

Poetry of Kenny O'Donnell

Kenny O'Donnell

Presented by

My poetic side 

Dedication

To my parents who let me make my own mistakes.

summary

Advice for my son

Stay your mind in the crashing waves

Take a walk in the dark

Kindling

I went under Bliss

The former path

Wilting Roses

Fields and valleys

The Depth where you dwell

How do I

Breaking Daylight

Let me breathe

A letter home

Fading

Chapbook

The fires

Memories in waves

Birth of another tortured artist

After

Redmarsh

One two till six

Towers of Sand

A Terribly written confession

They charge rent in heaven

The Trying

Be Still

Skipping Stones

Lost moments

We will never die

Hell in heaven

Such a crying shame

Lamentation for the human race

Wanted: Love

Present

Dull clear skies

Riverbank

Living By Pocket Change

Becalmed

I have a hole in my ass

A generation of men raise by pornstars

Rough and silver linings

A stripper he liked....

Wings like the abyss

My first night in Krakow

Determinism

Where is the blood?

Daily X Road

Drunken Hiaku III

This is my home

Those 'being good' days

Brilliant Ideas

Tanka XII

Advice for my son

My son, on the cusp of manhood,
comes to me for advice
and asks
what he should do with his life.
I've been waiting for this moment
for longer than I have been a father,
rehearsed the wisdom I would impart,
and send not a boy
but a man on a path
of virtue and philosophy.

And I choke
because all I can advise
is that it sucks to work an office 9 to 5
where you spend your time writing poetry on the toilet
and in the cubicle next to you,
a man farts
and cries.

Stay your mind in the crashing waves

With calm waters you may splash and prance on the surface
bask in the warmth of the sun and its glory
lose yourself, ourselves, in the time of our lives.

These waters turn grey,
the sun blotted from the sky
shrouded by cloud.

Only those who stay calm in the crashing waves
can survive
and reach the shore.
Do not cling to me if you cannot stay your nerves.
I have held you above the surface for too long.
do not pull me under.
It will not go how you think.

I will swim to the shore with you
I will keep you above the deep
if only you do not trash wildly

I beg you
keep your mind.
You will drown otherwise
and I will not drown with you.
You will go alone.

There will be no sun on the shore without you
but I will choose solitude on the dry shores
to sharing the dark and the deep.

Take a walk in the dark

Take a walk in the dark
Where your mother told you never to go
Take a walk in the dark
The real dark where you can't see before you
Take no light, you will disturb the darkness, the depth
Take a walk in the dark
Where the silence pierces the ears
And the scratches of small critters echo
And the sound of your footsteps cause you to question if you are alone
Take a walk in the dark where shadows dwell
And the darkness plays games with your imagination
Notice how there's something telling you to look behind you and quicken your pace
Take a walk in the dark where uncertainty is the only certainty.
And there's not guarantee of what you'll find at the end.
Keep your stride, keep it true until the end
Take a walk in the dark and leave the fear of it behind
Fear only what standing in the light will bring you. Or what it won't.
Maps were not drawn by standing still
Take a walk in the dark
Bask in the quiet
Keep from turning back and seeking out the security of the light
Fight on, stride hard against the fear, the apprehension
Pioneer your life against the unknown
Take a walk in the dark
Leave behind those who call you crazy, a fool.
That you're wasting your time. Stand in the light where it is safe.
Take a walk in the dark
Where you find just how far you can push your limits.
Where today's dreams are tomorrows possibilities.
Take a walk
To the edge of the map
And see what you discover in uncharted territories.
Take a walk to see what you will find on the other side of fear

Kindling

You've not paid enough tax on your widow cleaning business.

Your cancer screening is booked for March 23rd at 10:15

Aunt Felecia's dog died while she was holidaying in Spain with Edna and Betty, her neighbours.

I take the time to read each letter addressed to the former occupier before throwing them into the fire.

I wonder how long she has until the cancer gets her. When the taxman will come knocking to know where his thousands are.

I bet Aunt Felicia was whoring about with a bunch of Spaniards.

Mild entertainment. At least it warms me for a while.

I went under Bliss

I went under for an operation,
They didn't count me down.
Instead,
I laid there shooting the breeze
With the surgeons,
And then I wake up.
Nothing in between but lost time.
Lost time and bliss.
Not like sleeping
Or dreaming.
It made me think of dying.
Wonder if it's not so bad
To just
Go
Go into nothing and not wake up.
To go In a single moment,
A moment split in half.
A life Dwindling,
Then...

The former path

There is a path by the sea
Where foam would spill over the wall
And over the way with soundless crash
Bringing with it pebbles and sand and breeze

Dusk would fall behind the horizon,
The pale face of the moon
Would adorn the waves
Of a clear black ocean

The path remains
But the nights are gone
Streetlights pollute the way
And walls keep back the foam

And off the shore, illuminated
Stands a farm of silent pale giants.
Industrial omens, spinning their arms in the wind
It's for our good we're told. Yes but so was the view.

Wilting Roses

Wilting roses fall from stem
carried by wind along the grass and dew,
Tears no longer salt the earth
But my world has not forgotten you.

You are not there
It's not for you this fresh bouquet,
I come here to remember
And see my respects are paid.

You gave so much
Your time, yourself,
It's only right I go on
with your lessons, I'm compelled.

I will play my part
Time will make history of us both,
But you will live on in those we leave behind
And I will meet you on the new coast.

You will live on in those we leave behind,
And I will meet you on the new coast.

Fields and valleys

Though fields and valleys keep us apart
I cross the great plains guided by my heart

It will take me to you, this I know
Through tempest, sandstorm, heat or snow

With each step I feel your heat
And I will be warmed when once we meet

I fight the elements with your love and devotion
It is your promised hand that keeps me in motion

Little I'm afraid this man has to offer
But his body and soul, and the chance to grow softer

To leave behind the hardship that this life has made
And be by your side, where I wish to be laid.

The Depth where you dwell

Rock bottom,
Hell,
There are so many names
For the same place.
For you ,Man in the mirror,
With pits for eyes,
Where nothing escapes
It's called reality.

This depth is where you
Dwell and fester
Not alone
But also without good company
You sit with your depravity
And rational.
The light above you dwindles
Always closer than it looks
But you never try
Truly try
To grasp

Why would you
When you don't need to
Not you
You're fine
Never better
Its them
They just don't understand

And that's their fault.

How do I

How can I say I'm fed up
With how my day
Brings me down
Without seeming weak.
How do I remark on the things
That trouble me
And depress me
Without seeming like I'm just complaining.
How do I say
That I sit on the edge of my bed after waking
Hoping the seconds so that little bit slower
Before I start work
Without seeming like I'm asking for special treatment.
How can I break from the mould
From the grip and claw I find myself in
The one that keeps the smile from my face
Without risking the future of those I love
How do I tell those I love
Who rely on my strength
Those I must not fail
Without breaking down to nothing before them.
How do I
How do I
How

Breaking Daylight

I saw in the breaking daylight,
Silent chaos,
Dwindling,
Hoping against
Lives we lead left unlived.
Its my turn to lead.
I have awoken to the day.
And what will come my way

And what will come my way?
I have awoken to the day.
Its my turn to lead lives
we lead left unlived, hoping against
Dwindling silent chaos.
I soar In the breaking daylight.

Let me breathe

Let me breathe
take this bag from my back
For a moment
The skin is sore and the bones ache.

Let me close my eyes
They sting for all they have seen
Tear will well
Images swirl beneath my eye lids

Let my mind cease
And not dwell on things with no end
Though do not let me wander dreamland
There are far darker things in those depths

Let me close my heart
It has invited too much
It aches
With each beat it makes

A letter home

This night comes with sombre rain
The skies know what is to come.
In the morn at day break
The tired souls of my comrades,
Following my whistle and order,
Will go over the wall.
And advance the plains to the enemy
Who will do just the same.
These men I lead are hardly that
They've known no love
Other than that of their mother.
Known no shame of a heavy drink,
Some have not even had their first.
And many, if not all,
Had never stepped foot outside of their home town
Before this ungodly war.
But we are told
We will be home for Christmas.
Yet these children
And myself I'm sure
Have seen our last already.
I hope only their resolve
Is strong enough
That they do not yet realise it themselves.
We strike the enemy at first light
Children themselves.
Many wishing
Just as I
That we could walk the other way.

Fading

Life has lost its charm and shine
It's faded in recent years of mine
Dread and regret wells within me
Like a bile thick with agony.

Things have not turned out as I hoped
Perhaps I'm alone, or maybe just like most
My youthful ambitions have turned to sand
I have resigned to live on as an unremarkable man.

I have no tales or stories to regale
My time on this earth must seem limp and pale
The Gods must think me such a joke
They will harbour no festivities when I croak

An undecorated gravestone that is my future
Here lies someone. A forgettable creature
It should not be too late to save myself
But for so many years I've known nothing else.

It's a crime against nature to live so little
So do not settle for an existence so brittle
Do what you can to inject your life with colour
And take those lessons on to many another.

Chapbook

I see that familiar
Piece of trash
Fumbling
Dancing
In the wind
It carries the grit and grime
Of the high street pavement
And the stains of muddied puddles
I pick my chapbook
To stop it mocking me further
I handed it out
Only ten minutes ago.
I put it in the bin
Where I see another one
And wonder if my hopes
Are getting cozy in there too

The fires

The tinderbox has been struck
Fire blazes in the wind
Burning all it touches
A misdirected rage
Once lit hard to quell.
This fire has smouldered
For too long
And burns
Across the dried fields
Of a nation parched
Of virtue.
Now a vengeful blaze.
How long before
The winds
Turn on those
Who struck
The first match
And brings the fires
With it.

Memories in waves

Memories of you come into focus
and go
Like waves breaking on the beach.
And each time they go,
Just as the waves strip away the loose sand,
A piece of it fades away, replaced
With what I imagine
used to be there.
A jigsaw that falls apart with each blink
And I sketch in the gaps.
Because of this
I forget how things used to be
I forget how you made me feel
And I fill the gaps with a sketch
An imitation.
Sand that wasn't there before.
Soon enough its no longer memory
But fallacy.
And I have forgotten
What you did,
Why I left,
And wonder if it was my fault.

Birth of another tortured artist

"I'm just going to die alone" he jokes without joking
And people will say no don't be like that
You'll find someone, they're just around the corner
But
I'll tell him "yeah
You will
Unless you fucking do something about it."

"My job is destroying my soul" he tells me.
Oh don't worry something will come up
You just have to be patient
Some might say.
Well I tell him "Quit your job
And inject some meaning
Into your life. Don't live comfortably. Get comfortable being uncomfortable"

"I need a way out. I need something to do"
He moans and I scream
"Do you do anything you idiot?
Do something, just anything"

"Maybe I need therapy" he says
"Some do" I tell him "but not you. You need a slap"
But not a malicious slap
A therapeutic slap that comes from a good place.
Some people need that, some need more.

It isn't nice, the advice
I give him so I'm told
But the truth is rarely a comfort

"What can I do?" he pleads
"I think I'll learn play the guitar"

Well that's a start at least.
Because the world
Can always do
With another tortured artist
"You could always write poetry"
I say.

After

And what comes after? Not for me But the world?
What of the people I know?
How long will I be in the mind of those I leave behind?
How long will they dream of me?

And when those dreams fade into history
That is when I truly die.
To no longer be thought of
That is when I truly die.

If they go a day without me in their thoughts,
Will they feel guilty?

I don't want them to feel such guilt
But its comforting
To think
That they want to keep me

And years go by, once in a while I may appear
From the dusty regions of memory
Who will think the last thought of me?
Someone I love, I hope

Redmarsh

Mindlessly I stroll
Along the beach.
Sand soaked by the tides.
Rainbow array of pebbles pockel my way
And seaweed scented breeze
Draws snake like wisps
Of sand over the dunes

Ahead of me another giant
Falls, crumbling industry into smoke and dust.
Demolished towers, furnace.
Once proud now pieces
Making way for the new or nothing.

Behind, collapsing cliffs
Stolen away by the sea
Erroding closer and closer.
And inch or a mile each day.

Decay surrounds me, my home,
Childhood memories
Man and mother nature
A vendetta against a town
Condemned to history
With no place in the future.

One two till six

There was a woman
Screaming at the wall.
One two till six.
Rage and anger bulged
In the veins of her neck
It was outside a pub
Though she wasn't drunk
She was just outside it
Pacing, lamenting
She raged at the wall
At the person she thought it was
About paedophilia
And trafficking.
A crowd of social smokers laughed
She's local, a regular.
One two till six
One two till six
She repeated
There were wisps of sense
Just wisps
And once they were spoken
The disappeared into the wind
And I wondered if I had ever heard them at all.
I recognised her as a woman
Who asked me for change once.
One two till six.
A man came out the pub
Lit a cigarette and said
Come on Emma, give it up
The wall isn't talking back
But she raged on
Voice hoarse
One two till six

Then asked a passer-by for a quid
Before turning back to the wall
Perhaps it is coincidence
That the address of the pub
Stencilled on the wall
Said 1-2-6.
Emma picked up her bag
She walked as if nothing had happened.
Maybe there was, is, truth
Entwined with the rambling.
Wound so tightly together
That the truth is lost forever.
We might never know.
Whether Emma does
And simply can't say
Is something else entirely.

Towers of Sand

Poetry is in no way
A practical way of life
No great living can be made
By obscure writings,
Insane thoughts
Cocooned in fancy words.
So why do we do it?
Why cling to a dwindling art
In a world where art
Is becoming less of itself
And more of a shell,
Brittle propaganda.
Poetry, art, becomes this worlds dream
Forgotten, dusty, crumbling
Like towers of sand
Us poets we cling to it, those fistfuls of sand
And we fill out pockets with as much as we can
And we drop a few grains here and there
In the cyber jungle.
Leaving clues of a tradition
Maybe one day
There will be enough sand
For at least one more tower.

A Terribly written confession

It's been a tight week in a tight month
And you've made me dinner with what we have.
You say I'm sorry it's not much I hope it fills you
And I scrape some on to your plate.
You say won't you be hungry?
And I think - I've been hungry all my life
But not for food.
No I won't be hungry darling.
The fire doesn't take tonight
And we've no more wood
No more coal or kindling
So you find another blanket for us
But I wrap you in it
You say Won't you be cold?
I think - I've been cold all my life
But not from lack of warmth
No I won't be cold honey.

I'll never be either of these things again
Hungry for women, fame and fortune
no longer
Cold to companionship, loyalty and love
No longer

You've made me wealthy
You've made me warm
Do not worry for me
You did more for me
Than any other could.

They charge rent in heaven

I met him at those golden gates and he said 'Welcome Brother, I am Peter'
'I've got two brothers, you ain't either of 'em' I told him. 'Where the hell am I?'
I'm walking on clouds and I have some robe thrown over my shoulder.
'The end my brother. Paradise, Heaven.'
The gates opened and a warm soft light came through 'Welcome' a sensation said
Around me and from deep within.
I rub my palms together 'Well why didn't you say so'
He took me round the joint
And fuck me.
Would you believe, Heaven charges rent.
Takes a lot of power to keep it warm up here, and to keep those clouds floating OI' Peter told me.
And those robes ain't cheap to make. No sweat shops or cheap child labour up here, no sir.
Oh and you farm your own food.
Milk your own cows
...Rough and smooth I suppose.
'Some fudging paradise' I said. 'Hey what gives, I didn't say fudging!'
'There's no profanity here either brother'.
'Well alright, I guess I can't be surprised at that. Tell ya what. I'll be happy with just a nice thick steak
how about that? Huh?'
And peter said 'Oh no brother. There's no killing of animals here. We're all vegan'.
'Well sugar how about that' I say and ask 'There must be some decent tackle up here'.
'Whatever do you mean brother?'
'Y'know, tackle... broads, women, poontang'.
'I'm afraid there's no pre-marital sex up here brother,
Unless you intend to take a bride in paradise'.
'Well gosh-darn. Nah, I was never any good with women down below,
Don't see much reason for it to be any fudging different here.'
And then I ask where I can get some heavenly whiskey.
'Oh there's certainly no devils drink here brother'.
'Peter ol' buddy?'
'Yes brother'
'Fudge this'
I threw off the robe.

Walked out those gates

And jumped head first of the nearest cloud edge I could find.

It's hot as all hell down here. So all my whiskey is neat. But there's plenty of meat

And only an occasional demonic ass raping.

But if you can get past that, it ain't half bad.

The Trying

The moment you think you're good
You've gone bad
And it's a hard journey back into the dark
The dank wet alley of doubt
Where you sit on cardboard
And smell the scraps of cheap restaurants
And hobo piss and hobo intercourse.
Never leave here.
Never think you're too good to be here.
Because if you aren't kneeling
In the puddles, with holes in your trousers
You aren't trying to get out
And it's only in the trying
That you're worthy of leaving.

Be Still

Be still my heart
Do not beat for her
Each thump would be wasted
Each pulse of blood would leak

Be clear my mind
Do not be clouded by sensations
Each thought could betray yourself
Each consequence would be your own

Be tough my body
Do not use your strength
Each thrash concludes weakness
Each moment of patience is a victory

Be clean my soul
Do resist temptation
Each step away brings brighter days
Each day comes with opportunities

Skipping Stones

Knuckles ache, fingers crack
Peeling them away from the steering wheel
Reaching for the cardboard cup of coffee
For bitterness and reprieve
Steal back the livelihood thieved
By 5am alarm clocks
Break lights, reduced speed limits
Anxiety creeping as the journey extends.
Daily 9 o'clock pit stop no further but no closer
Radio buzzes with audible traffic
Horns blare, words of the urgent language
Audio overload, lane change aggro
Tempers flare, nostrils flared, teeth grinding, grip firming, blood boiling, blood stained gums, a day
long crick in the neck
And sore knuckles. Cracking digits
Destination sits somewhere on the edge of a circle, somewhere on the other side,
At the end of the diameter
And the end of the dream
just a couple pit stops away
Always.
There's always tomorrow
To go to the lake
To skip stones in knee deep water
To breathe.
To release the grip.

Lost moments

I see you enter, wet, over the tendrils of steam
rising from my coffee.

your smile brings me far more warmth,
your perfume sneaks through

surrounding sweet aromas of pastry
sending my heart racing

for a moment before you sit at the table
next to mine.

my mind is set a blaze,
concoctions of fantasy.

the scream of the steamer,
clattering mugs pulls me back.

you're not here for me
but I'm here for you,

and I wish you could see me.
I leave before you do

knocking your arm as I go.
with heat in my cheeks and my throat caught

I'm too afraid to apologise,
focusing too hard

on not making a more foolish scene,
breaking into a half run

through the sun shower,
as if I have somewhere to be

when something grabs my arm.
its you, handing my wallet over

with soft warm eyes,
I will away the fog

and thank you.

you smile with pity.

I see there's no hope for us,
for me, with you

We will never die

'We will never die'
your shoulders sag
the weight of imagined pain
from years to come
lifted from them
'We will never die'
the storm in your mind
is broken
impermanence gives way
to falsified immortality
'we will never die'
the lie stings even my own tongue
but its so sweet to your ears
I will bare the toxin
knowing this burden will not last
wondering if I have truly saved you

Hell in heaven

There's not much to this life of mine
No adventures or fame, but no petty crimes
there's only a path of broken dreams
and it's all coming to a close it seems
there'll be plenty of dry eyes once I pass
A man who spent his life at the bottom of a glass
don't pity me, it's better than you think
I'm happy so long as I have one more drink
I hope there's a hell in heaven
for people like me
A hell in heaven, guess we'll see
I've not left a trail of broken hearts
but you'll find in some lives, I've played my part
Theres always that one who got away
but I was never enough for her to stay
Her father didn't think I was up to much
and those weren't impressions that I could crush
the bottle was always my one and only
her love couldn't save me, she left me lonely
I hope there's a hell in heaven
for people like me
A hell in heaven, guess we'll see
I never did nothing to make my mother cry
but I know for me she has no pride
I threw away my time, I did no right
I've lived such a simple, sad, sad life
I'll take what I got to wherever's next
I've got nobody to give whats left
don't pity me, it's better than you think
I'm happy so long as I have one more drink
I hope there's a hell in heaven
for people like me
A hell in heaven, guess we'll see

Such a crying shame

We saw the world that we could make
dreamed a life for our own sake
held a hope it would come to be
but I couldn't have known what she'd do to me

Take my soul and bury it deep
cauterise the wound so it can't seep
and leave me to my own disgrace
of having my trust completely misplaced

To another her heart was given away
and in our home did they lay
the sanctuary for our matrimony
Far from the truth they did show me

It was all my doing she did claim
all my love she found quite lame
I will always be fond of my Lydia
But now I don't regret giving her chlamydia

Lamentation for the human race

I'm terrified for this species

In doubt it has much to look forward too.

We're become shells. Some have already finalised their transformation into a thing with nothing inside, from a person with something within.

It's all about output. Performance. What can I show people that I do. Some people are not themselves they are instead only what they can be perceived as being.

They have nothing underneath that thin layer. Even their opinions, which they borrow from each others performances, are wafer thin. Attack it and it falls apart.

And these people, who know nothing beyond what they find in videos shorter than a healthy fart, will be teaching the next generation.

And those poor souls will know nothing

How could they.

They will live attached to machines, invisible ball and chains. Hell people are like that already. We used to snort cocaine and now we inject ourselves with content. Sweet sweet content.

They will have no memories either. Why would they. Everything they witness is immortalised in digital form

Remember when.... no but I can look at it. I can look at the pale imitation of a true experience.

They're all going to be the same model too. Exactly the same.

Designer humans.

Same factory.

We won't have sex anymore, we can't get it up

or wet

because we aren't

the Adonis or

the Aphrodite

of the porn we're addicted to.

No we're the flabby ragged spotted gaunt

shadows

of what people used to look like,

hooked on virtual

reality.

Where we're all heroes,

all gods of our own universe.

Who the fuck is gonna fuck that.

Leave procreation for the elite.
The ones who don't fall pray
To drop fed gratification

There's no colds anymore,
no cancers
Or aids.

How could there be when we never leave the room. Never unhook from the intravenous drip that keeps the heart healthy enough to keep beating.

No
We fear death by connection error.
Isolation from the main server.
It's a basic human right! We'll say...to have a connection.

Yeah.
I really feel sorry for the future of the Human race,
And even more for those who don't realise that the future is already here.

Wanted: Love

I always thought that I wanted love
Then I met you and I couldn't get enough
I knew then you were too good for me
And look at us now, I was right you see

I never had luck with love before
I once knew a girl damn rotten to the core
She took me by the hand and took me by the heart
And led me down somewhere deep, somewhere dark

Took me too long to see the writing on the wall
All I could hope was for someone to break my fall
That's when you came to me in some kinda dream
Then love was never grim as it first seemed.

I never looked for you but I wish I had
Think of all the years we could of spent being mad
Madly in love like we are today
From now and always, when we're old and gray.

One day we're going to have kids of our own
And I'll tell them all our stories and they're gonna moan
Because I tell them all the time
Just How lucky I am that you're all mine

Present

Am I Here?

when I write, am I present

is there enough of me on the page.

have I actually tried today, done what I tell people

and bled onto the paper, enough to laugh

enough to cry

enough to rage at the words I've written

Am I Here?

or elsewhere, wishing to be done? away

from the page, the pen, the responsibility

telling myself I did a good job, clocking out early

Am I Here?

in this moment, lost within

so that I can avoid making eggshell poems

and stain glass prose

and instead

write icebergs

Dull clear skies

Some days even with clear skies
the sun just doesn't seem to shine
scuffin' my shoes across the ground
wondering when things will turn round
they do eventually, this I know
things have to come and things have to go
tomorrow is always a brand new day
I've just gotta hope the sun shines my way
This isn't a lonely journey as you may think
there's plenty of guys here upon the brink
we'll give each other hapless smiles
but not a word will be spoken for miles and miles

Riverbank

The river bank crumbles beneath my knees
Sediment slides into the current and I sink slowly closer to the wash.
And I should just lean forward
My heart wills it
My gut senses it
Land in the water chest first, and see where it takes me.
Some will call it brave
Others call it stupid
Maybe it's both and neither.
Certainly, to not drown just a little bit in life is at least one.
But who can truly tell.
You might have something worth drowning for.
And the decision is made for you already,
You simply have to fall into the waters
And see where it takes you

Living By Pocket Change

With less
than £10 in my bank account
and only Half
that in pocket change
i'm left to wonder if success
is just around the corner
like it was
for all those poets
I admire or if
I'll end up like
the other ones
who I like even more

Becalmed

We are becalmed,
Taking on water.
Bloodfoam-
poison-
Curdles
In my throat,
Dammed
Behind gritted teeth.
Even deep breaths
Stoke,
The smoulder.
My lungs filled
With ash,
With smoke.
Breaths of acrid air.
I am more scar
Than skin.
Once oak-barked
Now brittle.
My heart
Is bound
Tethered, suffering
The ropes' burn
While your mind
Is encased
In thorned vines
Growing thicker, sharper,
Tighter with each imagined
Fear you collect.
I cannot
Let you drown
In the deep.
I cannot

Keep us
Afloat alone
And our raft,
splintered
And seeping
Water, is becalmed.
We
Could repair the sails
Together.
I will fashion oars
With my bones
So long
As we
Paddle together.
We can venture
To the horizon,
From the maw
Of the abyss,
The fabled edge.
A sanctuary revealed.
But
I can't sail
There for you.

I have a hole in my ass

I have a hole in my ass
And it itches terribly
It's not like yours
You sit on yours while mine stopped me from sitting.
And my hole has no purpose
Other than to itch and piss me off.
I have it because I grew a cyst
The size of a peach
Then one day
It burst
And filled my underwear with blood and puss
The nurse said I was 'blessed with a hairy bottom'
And the doctor cut it open and drained the liquid and stuffed it with gauze and said 'don't sit down too much'
I laid on my side for weeks and every time I stood to piss I was on the cusp
Of blacking out
And I'd change underwear three times a day because the bandages
Were soaked with blood.
My shits were red, the toilet paper was red, the only thing that wasn't was my face
Because all the blood was down the crack of my arse.
I had to go back to see the nurse
and have her pull out the gauze
From my hole - the way you pull string from a yo-yo - Ho ho it hurt.
and then she put some more back in.
She threads me like a needle, sometimes she's gentle and other times she goes 'oops'
And a tear rolls down my cheek
While I'm face down on the bed and have my arse is up in the air.
'You can put your pants back on now' she says peeling off her gloves with a snap.
My arse throbs and my heart thumps
There's blood in my ears.
I gingerly pull up my jeans
And thank her.

A generation of men raise by pornstars

Sad little arsehole
Holding his sad little dick
He's only gone and fallen in love.
Cursed.
To a pornstar no less.
I know people say its better
To have loved
Than to never have
But come on.
He's only ever seen her
On a screen.
At 18 he made her
His screensaver.
Legs akimbo
Inviting him in.
By 25 he had seen
And bought
All her movies.
He's not even jealous
Of the guys who get to fuck her!
What kind of love is that?
White guys, black guys, asian guys,
Skinny guys, fat guys, guys who look like fucking walnuts.
2 guys, 3 guys, 5 guys, more.
She really puts an effort in to be an expert whore.
And he's there
On his side of the screen.
Making furious, shameful love
To his hand.
What kind of love is that?
Modern love.
The love of a young man.
In this day and age.

Raised on gratification.

Raised on government.

Rough and silver linings

She left him
For his cousin no less
And *she*, his cousin,
Always complained
That she would never find love
 And this was after he lost his job
 When someone decided that he - a children's social worker
 - was no longer needed
 In one of the most impoverished counties
 Of the country
She left with the dog
No not his cousin but
The mutt
He has had since
He were a boy - before they even met.
 He was eighteen years old
 Could barely take a step
 Could hardly see a head
 Had next to no hair at all
 And would now sometimes shit inside

I'll stab you...
To DEATH
She said
And bite your cock off
 He waved her goodbye
 Drinking a small espresso
 Which he made
 While she packed her things,
 And his things,
 And their things.
 Things she thought
 he cared about.

He thought about
Other things
Like what he
Was going to have
For dinner
If she didn't take the fridge
And the pans
 She did incidentally
 Leave the pans
 But he suspected
 She had no idea where they were
She screamed
Of death and murder
Till her voice gave out
That's when she
And his cousin finally left
 Two dykes in a volvo
 And an open boot full of crap
 And a dog he loved.
 Until the dog,
 Such a good dog
 Took a nervous shit
She kicked the dog
Out the car
And said
Take that dirty
Old bastard back
And the dog walked,
wobbling
Up to the house.
And got his head scratched
 Who's Good boy
The dykes pulled away
And he and the dog
Again not his cousin
- though she smelled much worse -

Went into the living room
Where only a chair -
with slash marks
And stuffing bleeding out
- Remained
 Ah so That's what
 She was doing
 When he was making his coffee
 That's why she
 had the knife.
 He thought she was finally
 Going to stab him
Yellow foam rolled in tufts
As he wandered his living room
Though there was little
Living to do in it
Then
A stone crashed though the window
And hit his hand
And smashed the coffee cup
The handle still pinched
Between his fingers and thumb
 Then tired screeched
 And the last ounces
 Of strength remaining
 In her vocal cords
 Could be heard
 Fading down the street
She had smashed his smart phone
When he asked her if
She wanted a coffee
And he had no landline
Who does these days
So there was little chance
Of getting the window fixed
Today

Not the perfect start

To an English winter

But it was his lucky day!

There were two ribeye steaks

In the freezer

And a bag of onion rings.

He and the dog

Had dinner together

Though she had taken the forks

Oh well

You have to take the rough

With the smooth

A stripper he liked....

A stripper he once knew and liked called him He answered immediately But had enough mind To turn off the porn On the TV And not seem to desperate As he said "Heeeyy" as cool As he could. She asked how he was "Oh you know - living the dream" And she said she was bored And fancied a chat And hadn't spoken to him in a while And she wasn't a stripper anymore "Really?" "No I'm a hooker now" "Oh Really?" he said wondering How to find out her rates. "Yeah I needed to get out Of there, none of the guys were any good" "What are your new clients like?" "Well they mostly just want to talk And to cry. They don't actually want To Fuck me" "Really, That's a surprise". "Easy Money" she said And somewhere within him Perhaps in his heart More likely his cock He weeped But not in the climactic Way he would have liked. Because she'd rather watch Grown men cry Than take his money And make him smile.

Wings like the abyss

Death better be quick
When she starts knocking
at the door
Don't dick about
I'll tell her
I don't want to linger
On what might have
Or what could have.
She's going to come to me
In a fitted black dress -
that is a cocoon of her wings -
(Like the abyss of the cosmos),
With hair of fire
(The destroyer of all things),
And eyes of poison
(that ends you in silence).
And I'll see her coming.
And I'll fight the urge
I've cultivated through my life,
To run away from beautiful women,
And finally let this one kill me.
Like I should have done
A dozen times or more in my youth.
Here's hoping I'll be in a bar alone
And she'll send me a drink.
I'll know it's her then.
I'll know death would have come.

My first night in Krakow

I landed in Krakow
checked in, napped,
Awoken
to someone trying my door.
He needed a piss
and thought my room
was the bog.
I got drunk on a boat
at noon
and couldn't find my way off.
It never left the dock.
I floated around the square
and got the impression
that everyone
wanted to talk
to me, but nobody
wanted to know me.
Somewhere in the beautiful
Jewish quarter
at night
where life
seemed to blossom
I stumbled about
The rowdy street
and peered in someone's window,
they were watching porn
in their living room.

Determinism

And the universe roars onwards
unflinching.
Is it all written?
Written before our time?
Yet we have measured the skies,
we have plotted the stars,
we have hypothesised the demise of galaxies.
We're playing the numbers game.
The language of the universe.
Unending. Unrepeating.
The Cosmic Script.
Where all history, all futures
and anomalies,
beyond our imagination,
All strange truths
beyond comprehension
Written before we roamed land,
before order and ice,
before chaos and fire
and their ultimate melding.
The remnants of pasts' light
- the order -
leaves clues
to mysteries' future
- the chaos -
and we draw our map
as we go.
We are limited
by our time
by resource,
technology
and the fundamentals
of the universe

itself.

One day

we will

reveal

what lies

in the fog.

But not yet.

Not yet.

'Yet'.

That is the word.

That is the journey,

fuelled by curiosity

and doubt.

The path into the darkness

at the edge of the map.

Where there be dragons,

Where there be treasures

unimagined.

'Yet'.

It is the duty of man

To make 'yet' redundant.

Not to take the first step

but to lay the foundations,

the stones,

which future generations

will step upon

and do the same

for the next

until at last

we have crossed the river

of the unknown -

exhausting debate

exhausting discovery

surviving madness

- to the other side

where truth resides

and insatiable thirst
is born again
in a universe that roars
onwards
unflinching.

Where is the blood?

For ten years I did not write,
Ten years stolen from me.
Someone else used them
And I want them back.
I'll give up the ten years
I said I was a writer
To whomever needs that instead
God, this is fucking terrible
Terrible poetry here.
Not an ounce of feeling
Or effort.
Fuck,
It pisses me off.
This dribble
This meandering
Bukowski
Maddox
Lawrence
They would laugh at you,
Tell you
To keep the numbers job.
You're not breaking
Any new ground here.
These are words.
Substance starved.
Wheres the blood?
Well done.
You're an insta-poet.
Writing in milk
And honey.
Shallow.
Thoughtless.

Daily X Road

Every day is a cross roads
Which we choose to ignore.
We prefer to walk
The straight line
Don't look for anything more.
So many roads un-taken
All those chances lost
But we will walk the straight
The narrow and never consider the cost
While others will dream of looking
Some will take the turn
And though they might not get rewarded
They see what their daring earns
But we will walk the straight
The narrow
And never consider the cost.

Drunken Hiaku III

As a recovering
drunk, sober folk make me drink.
Thirst for oblivion.

This is my home

This is my home
and you're welcome inside.
I have some rules
and I like the way things are
but I'll make things comfortable for you
and you will have a place here
just don't tear down the walls,
or rip apart the foundations
do not replace my paintings with yours
that you have brought from your broken home
the one you have left to be here
All I ask is that you
respect the way things are
because the way things are
is why you're here
and don't invite others
that I have not invited.
I see them at the windows
and doors
trying to break in.
Don't break the plates
Or shatter the glass
Or rip
the paper
from the wall
Don't stop me
from protecting my home
from those who want to destroy it
and replace it with their own.
they should go and fix their broken home
if that's what they desire.
Why should we deign to accept
Their way

If not them for ours?
How dare you threaten
those who live here
Leave be my sons and daughters
Brothers and sisters.
They have invited you
as I have
and done no wrong to you.
Why must you
Bleed and gut us
And bring your false idols'
judgment
Why should we allow
our blood
Spilled
in these rooms
in these halls
only to bring your
broken home to our door.
Must I be forced
from my home,
my bed
and see my paintings torn.
Uprooted by a landlord
Who cares not for
The way things are
If it meant
Rapid end
To his tenure.
I am Condemned
if I
say otherwise,
If we
speak up
or cry aloud
that this is our home.

This
is our
home.

Those 'being good' days

Some days are reserved for being good.

Waking early,
eating breakfast,
working hard,
working smart,
scheduled time,
optimised mind.

Never say no, never say die.

no
task too hard,
no
effort comes small,
no
pressure too much,
no
deadline too soon.

I am Atlas in a suit and tie.

Healthy lunch
and not too much coffee either.

Listening, truly listening,
and not waiting for a break

to escape

the flood

vomit

banality

of someone's weekend account.

And then the gymnasium.

God maker,

Greek marble aesthetics.

Put mind,

put body,

put soul

to work in unison grind.

Embody discipline.
All gas, no breaks.
All effort, no thought.
All too much, all too soon.
Some days
are reserved for this.
And those days
are the days
shortly after
and immediately before
those other ones.

Brilliant Ideas

And there were his ideas Spread across the wall With bits of skull And brain matter Ideas unrealised
Scrambled more Now than When they were in his head His matter dripped Across the floor As they
heaved Him into a black body bag And zipped him up And a neighbour from down the hall Wearing
his wifes slippers and dressing gown United so his dirty white boxers were on show Peered through
the doorway and said - what a waste So young, what could have drove him to this. And I would
have liked to feel His neck in my hands. It would drive you too if you let it I'd say If only you would
see it I'd tell him If only you had it I'd cry And let it invade you And ravage you As he did. But yes.
What a waste.

Tanka XII

The cat struts, unbothered
on the table and paper
and headbutts my hand
he knows I have no muse, not
tonight. A drink instead then.