the Golden Doodle had an appetite that wouldn't satiate.

So now they watch him like a hawk,
No more cash lying around for him to stalk.
But Cecil, oh Cecil, a legend he'll be,
For eating \$4,000 so delightfully. ("Cecil") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Silky Shark

In the depths of the ocean, a story unfolds
Of a silky shark, resilient and bold
In Jupiter, Florida, it swam with grace
Until a satellite tag left a large, gaping space

The dorsal fin, wounded and torn
But the shark didn't falter, didn't mourn
It continued to swim, to live, to thrive
And in a year's time, it began to revive

Researchers were amazed, as they watched in awe
As the injured fin grew, without a single flaw
Regenerating tissue, a miraculous sight
A testament to nature's incredible might

For the first time documented, in history's span
A silky shark showed that it can
Heal and regenerate, against all odds
A symbol of resilience, of the power of gods

Like a phoenix rising from the sea
The silky shark's tale is a sight to see
It teaches us that in the face of despair
There's always hope, there's always repair

So let us marvel at this wondrous feat
And celebrate the beauty of nature's treat
For the silky shark's story will forever shine

A reminder that even in darkness, there's a star to align. ("Silky Shark") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Pillows of Emotions

This museum of emotions,
Built on pillars of sadness,
Stands as a testament
To the highs and lows of life.

Each exhibit tells a story,
Of beginnings and endings,
Of joy and sorrow,
Of love and loss.

The rivers of the past
Flow through its halls,
A constant reminder
Of the fleeting nature of time.

As we walk through its corridors,
We are confronted with our own reflections,
Our own memories and regrets,
Our own moments of happiness and pain.

But amidst the sadness,
There is also beauty,
For in the depths of despair,
We find the strength to carry on.

The pillars may be built on sadness,
But they also stand tall
As a symbol of resilience,
Of the human spirit's indomitable will.

So let us wander through this museum,
Embracing the full spectrum of our emotions,
For it is through our sadness

That we find the courage to truly live. (Pillows of Emotions") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Destiny

Through the town, the Ingle's flame did wane
And with it, the warmth of hearth and home
Its light, a beacon, now flickering and dim
As the imp of the Ingle did shrivel within
Leaving a void of darkness in its wake

The nymph of the Mirror, her beauty so fair
Drowned in the depths of her own reflection
Lost in a world of illusions and deceit
Her spirit, suffocated by her own perfection
A tragic end to her once radiant grace

Die, demon of the Cupboard, your secrets untold
Your whispers of temptation, now silenced and cold
No longer a hiding place for the darkness within
As the spectre of the Stair takes flight and flees

And die, you lean Clock's warden, who ticks and tocks
Whispering in my ear, your relentless, haunting voice
With each passing moment, dragging me into despair
But now, your power wanes, as I break free from your hold

For I am the master of my own fate
No longer bound by the demons that haunt
I rise above the shadows that once held me down
And in their demise, I find my own rebirth.

So let the Ingle's imp shrivel and fade
Let the nymph of the Mirror find peace in her depths
Let the demon of the Cupboard meet its final fate
And the lean Clock's warden, be silenced at last.

For I am the master of my own destiny

And through the town, I walk with newfound strength
No longer held captive by the forces of despair
I am free, I am alive, I am reborn. ("Destiny") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Uncertainty

In the midst of following directions
I find myself in unexpected situations
Do I trust the hand that guides me
Or does it lead me astray, harmful and unkind?

I question the director and their intent
Do they have my best interest in mind?
Can I trust myself to evaluate the truth
Or am I blinded by doubt and fear?

I scan the room, looking for clues
Who holds the power, who is in control?
Do I see fear or helplessness in their eyes
And what scenarios have I overlooked?

The weight of uncertainty bears down on me
As I grapple with the unknown
But in the chaos and confusion
I search for the answers I seek

I am determined to find the truth
To decipher the waving arms and pointing fingers
To understand who I can trust
Amidst the tangled web of deception and doubt

I press on, seeking clarity and understanding
Amidst the turmoil and the unknown
For I refuse to be blinded by uncertainty
And I will uncover the truth that lies within. ("Uncertainty") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Magnetic Cereal

In the morning light, we pour our cereal bowl,
With iron-fortified flakes, to nourish the soul.
But did you know, this iron is unique?
It's magnetic and strong, not just for mystique.

Like a secret power hidden within our meal,
The iron in cereal has a magnetic appeal.
When floating in liquid, it's a sight to behold,
As the cereal dances with the magnet's hold.

A science fair experiment, for the curious mind,
Crushing up cereal, an adventure to find.
How much pure iron, can be pulled out with ease,
Unveiling the secrets, of breakfast's expertise.

So next time you reach for your favorite grain,
Remember the iron, with its magnetic refrain.
It's not just for nutrition, but a hint of surprise,
In every spoonful, a wonder that lies.

Iron-fortified cereal, a marvel indeed,
With its magnetism, a new perspective to heed.
As we start the day, with a breakfast delight,

Let's marvel at the science, that's hidden from sight. ("Magnetic Cereal") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Welcome Home

Welcome Home, they say with a cold, hard stare
As they strip you down and search you bare
Your personal effects cataloged away
In a storage basket, just another day

In an orange jumpsuit, with cheap black high tops
You shower and are sprayed with pesticide drops
Your head and genitals, now smelling of vinegar
As you fill out a questionnaire, feeling like a prisoner

Vital signs taken, blood is drawn
What will they find from the substances you've drawn?
Your DNA now part of a nationwide database
A part of the system, feeling trapped in this place

Bedding and toiletries, a small comfort for the night
As you're escorted to your pod, your new home in sight
Assigned to a cell or a yoga mat on the floor
In this world of concrete and metal, what are you here for?

Welcome Home, they say with a hollow tone
As you sit and wonder, feeling completely alone
Is this the price to pay for a life of mistakes?
Or can you find redemption behind these cold steel gates?

Welcome Home, a bitter irony in these walls
As you try to find a way to rise above it all
A prison of your own making, or a system's cruel hand
Either way, it's a steep climb to find solid ground

Welcome Home, a place where you're just a number
But deep down, you long to break from this slumber
To find a way to reclaim your life, your soul

And turn this place of confinement into a place that's whole. ("Welcome Home") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Crows Have Funerals

In the world of crows, a funeral is held
When one of their own has met its end
They gather in large, loud gatherings
To mourn, to share, and to defend

For when a crow is found dead
It's not just a somber sight
It triggers an instinct within them
To mob the body with all their might

But the reason for this strange behavior
Is more than just a show of sorrow
It's about gathering information
And planning for a better tomorrow

What happened here, they seem to ask
How can we avoid this fate?
Who are we ganging up against
To prevent a similar state?

For up to six weeks, they remember
The human who was near the slain
Associating them with the death
A link that's not easily unchained

But humans are not their greatest threat
For when a hawk is in their sight
The mobbing intensifies even more
As they prepare to stand and fight

It's a ritual reserved for their own
This funeral of crows so grand
A testament to their tight social bonds

And their instinct to protect their land

So when you see a gathering of crows

Around a fallen member of their kind

Remember it's not just a mourning ritual

It's a display of their intelligent mind. ("Crows Have Funerals") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Ego's Game

In the depths of the human heart, a battle rages on
The ego's grip, its fear and pride, like shadows in the dawn
It seeks to oppress and demoralize, to assert its dominance
Using the law, and moral codes, as tools for its defense

It whispers words of judgment, of condemnation and shame
It seeks to undermine and accuse, to tarnish another's name
But we must not be swayed, by the ego's subtle game
For in its fearful grip, we'll only find suffering and pain

We must rise above the ego's need, to control and dominate
We must embrace love and compassion, before it's too late
For the path of the ego, leads only to division and strife
But the path of love and kindness, brings harmony and life

So let us be aware, and vigilant in our ways
Lest the ego's grip entangle us, in its deceptive haze
Let us choose love over fear, and unity over division
For in the light of love's embrace, we'll find our true vision

So let us stand against the ego, with courage and with grace
Let us choose to uplift and empower, in every time and place
For in the end, it's love that wins, over fear and selfishness
And in its radiant light, we'll find true freedom and wholeness. ("The Ego's Game") 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.

Chosen Silence

Chosen silence, a symphony of stillness
A melody of quietude, a song of peace
Serenade my soul with your hushed whispers
Let your gentle words bring me release

Shape nothing, lips; be beautiful in your silence
Let your lack of words speak volumes
For it is in the absence of sound
That the true beauty of expression blooms

Eyes, be shrouded in darkness
But seek out the uncreated light
For in the depths of obscurity
There lies the clarity of sight

Taste, do not indulge in earthly pleasures
But seek the sweetness of divine fasting
Let your palate savor the sacred feast
And feast upon the crust of the divine's own casting

Nostrils, breathe not in the arrogance of pride
But let your breath carry the essence of humility
Let the scent of sanctity fill the air
And cleanse the spirit of all impurity

Hands, yearn not for the softness of earthly comforts
But prepare to walk the streets of gold
For you shall hold and be held by the divine
And find solace in the house of the Lord

And Poverty, be the bride of plenty
For in your lack, true abundance is found
Clothe yourself in the lily-colored garments

For your spouse is not of human making, but divine bound

So sing to me, chosen silence

And let your music be the only song I heed

For in the stillness and the quiet

I find the presence of the Lord indeed. ("Chosen Silence") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Fruit Bats

In the heart of Zambia, a sight to behold
A migration of bats, a story untold
Millions of flying foxes, straw-colored and strong
Their numbers so vast, their journey so long

They descend on Kasanka, a national park
To feast on the fruit, to leave their mark
They spread seeds throughout the southern savannah
Their vital role, a sight we cannot abandon

The largest migration of any mammal on earth
Their journey is crucial, their value of worth
But deforestation and poaching pose a threat
Their existence endangered, we must not forget

Conservation groups work tirelessly to protect
These bats of importance, we cannot neglect
Their mysterious migration, a wonder to behold
A symbol of strength in numbers, a tale yet untold

So let us stand together, to protect and defend
The straw-colored fruit bat, on which we depend
For their journey is vital, their presence profound
Let us safeguard their future, let their story resound. ("Fruit Bats") 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.

Unwavering Defiance

The strongest boy in our high school
Stood proud and tall, his long blond hair
Flowing like a lion's mane, untouched
By the discipline of sports.

The coaches, with their worn-out bodies
And bitter eyes, despised him
For his defiance, for his refusal
To conform to their standards.
They could not cage his spirit,
Could not tame his wildness.

He held the iron cross with ease,
His muscles quivering with strength
As he defied gravity, defied the teachers
Who stood by, powerless and envious.
We watched in awe, as he defied
Their expectations, their limitations.

He was a rebel in a world of conformity,
A lone wolf in a pack of sheep
And we, his fellow students, admired
His courage, his defiance, his refusal
To be like everyone else.

In those moments, as he held the iron cross,
We saw something beyond physical strength;
We saw a spirit that could not be broken,
A resilience that could not be tamed.
And as he fell to the mats,
We knew that he would rise again,
Stronger than before.

In our identical blue gym shorts,
With our last names scrawled across our chests,
We were all the same, except for him.
He was a symbol of resistance,
A beacon of hope for those who dared
To defy the constraints of society.

I had faith he could rise from the dead,
Not in a religious sense, but in a way
That spoke to his indomitable spirit.
He was the strongest boy in our high school,
Not because of his physical prowess,
But because of his unwavering defiance
And the unyielding strength of his soul. ("Unwavering Defiance") 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 loin
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

Little Tree

Oh, little tree, emerging strong
From the heart of that ancient stump
You defy the odds, you carry on
A symbol of life, a triumphant jump

You are not a requiem, nor a prophet
You are simply a testament to resilience
A reminder that life persists, despite
The looming shadows of death's influence

You are a fractal branch, a reflection
Of the same relentless spirit that drives us
To rise from the depths of the ocean
To create, to build, to conquer, to trust

In your humble existence, we find
A mirror of our own journey, our own fight
To endure, to grow, to reach for the sky
And to claim our place in the grand design

So, little tree, continue to stand tall
A beacon of hope, a symbol of strength
For in your quiet presence, we recall
What it means to embrace life at any length. ("Little Tree") 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.

Fear Tactics

The call came in, a demand from the station
To come down and discuss, a matter of importance
But no details were given, just an ominous request
To appear without reason, to face the unknown test

I felt a shiver, a sense of unease
Why would they summon me, if not to appease
Their own suspicions, their own hidden agenda
I knew I had to be cautious, I couldn't surrender

I called them back, demanded some clarity
But all I got was threats, a show of authority
They warned of sirens blaring, of a public display
A tactic to intimidate, to force me to obey

I stood my ground, I refused to comply
I knew my rights, I wouldn't be swayed by their lie
I informed them of my lawyer, of my right to representation
They hesitated, backpedaling from their intimidation

Finally, the truth emerged, a simple summons to court
Nothing criminal, just a formality of sorts
Yet the taste of their tactics, the fear they tried to induce
Left a bitter aftertaste, a distrust of their abuse

So I urge you, be wary, when the police come knocking
Don't be swayed by their tactics, don't be cowed by their talking
Stand up for your rights, demand the truth be revealed
And never face the unknown, until all is unsealed. ("Fear Tactics") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

21 Grams

The man in the lab with his scales and tools
Measuring every inch of your once living form
Twisting a tuft of hair without a thought
For the nakedness that lies before him
And the boredom that fills his soul

Weighing each organ, each part of your body
Staring into the emptiness where your lungs once breathed
Even in death, still an organ donor they say
As if something can outlast the final breath

Your feet, just regular feet
No mark of expertise or love
Nothing to show the life you lived
Or the people who held you dear

Every pound accounted for, except for 21 grams
The man, a praying man, claims to understand
This is the soul, he says, finally
After the breath has left the shell behind

21 grams, he proclaims, the weight of the soul
Less than \$4,000 worth of crack, he equates
All that moves us through this world
All that remains when all else is gone

But what of the love that filled your heart
The memories that danced within your mind
What of the laughter and tears that you shed
Do they too weigh only 21 grams?

The soul, an intangible essence
Beyond the reach of scales and measures

A mystery that defies the grasp of human understanding

For in the end, it is love and connection

That truly move us through this world. ("21 Grams") 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.

Eraser

In the days of old, before the eraser's birth
A simple piece of bread held priceless worth
A small, moistened wad, to fix mistakes
On paper and parchment, where pencil marks would break

For 170 years, this was the way
To correct errors and start anew each day
But then came Priestly, with a discovery so grand
A substance, caoutchouc, that was perfectly in demand

It wiped away the marks, the black lead pencil left
With ease and precision, it was deft
It was dubbed "rubber," a name so fitting
For its ability to erase, without a single splitting

And so, the era of the eraser began
No longer needing soggy bread in hand
A simple, pink creation on the end of a pencil
To fix any mistake, big or minuscule

Ode to the eraser, a marvel of invention
A tool for perfection, without apprehension
From England's Lake District to the world at large
The eraser, a symbol of progress and charge

So let us remember the days of yore
When bread and moistened dough were the eraser's core
And be grateful for Priestly's contribution
To the simple, yet mighty, pencil revolution. ("Eraser") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

The Wheel of Compassion

If Gandhi's spinning wheel had spun
A million yards of cloth so fine
We would have clothed our war dead
In garb fit for their sacrifice

And with the surplus, we would have built
Cities of tents to shelter the homeless
From the raging storm of war
And provide a safe haven for all who suffer.

But alas, the wheel did not turn enough
And the cloth was in short supply
Our war dead lay uncovered
Their spirits restless and untethered

We mourn their loss, their precious lives
Snuffed out by the cruelty of war
If only we had woven a million yards
Perhaps their fate would have been different

But we can still honor their memory
By weaving a tapestry of peace and love
And ensuring that no more lives are lost
In the senseless madness of war

Let us spin the wheel of compassion
And clothe the world in kindness and empathy
So that no more tents need to be raised
For those displaced by conflict and strife

If only Gandhi's spinning wheel had spun
A million yards of cloth for all to share
Perhaps we would have learned the value

Of peace and harmony, beyond compare. (The Wheel of Compassion") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Same Ember

In the tapestry of life, the threads of joy and sorrow intertwine,
Creating a beautiful mosaic of memories, both bitter and divine.
A list of things we want to forget, a list of things to remember,
But they are not separate, they are two sides of the same ember.

The sound of rain against the window, a melancholy melody,
But it teaches us to appreciate the sunshine and its revelry.
The taste of bitter coffee in the morning, a reminder of days gone by,
But it guides us to savor the sweetness that life can supply.

The weight of regret in our chests, a burden we cannot shake,
But it shows us the importance of the choices we make.
The warmth of a hug on a cold day, a balm for our weary soul,
A gentle reminder that love can make us feel whole.

The sound of laughter in a crowded room, a symphony of glee,
A beacon of hope in a world that can sometimes disagree.
The feeling of hope amidst the darkness, a light in the night,
A reminder that even in the depths, there's still a chance to take flight.

These intertwined lists, a reflection of our human condition,
Reminding us that joy and sorrow are part of our life's rendition.
So let's not try to forget or remember, let's embrace it all,
For it's in the unity of these moments that we truly stand tall.

Let's fold up these lists and tuck them away with care,
For they are the fabric of who we are, the essence we bear.
The lessons learned from both joy and pain, they're intertwined forever,
And it's in this beautiful tapestry that we find our strength and endeavor. ("Same Ember") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Crows In The Wind

Off go the crows from the roof,
A frantic flurry of black feathers and caws,
As the strong wind sweeps them away,
Their wings flapping wildly in the relentless gust.

They struggle to hold on,
But it's a futile battle against the forces of nature,
Like trying to grip onto a slippery oil slick,
Their clawed feet slipping and sliding.

The crows, gentlemen in their spottled-black coats,
Engage in a clumsy dance,
Their bodies swaying and tilting,
As if they're uncertain of their own balance.

Their movements are awkward and unsteady,
A comical sight to behold,
Yet underneath the humor,
Lies a sense of vulnerability and struggle.

They appear lost and disoriented,
As the wind buffets them mercilessly,
Their efforts to right themselves,
Only seem to exacerbate their plight.

There's a certain sadness in their plight,
As they battle against the elements,
A reminder of the fragility of life,
And the struggle to find stability in the midst of chaos.

It's a poignant display of the challenges of love,
How easily it can falter and fail,
Leaving us exposed and vulnerable,

In front of the unforgiving eyes of the world.

The crows in the strong wind,

Are a poignant allegory,

For the universal experience of love's trials,

And the unyielding forces that seek to topple us. ("Crows In The Wind") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Cautious Steps

Emerging from the wintry stream, I tread cautiously, my senses alert and aware. The world around me is filled with uncertainty, and I move with calculated steps, my heart beating with cautious determination.

The paths before me are shrouded in hesitation, and yet I push forward, resolute in my pursuit. Each step is a careful choice, a deliberate movement towards the unknown. I approach the world with a formal demeanor, navigating its complexities with a polite grace.

As I journey, I begin to thaw, my once icy heart softening in the warmth of the world around me. Barriers crumble, and love breaks through, tender and true. I shed the artifice of disguise, allowing my raw essence to shine through, uncarved and unadulterated.

Embracing the valley's call, I seek to explore and learn, free from the constraints of preconceived notions. The expanse before me is vast and limitless, a place where diverse souls coexist in harmony. Boundaries fade, and differences thrive in a harmonious blend.

In cautious steps, I weave my way through the tapestry of experience, capturing the essence of truth. Each trait, each encounter, adds to the intricate portrait of my journey, forever profound and everlasting. ("Cautious Steps") 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 smudged 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.

Morning Bread

You entered my life like fine wine and honey,
A fiery, intoxicating sweetness that consumed me whole,
Your presence burned my mouth with desire and passion,
Leaving me craving more of your delicious essence.

But now, as time has passed and our love has deepened,
You have become like morning bread to me,
Smooth, comforting, and always there to nourish me,
I hardly taste you anymore, but I know your flavor well.

In the quiet moments of our togetherness,
I savor the familiarity of your presence,
And I am completely nourished by your love,
It sustains me, it fills me, it satisfies me.

Like morning bread, you are a constant in my life,
Reliable, comforting, and essential to my well-being,
Your love sustains me in ways I never knew possible,
And for that, I am grateful every single day.

So here's to the fine wine and honey that brought us together,
And here's to the morning bread that keeps us close,
For in your love, I have found my sustenance,
And I am forever grateful for the flavor of you. ("Morning Bread") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

A Bull's Rage

The DEA officer came to inspect
Our farm, for drugs he had a quest
I warned him not to enter the field
But he dismissed my words and refused to yield
Arrogant and proud, he flashed his badge
Claiming authority to trespass without adage
But as he ventured into the forbidden land
He encountered a danger he couldn't withstand
A bull, big and mean, charged at full speed
The officer panicked, realizing his greed
For power and control had led him astray
As the bull closed in, he had to find a way
To escape the wrath of the angry beast
Who cared not for authority, but only to feast
On the fear in the officer's eyes
As he ran for his life, amidst terrified cries
I watched from afar, feeling a twinge of glee
For the officer had learned a lesson, you see
That even with a badge and the government's might
Nature's power cannot be challenged in a fight.
So, as the bull closed in, I yelled with all my might
"Show him your badge, it might save you tonight!"
But the officer heard not, as fear gripped his soul
And the bull's rage took its toll.
In the end, the officer escaped with his life
But humility and fear cut through like a knife
For he learned that on the farm, respect is the key
And even with a badge, nature reigns free. So, respect the land and its creatures, with all your
might
For in the end, they hold the true power and the right. ("The Bull's Rage") 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.

Between

Between two words
choose the quieter one.

In the hush 'twixt twin utterings, find
The whispered one, cloaked in a gentler tide.

Between word and silence
choose listening.

Let the deep listening stitch the seam,
Where word and hush in twilight gleam.

Between two books
choose the dustier one.

Crave the tome where time's fingers have danced,
Touch the page where the dust motes have pranced.

Between the earth and the sky
choose a bird.

In the sweep 'twixt soil and the blue,
Cradle the winged minstrel that cleaves the anew.

Between two animals
choose the one who needs you more.

Betwixt beastly kin, pick the heart that pines,
Lend thy hand where the shadow of neglect inclines.

Between two children
choose both.

Between budding blooms, never split the ray,
Embrace each petal that looks to the day.

Between the lesser and the bigger evil
choose neither.

'Neath the guise of wickedness, vast or slight,
Tread not in the murk, steer toward the light.

Between hope and despair
choose hope:
it will be harder to bear.

In the duel where shadows court the light,
Grasp the hope though it bears a titan's might.

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.

Don't Give Up

Oh, it's not just the shocking pinks and purples erupting from the crabapple tree, or the unashamed exhibition of the cherry branches with their sugary blossoms up in arms against the brooding sky to announce spring's arrival, no, it's something quieter that captures my fancy.

There's a subtlety to the way the leaves make their grand entrance, slowly, without the fanfare of petal and buds, a verdant tide slowly covering the grimy aftermath of winter's end. They're like diligent workers clocking in, their green uniforms slowly draping over the bare and waiting boughs, a lesson in perseverance.

This greening, it speaks to me?whispers, really?about carrying on under the sometimes-gray dome of life. Right through the detritus of ourselves?the mistakes, the pain, the vacant places?we're nudged by nature's elbow to keep moving.

The tree knows its script by heart, offering up a leaf like a magician revealing a coin in their palm. "Well then," it seems to mutter with a quiet resilience, spreading out its newest bit of handiwork for all to see, "let's see about taking on another season, shall we?" And with every unfurling leaf, it takes it all, everything?the hail, the rain, the days too hot to think?and still persists in green, as if to show us, in its branching wisdom, how it's done. ("Don't Give Up") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

Love, A Fire

Imagine if you will, a fireplace in an old stone house,
the kind with a hearth wide enough to roast an ox,
or at the very least, a few plump chickens and an assortment of root vegetables.

And in this fireplace, a fire crackles and hums,
a pyre for the heart, licking and flaring with an appetite
that seems almost indecent in its fervency.

But this is no ordinary blaze, my friend,
this is the kind of fire that wants to change you,
the sort you read about in ancient myths, full of promise and alarm.

Imagine now, hurling yourself like a log?
all your possessions, your fears, your neatly folded reservations?
into these transformative flames.

Watch as the fire licks your edges,
consuming the daily newsprint of your life,
the private memos, the grocery lists, the endless to-do's.

With each crackle, your ego pops like a sap bubble,
your desires char into feather-light ash,
and ambition, that twisted, burning branch, disintegrates.

Until all that is left of you is what cannot be seared or scorched,
a diamond core of pure being glowing in the embers,
incandescent with the simple, naked truth of yourself.

And there, in the waning glow, as the fire settles into silence,
you understand at last the arsonist's joy?
the beauty of warmth, the necessity of light,
and, oh yes, the inevitable rise of smoke signals,
telling tales of transformation to an ink-black sky. ("Love, A Fire") by Courtney Weaver Jr.

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.

As The Poems Go Into the Thousands

As the Poems Go into the Thousands

It dawns on you over a second cup of coffee,
like the slow yet certain sunrise through a rain-washed window,
that the stack of your poems has become a paper tower,
one that teeters precariously on the very notion of
accomplishment.

All these words, a grand parade of inky soldiers,
yet what they've conquered seems hardly more than
the common trifles of existence?
a splash of rain on the back of a neck,
or sunlight playing a game of tag with the leaves.

They've danced in and out of the traffic of life,
a life measured conveniently in years and days,
rounded like the edges of a well-worn coin,
spent in the company of countless faces,
those silent composers of our narrative.

And before the gentle tap of the space bar echoes
a brief interlude, an exit stage left, if you will,
one must nod to the simple truth
that leaving behind these lines is lighter, far lighter,
than the living within them, the crafting of each tender phrase.

With fingers hesitating like a suspended raindrop,
I listen to the piano notes fluttering from the radio,
an invisible maestro spilling out his soul in waves.

Oh, the best of us seldom crowd the air with syllables,
content to let a few chosen notes linger in the clearing,
while those with the least to say are often the ones

most allergic to the tranquility of silence,
pouring words out like a waterfall with no end.

Indeed, those masters of brevity whisper to the eager page,
leaving behind just enough?a footprint on the path,
a breath on the mirror?beckoning us forward,
out of the haze of verbosity and into the clear day,
where poems count not in thousands, but in countless shifts
of the heart and mind, ever so lightly, they go.

The Return

The Return

I have been seeing growth in the most unlikely place
hand-shaped leaves sprouting on the blunt ends of cut branches
as if to wave hello, or maybe goodbye, to the clear blue day.

I have watched necks reattach themselves to heads,
as if someone up there was making amends,
a universe seamstress mending our broken parts.

I even thought I saw a corpse stand up,
rubbing its eyes, bewildered,
elastic as a young sapling after a long, dark nap.

But of course, this is nonsense,
a whimsy that can't outlast the lingering truth
that my grandmother, God rest her soul,
has not decided to take up residence inside a wolf's gut.

Nor does the parakeet we buried in the shadow of the ferns
flit about the kitchen, its blue feathers buzzing the air.
No, it seems once you've punched your final ticket,
that's pretty much the end of your ride.

And yet, you might catch me in the earliest light
mixing up the trill of a bird with the sound of my mother's voice,
calling me in for something or other, you know how it is.

Could be that the bird is part of grandmother now
or mingling with the ineffable light?
that light everybody seems so hung up on.

I suspect grandmother could come back as the family dog,

punctuating her frustration on the leg of the dining table,
which, frankly, is as good a place as any to work out your reincarnation.

The question really is: where do we put all these absences,
the voids left by the ones who have packed up and moved on?
How does a child understand the vacancies
when she can outrun her playmates to the swings,
pumping her legs so furiously, the whole world gets dizzy?

Life, it turns out, is a series of leaving things behind,
only to find them again in the oddest of places?
in the curl of a leaf, the creak of a floorboard, or the silence of swings.

Sometimes In the Stillness

Sometimes in the Stillness

It's in those hushed moments, when the clock has paused
or seems to have given up ticking altogether,
and the cat has at last found a permanent place in the sun
on the carpet?

that if we sit still, swaddled in an afghan of quiet,
and pay a bit more attention than usual,
we might detect a faint murmur,
like the sound of a distant crowd

This is not the refrigerator's hum or a creak in the floorboards,
but something that resides more internally,
where the hinges of the heart quietly open and close.

It's as if this whisper is an understudy who's learned all the lines
by heart, ready to fill in with a clear voice?
handing out little booster shots of fortitude
to the wobbly knees of our weakness,

offering a sturdy arm to fear, shaking as it is,
and spinning strands of dawn's light into a wreath
to crown the furrowed brow of despair.

Odd, isn't it, how in the midst of such silence
our own heart begins to converse,
how in listening we unearth the seeds of a strength
we never knew were buried there,
how in the wilderness of nothing being said,
a path of words can suddenly emerge,
tracing a trail of comfort through the tall, swaying grass of our thoughts.

So, next time the world dials down its volume
and you find yourself submerged in the sea of stillness,

remember to lean in?really close?to your own heartbeat,
and listen, just listen.

Carrying the Cross

Carrying the Cross

Imagine the scene:

a throng of people, zigzagging like ants
across the landscape of dusty Judea,
all ears perked to the man in the middle?
that Jesus fellow with his knack for parables
and a reputation for turning water into wine.

But on this particular sunbaked afternoon,
he wasn't spinning tales of mustard seeds
or lost coins. No, he was onto something heavier,
the weight of his words like a timber hitched
to every listener's back,
a carpenter's cryptic nod to future events.

What did they think? Those followers
whose sandals were coated with the fine powder
of their journey. Did they envision splinters,
the rough grain against their skin,
as they tried to puzzle out
the metaphor of lumber and life?

He wanted them to know
there is a tariff on the road to enlightenment?
a cost that goes beyond dropping coins
into the outstretched hands of beggars
or whispering prayers in the dim candlelight.

You see, it isn't enough to applaud from the wayside,
waving banners of admiration for his charity work
while sipping on a cool drink.

We must lace up our sandals, hoist our beams,
and walk?no, not just walk, but stride,
as one does with purpose,
laying down the timbers of truth and kindness
wherever we might find a stretch of barren land.

So there they were, considering his proposition,
as Jesus, who I imagine never one to complain
about the daily grind, never caught muttering to himself
in some olive grove about the unfairness of it all,
simply showed the way.

Maybe some shuffled awkwardly,
eyeing the expanse before them
and the beckoning comfort of the roadside inns.
Yet others, perhaps, squared their shoulders,
embracing the splintered gift of his words,
and stepped forward into the uncertain terrain
where actions carve a deeper groove than sermons,
where the true shape of faith
is the shadow of a cross, sharp and elongated
in the dying light of a setting sun.

Cybernetic Meadow

Cybernetic Meadow

Consider, soonest,
a meadow machined:
beasts, iron looms
in digital peace, programming.

Clear water kisses sky.

Dream, now ?
a forest soldered with circuitry,
pines interweaved with copper threads,
deer by the cool hum of data-flowers.

Dream,
of wired ecology,
labor lost,
flesh rejoined with soil and fur,
kin under the silent gaze
of machinery's loving grace.

Heart of the Tree

Heart of the Tree

What's this fellow up to, you might ask, stooping so,
as he sinks his spade into the soil with a gardener's grunt,
tucking in a sapling, a young thing,
barely a twig with a prayer of leaves?

Well, he's dabbing a bit of green on the blue canvas of the sky,
planting a stationary kite that will fly in place for years,
a kind of vegetal pole where the winds twirl their invisible ribbons,
and a lookout tower sticking its head into the clouds.

In the soft bed he readies, believe it or not, he tucks in
a future comfort, a place where shade will pool like a cool thought,
where droplets will gather and fall like quiet epiphanies,
and seasons will come to sit in a ring, changing hats as they chat.

Oh, and he's quite the generous sort, casting out parcels of beauty,
and claims to the forest's ancestry, handing out tickets
to a leafy legacy that others will cut the ribbon to, all smiles,
the kind of future spectacle that'll cause unborn eyes to shimmer.

Imagine, there he is, plodding about in his personal plot,
surrounded by houses, stoically loading his ark with loyalty,
with neighborly love, with handfuls of civic-mindedness,
all the while the grand blueprint of a nation uncurling in his mind.

This one tree, its branches may not reach from sea to shining sea,
but nestle into its limbs, a sparrow starts a song
that carries far, past borders, over rooftops, a melody that wraps
around the heart of the country, endless as the sky ?
the simple anthem of someone who has planted a tree.

The Triumph of the Good

The Triumph of the Good

It seems a quaint notion, doesn't it,
the spiritual and the moral, wearing capes, no doubt,
rising triumphantly over the slumped shoulders
of the material and the unmoral, which I imagine
in rags for some reason, moping away defeated.

Today, in our ultra-modern kitchens and Wi-Fi cafes,
where the material is more like a roommate,
always making noise, always eating up the refrigerator's electricity,
these ancient adversaries loiter in a quiet corner of our mind,
shuffling their feet, waiting for us to notice them.

The spiritual, that wisp of incense trailing from a temple's door,
has been mounting a comeback tour,
a slow infiltration blooming inside our skulls.
Not with fanfare or firework, oh no,
but in the gentle manner of a gardener deadheading petunias.

Meanwhile, the moral, old-fashioned as it is,
with its hand-stitched handkerchiefs and eyebrows raised in concern,
has been edging out the puissant, yet secretly weary unmoral,
whose tactics are as tiresome as an overplayed song.

And on the street, this ongoing battle rarely makes the news?
no, it hums along beneath, threads in a vast tapestry,
where faith, fellowship, and service are not merely words
from an archaic text but cures for most modern ills; they are
the soft-spoken doctors in this world's emergency room.

In the end, there truly is nothing beyond their reach,
no human knot they cannot untangle,

these quiet heroes of the human race,
making the daily, unheralded journey
toward something resembling victory in the ongoing human story.

No need for a trumpet's call or a finish line's ribbon?
just the steady, imperceptible triumph
of good thoughts over the raucous currency of the now.

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.

Fiery Visitor

Fiery Visitor

It's like that neighborhood dog with the deep chest,
the one that startles you from your porch reverie,
your book slipping, forgotten, as you turn to see
just what ruckus this is about.

It's not that anger is without its charm, right?
It comes dressed in red, uninvited to the party,
a bit too loud, a bit too brash,
clinking its glass for a toast to upheaval.

Oh, don't worry, it's not the end of the world?
just the sound of its engine revving,
a call to arms for the sleepy, the bystanders,
a potter's wheel spinning fresh forms from old clay.

So, here comes anger, polite as a hurricane,
an unexpected guest at your garden party.
Watch it flip the tables, dance with the trees,
and then, with a bow, exit stage left.

When the show is over, take a look at the sky,
how it clears its throat with newfound blue,
how it nudges us all with a wink and a nudge,
to roll up our sleeves for the tasks that lie ahead.

For this fiery visitor, when it comes knocking,
it's not just barking dogs and clattering trash cans?
it's a red-cheeked prophet preaching better days,
a reminder to stir from slumber and craft a world anew.

Ancient Wisdom

Ancient Wisdom

Just another evening under the spangled sky,
you might scan through the black with a telescope,
looking for your own private asteroid to name,
or to catch the drift of a lost comet.

But who could have guessed that the stars,
those holes punched in the canopy of night,
were just a bunch of cosmic kidney beans,
bladder busters on a grand scale?

That's right, the same twinklers guiding sailors,
acting as God's salt on the black tablecloth of heaven,
are apparently registered nurses walking the night shift,
hovering bedside to lay their cool hands on our fevered brows.

And let's not pass over the moon,
not when it is busy inspiring the seeds buried in soil
to rise up in green waves, or turning the ocean tide
on its heel, or shining down on lovers
who are hoping the whole thing might last,

nor should we ignore our own earthly pair of beans
tucked away under the ribs
performing their own watery dance?
a kind of renal ballet, filtering and cleansing,
joining the cosmic jig with every glomerular twirl.

And so, when you next find yourself
hiking the porch steps on some crystal-clear night,
or just pitching trash into the can
in the alley behind a restaurant,

take a long look at the celestial event above your head.

Consider the medicinal light bathing your skin,
the cardiological glow entering your bloodstream,
and how, with every beat of your heart,
nature is pumping its ancient wisdom deep inside you,
making sure you're alive to see another day.

The Dark Talent

The Dark Talent

The courage to follow,
A rare guest knocking
At midnight's hollow door,
Turns the key towards
Talents skulking in shadows.

To dark places it leads,
Where dusty spotlights
Illumine only the brave,
Their gifts unfurling
Like a deck of tarot cards.

Everyone holds a hand,
But not all play the game,
Fearful of the fortune teller's grin,
And the long walk back
Alone under a mocking moon.

I'm Leaving You, But Come With Me

I'm Leaving You, But Come With Me

I'd take the road flecked with the late sun's gold
To escape you?but you'd hitch a ride in my pocket.

Every city wears your face,
Windows mirroring your frown when I try to peer through.

The world's tainted where we step,
Sullied peaks and valleys?you and I, latecomers.
Cafes hidden in alley mists,
We pass unseen, you with your map, I with my thirst.

We lay in the dirt, beside the murmur of a tired stream
Under nights heavy as curtains?never ours to part.
Clumsy tools in the hands of a blind god:

I pour my prayers into a trembling pond, a circle of repetition?
A ritual of taking what was never given,
Since what I yearned for scurried into the thicket.

You whispered once, "Desire wilts;"
Becomes a dry husk of a word, a brittle echo.
Onlookers capture your tears in their shutters,
While the dusty shroud I brought us was a trove of nightmares.

Misremembered, I let it slip from thought to afterthought.

Sleep is a stranger by your shuddering silhouette,
My eyes?dull satellites orbiting restless.
Watercraft of every sort drips sorrow from its bow?

Every vessel a grim reminder:

All things carry you.

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.

Hospital Room Olympics

Hospital Room Olympics

The room's a tangle of life's thin tendrils,
Jellyfish tendrils, pulsing silent in the sterile sea.

A cord for food that never tastes of home,
A screen where chefs dance, flavor lost in lights.
A lifeline squeezing flesh and hope around frail bones,
Veins sipping from a plastic vine, skin mottled, almost done.

You, tethered dreamer, and I, weaver of woolen threads,
Spy on knife-flashing, pan-clattering mirages
As you drift and bob in pharmaceutical tides.

You move? a careful choreography of convalescence,
Steps counted like a stone-skipping child's game.
Each stride, a tiny triumph; each breath, a score kept.

This is no Greek contest? no olive wreaths or victors' songs,
Only the shuffling feet of the newly brave,
Flannel-clad gladiators in slow-motion combat.

We peer outside, note the sun's surrender,
As the room turns goldfish bowl?
Five shuffling paces mark today's victory lap,
The podium, a bed to which you retreat.

The Stillness

The Stillness

holy crap, the world's gone mute,
the kind of quiet you find in a drunk's coat pocket,
where dreams and loose change mix it up
and the lint-encrusted condom from '21
is a monument to what never happened.

the night's tongues are wagging all hush-hush,
while the souls collapse into couch cushions,
wrapping themselves in the cradle of dead air,
like the void's some kind of velvet teddy bear
they can hug when the screams get too loud inside.

they talk about eden, the eternal nap spot,
where the worms do the tango and the apples rot,
lying there, a snoring pile of bones,
in the kind of rest that only a tombstone understands.

it's a fade-out, not a swan song,
slinking into the shadows where the crazies can't find you,
the stars poking holes in the sky like some dumbass kids
with a BB gun, taking potshots at the streetlights,
keeping watch until the sun staggers back into the sky,
hung over and begging for another hour of shuteye.

Children Listen

Children Listen

In the stillness of an average room, let's say a living room,
the silence is only a thin illusion, a sheer curtain,
because children, those little detectives of sound,
are lending their ears, which open and close like quaint garden gates.

Some will scamper after, nearly tripping over their own feet,
as they chase the elusive tails of our sentences?those slippery eels?
trying to grasp them with determined, chubby hands.

Meanwhile, others find a quiet magic in the pantomime of shadows,
those mute actors on the walls, staging their silhouettes at sunset,
with the children mirroring each secret motion,
joining in a game of follow-the-leader, wordlessly.

Each silhouette a teacher, each child a learner of the light and dark,
a room transformed into a silent theater,
where the only admission is a pair of wide, wide open eyes.
And the only performance?a lesson in the quiet art of listening.

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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.

An Insane Idea

The Insane Idea

Our thoughts were a straight highway,
Next to it, a little rabbit trail
Where a jester danced with a bottle.

Sobriety, that stern schoolmaster,
Barked his sharp lessons,
But folly, oh folly!

It wore a secret grin and beckoned
With a jerk of a thumb,
And there we were, nodding compatriots.

By dawn, with bleary eyes,
We searched the mirror
For the culprit?

But only found our own bemused
And fetching portrait,
Baffled again by the sly guest's trick.

Recent Days

Recent Days

What word would serve to capture this sliver,
this tiny slice of existence, these recent days?
Not "productive," not shimmering with the sweat of labor,
nor "adventurous," lacking the spice of unpredictability.

Perhaps "meandering" fits just right,
like a river that knows no urgency,
ignoring the pace of clocks and calendars,
winding through the hours with a languid grace.

Or is it "reflective," as in the way a pond,
still in the arms of twilight,
holds the gaze of wandering clouds and a coy moon,
mirroring their light more than it generates its own?

Or maybe "unremarkable," that gray word,
which, like a well-worn sweatshirt, doesn't impress,
but promises a familiar comfort,
the soft embrace of routine and repetition.

Yes, "unremarkable," might just be the one?
not a word to make headlines or to carve into stone,
but one that allows us the quiet nod of recognition
for days that pass, not with a bang, but with a whisper.

And yet, within these unremarkable days, treasures hide?
like the moment when the morning light
stops you on your way to fetch the paper,
and turns your hands to gold.

Or when the hush of the evening

stirs secrets within the trees,
who share them with the breeze,
who then whispers them to you.

So "unremarkable" becomes our word,
a soft-spoken guest at the tip of our tongue,
reminding us to look closer,
to find the poetry sewn into the fabric of our days.

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.

Birdsong in Pandemic

Birdsong in Pandemic

We began to notice the birds,
Or so we thought, their music
Rising above silence, as we
Spoke less and less,
Heads in frames on screens,
Or distantly in masked clusters.

Dang, those warblers and thrushes?
Their voices?aren't they thundering?
Yes, chimed the neighbor behind her veil.
The birds have turned up their symphony.

Only they hadn't, the experts say.
In their measured tones, they explain:
The world's din drowned before,
The birds sang just the same?
Only softer, now no need to scream.

Why then do we hear them, you ask,
As if each chirp was a bellow?
Not because they grew louder,
But because we, in our confinement,
Grew quieter, more desperate to listen.

Poetry of isolation is what we found?
A birdsong present always,
Yet only now do we truly hear it,
In our longing suddenly clear.

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.

Clover

Clover

Wearing green to church,
A three-leaf clover on the lapel?
Cheap grace explained in whispers,
Saints and legends intertwine.

Fields of conquest, tales of shamrocks,
Primitive men chewed as gossip.
In the shadow of the rose and thistle,
A nation's symbol germinates.

Reclamation of insult,
Or homage to the sainted herder?
St. Patrick's lore becomes a badge,
Roots sprawling in the emerald myth.

From the soil of subjugation,
An icon grows defiantly?
A trifoliate plea for identity,
On the breast of believers and nonbelievers alike.

Renewing the Mind

Renewing the Mind

The question echoes in an empty room,
The skull's dark chapel where spiders loom.
Why polish the pews of our thoughts, you say,
As the night ushers in the grey of day?

Word, silent lodger residing within,
As cryptic as a cat's clandestine grin.
It whistles old tunes through skeletal halls,
We listen? a leaf that quivers, then falls.

Guarding the heart, a soldier's last post,
Against the ghostly temptations the host.
A thump in the chest, a whisper, a start,
The battlefield of the human heart.

Falling, the grace of a dancer's misstep,
Under the spotlight of sin where we crept.
Yet, this misstep? a doorway ajar,
To turn, to see forgiveness not far.

Grace, that unwarranted gift at your door,
Wrapped in the rags of the rich and the poor.
A knock with no bill, no costly embrace,
The beggar and the saint, wearing the same face.

Prayer, the last breath in the night's deep spell,
The conjurer's words, the tolling of the bell.
An essential thread in life's frayed hem?
In whispered incantations, we find them.

As If Engine

As If Engine

A wrench turns
in the turbine of dreams,
removing gears at will.

And yet,
ignition flares up
with an odd rumble,
steady as deceit.

Strange how hearts,
like engines with their parts
scattered, piston-shattered,
still beat a ragged tempo.

Cracked valves, springs awry,
each thump a miracle
in the machine shop
of our rib cages.

The Good Results of Prayer

The Good Results of Prayer

The devout will tell you?

How in the stillness,

They clasp hands tight

(As if to squeeze out wisdom)

And whispers ascend.

They'll swear by the strength?

Not their own, but loaned?

That flexes in their feeble grip;

The clarity that visits

The confused yet hopeful mind.

Peace, they say, settles

Like dust after the storm?

Firm, even as the world blurs

Into another question unasked:

What face does solace wear

Amidst the clang and clamor

Of our difficult days?

House of God

House of God

Set an altar
in the world, in the heart:
stillness amidst the rush,
seeing where we stand,
who stands with us?
the awe of the here.

Mark the gates of heaven,
ordinary earth, with ladder marks?
where divine footsteps mingle
unseen yet felt.

Stack stones high, pile life's fragments?
spirit and flesh, sacred and secular,
have no divide in the divine eye.
Every step, an altar beneath,
the earth heavy with holy whispers,
a wonder not to stumble
on the sacred
that cradles our every tread.

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.

The Arid Land

The Arid Land

Willows gasp for life?

Roots thrash in the empty air.

Above, buzzards arc in sky's uncaring glare.

Endless craving of sands?

Barren, they'll never know the kiss of water's sweep,

Nor the caress of life that crawls or leaps.

Yet still, under the unyielding azure span,

Defiant against its own desolation,

We find a fierce beauty to love

In this land, bathed in relentless sun.

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.

Enigmas

Enigmas

A lobster weaves gold with its feet?
The ocean harbors answers, not I.
You ponder the ascidia in its glassy dome,
Awaiting?what? It waits for time,
As do we all.

What embraces does the *Macrocystis* alga seek?
There's a sea, a time to learn its secrets.
You probe about the narwhal's spiral horn;
I narrate its demise, pierced and done.

Kingfisher feathers dancing in southern freshets?
Curious? Yes, so are many.
The sea anemone's crystalline form perplexes you,
A riddle dealt from your deck of wonders.

You're transfixed by the spines, electrical and fierce,
The moving stalactite encased in armor,
The fisherman's lure in the abyss?
A melody, a thread through water.

Know this: the ocean is privy to the secrets,
Jewel boxes brimming with life,
Countless as grains of sand, immaculate.
In wine-dark depths, time crafts
Petals of steel, jellyfish luminous and untangled,
Their threads released from a cornucopia
Of endless nacre.

I am but a net, empty and cast forth,
Beyond the reach of human gaze, dead in the gloom,

Hands accustomed to framing the world, slicing
Latitude and longitude on a hesitant orange globe.

I wandered as you do, probing
The unfathomable cosmos.
In my net, under the cloak of night, I woke bare?
Nothing ensnared but a fish gasping in the wind.

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.

Lighthouse

Lighthouse

In the ruckus of storm-tossed days,
You, steady as stone, aglow,
While I, a mere skiff in spray,
Veered near the gnash of despair's undertow.

Your beam? a silent hallelujah,
Sliced through the squall, a keen knife's edge,
Cutting a clear path through the tumult,
To harbor's embrace, love's pledge.

Without you, the night's a blindfold,
The sea a bed of nails,
Each wave a riddle in the dark,
Each gale a chorus of wails.

With you, the rocks, the peril,
Fade to myths of olden sin.
The shipwreck of our yesterdays,
Washed ashore, begins anew to begin.

The Heart Away From Nature

An old Lakota, bone-wise, whispered
Of hearts turned stone without the green whispers
Of wind-tongued leaves, the soft handshakes
Of branch with branch. The man he spoke of,
Captive of his own concrete, his breaths
Short, as if rationed by the city's tight grip.

No tender shoot or bloom could reach him,
Nor the rustling counsel of rivers, the patient
Earth's nurturing. He knew the wilt of compassion,
The shrivel of sympathy, witnessed
How men turned blind to their own kind.

So he kept the young ones near the tall grass
Where thoughts could bloom wide under big sky,
Where hearts learned the soft shuffle of bison,
The lullabies of brooks, growing
Gentle in their chest, beating a respect
For all that breathes, walks, and dies.

"Stay close," he'd say, "to the world's softening,
For it is easy to harden without its touch."
It was his gift, this knowing?
A gift he gave, wrapped in the wilderness.

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.

The Room Where Everything was Stored

The room is small, one window, the pane
speckled with a few quiet drops of yesterday's rain.
A kind of crypt with objects we've outgrown.

Gone, the evidences carved on the bark,
every footprint leading elsewhere,
dissolving into the dusk-hungry ground.

A bevy of shadows gathers,
their whispers clotting the air?
that dense anthology of slumber and silence.

Sadness has roots here.
It climbs the walls with practiced fingertips,
blooms in the lamplight's gentle cough.

Within these corners,
a congregation of the cherished,
a makeshift altar for the absent.

We've laid them here, these tender artifacts,
like relics of a soft-spoken god,
their whispers the litany we recite.

Memories are the strangest fruit,
they hang, heavy with the ghost of tastes,
the chiaroscuro of vanished summers.

Each object, an echo,
a soft brush against the soul,
an apricot's blush, the fire's last breath.

What is tendered, what is kept?
as if a room could mend its own heart,
gently finger the text of our losses.

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.

Persistence

Work out. Ten laps.
Chin ups. Look good.

Steam bakes old bones.
Phone humming in the locker room.

One bite of the apple,
One long kiss goodnight.

Nurse in white,
Her voice soft as a secret.

Pricked vein, blood's whisper.
Dance of the disappearing reds.

Wrap up warm, they say,
As breath grows shy and scarce.

Night's sweats and sores,
The slow parade of loss.

Clenched fist, unclenched world.
Haunting echoes in hollow rooms.

Commands to the mirror,
Grimaces returned in kind.

Halting words like tired steps,
Chin up, but the sky falls.

Embrace the chill, the stiffening of will,
Coughs that rattle like old gates.

Patient gown, the draft of life,
Each draught a nearing shore.

The gasps of a fish on land,
Less air, less time, less.

Rooms bleach-white,
Soul's fever, limbs in rebellion.

No more the march, the workday rhythm,
Eyes scan the ceiling's sterile tiles.

Air, the greedy heir,
Takes all, gives back scraps.

Blood thin as regret,
Lungs like crumpled paper.

So say the healers,
Counting the days on fingers.

Meal untouched, bed untouched,
By air, by time, untouched.

Evening wrestles with the clock,
Knocking gently, unavoidably.

Persistence of the beat,
In the chest, a drumming plea.

Inhale the world, if you can,
Exhale, and hold the void at bay.

The Way the Mail Stops Coming

You don't lose someone all at once.
It's a slow vanishing act,
Day by day, the absence takes a seat,
Sips your coffee, reads your paper.

Her scent lingers like a question
On pillows, in closets, a whisper in drawers.
With time, even ghosts pack up,
Move on from the fabric and the paper.

A mailbox grows hungry, its mouth agape,
No more letters with her name,
No more words to say: I am here,
To say: remember.

This kind of going away is a puzzle:
How she fills the room without a body,
How the years will take her bit by bit,
But never entirely, never all at once.

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?

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.

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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.

The Eye's Delusion

The Eye, that clever little voyeur, squinted hard,
Scanning the countryside like it owned the darn place,
Mumbling about a glorious mountain where none existed?
Engulfed in blue mist, merely the perfume of its own ambition.

The Ear, tired of listening to Eye's endless romance,
Snapped, "Quiet! I've had quite enough of your misty visions."
For it knows silence is golden, and gold is the mountain it seeks.

The Hand swished through the drama,
Like a hungry ghost looking for a meatloaf sandwich?
No towering peaks to grasp, not even a lousy hill or a knoll!

The Nose, always after the scoop,
Snorted, sniffed, and snuffed out the bold lie,
No Alpine flowers to savor, not even the faintest hint of pine.

The Eye, betrayed by its sweet illusion,
Cast its optic nerve to the heavens,
Murmuring betrayal, while the others,
Oh, those skeptics, huddled in conspiracy,
Their whispers prickling the void,
Decreed a sentence harsh and swift:
"There's a crack in our Eyeball," they cried,
"He sees what we cannot, and that is simply not tolerable."

And so the Eye wept, all watery and blurred,
For who would ever trust a visionary
In a world of doubters with sturdy feet
Planted firmly in the flatlands of certainty?

Two Powers

Two Powers

Love makes a tenant of the stars descend
to mingle with the grime, while Lust feigns vows,
and Heaven and Hell become the here and now,
depending on the master we befriend.

Not a coin toss, this choice; both blend
their flavors in life's stew, both disavow
indifference. We choose, uphold the plow
to till joy's vineyard or sour ends.

Love masquerades as Hell, yet sings of Paradise.
Lust dons angel's robes, breathes easy lies,
and slides toward Hell, a bride too soon bedecked.
If Love is life's own spark, a swift device
to elevate the soul, Lust's thick alibis
serve only Death?each Power's own architect.

There Are No Facts, Only Interpretations

We dress up our eyes
In the suits of perspective,
Tie knots of conviction
Around our necks.

The world's a stage
Where truth shifts with the light,
Each gaze a script
Editing the scene.

In the corner,
An old man insists
The shadows are solid,
A beggar trades
Silence for alms.

A child looks on,
An empty slate,
Sketches a bird
Where we argue sky.

No fact to anchor,
Winds of whim and whisper
Unfurl the sails,
Chart courses into mist.

We nod, we argue,
Fetch bones for dogs,
Interpretations
Scurrying after.

At the end of the day,

Our pockets heavy with stones
Called certainty,
We wade into dreams,
Folded maps
In hands that tremble.

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.

Evening Comes

West undresses,
Drunk on colors no one else will wear,
Passing them off to trees
Who stand like old men in a line,
Scratching their heads at the youth's odd fashion.

You watch the split:
One world scales heaven,
The other, a leaden anchor,
Sinks without a ripple.

Between them, you're the child
Neither parent claims at the playground?
Left with a voice too faint
For the house hushed by secrets,
Nor devout enough
To hymn with star-bound choirs.

Your life's a tangled skein
Threads you can't tease apart.
One moment, a rock in your shoe,
The next, a spark trying to catch,
A shy flame whispering up into night.

Each breath? a pendulum
Swings from stone to star in your chest.

Creative Sorrows

I dressed my sorrows in the dark,
A tailor, nimble, blind and stark.
Anger beckoned, a fiery muse,
Whispering sonnets with a fuse.

In that crucible bleak and strange,
A smithy hammering at change.
With every ember's creative bite,
I sculpted shadows into light.

Beyond the thorns, the bloodied veil,
Lies the art that tells the tale.
The pain, the ire, in the forge's glow,
Transmuted into a creative flow.

So paint your anger, sing your sorrow,
Forge today, a brighter tomorrow.
For at the heart of each painful thing,
Is a bird that's waiting to take wing.

Consider the Possibilities

The empty cup,
A beggar's coinless hat?
Both echo with a kind of wealth.

In the room with no mirrors,
Dance the shadows
Of what could be.

Picture the barren tree,
It's branches
Cradles for the wind's children.

The clock without hands
Teaches the art
Of timeless expectation.

Look at the sky,
The ground,
The in-between?

All filled with the craft
Of what's to come,
If only you build it.

The zigzag of lightning
In a bottle,
The ripe void waiting to burst,

That's where we start:
With the quiet thunder
Of possibility.

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.

Diagnosics for Human Ghosts

List what you've misplaced:
Socks, dreams, two weeks' time.

In the mirror, how many holes
Where teeth used to hide?

Weigh your harvest: lungs,
Liver's slice, fingers of strife.

Gauge the path from thought
To sight? How far the light?

Count the silences when words
Failed you or you failed them.

How translucent are you?
Can moonbeams pen your memoirs?

Choose a rune, rename yourself.
Listen? Is that singing your elegy?

Classify your demise.
Chart the empire of your dust.

On the scale of ghost to shadow,
Mark your worth in others' thoughts.

Do you perch on whispers,
invisible yet omnipresent?

Inspect. Are you whole
Or something less than sum?