

I Kept It All In Ink

Amanda Madeline Crowe



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My poetic Side 

Dedication

To everyone I have ever loved. I will never regret giving you the love I did.

Acknowledgement

To everyone who's ever existed somewhere between holding on and letting go. Thank you for reminding me that both can be beautiful.

To my kids, who remind me daily what love looks like in its purest form.

To every person who has ever left a mark on me, good or bad. You helped shape these words, even if you never meant to.

And to the quiet moments that demanded to be written down? you're the reason this book exists.

About the author

Amanda Madeline Crowe writes from the heart she's spent years learning to trust again. A mother of four and a lifelong observer of people and moments, she finds beauty in the in-between the quiet, the almost, the becoming. Her work blends reflection, love, and resilience, often rooted in real conversations, memories, and healing.

When she isn't writing, Amanda can usually be found baking, painting, or chasing light through ordinary days, finding poetry in everything that lingers.

summary

A Birthday Suicide

Anchor in the Storm

I?m tired

The Weight of Almost

Nothing Else Matters

A Little Longer Than I Thought

If I don?t see you again

Your Lips

Unsaid

The Way We Keep Existing

?Every Inch of You?

The Corner That Waits

I Am Here Now

After Dinner Mints

A Birthday Suicide

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These thoughts arise, they pull me under,
Dark reflections, twisted wonder.
Desires dance yet stay unspoken,
Bridges burned, but never broken.

Topless trees in lifeless gray,
Suppressing dreams that drift away.
A crimson river, slow and deep,
Calls my name, denies me sleep.

The weight of sorrow, heavy chains,
Blood-stained lips, exquisite pain.
A breathless hush, a final sigh,
Where silence lingers, here am I.

This wish I make, this fate I weave,
A whispered hope you might believe.
But at its core, the truth remains?
All sense is numb, yet none explains.

Anchor in the Storm

I have known love before?
love that burned too bright,
love that left me hollow,
love that taught me to run before I could be abandoned.

But then there was you.

Not a wildfire, not a tidal wave,
but a steady flame, a quiet sea,
something real enough to hold without fear of it vanishing.

You see me? raw, unguarded,
wounded in places I rarely let light touch.
And instead of turning away,
you stay.
You listen.
You let me unravel, then remind me
I don't have to weave myself back alone.

You hold my hurt with careful hands,
never flinching, never casting blame.
You are the first to show me
that love does not have to be sharp,
that apologies can be given without defense,
that softness is not a weakness but a choice.

And though we move carefully,
though fear lingers like a ghost in the doorway,
I have never felt safer
than in the quiet spaces between us?
where words aren't needed,
where just being is enough.

You are my anchor in the storm,
and for the first time in my life,
I don't want to drift away.

I?m tired

I can still recall the days when I pleaded for love, when I lost my vibrance and settled for the uncertainty, "the maybe," "I'll try," and the exhausted excuses. I endured the sting of every rejection until, little by little, I started to believe that was all I was meant for. That I should simply be thankful for the rare moments of acceptance and remain quietly on the sidelines.

It wasn't easy, but when I finally saw myself becoming the shattered person I had always feared, I knew I had to move on. With every step, I forced myself forward, learning that one of the hardest things in life is walking away from something you've always longed for. But I did it.

I did it because I was tired of living under gray skies and wanted to feel the warmth of the sun again. I did it for the moments of unrestrained laughter that left me breathless. I did it because, despite my flaws, my scars, and the emptiness I sometimes feel, I still deserve a chance at joy.

It took time, but I've never been prouder.

I did it.

The Weight of Almost

I arrived like a question
half-swallowed,
wearing silence like a shield.
Everything I touched,
I expected to break.
Everything I said,
I rehearsed in apology.

There was a time
I only spoke in exits?
built doors out of distance,
named it safety.
But some kind of warmth
stood still
when I backed away.

Not a fire,
not a blaze,
just something that stayed lit
even when I dimmed.

It didn't ask me to be brave.
Didn't beg me to be soft.
It waited,
quiet as the moment
before the truth
is finally told.

And maybe I was still trembling.
Maybe I still counted
every heartbeat
like a warning.
But something in the way

it never left
taught me
how to stay.

Nothing Else Matters

"Nothing Else Matters"

A poem from her to him

He is a mountain kind of quiet,
steady and soft,
like old trees that don't sway unless the wind means it.
She, a storm from the South,
warmth wrapped in firelight,
carving laughter into the room with every glance.

Three hundred miles stretch between their lives,
but not their hearts.
Love rides shotgun with the windows down,
music too loud,
both of them singing like the road was made for this?
like the wind
was carrying them home.

They count the weekends like prayers,
because the in-between hurts.
But when he's near,
the world stills.
His hand finds hers
and all the noise fades.

She's got little feet running through her house,
bedtime stories folded between the laundry.
He's got calloused hands
and the kind of voice that feels like morning.
The moment he walks in,
everything loud in her head
goes quiet.

Once the house is quiet,
toys tucked away,
and little hearts dreaming down the hall,
they hold each other close in that quiet way?
like peace finally came looking for them.
They talk without talking.
They love without trying.
They let the night have them
just as they are.

Maybe one day
goodbye won't be part of the drive.
Maybe the spaces between
will shrink until there's no "your place" or "mine"?
just "ours."

But until then?
they will keep driving,
keep kissing in the kitchen
with tired eyes and unspoken grace,
keep existing
in that beautiful, impossible middle place.

Let the music carry what words ain't enough
They hold each other close in the softest way
Fall asleep tangled, forgettin' the day
And nothing else matters?not the time or the place
Just the way that he melts when she touches his face

Not the distance.
Not the past.
Not even the pain.

Just her
and him?
a boy from the hills,

a girl in the rain?
still choosing each other
again and again.

A Little Longer Than I Thought

I love you like breath
steady, instinctive,
sometimes all at once
when I forget how to pace myself.

I came in fast,
heart first,
hoping you'd feel safe in the fire
I tried so hard to keep on.

But I see now
how flames can scare someone
who's been burned by them before.
I see how too much
can still mean it's real
but still be too much.

It wasn't fake.
Just flawed.
Raw in the way healing is raw
all tenderness and timing,
all hope and heavy hands.

I gave what I had,
even when what I had
was tangled in anxiety,
in silence I couldn't read,
in questions I didn't mean
to make feel like demands.

I tried to love loud enough
to drown the doubts,
but sometimes

that only made them louder.

I never meant to make you flinch
at something meant to hold you.
Never meant for my wanting
to feel like pressure.
Never meant for my fear
to sound like your fault.

I just didn't know
I still needed saving
from myself.

So I've turned inward,
not away
learning to hold my own hand
before reaching for yours again.
Finding softness in solitude,
and peace
where panic used to be.

I love you still.
That hasn't changed.
But now I know
real love isn't about urgency.
It's about presence.
Patience.
And sometimes,
stepping back
to become someone whole
on her own.

If the timing ever fits again,
I'll be ready
not rushing,
not reaching,

just steady.

If I don't see you again

I've been staring at the ceiling,
Watching hours slip away,
Haunted by the echoes
Of the things we used to say.
And the past keeps rushing forward
Like a river I can't slow.
If I could build a wall against it,
Maybe I'd finally let you go.

Back before the world got heavy,
We were chasing every day,
And when the stars lit up the sky,
That's when we'd come alive and play.
That first kiss was reckless fire,
Two hearts racing far too fast.
I was holding on for dear life,
You were gone before the crash.

Guess you never meant it
When you swore you loved me true.
I was blind, blaming fate,
When the fault was always you.
Funny how the darkness tells the truth,
But it's the sunrise that I dread.
How do I silence memories
Of the lives we could've led?

Summer's faded, nights feel colder,
And I reach for my phone too late.
You don't answer, you don't bother.
But I still dial anyway.
Did you see me as a wager?
Did you toss me like a game?

You walked off without the burden,
But I'm the one who wears the blame.

Guess you never meant it
When you swore you loved me true.
I was blind, blaming timing,
When the fault was always you.
Funny how the truth cuts through the dark,
But daylight makes it real.
And I can't unlive the moments
Or the way you made me feel.

Now the nights are long and restless,
But one thing's clear to me...
No matter how I dream it,
You were never mine to keep.

Your Lips

I woke up thinking of your mouth
how I'd kiss you good morning,
how I'd steal a kiss between hits of the blunt.

All day I carried the ache
to map your spine with my lips,
to find the corners of your smile and press myself there.

Tonight, I'll fall asleep with the taste of you imagined,
dreaming of your lips against mine,
and when I stir at 3 a.m., I'll crave you in my arms,
just so I can kiss you awake.

And of all the lips I've ever wanted,
none have ever pulled me in
the way yours do.

Unsaid

You touch my hand like you're testing the moment,
unsure how long it's meant to last,
like holding on too tight
might change what's already good.

Your voice settles into me,
low and careful,
like it knows the ghosts I carry
and chooses not to wake them.

I catch myself smiling at nothing,
at the way your presence
feels like a door left open
on a warm night.

And those glances
where we both know there's something to be said
but we act like there isn't,
they echo louder
than words ever could.

You don't ask for more than I can give,
and still, somehow,
you make me want to give it.

The Way We Keep Existing

There are pieces of me
only you ever bothered to find,
the parts I hid,
the ones I never named.

Sometimes I still feel your presence
like I'm walking through a room
you just left.
Warm air.
A dent in the pillow.
Evidence.

I used to think heartache
was just the consequence
of wanting too much.
That pain meant I'd earned it.
But I'm learning
I was wrong.

We were fire that forgot
how to take turns breathing,
sparks,
then silence,
then sparks again.
A cycle we didn't know
how to break.

There are nights
I crave something reckless
just so I can stop thinking
about what's missing.

There are mornings
I wake up from dreams of you
and hate how quickly reality returns.

We called it goodbye
but neither of us meant it.
Some loves don't end,
they just change shape
and haunt softer.

All I ever wanted
was to make sure
you knew you mattered,
that your existence
has been the best kind of collision
inside my life.

I don't replay the past
to torture myself.
I replay it
because it reminds me
love was real once,
not perfect,
not painless,
but ours.

Maybe someday
timing will stop picking sides.
Maybe someday
we'll get the version of us
that learned how to stay.

Until then,
I keep the future open
just wide enough
for you to walk back in.

?Every Inch of You?

Your eyes
hold me steady
like gravity choosing its favorite pull.

The air thickens
between one breath and the next,
where silence hums louder than sound.

I trace your presence
without touching
mapping warmth,
measuring the distance
from your heartbeat to my name.

Every glance
feels like a slow unraveling,
every inhale
a quiet confession.

And in that held gaze,
I feel you
filling every inch of me
that ever dared to be empty.

The Corner That Waits

There once was a corner so still,
half-shadow, half-thought, half a thrill.
The lights softly shone,
but I wondered, alone
what breath fills this space when it's still?

Do the echoes start whispering late?
Do the walls hum the songs they create?
When the footsteps are gone,
does the silence move on
or linger to ponder its fate?

It's nothing too strange, just a spark,
a musing that hums in the dark.
Where the world blurs its seams
between waking and dreams
that's where wonder remembers its mark.

And maybe it's nothing at all,
just the quiet remembering you.

I Am Here Now

He spoke with the kind of steadiness
that drew me toward him without asking.
Every word brushed against the edges of my fear
until it finally quieted.

The air between us changed
not heavy, just full,
like it could hold everything I'd been afraid to say.
I felt it in the way his presence pressed against mine,
not demanding, just there,
like gravity.

My guard slipped,
slow and deliberate,
and I let myself melt into the nearness of him.
Each breath felt like a confession
I'd never found the words for.

He didn't promise forever;
he just stayed,
and somehow that was enough
to make me want more.

Maybe this is what desire feels like
when it isn't born of fear
a steady pulse,
a soft surrender,
the body remembering
that it can feel safe
and hungry
at the same time.

After Dinner Mints

Laughter still lingers
between plates and crumbs,
the hum of the kitchen light
catching the steam of our breath.

You taste like warmth and pale ale,
like the comfort that only
comes after a full day
and a full heart.

I do a little shimmy,
some mix of joy and surrender,
and dart to the other side of the counter.

I don't know,
maybe it's the way your eyes
turn soft when they land on me,
or how the air thickens
each time we find each other again.

Another kiss,
and the world narrows
to this room,
this pulse,
this hunger that isn't for food
but for the way you make it feel
to be known and wanted,
and full.