

Anthology of nialprideaux



Presented by

My poetic Side 

summary

Untitled

I am

They

Immortality

A Utopia Destroyed.

One Half without the Other.

Internal Voices

Internal Voices (reprise)

Sir Y

The Boy and the Horse

Ghosts

An Bháisteach

Heaven

Wooden Castle

10 Things You Should Know Before Dating Me

Elysium

A Poem for Bigotry.

"Lunar" - part 1

Asphyxiated.

"Lunar" - part 2

Keeping Up With The Reality

Missing (short story - part 1)

Missing (short story - part 2)

Missing: Diary entry (short story - part 3)

The 7

For I Can't Help Falling In Love With You.

Pepsi Cola

Ammunition

Remind Yourself:

Missing: the day of

Humans and the Stars: My Conversations

Have You Ever...?

When Glitter Becomes Glass

Flames

Thalassophobia (HAIKU)

A Bad Combination (HAIKU)

#HumanRights

The Trial of Forgiveness

Checkmate (short story)

Valyria

The Quiet Ones.

Gravitational Pull

The Boy of Gold and Stone.

The First Time...

You're Worse Than Cigarettes

Cloudbusting Love

The Young Boy

Kings

vigil.

Bully Sharks and their Prey

Where Would You Go?

Can you see me?

Ghosted

Endgame

Castle

New Year's Day

Accents

"There's no place like home."

breathe in, breathe out...

The Coven (a story writing practice - part 1)

The Coven (a story writing practice - part 2)

Te deseo, Cariño (a Valentine's Day letter from me to me)

(writing practice) - untitled

Gáta, God of Chaos - writing practice

New Year's Eve:

11 Years...

the R word: part 1.

the R word: part 2

Poker (Love) Games

the worst kind of betrayal (writing practice -- part 1)

Himiko of Yamatai: A Short Story

Grief is... [Haiku]

The Five

The Witch: A Fairytale Nightmare

The Moon

Winter Sun

Untitled

You ran your fingers through the back of my hair as I lay my hair on your chest.

You were the one who brought out my best.

You were the Sun and I was the colours you created as you gravitated across the sky;
we were brighter at the highest point.

As meadows and moors bloomed in your presence, they died in your absence and the cold nipped my skin with its sharp teeth.

I am

I am the tree that rises and falls,
the air that fills your lungs,
the water that carves through earth.

I am the fire that consumes all,
the volcano you thought was dormant,
the storm that tears your town apart.

I am the reason you need health care.
I am the reason you breathe.
I am the reason you grow,
I am the reason you age.

I am Nature.
And I am always watching you.

They

They demand money from their parent.
They get arrested for assaulting their parent.
They are warned and released.
They get verbal abuse from the parent's partner.
They get bullied in school because they struggle.
They take drugs to get through.
They physically abuse their parent for money.
They get arrested for assault.
They get are released.
They get bullied again.
They take drugs again to get through.
The cycle repeats.
They demand drug money.
They get a juvenile sentence.
They are released again.
The bullying is more frequent.
They take other drugs to get through.
The cycle repeats.
The violence is more frequent.
The bullying is uncontrollable.
They take more drugs to numb the emotions.
Arrested,
Released,
Bullied,
Drugged.
Arrested,
Released,
Bullied,
Drugged,

Gone.

Immortality

Death take me,
Take me from this darkness and into the light.
Choose me, let me be the one,
The one that you take tonight
and give me back to the Alpha's might.
In death, we are one,
and no battles were ever won.
To accept death is to feel immortality,
as its not a matter of morality.
While in life, we conquer and divide,
Death is the one who, in its own time, provides.
So let me be the one,
The one that you choose tonight,
because sooner or later, dead or alive,
The moon will turn red against our final dark night.

A Utopia Destroyed.

You are my protector,
when no one else is willing.

I love everything about you,
your irritating personality, your humour
and your laugh.

When you were happy, it showed and
to be near you was like standing on the Sun.
You were happy with someone,
and I grew up with that person
you'd become.

You'd built a world with her,
with a castle and creatures,
a place where Spring breezes swirled.
But you grew up too fast in that world.

You were suddenly different,
your moods swung like a monkey in the trees.

Then your grounds crumbled, and
the world you created burned.
The castle collapsed and the creatures died,
all while the Earth still turned.

You had the same energy, but
now you were radioactive - being near you
I had to be brave,
Meanwhile God flipped a coin,
to determine if the suicidal man would cave.

Heads he stands,

Tails he falls...

Heads.

One Half without the Other.

You caressed my hand while your lips
kissed the skin on my shoulder.
Your tongue danced up the slope of my neck
and tickled my ear.
The words that followed ignited the butterflies
in my stomach again, as you told me you'd never
leave me.
But you were already gone when I looked behind,
and the heat I was so used to left me to my
vulnerability.

Internal Voices

When I look in the mirror,
who do I see?
I see someone I do not like,
and who will he grow to be?

I see someone who is fragile,
someone who is blind;
blind to what the others see,
to all but the internal voices in his mind.

The voices scream and yell,
saying "You're not good enough",
they're as loud as a Church bell,
echoing "You're going to Hell".

It took some time for me to look at myself,
the skin and bone I possess,
to silence the voices deep within,
because I am truly blessed.

Internal Voices (reprise)

The wind around me swirls,
it screams against my ears,
It fills my lungs with a soothing scent
as I take on daily fears.

My smile is my battle cry,
as I invite the world to play,
And I've been reborn, to some I'm a threat,
because my gaze can wound and slay.

I'm a prince forged in steel,
my scars gleam like contrails in the sky.
This war will never be over,
at least I understand why.

My armour is broad, weapons sharp,
the elements at my command,
I battle my internal voices,
because my life is in my hand.

Sir Y

I wait on the sidelines, counting on
my fingers for every time I'm discarded.
But, I'm playing the game, and I'm
waiting for the right time.

I feel like I'm stuck in a nightmare,
the faster you run the slower you get,
"oh Niall, you were good, but you're
just not enough"

So I walked all night long in the dark
just to end up back here, only
to feel like nobody; a bench filler with
a gym bag and locker to prove my
uselessness.

"A round of applause,
for the great Sir Y."

Now my people are the discredited and
"forgotten" - the ones who greet not being
wanted as an old friend, the underdogs who
see everything.

I'm one of them, and that's okay.

The Boy and the Horse

The man in the black room sat alone,
the door locked to keep out the pain.
A boy on a horse came galloping
through the wall in white smoke.
They trotted around, a child's pure laughter
radiating through light neighs, and an
invisible wind appeared to flow through
the boy's hair.

They stopped in front of the man, both staring
intently, as if they were listening to his silence.
The man tilted his head forward as tears fell.
The boy climbed down from his stallion,
his light clothing flapping gently as he walked.
He reached out and took the man's hand in his,
and they disappeared.

Ghosts

Both men span in a plethora of circles
and brought themselves close again,
the space between them felt electric,
heated and intimate.

Vines climbed up the walls of the surrounding
Castle ruin and crowns of flowers bloomed
in their hair. They both stopped, their gazes locked
and their lips met like the ocean and sky in the horizon.

As the sun fell behind the trees, the colours
of the walls darkened and the ghosts of the
two men melted into the shadows.

An Bháisteach

I'm standing in the rain,
you hurt me for personal gain.
I was your private dancer.
In my mind, there was no doubt about us;
we were fire starters catching shadows.
We would dance endlessly to Tina Turner
and Heart until the late hours of the morning.
But now I'm standing in the rain.
All I feel is pain.

I ask myself, from my
squelching shoes and sticking clothes:
"Why am I here..."

Heaven

As I walk along the causeway
the push and pull of the waves is inviting,
something about the sound of the waves crashing
feels calming.

I sit in the surf and hear the gulls through
the summer breeze, the little waves glide over
my hands and through the crevasses between my
fingers.

You sit next to me and feed your arm through mine,
your head fits perfectly in my neck like a jigsaw
piece. The crystal water reflects the sun like specks
of diamond, and tiny mammals come to greet us by
our feet. You turn and look at me, strand of hair floating
gently in front of your emerald eyes,
and our Heaven was made.

Wooden Castle

Outside, there's a wooden castle.
A world where anything goes.
You can be anything you want to be,
and you're free from pain and woes.

You can save the princess, be the princess,
or a princess saving a princess,
then your younger sibling comes in,
and makes it an innocent mess.

Its a world with spiders as big as the moon,
and dragons small as ants,
the ground is made of lava
so hold tight to every one's hands.

The sun goes down and it's time to go,
the lava cools back to gravel,
but this world's in your mind's eye,
so don't worry, it's not far to travel.

10 Things You Should Know Before Dating Me

1. I'm 6'2 so you may need a bigger bed.
2. I'm a Virgo. If you're going to be one to break my heart, carefully consider the method.
3. When I have to get up for an early morning, I force sleep out of my mind for fear of being late somewhere or disappointing someone.
4. My Grindr profile has told me that the only people who'll give me attention, are the ones my mother told me to stay away from.
5. Sleep with slight noise if you want to share a bed with me.
6. Sometimes I let my phone die to avoid socialising.
To me, Social Media doesn't exist.
7. I need my house keys in my right coat pocket to easily jab an attacker, and my phone in the left coat pocket to ring anyone just in case.
8. My self-esteem lingers like a left-over party balloon floating awkwardly in mid-air and collapses soon as someone squashes it in their hands.
9. There are gonna be times when I give in.
There are gonna be times when my anxiety takes overdrive.
There are going to be times where I want to be invisible, because that's how I'll feel.
I don't have a successful track record in relationships, and will likely push you away before you run - to feel less hurt.
10. I overshare a lot.

Elysium

My anxiety is like a poltergeist: one day it's barely noticeable,
and the next it's the personal, formless earthquake tearing through
the fibres of my being and simultaneously feels like a creature
will either crawl down through my rectum or up through my throat.

I hide under the table in the kitchen of my mind until the shaking
and tearing and screeching stops and I'm only left with ruins.

I call these days the dark days - I'm not afraid of the dark, but
that's part of the problem.

Insomnia sweeps me up in its arms and settles me down in
the sitting room with only the dim light of my mobile phone:
it has a magic that makes the Moon feel like an old friend.

As humans, we are wired to forget things. We tell ourselves
our problems are too small for the world, but then, we feel
the issues we have are too big for our own worlds until we remember;
"Someone out there has bigger problems than me."

I wrestle with thoughts I have about failing what hasn't happened or
a sickening coincidental meeting with an ex or the way I'm going to die,
yet, that one section of my mind somehow finds an Elysium in watching
the sky's dark transition from black, to purple, to dark blue,
the watchful stars disappearing into the coming light.

Elysium: a place or state of perfect happiness.

A Poem for Bigotry.

A series of things that gay people do in public.

We go out for drinks with friends.

We can have successful jobs.

We go to concerts.

We want to marry without being told we're "not entitled to".

We want to live free of prejudice, that's all we ask.

Knives scare me more than guns: when I see a knife, I see the flash of a slaughterhouse and the conveyer belts converting animals to packaged marketable pieces.

I know a slaughterhouse when I see one: it looks like the parents sending their child to gay conversion camps to 'cure' them. It looks like the preacher that brainwashes trans children to believing they're broken. It looks like the justice system disregarding men in abusive relationships with other men.

This is what people either directly or indirectly imply they want to happen to us. On the other hand, at least a bullet to right spot of the head denies them satisfaction of the screaming from the kitchen.

I know a slaughterhouse when I see one: it also looks like losing a job/being evicted from your home/being bullied at school because of who you are. It's the derogatory word for a public display of affection. It's the comment section for a bigot to write a song about what they believe should happen to us. It's a sulphuric air we are force-fed to breathe when placed in social and political boxes of the history they won't teach you in school.

We just want to live free of prejudice, that's all we ask.

But know this, what goes around comes around and each derogatory word is like a small stone that starts an avalanche.

"Lunar" - part 1

When the moon rose against the velvet night, I saw him - I saw his soul and he saw mine: I saw all his beautiful imperfections he dissects every day, from his cratered skin to his slight crooked tooth. His eyes, however, no one had words to match. They were as clear as glass, they held the sky with care.

Spring breezes are swirling around our ankles and through the fibres of our clothes like the tidal waves.

He could hold moonlight in his eyes and he said mine held the earth in all it's soil and sandy shades of brown. The stars watched in their constellations, as we danced in their presence to no music, and he called me Lunar.

Asphyxiated.

Don't hold your breath for anyone,
Don't wish your ribcage be locked without cradling it,
It may delay the decay but eventually
the cracks will spread through it.
Sometimes, to keep yourself together
you have to walk away.
Even heartbreak can be the only key
to unlock your chest and breathe again.

"Lunar" - part 2

You took my life and folded it like paper into the Garden of Eden. You held me in your arms like a new kitten. You gave me the name Lunar because you told me I'm like the Moon, because I'm "mysterious", so I didn't mind the name. But then a black hole came between us and pulled you from my grasp.

"I miss you..."

I've typed out that text so many times... even being in the same room feels like you're out of reach. But when I see the moon, I still see you.

message send failure

Keeping Up With The Reality

Ask me what kind of shows I watch, and I will take you on a magical journey from Westeros to American ghost stories to watching men dance in Drag. What entertains me is the Starks and the Lannisters at royal meal ripe with THE tension of "Who's going to die next?", ghosts that are trying to explain what happened to them, Crime scene investigation documentaries discovering the truth, and yet I'm told that what I like to watch is *boring*.

Boring because it's not an hour filled with overpaid arseholes sat talking in a sitting room being paid millions to talk about nothing. It's not as interesting as watching two girls argue over a boy they only met 2 days ago and calling it "girl code", or a group of boys out on the town treating women as sexual prey for their personal gain, and you're telling me my shows are *boring*?

NEWSFLASH:

Reality TV, does not exist. Even in talent competitions the producers pick the most entertaining to watch: will they pick a pianist, painter or a spoken word artist? Or a dog that's been taught to walk on its hind legs? The producers are likely to go for the latter, as the dog is a metaphor for Celebrity: they're trained to only sell assets their trainers know people will buy.

#KeepUpWithYourLife #NotSomeoneElses

Missing (short story - part 1)

Friday 14th Feb,
2014
5 days missing
St. Ives, Cornwall

BRETT

There was something about the stranger... He sat on the opposite side of the B&B restaurant looking over his laptop through the narrow-framed glasses. Watching me. Watching closely like he was placing a face to a name. Every time I'd look over to his side he'd avert his eyes back to his laptop, pause for a brief moment, then glance back at me over the top of his thin YSL lenses.

I took out my phone. A text had come through on the screen from Alex:

"Hey. Hope you're okay. Your dad's going ape. Police are out looking for you...miss you. Let me know if you get this x"

I removed the sim. There was something liberating about being dead. Well, technically missing, soon to be presumed dead. Sometimes I believed my father, the one person who's supposed to protect me, could actually kill me. My dad stole my innocence and my childhood, he beat me and beat me until I was someone I didn't recognise, that's the real crime.

So, yes, I took off with the last of my birthday money and my passport. I found a cheap car online and drove with only £300 left from my birthday to get me away from this life. I drove into an ASDA to buy all essentials: shampoo, clothing, hairdye, glasses, stationary and food for the journey.

I ended up in Cornwall before dusk, so I found a cosy cheap bed & breakfast, booked in and took up a new appearance - dyed my hair almost black with eyebrows to match, cut the sides and back of my hair and took up smoking while I was at it. As far as the world was concerned, I wore glasses and wore cheap band merchandised hoodies. I was new again.

I sat in the restaurant waiting for my order of baked potato and beans with a small cup of tea. The sleeve on my left arm had fallen, revealing bruises that bloomed like a garden of black and blue roses so I tugged it back up to my wrist.

The barista turned the TV on with a loud scratching tuning noise and the news reporter emerged from static. "In other news, a man from the Greater Manchester area in Lancashire has been arrested for allegations of child abuse. An anonymous phone call tipped off police of a diary kept by 17 year old Brett Hayes, who was reported missing 5 days earlier. We go live now to Castlefield to interview a close friend of Brett's, Kaylee Hawthorne." I put my fake glasses on and sipped banana milkshake as Kaylee appeared on the screen behind a thick black microphone, cars driving by behind her. "Kaylee, thank you for speaking to us tonight. How long have you been aware of this?"

"Honestly Brenda, I've only been made aware of this since he went missing, he's always been very private about his parents as his Mum left when he was young because his Dad can't see past his heroin."

"So, did you have any suspicions at all?" pressed the news anchor, "About his home-life or

anything?"

"He'd come to parties but every time we saw him he'd be wearing long sleeved clothing even in the summer, he never shows his arms," she said, her throat tightening like she was going to cry, like she knew.

"Why wouldn't he show his arms?"

She sniffled and composed herself. "I don't know... the most recent time I saw him was two months ago, we bumped into each other outside Morrisons, he had eyes as black as a panda and a fat lip..." she paused for a fleeting moment, "I asked him if he had been in a fight and he didn't say," she was right, "and I haven't seen him since."

My potato came steaming hot with a scent of sweetness making my mouth water, and for *once*, I felt powerful.

The man was still watching me. He wore a shirt, black formal trousers and had his hair slicked backwards, very clean cut and sharp. I stood up to leave and he mimicked me like a reflection. I turned out of the restaurant and he followed slowly. I grabbed a free brochure of historic sites of Cornwall and walked faster out of the door to my car before driving out onto the main country road heading towards the main town. Five minutes later, a silver car appeared behind me and seemed to challenge me. As it gained on me, I caught glimpse of a flash from inside the car in my rear view mirror. *I'm being followed*, I thought. I pressed my foot harder on the pedal and gained distance between myself and the silver car. Coming up to 70 miles an hour, I checked the rear view mirror and there was no car. That's when my car met the oncoming 18-wheel truck.

Missing (short story - part 2)

dream

All I did was lightly throw a book to a friend, that's all I did. And I got a detention because it bounced off someone's shoulder? Not entirely my fault, his shoulder was... in the way, maybe. I was sat in the same classroom after school, punished to sit in my assigned seat until 5pm, two hours after school had finished. 'Your father's coming to pick you up, Brett', said Mr Munnds. My heart dropped to the pit of my stomach.

'No! I'll walk,' I argued.

'Too late, I've already phoned him. He wasn't happy I had to ring him at work.' Yeah, 'at work'... The classroom suddenly changed shape in smoke and transformed. Before I knew it I was at home in the sitting, just after swallowing awkward tension from the car journey home. Everything was blurry but the two of us.

'Why are you such a fuck-up,' he said, 'all you do is misbehave! You're a bad seed, you are! What did I do to end up with you!' His voice now elated to a shrill scream. I looked into his large black eyes, down to his nose, and just knew what he was doing, at work.

'I don't have to deal with this,' I said as I pushed past him to the staircase.

'Don't you dare walk away from me! You bastard faggot!' he screamed as I ran up the stairs and slammed myself into my bedroom. Things were quiet, except the odd tapping and sniffing I'd hear from the living room. Everything began to feel hot and red. I looked at the edge of my bed where an insidious silhouette stood, arms like a spider and red glowing eyes, and in a low gravelly tone, said 'Naughty children deserve to be punished,' and the walls began to move.

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19th February,

2014

Edward Hain Community Hospital, St. Ives

10 days missing

Beep... beep... beep...

"Okay bright eyes, your stats are have stabilised. Gave us quite a scare, you did. Keep this up and we can finally meet you." I heard a cheery voice say before they left. It was definitely a woman. The first thing I remember when I woke up is nothing but pain... paralysing first degree pain. Imagine how a porcelain doll would feel being dropped from a great height and you might be where I was when I woke up. The next is hearing the TV screeching:

"Welcome to BIBT Evening News. Our top story is, an unmarked car has crashed into an oncoming delivery truck on the B3306 in Cornwall. A boy named Alex Castér was pulled out of the wreckage

unconscious and with serious injuries. Nobody else was hurt." Through blurred vision, I could only assume that they'd displayed a CCTV image of me leaving the B&B. "In other news, police are still looking for Brett Hayes..." I tried to move but pain played host to pretty much sixty percent of my body from my head down through to my left femur, the absolute worst of it all were my chest and abdomen and waist. I had no idea what happened or where I was, when a nurse came into my clearest vision.

"How you doing?" She asked, lightly.

"Who are you?" I asked back, slightly panicked. "Where am I?"

"I'm Doctor Machins. You're in hospital, darling. You've survived a very nasty accident, you're lucky to be alive..."

I looked down in agony to find I was in a horrible blue hospital gown. I tried moving my arms but they were strapped to the sides of a surprisingly comfortable hospital bed. When you're in that much pain, a bed of knives is more comfortable. Dr Machins had a white uniform on, her chocolate brown hair tied up in a flawless ponytail and she wore a beret clipping her side fringe out of her eyes as she scanned through a document in her forearm. "Right, I'm afraid you've got a few broken ribs, a broken pelvis, trauma to your neck and slight internal bruising to your abdomen, you're going to have some very important surgeries so we have to keep you in----"

"I... what happened to the... the other, uhm..." I interrupted, my head was splitting trying to remember.

"The other driver?... he died two days ago." Oh no.

Missing: Diary entry (short story - part 3)

- diary entry -

Monday, 21st March

2011

What name do you call an environment that's totally hypocritical, and just absolutely fucking dreadful to know you're legally forced to be? Is it:

A) School, where they literally tell you to be who you are then validate immediate confiscation of makeup and displayed body piercings because it's "distracting to the other students learning"? Or,

B) Home, where no matter what grades I achieve, I live with a single parent who I'm *convinced* hates me?

Trick question: both are just as bad as each other, but for now, let's say the answer was A. I'm totally stressed out. Alex and Kaylee haven't spoken since they fell out with each other, because Alex was talking to a girl Kaylee wasn't. Honestly, if this constitutes a relationship, it's the pettiest fucking thing ever. After all, I'm on Alex's side anyway. Why should he *have* to stop talking to Beatrix because Kaylee fell out with her? Girl's are confusing. I hope I passed on my English test. That's more because of the treatment I'll get from dad if I don't. He calls me things... I can't say this to anyone because they'll all think I'm mad, he tells me, and that I'd need to be punished... I don't know what I did to be punished...

The 7

The first little piggy had excessive desires,
The second little piggy swallowed the world.
The third little piggy wanted a material life,
The fourth little piggy was a hot mess.
The fifth little piggy was very, very angry,
The sixth little piggy was jealous,
And the seventh little piggy, was the proudest of all.

For I Can't Help Falling In Love With You.

The pillars of the castle stood out against the twilight morning sky like swirling milk in tea. A girl endlessly walks in the grounds, the fallen branches of surrounding trees catching in her white linen.

She climbed the invisible stairs of one of the succumbed towers, and then she stopped. Floating in midair with her black hair caressing her face gently, she spread pristine white wings and disappeared in a burst of light.

A man walks the same path, he is dark and cloaked in smoke with a flat-based hat. Watching her from the ground, saw that she was free and he was bound to the stones that once made his home.

Pepsi Cola

The worst thing about being with you, is that you are my own brand of Pepsi Cola. Being with you, is like drinking acid, but because you taste so sweet I keep running back to you, I started to like feeling the excess gas in my stomach so much I got used to it. You're so acidic, I could clean the pennies of my piggy bank that I haven't touched since I was 7... The dentist tells me to stop drinking it and validates his one-sided opinion with a load of comments like: "you'll get cavities", "you'll get diabetes", "you're addicted" I'd happily lose my teeth for you, diabetes is NOT sugar-caused or addictive like caffeine, alcohol, cocaine or heroin etc. He puts me on a sugar ban... but without you, my mouth is dry, my moods swing like clock pendulums, my head feels like a stone being chiselled away, and my hands tremble with the withdrawal from you... I need you.

I finally get why people were telling me to leave you: I'm better off without you.

Ammunition

Last night, you called me Arizona,
'cus I'm "sweet yet slightly bitter",
on the run in Barcelona,
I'm not giving up, I'm not a quitter.

I fall asleep in a British flag,
you stood smoking by the window,
I pledge allegiance to my Dad,
while we roll around in the green dough.

Come and play in the shadows with me,
where bullets are like sweet candy gobstoppers,
my kiss is the barrel of the gun, you'll like it,
because we're the opposite of the calming summer.

Drugs, breathe it up like Pete Doherty,
You'll get what you're given,
Together we're too toxic for Heaven,
and we'll go unforgiven.

Remind Yourself:

Your body is made of the same elements that Lions are built from. Three quarters of you is the same water that beats rocks to rubble, wears stones away. Your DNA translates into the same twenty amino acids that Wolf genetics carry. When you look in the mirror and feel weak, remember: the air you breathe fuels forest fires capable of destroying everything you touch. On the days you feel ugly, remember: diamonds are only carbon,

and remind yourself: You are so much more.

Missing: the day of

BRETT

one hour missing

I am so much happier already. After living vicariously through dreams of escaping the grasp of a sadistic parent, I was finally, actually *acting* upon them. But to fake a disappearance, you have to read up on it: no blood and no body, and the police will think this is a hostage situation, so they will look around the house, and the homes of every one closely related to my Dad, blood or not, for any signs of me, and they all will have at least something. So, dad, I ask you: if I turned up dead, what would you say at my funeral? Would you buy a star from the sky to light up your darkness? Would you name it after me because the real me was now gone? Would you stand on that altar, and swear blindly in front of an audience and God that you loved me and tried to protect me? Or would you simply look on at my coffin, tearless and void of compassion like you always lived? Personally, I think the latter is more realistic. I was never yours to keep: because you'll never see that stars are free.

Humans and the Stars: My Conversations

"Hello," when I say hello, I can mean a lot of things. One word can tell you if I'm having a good day or if I don't want any conversation at all. One amazing thing about communication is you can pretty much always tell what someone's thinking by their tone of voice; if they're happy, it may sound light, and if sad it may sound heavy. Or they may just be cursed with a heavy voice, like me.

SNAP, CRACKLE OR POP?

Me, snap. I have this violent tendency to see twigs and branches, and want to snap them in half. I have held brittle feelings for another, but snapped them, cracked them, dropped them and forfeited them all under the illusion it was love but it was fine by me! I mean, this one time at Glastonbury when Lorde walked out on stage, i mean, I want that Green Light, to be happy. My head is a messy bedroom I always avoid going in because it's just clutter. When i say messy bedroom, I really mean it's a messy car full of empty drink bottles and empty McFlurry containers from early-morning drives when I couldn't sleep. Every time a hair falls from my scalp or skin falls away from my body, I'm reminded I'm closer to complete regeneration and the stars always guide me back to sleep.

People have told me I'm basically a star in the sky, nothing can touch me but they've never got close enough to see it's true form. Anyone who can see me thinks it's beauty, some people may even try to purchase or obtain my presence one way or another, but one thing will always be evident and fixed in position, when you look at the stars, they're free, and as they look back at you, the channel of communication opens and the night sky gracefully welcomes with "Hello".

Have You Ever...?

Have you ever...?

Gone impulsive vegan for a few hours then crashed? Yes.

Played beer pong? Yes.

Gone to Church? Yes.

Given someone flowers? Yes.

Have you ever...?

Been bitten by an animal? No.

Got lost in an amusement park? Yes.

Have you ever pranked someone? No.

Eaten a whole pizza or cake to yourself? Yes.

Have you ever...?

Ran away from home? No. It wouldn't have helped.

Been attacked in public? Yes.

Smoked pot? No, despite being told "it's harmless".

Cheated on your partner? No.

But he didn't believe me.

When Glitter Becomes Glass

Have you ever thrown a fistful of glitter in the air?
Do it,
Watch how light shimmers down to the ground.
Then when you do it,
You just might remember why I'm not around.

Touch it,
Feel it slip like sand between you fingers.
When your next piece comes at the dinner table,
We'll see how long he lingers.

I have thrown a fistful of glitter in the air.
I heard the sounds of glass shards
cutting my skin bare.

The glitter sticks in drying scars
and turns my muscles to red crystals,
Cleansing the wounds with salt,
And bandage them with Thistles.

I'm telling these tears, saying;
Fall away,
Fall away,
May the last one burn into flame.

Have you ever thrown a fist full of glass in the air?
I have.
And I've got scars to prove it.

Flames

Be water to fire, not gasoline.

Thalassophobia (HAIKU)

I hate deep water.
The darkness and everything,
It scares me to death.

A Bad Combination (HAIKU)

Fire and vodka:
do nt mix us together,
we're dangerous.

#HumanRights

Your body is merely a vessel, it doesn't matter what exterior you have as long as it reaches its destination.

The Trial of Forgiveness

I told you:

"Mess me about, you're blocked like hair in a sink."

Mate, you're left on the table to dry,

Kind of like quill ink:

Mate, you're done,

By my curiosity, you got busted!

I saw you with him,

And like furniture, you were, *being dusted*.

And to the other one...

How dare you speak my name,

You're as skinny as a rake.

Mate, listen to me,

You're all potato and no steak.

If Adele was me, the song would say:

Hello,

Do you hear me?

I've got better things to do,

Other places to be.

Looking at my reflection,

the thought of you two is bringing me down...

Then I see something shiny in the corner of my eye,

Oh yeah, it's my Crown!

The crown reminds me,

I'm better than this in every way,

And guess what,

At the end of the day...

I wish you every happiness.

I'll go on dreaming of Angels.

Sometimes, it takes every ounce of effort to be the bigger person.

Checkmate (short story)

The General stood before King Alexander, eight squires lining both sides of the golden carpet leading to the throne wearing black robes with a silver snake embellished on the right shoulders. The throne room was immaculate with ten guards placed symmetrically around the room. It is the largest room in the Palace, with pillars and the floor made of pure marble with humongous gold-framed portraits dotted around the room, the wall to the right of the throne looked out through large windows onto the large Palace gardens and the wall behind the throne was entirely made of silver glass draped with grey and silver curtains with black embellishment. The throne itself was gold, and elevated with a small series of steps leading up to it. The King himself wore white robes with a snow-white fur cloak, and his crown was made of golden flowers wrapped in silver stalks, a gold Lion's head at the front sitting softly over his young dark hairline. His eyes were a pristine blue, beautiful and full of mischief.

"So, I hear your King openly supports my brother, your spies are plotting for him to seize my throne and I am to be assassinated. Know about any of this?" Said the King, looking at him, chuckling as he heard the sentence from his own mouth.

"I had no such idea, your Grace," said the General.

"I heard, two armies landing on the Gold Coast and the Isle of Miade, my brother is to be set free, seize my throne and I am to be assassinated. Sound familiar?"

"Like I just said, I had no such idea?"

"I've even heard this plan be referred to as 'The Restoring of the Assaelian Empire', although it should be more accurately referred to as 'I don't like my brother, so kill him for me, someone', a plan evidently concocted by my younger brother and once Uncle, your King Stanley to attack *my* kingdoms!" Alexander interrupted.

"*Your* Kingdoms? It is *my* King's kingdom under attack, you may find," He slowly began to walk up the steps, closer to Alexander. "It is *your* pirates taking our ships, *your* spies taking our food, *your* whores distracting *our* good men! And well, you think we don't know where the orders come from?" Alexander stared at the General with a slight smile. Despite a slight confusion of Kings, the sight of seeing his Uncle's men so vexed and frustrated with him was humorous. "The whole world knows what you are, King Alexander of the West, and King of all Sword-swallowers and Pillow-biters alike, and that any man seen with you is likely spotted coming out of your chamber the next morning. Milk spewing from his mouth or down his thighs... *or so I've heard*," The General smiled an evil smile. Unmistakable, and clear. Alexander rose up from his throne with his smirk disappearing, diamonds shimmering in the light as he stood. He was broad, tall and muscular, and the General matched in physique. Under the white cloak he wore gold jewellery and grey garments. The stubborn strand of hair from his fringe felt comfortably into his eye. Tucking it back into the crown, he looked at the General, his blue eyes burning through him like a winter's chill.

"Knowledge is everything in this game, your Grace," he smiled, and Alexander smiled back.

"Guards," All of the guards turned their attention to the throne, "Seize them." They moved forward before being stopped, "Oh wait, I change my mind, let's play a little game with Sir Lawrence to remind him of whose Kingdom he's in." The General drew his sword and his Squires followed his action. Two guards bolted the doors shut. "Squires! Stand around me!" the General commanded and they obeyed. The remaining eight guards formed a tight circle around the squires, shields out to trap them in. A flash of panic struck the General red in the face like a slap and he was cold with sweat. Alexander walked slowly down the throne steps towards the General. The Guards parted and

disarmed the squires. One squire, broke the circle exposing the General and Alexander stopped close enough to feel his breath.

"Go back to your rat-hole. Tell my dear Uncle I fear neither him, nor his Bishop, nor his army. Tell him if he wants to shake his little fists at us, we'll give him such a bit, he'll wish he kept his hand in his pocket," He moved even closer to the General and whispered, "Insult me again, and I'll paint the walls of this room red with you. Understood?"

"Y?yes, your Grace," said the General.

Valyria

it felt nice
to wake up alone in the morning
and not have to tell someone
you love them
when they stopped loving you first,
and you feel like a ruined city:
an island,
isolated with beautiful scenery
but plagued
with boiling waters
and monstrous demons.

The Quiet Ones.

the truth about us quite ones.

when sat in a group conversation
and we're not saying much,
i bet you're thinking a series of things:
what are they thinking?
how are they feeling?
what have they done?
what have we done?
have they done something to be quiet about?

there's always one wolf of the pack that listens to every ones movements,
one tree with the deepest growing root,
a star that lives blind to their naked eye.

people say:
be wary of the quiet ones,
like we're plotting a mass murder.
but we are natural investigators,
as when people think you're blind to their actions,
they start to get careless,
and forget
we remember.

Gravitational Pull

You are like the moon: even when out of sight, I can feel you pulling my tides in your movement.
I'm your Earth and you're my Moon, but we merely co-operate because we're trapped, together in a casual predictable affair of physics.
We'll always come back together.
We're just two different addicts looking for the same satisfaction.

The Boy of Gold and Stone.

There once was a boy and a girl: the boy was granite and soil, covered in trees, flowers and creatures, and the girl was born of Adam and Eve, blood and bone. She, stood in front of him, pick axe and drill to hand, and he stood with nothing to defend himself from her advance.

"Why are you digging into me?" asked the Boy, "Because I know there's something pure in you," she replied. She dug and dug further into the ground, endlessly searching for a shiny, glistening metal inside the boy. But when she found it, she took it, leaving a cavern where the metal once lived and the boy could feel nothing but a slight emptiness.

She kept coming back. She drilled and blasted deeper into his very foundation and took what she now knew was gold. She took more, and more, and more every time she said to him "I love you". She made enough wealth to feel an endless thirst to take more gold, and when she found the last slivers of it in his increasingly-stone heart, he stopped her pick axe with his stone hands and begged her, "Enough!"

But she took it anyway. Thunder only happens when it's raining, Players only love you when they're playing. And now he was a gold mine with only cold stone and hallow catacombs left in him, filled with the cold damp air of anger.

The First Time...

The first time I saw him, every colour in my head was clear. As clear as the clean sand against the dark rock under shallow coastal waters, or the newborn air you feel on top of a cliff.

Ever since I was a child, I wanted to do something creative. I bought paints, easels, crayons and brushes and pastels, messed up the dining table and wooden floors, in a search of something to create.

But I met him, and I finally found it - I wanted to create something perfect. I saw it all so clearly! We both would be together until we grew grey and withered, in a little mini-mansion with dogs and kids running around laced with the stress of getting them to school on time, so I put that image on canvas and called it "Mine".

He told me to sell it, so I refused - why sell the happiest thing I created? It was so perfect. The blends of green and blue in the sea with the whites and browns and greens of the cliff side, and the house was just right.

But I wasn't in the picture. I looked closer and the kids were there, the beach was there, he was there... but so was someone else.

Another guy.

I remember...

I caught them. I caught them, together, in the act.

"It's not what you think," he told me, and begged me not to sell the painting. *My painting.* "I can change"...

And like that, I sold it. Selling it felt like cutting out a disease: it hurts and it bleeds but if I keep it, it will consume me.

Now that painting has become someone else's life.

You're Worse Than Cigarettes

You choke me, thicken my blood with poisons. You've turned my fingers yellow and my eye sight hazy. I always told my parents "I won't smoke", meaning "no one can tell me to, but I may on my own terms at least," but if they could see me now... the destruction between me and my body...

But without you, I'm always, pissed, off.

Everything. Just. Annoys me.

But I want that burning sensation you gave me, reminding me I was alive and I crave the taste of smoke on my tonsils, I can't sleep flat on my back without my lungs pressing "eject" on their bronchioles.

I believe you can read a person's life story just by looking around their body: from age and diet to life story and struggles, what your mind does, your body displays, and mine tells everyone my addiction to you.

You're worse than cigarettes...

I wake up like a fire survivor - sick thing is, you made me want to go back into the fire.

Cloudbusting Love

Your hoodie was spread out across my pillow, at night I cross the arms across my chest and pretend your body fills its space.

It's easy to wish for such things when you're everything you promised and more, I don't need a Genie in a lamp to wish for that.

We are coasting close to each other and it feels supernatural: scary but sweet, like growing up with the taste of candied violets stuck in our mouths, or the colours of Deadly Nightshade flowers.

We dance until the morning light, even when there's no music, because when I'm with you, time is just one long day.

And every time it rains,

You're here in my head,

Like the sun coming out:

I know something good is gonna happen...

I don't know when,

But just saying it could even make it happen!

The Young Boy

Sunrise burned a deep rose red in the sky above the rolling hills and vast plains of England. Ser Alyx of Montaeth stood facing the opposing rebel army and an army stood behind him. Unlike the rebels, his army was a variety of all ages and all highly trained in combat. The rebels shook in their rags at the mere sight of glistening black and gold armour. The inevitable was clear and sharp as a knife: one foot forward and it begins. Yet no one took that one foot forward for what seemed like hours. Then Alyx took one breath, one step and drawing out a scream, ran forward with his armour clattering and the rising red sunlight reflecting in his blue eyes looking like they were forged from fire.

His army followed suit, and it began. Steel and iron sang together like fluttering birds in spring, skin tearing all around spilling blood like wine. The youngest of Alyx's army stood close by, fighting anyone who came near him. One of the rebels came up behind him and took hold, pulling him down to the ground. The young boy managed to stab him in the neck before getting his breath back and Alyx pulled him to his feet. He looked ahead and saw the rebel leader stood between two guards, Alyx saw three women. Standing there, still as statues. Watching. Everything went quiet for one long moment before he remembered where he was. The rebel leader was Ser Goran Mount and Alyx recognised him immediately. He ran forward pushing anyone who got in the way, but the young boy got there first and was seized, held knelt to get ground, jaw held open by one guard as the other hovered his sword over the boy's open mouth.

"No!" Alyx cried, but the knight plunged the sword deep down the boys throat into his stomach and twisted it before pulling it free and slit his throat. The guard holding him pushed him forward into the mud and stripped him bare from the waist down and pushed his penis into the boy's dwindling warm body, laughing. Alyx dropped his sword and removed his two long daggers from their hidden sheaths and charged forward. Both knights prepared to meet him, and he tucked his head between his legs and rolled forward on his back, slicing their ankles as they started running. They both fell in ear-splitting agony and began to crawl away as Alyx turned back to them. He drove each dagger into one calve, pinning them to the ground as they screamed. Ser Goran stood firm in his spot, sword raised. Alyx stopped, blood dripping off his armour like rain, and picked up his sword again before slowly walking to Goran. When Goran's trembling sword touched his breastplate, Alyx stopped, breath heaving. He turned and glanced back at the raging war, like two world's colliding in an angry mob of blood-stained steel, and without question, swung his sword at Goran's neck. His body fell backwards on his knees and his head rolled away. The guards were still screaming in pain behind him, and he sat them both up, squeezed their jaws open and drove his sword down their throats before cutting them open like onions.

Leaderless, the rebels surrendered immediately. Alyx picked up and dumped corpses into a pile like dolls. He found the young boy, face pushed into the blood drenched soil, backside bare and bloody. He pulled up the chain mail and cloth back to his waist and sat him up. The boys blue eyes were open still, staring at nothing, and the blood in his mouth had gone death cold. Alyx knelt, closed the boys eyes, and wept as he cradled him. "My son... my poor boy..." He said, voice breaking as his tears fell, mixing with his son's drying blood.

Kings

Sunflowers, green cash,
French cologne and cigarette ash,
Classic cars on Sunset Blvd,
We were kings of the world.

What are you thinking?
How are you feeling?
Those spring-warm nights seems so long ago,
And so does the boy I used to call
my King of the UK.

vigil.

My farm,
My farm and yours
churns restlessly in a storm.
Red dusks at night,
my grass,
baked and dry,
keeps animals searching until sleep.

Resting sun
breaking out of the hilltop
as awake as us,
faithful in promise.
Quiet in heat,
eye of chance
fermenting the air to stifle,
stares fixed in its path.

Close up
the earth moves away,
burnt and frozen,
silenced in bloom.
Hopeful of time and distance,
Your eyes
deep and serene
glow brightly into me.

Hope, my angel,
your voice rouses animals from the shadows
the earth blossoms again
silent in monsoon,
our tears shall feed the circle
and she shall close her eyes

and rest again.

Bully Sharks and their Prey

A sea full of sharks and they all smell blood.

I sank,

They came,

I swam,

I floated,

I moved,

Moved away from all those who told me "no",

Back to those who told me "save yourself",

Tried to make life more than what it is.

Now I'm on my throne,

The sharks who chased me are my jester and audience,

Bowing heads to the one they said

"You won't amount to much",

Called me *"useless"*,

And *"waste of sperm"...*

I'm a shark too,

But unlike them,

I'm a King.

Their food is my Court,

Their weak are my strong:

Strong in weakness,

While their physicality fails them.

Those sharks dare to ask to sit at my table.

And oh, how they don't like being outranked by the one they categorised as *prey*.

Where Would You Go?

I came to a forked crossroad with a signpost holding two signs simply pointing to 'Left' and 'Right'. Looking left, I saw a destination in the distance and immediately knew where the path would end, but looking right... The path continued down into a clearing, submerging in trees in some areas and rising into the mountains before vanishing. There was smoke rising on the other side like a snake against the sunrise.

Can you see me?

It's been a year Grandma.

I really really miss you.

Mummy says you're safe now, she calls you Angel.

I tried your favourite coffee today, but I don't really like it. It tasted ewwie.

I learned to ride a bike this summer! And I can ride it without training wheels!

Can you see me?

It's been five years, Grandma.

I'm in Year 6 now.

I really like art, but I'd do anything instead of sport.

I catch Dad still crying on your birthday, even though he won't tell me why.

Mum lets me spray my bed with your perfume... it just reminds me of you.

Can you see me? I

t's been 10 years, Grandma.

I started high school.

Even though i didn't do well, I got into College!

(I have my parents to thank for the push)

I'm thinking about Universities, now... but I'm scared...

I know you'll be there when I stand at the altar, and holding my first child... I

hope you know you're my Angel.

Can you see me?

Merry Christmas, Grandma.

Ghosted

I'm a long way from home,
I still tremble from that last text you sent.
I retype the reply I want to say,
but the other me in my mind pauses my thumb.

Why won't you hear?
I've dressed my wounds by fucking people who aren't you...
But shit, I'm so blue without you.
I forget, to you I'm just a ghost,
But remember,
I know how to haunt you.
You're not ready for the shit I can do.

Why can't you see?
No...
I won't make threats,
Just like you never kept promises.
Eye for an eye,
tooth for a tooth,
you break me,
I break you too.

They say Halloween is the one night ghosts walk among the living...
I'll see you then.

Endgame

The best revenge is
proving to them you're more than
what they imagined.

Castle

Motes and razored cliffs surround me,
The causeway connecting me to my land swamps and swells.
To myself, leave me be.
And stay on your own bay.

The walls surrounding me reach so high,
Birds fly around them.
Each day, in my courtyards, the sun passes over,
Glistening from my crown's diamonds and gems.

Praying in my Chapel,
My neck is open wide,
In stumbles a not so quiet, armed assassin,
And before he takes his shot, "I'm sorry", he cried.

He missed.
He fell to the floor.
He was removed, his gun clenched tightly in his fist.
And my heart beat against my chest like the knock on a door.

If you want to bring my walls down,
Prepare to get bruised.
The man slowly lingered in my dungeons
While fresh wounds oozed.

New Year's Day

Goodbye, old year,

You are the now outgrown child's overalls, placed in a charity bag to be passed on, making room for new things.

You are now the bottles previously purchased for consumption before the annual firework displays

You represent the old schools students will no longer be attending as they grow and progress down their destined paths.

You are the diseases that we have endured, while you successfully claimed some for the Reaper.

You are the old, worn-down shoes we sadly have to let go, like losing an infected limb or a toy we loved as a child.

You are the old year, now stored in the archives of time.

Welcome, new year,

You are the new pair of shoes we have yet to walk in.

Happy New Year.

Accents

My Grandma holds her accent in both fists like loaded pistols.

Between her lips and hips is the essence of Irish strength.

Her accent is like the Catholic and the Protestant at a 1700s dinner, Irish and English clashing together in a verbal battle, there is no telling my Grandma to be quiet. She doesn't know "quiet".

Her accent is a *one size fits all*,

"How are you" becomes "How ar' yah?"

"I'm good" becomes "I'm grand", and outside friends meet an intriguing dialect they cannot understand.

At family gatherings, the accents are like vines, thick and deeply rooted.

She waited long enough to be able to speak only to be branded *gypsy* because of her birthplace.

She learned a lot by having grandchildren, her voice is like a lullaby in the night

She has a somewhat charm to her voice, making vulgar words like "fuck" and "shit" sound like punchlines.

Even though she has refrained from adopting the native English sound, her accent is like an umbilical chord, connecting her to the Emerald Isle.

"There's no place like home."

Running through the trees,
Flying fast as birds,
I am my father's child,
A stag grazing, treading cautiously across the ground.
My antlers grow through my fists,
I look to the Sun whenever I feel mad, and just breathe.
Home is the rolling hills of the cold, wet North,
Filled with the scent of pollen carried from the Yorkshire Moors.
The grass beneath my feet brushes against the skin,
A reminder of the roots I'm leaving behind.
Running through the trees,
My hair flowing in the wind like a cavalry flag
With a heart of marbled stone,
I'm home.

breathe in, breathe out...

All I was doing was sitting.

Sitting on my bed, watching a tv show, eating muffins.

Simple enough, right?

The change comes as my muscles start to feel like they're tingling.

My nervous system becomes live wires, and my body feels the current shooting through like it's only water.

'Run.' the voice tells me, 'Run away,' he whispers into my neurons as it takes control over the steering wheel of my brainstem.

My legs pull me to the door.

Now I'm the best prepared for the worst case scenarios - I'm prepared to fight the stranger in the alley that simply walks by, or the dog whose bite to crush bone simply wants to say hello.

I'm running from the monster under that bed that my brain knows isn't even there.

Breathe in, Breathe out.

Breathe in, Breathe out.

Learn how to play the piano.

Watch a new TV show.

Watch a film in a foreign language.

Go outside, meet up with a friend or something.

Just do *something*.

I'm not in any danger.

Distract me, me.

Breathe in, Breathe out...

The Coven (a story writing practice - part 1)

The low hanging fog clung around the street lamps like fabric, making the little bulbs inside look like amber stars while the moon gradually moved shifted overhead. The rain fell lightly, almost looking like glitter in the wind. It definitely looked cold. I stood by the door, twirling my cigarette between my thumb and forefinger and took a final drag from it, watching the smoke rise into the air as I stubbed it out on the stone wall. The warmth of the house met my skin like water to an ice cube. The house was dimly lit tonight, with all the lamps around the house and the kitchen extraction fan light all on low, like candlelight and the open fire in the sitting room cracked and licked the dry wood in that comforting glow. I was greeted by Charles, with his shit blond hair and his shit dated dress sense. He could smell the cigarette on me, even more being a Vampire.

"You know I don't like that, Alex," said Charles, "how many times have I told you to stop?"

"Oh god, I'm a Vampire it's not going to kill me." I said, a cheeky grin crept its way into my dimples. I sure do enjoy being right and Charles' sarcastic scoff reassured me that I was.

"It's disgusting."

"Yeah well, when I want to hear your old values, I'll ask for them." His brow narrowed, hooding his pair of dark ruby red eyes. If he could kill me again, he would have. Charles is what you could label as conservative - as in he still maintained his old human values just like I did my habits: he listened to classical music, sipping sherry reading a newspaper whereas I smoke, and often in front of him just to see his nose wrinkle at the smell. 'I understand you're from a different era to me, but could you be more respectful?' he asked me once. I do maintain respect, but I only give it to those who deserve mine, like my human parents for example.

"Don't fucking look at me like that. You have your values, I have mine," I said as he walked away. "Got something interesting to listen to on Radio 4, have you?" I chuckled. He kept walking and like a flash, disappeared upstairs. At that moment, there was a knock on the door behind me. Upon opening it, the scent hit me like a car to a wall. Human...

"Evening Sir, my name is Elij-" he paused for a moment. A muted scream came from somewhere in the house. He looked behind me.

"We're a family of professional tattoo artists. My Dad is doing one on my brother right now." The man looked me in the eye. "...Yes?" I finally asked after what felt like minutes, "I do have things to do, you know."

"Sorry, uh... just... your eyes are..." I knew where this was going, "...beautiful... pardon me if that's an uncomfortable comment, Sir," I couldn't help smiling at the formality.

"No not at all, Elijah," His face looked confused when I said his name.

"How did you know my name?" he asked.

I lied. "Lucky guess." I said with a disregarding shrug. The long pause that followed invited him to tell me what he was doing knocking on my door this late at night. Humans should normally be asleep by the darkest point of the night, so when he didn't stop looking at my eyes, I had to click my fingers. "Sorry... uh... I'm just wondering if you've, um, seen this boy?" Fumbling in his coat pocket, he took out a folded piece of paper and unfolded it. On it was a picture of a young man, looking roughly early 20s under the unmistakable word "missing" in big block capitals. The young man was Jordin Spark, aged 21, last seen in Huddersfield town centre over two weeks prior.

"No sorry, I haven't... Is he from this area?" I asked, trying to sound interested.

"Yes, Aspley," he said. Another scream arose, but he didn't seem to question it.

"Well, I work around Huddersfield, leave this with me and I'll keep an eye out for him." I almost snatched the poster from his hand. "Write your mobile number on the back so I can contact you if I do." The whole time I held his gaze in mine. Handing him back the poster, he took out a pen and did as told, without breaking eye contact, and I took the poster back.

"Bye, now." I said as I shut the door on him. Running downstairs to the basement, more screaming became louder and louder. I opened the door, and found a Mr Jordin Spark, who was half naked, and cuffed to the table. My mouth began to water. "Hmmm. What are we going to do with you..." I said half smiling, my teeth protruding and ready.

The Coven (a story writing practice - part 2)

The night air was crisp as it crept through my open bedroom window. My loosely-fitted Campus t-shirt shifted in the slight breezes. Sitting cross-legged on my bed with a TV show on my laptop, I twirled another cigarette in my fingers, knocking of the empty ash into the cup on my bedside while sipping hot chocolate. I was so engrossed in the show it had gone simply cold chocolate milk. At that moment, the door gently swung open as Charles appeared and strolled in.

"How many times have I told you to not do smoke inside," he said.

"It's my bedroom, I'm allowed to do what I want in *my* bedroom. And how many times have I told you to piss off and leave me alone? I'm watching American Horror Story, here. These two lads are about to start screwing," I said with a smile. "Also, did your mother ever tell you it's impolite to barge into someone's room? I know you're old but, come on," I said. I took a drag of my cigarette. One trait I like in people is basic manners, which he seemed to lack.

"I own this house, Alex. While you're under my roof, you live by my rules." I rolled my eyes. Pausing the episode on my laptop, I turned to him and stared him out.

"Get out of my room."

"No."

"You can walk out, or leave my way, I don't care which. Although I'd prefer the latter." I said. His expression brushed off the advance and he sat in my desk chair.

"I'm not happy with the way you uhm, *dealt*, with Mr Jordin." he said, picking up my grandmother's old hair pin: an heirloom, made of gold with a crystal encrusted flower at the head, dotted with purple, green and clear white gems.

"And I'm not happy with you touching my shit but you're doing it." He looked at me and back down on the desk. "And I fed off him, disposed of the body the way you told me to, and job done. What more can you be displeased with, other than your shitty clothes?" I stubbed my cigarette out and rolled a fresh one.

"He's been found."

"Oh good, give the investigator a reward, they actually did their job." I said sparking up. Charles' nose wrinkled at the smell just the way I liked it.

"They found fingerprints." I knew he was expecting me to feel a bang of fear but, no. I felt nothing.

"And?" His mouth curled up and he dashed over to my bed like lightning, fingers wrapped around my throat.

"*And*, the problem is, you were sloppy! This is you, every time," he pressed his lips against my ear, "you're stupid. Why I got you as a son, I'll never know." My vision began to go blurred very quickly. When I pushed his arm away, he flew straight into the bookcase, crushing it. I brushed a few loose fringe hairs out of my eyes with my finger, and smoked.

"*Thank you for coming in*," I said, "do close the door on your way out." I pressed play on my episode and he growled at me.

"Great," he said, climbing to his feet, "now I have to pay for this. You have to learn," he pointed his finger at me.

"For me to learn something, you have to actually teach something." And with that, he stormed out,

cursing under his breath. "Close the door, you dick!" I rushed to my feet and slammed it. He is such a loser. For a moment, I heard some muffled conversation in the hallway through the closed door, then Elle knocked not he door before swinging it wide open. "I'm sorry, Alex, but I wouldn't barge in if it wasn't absolutely necessary..." her long black hair was in disarray, strands falling onto her face. Something was wrong.

"What?" I asked.

"We need to get to Queensgate Market, *now*."

Te deseo, Cariño (a Valentine's Day letter from me to me)

Everyone around you is celebrating today.

It's okay.

Everyone around you is with someone.

It's okay.

They're publicly showing their happiness, and that's okay.

As there are two kinds of love:

The love you have for another, and the one you can have for yourself.

When you're in a relationship with someone, the love goes to them,

But when you're single, circulate that love back to yourself.

Send yourself flowers.

Buy yourself a present or a cocktail.

Celebrate Valentine's day,

In your own special way.

(writing practice) - untitled

I wasn't always this cracked.

No - *damaged* is a better word. I used to be normal. Well, as normal as any teenager under the influence of rising hormones and peer pressure can be. But after the killings, I began to feel... I don't know, rough around the edges or something. Welcome to the Jailbird Olympics, where they tire you out by forcing activities onto you. Personally, I think they're trying to tire the other inmates out, keep them comatose as if they're trying to prevent an uprising or something. That won't work on me. Before, I behaved like a human - I opened the door for strangers, drove, socialised and ate human food and now I'm another name on a neighbourhood watch list who kicks orderlies and hears and sees things that aren't there, and curses. To say a mosquito bit me would be an understatement, because it was no mosquito.

But at least I have my fans. I must get more letters than Jeremy Kyle, Channing Tatum and Beyoncé combined. My ego somewhere deep inside giggles like a little boy, 'I'm actually popular', he says. Sometimes the letters re from people who believe I'll be saved if I 'accept Jesus Christ' into my heart... I say the words but nothing ever happens... he never climbs off the cross. I'm a kicker and a scratcher, so the exhaustion tactics of these prison directors don't know what to do with me. It's beginning to turn into amusement. The one thing that always gets me to behave, is the one song by Taylor Swift I don't like that they play on repeat for the entire duration I'm locked in solitary. Oh god. I hate this fucking song, I always think. Those cunts.

And I ask myself, "How did I get here?"

Gáta, God of Chaos - writing practice

The light of the steadily rising moon slowly lit up the floor of the large barn through the gap in the wooden walls and the open doors. As the hunter woke up, he quickly realised that he was bound ankles and wrists to a chair, not by ropes: snakes. Panic slowly set in as he struggled against them and they tightened their grip, turning his limbs cold. Footsteps lightly pattered around the area. He struggled to see much further than his knees as a voice rose lightly rose out of the darkness.

"This is wrong... this is all wrong..." There was sounds of chains followed the gentle rustling of hay, like something was being placed on the top of it. "How dare you," the voice said, pointing the tone in the direction of the hunter. Panic slowly set into his mind as the shadowed silhouette slowly approached him. The figure was crouched in front of him when a streak of moonlight hit the man's face. Within almost no time at all, flames lit up surrounding lanterns, illuminating the entire barn. The hunter saw the corpses of his sixteen kills laid gently on the hay, almost as if they were sleeping. As he scanned the room, the hunter's breath caught in his throat and fear tingled the hunter's spine when he saw the unmistakable slitted golden eyes of Gáta. He stood crouched over the hunter. He had one dagger in his tunic, the other in one hand, and his legendary crown of human bone and metal, claws protruding from his nail bed and behind those glowing eyes was a harnessed chaos.

"Sir, I?" Gáta placed a cold finger on the hunter's mouth.

"Shh, your time for talking is over," he said coolly as a one visible dimple rose closer to one eye, showing a slight smirk. He was so close to the hunter's face he could smell the dried blood on his face. "Now, usually I don't mind the smell of blood, but only when it's your kind's."

"I didn't mean to?" Gáta clutched him by the jaw strong enough to hear a crack.

"You didn't mean to go hunting, on sacred ground? You didn't mean to hunt, my sacred animal? So you could sell it on your little Mortal's illegal market?" Gáta turned his hands outward, and the corpses of the enormous Tigers rose to life behind him, their bones snapping back into place as they began to prowl forward. They looked at him with a burning intensity, as if they remembered the hunter's face. Gáta looked at him with an intensity to his Tigers, and the hunter avoided them at all costs, shuffling around in his chair as the snakes bound themselves even tighter. "What's the matter? Want to be freed?" Asked Gáta.

"Yes, my good Lord," squealed the hunter, and Gáta smiled. The Tigers behind him began to slowly turn away and run away through the open doors.

"Of course you do." Said Gáta. Like a breath, he was gone and took all light from the lanterns, with the only light being from the moon now high in the sky, followed by the second moon. The snakes that bound him to the chair fell away, and he leapt to his feet fast enough to fall slightly dizzy for a little while. He then rummaged around, determined to get home. He left through the open barn doors and closed them behind him, those burning golden slitted eyes etched into his mind. Something snapped in the woods in front of him. As he scanned what he could see left in the little light left of the day, everything went quiet. As he locked the barn doors, a Tiger leapt out of the shadows and crushed his neck. Gáta stood against a tree with his arms folded and a smile that lit up his golden eyes.

"This is what happens to people who kill my pretty pets," he said as the Tiger feasted on its fresh meal.

New Year's Eve:

The scent of roasted meats and vegetables laced with thick plum red wines fills the air.

The gnashing sound of teeth chattering and tongues rising and reclining behind them in conversation with the occasional booming laughter of fathers and uncles bursting out before quietly blending back into the tide of voices.

Kids running around after the family pets, the family pets playfully biting one another, rolling and patting, pouncing and huffing, inviting to play.

Mum places the deserts out on the already messy table, splatted with meat gravy and berry sauces: "deserts are ready, everyone!" she announces.

The kids fall asleep in front of their devices, the screens lighting up their faces like resting angels and the dogs carefully rest beside them.

11 Years...

If someone told me back then, "you won't be friends with him in 11 years time", I'd have laughed in their face and called them a liar. But you knew that.

The simple fact is, you played a prank on me that backfired on you. As children, we don't realise that from the earliest point, our friends affect us. We used to pretend to be spies, super heroes... we even created a game for our group, remember? The Spy Game... and we were all brothers and sisters.

What happened?

Life. You don't realise when you're young that effort is a key role in relationships, and yet we all went to different schools, made new friends, yet the two of us were okay! We were as great as the sea and the moon, churning in unity like the lunar cycle; inseparable.

Locking me in your garage was a bad idea. Small spaces are an enemy of mine now; cramped elevators in particular. Anxiety raises itself from its dormant slumber and presents me with two bandanas; red for fight, white for flight. You didn't even pick up on the signs that you did me wrong as it was still a joke to you.

I look at your Facebook page and you seem to have become the person you always wanted to be and so am I. You're still into comics, as I'm still accustomed to their films...

But you're Captain America and I'm Iron Man. We're just too different now.

the R word: part 1.

The train pulls in,
Valentine Station is the new destination
as I fell asleep and missed my station.
You sat next to me,
with your velvet brown eyes and bristly little beard.
You got on the wrong train.
With lips soft as rose petals,
you inspired me to rise to another level.

the R word: part 2

I'll let angels decide,
how long this lasts.
My easygoing nature letting time take its course.
But you're sprinting ahead of me,
like you're Husain Bolt and I've just learned to run.
The R word is brought up.
i'm sorry.
I deal my final card.
My guardian Angel says, it's not the right time.

Poker (Love) Games

As a body feeds a virus, like blood feeds the tissue, you multiplied in my heart like an epidemic infection.

I think I know what love is; love isn't something other-worldly, or gifted by God ? in my experience, it's physical, like the deep paling feeling of the stomach before vomit. Like the consuming rush of adrenaline after a fight, or swelling behind the eyes before the tears break.

You make me want to cry, fight, dance, laugh, throw up my body weight in fluid and shout swear words from the rooftops. You inspire me to rise another level, play Russian roulette just to see if it's the only game you let me win. Like Achilles and Heracles, you throw curve balls at me and raise the stakes... but where am I going wrong?

Shock, I lost... but two days later, I'm back in class like nothing happened ? not just learning where I went wrong, but what you always do to do beat me ? because when you play the honest cards, always have the chance of failing.

I never learned to play poker, so no one taught me how to hide what I hold. The faster I learn, the less you think I see you cheat. We played card games like Snap, Old Maiden for fun...

Love is a game, and you're cheating. But, I see you ? I see where your hand goes and that smirk behind your deck, but as I'm holding my straight flush you tell me you "love me"... when my tutor says,

"Everything you hear at a Poker game is pure shit."

(I am okay, just under a lot of stress right now so yeah)

the worst kind of betrayal (writing practice -- part 1)

PART 1

2:14pm

Have you noticed, that craft classes always have that one distinctive, thick smell? Of course, the obvious smell of wood, like you're a wood mite living under the skin of a tree. Alex's birthday is right around the corner, so I've decided -let's make him something,- as I would prefer something homemade over shop-bought any day of the week, I want to make him feel like that.

"Hey, loser," Callum swatted me over the head as he came to talk to me, the dull ache remained for a couple of seconds

"Hey, dickhead, that actually kinda hurt, did that...?" "Oh shut up, it was a tap on the head." He slunk down beside me, elbows on the desk, his short blonde waves covering out of his face.

"So, what are your plans tonight?" he asked as he brushed my hair back into its usual style, "The parents want me to go to a vegan restaurant with them because they're trying it out and I'd go with a bargain bucket of spicy wings, at least I'd get banned from going ever again,"

"Well, it's mine and Alex's nine month anniversary today so I'm making him somethi?"

"-nine month anniversary?- People actually do that?" His face paled slightly at the idea. Sentimentality is definitely not his forté.

"Yeah, it might actually get you laid if you do something romantic for once in your life," He looked up at me, and tried to hide his smile of defeat.

"What is it you're designing him anyway?" "He likes interior design, so I'm making him a latched white key holder with gold hooks ? it's to go in his kitchen, he said he needed something to breakup the dark greys and black marble tops. He paused for a second, his face turned inquisitive.

"Why don't you ask him out for a meal if you're so bothered?"

"He's already told me that he's going out with his parents, so I didn't want to impose on that. As you know, I hate people that change plans,"

"Oh yeah," his expression relaxed and he let out a slight sigh, "you sounded so fucking gay then, but you do have good taste... like when you helped me get ready for a date... I, on the other hand, don't..." He straightened himself up and inhaled deeply, "Well, I'm gonna go get myself reported to PETA for disrespecting a vegan restaurant, so I'll see you tomorrow?"

"Yeah, I'll ride my bike to yours at, like, nine-ish?"

"Sweet, see ya." He passed Jim as he left the class, who shot me a subtle look of disdain. "What are you looking at, brother Christian?" asked Callum.

"Just a couple of admitted sodomites," he replied with a smirk.

"You see, Jim, even though your parents don't believe in contraception or abortion, the least your mum could've done was swallow..." Callum smiled and left before Jim had a chance to reply.

"Okay, people," said Mr. Horsfall's this voice, penetrating my chest, "time to pack your things away, I know you all want to go early and quite frankly, so do I. Enjoy your weekends!" At home, I finished the present, placed photographs of me and Alex together inside and wrapped it, even tying ribbon around it to make a nice bow on the front. Final touch, an anniversary card from the internet, reading:?

My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep: the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.

A spur-of-the-moment inspiration suddenly struck me...
I am one sappy bastard, I thought.

Himiko of Yamatai: A Short Story

Long ago, there once was a queen. Her name was Himiko of Yamatai. It is said, that the people of Yamatai were once simple fisherman, who were caught in a storm and were shipwrecked on the coastline of a far away land. As time went on, a small fishing village became a country and kingdom, where only the women succeeded the throne. But Himiko was no ordinary woman.

According to legend, she was born on one stormy night when the storm was at its worst. The people prayed to their gods of earth and sky and sea to go back into peaceful slumber, as they believed when all three were awakened, they would battle for control of the world, and the world would end.

Himiko split her country between admiration and defiance, as rumour bounded that she had abilities not of this world. Admirers quickly built shrines of worship, which were torn down and burned just as quickly by rebels... those who called her a witch were taken to the sword and went to it gladly.

Another storm came, worse than the last. People prayed and the rebels pointed the finger at her as the cause, as she calmly walked into the churning sea and held out her hands. It is said, after a few moments, the storm suddenly ceased. Sunlight cut through the clouds like glass, and birds began to chirp again. In that moment, she became known as the Sun Queen. She ascended to the throne, and carried dynasty three hundred years strong, with her brother Lui as Lord Commander of her Queensguard. When war struck, she and her nation retaliated with brute force and a superior sense of warfare. The summers would bring drought and winters would be so cold, they would kill almost all young children. She ruled peacefully and justly for around sixty years, and suddenly... the kingdom vanished.

No one knows why or how. Some say the gods awoke a final time and destroyed the land, others suspect foul play from allies, enemies, both, or from within, all of which point the finger at her brother ? maybe he was jealous that she was the queen regent and envied her. But no one alive today knows what happened. Many have sailed to the islands believed to be Yamatai, yet no one has ever returned.

Grief is... [Haiku]

Grief is like a box;
A box of vile stinking shit.
But I'll get through it.

The Five

I sit in this big white room alone, scrunched up like paper in the corner,

I feel the tears fall down.

The door is locked from the inside,

To stop the pain, and keep my remaining innocence.

I sit in this room, as The Five routinely visit; Anger, Denial, Depression, Bargain and Acceptance, and they come in many forms and sizes: Anger is a small red Dragon, Denial is a small green Snake, and Depression is a small blue mouse, Whereas Bargain is me dressed in a suit, and Acceptance is me dressed in the comfiest clothes You can find.

Anger likes to scale my clothes, tearing them to shreds

As they curl up on my stomach after scorching these clinical blanched walls.

Acceptance enters after a while, and tries to coax me out, telling me what has happened to me happened, and staying in this room will not change that.

I want to be somewhere else; four years ago before the butterfly fluttered its wings, growing the winds that pushed me into this white room today.

Am I going crazy?

My counsellor says no.

Everything I'm feeling and thinking is totally normal, as I'm processing traumatic grief.

I want to be normal and free again, and I want to stay in this big white room.

But Acceptance is right, and the tears have gone for now.

I cannot stay in this big white room forever.

The Five will always be with me, and maybe eventually they'll learn to knock before they enter.

The Witch: A Fairytale Nightmare

There once was a castle atop a mountain, the highest mountain in the known world.

A lonely Queen reigned, with her three daughters.

The eldest princess had two sons, and the youngest, a daughter and a son.

The eldest of the Queens' grandsons shone bright; his light captured adoration of the entire kingdom, and envy from neighbouring realms, yet he was troubled.

One day, a young maiden stumbled into his life and he wanted nothing but to make her happy, for she was lonely.

He brought her out of her loneliness, and the royal family welcome her with open arms. They had a two years of glory before it all began to fall...

He would began to claim she was a witch, who could shape-shift between the loving nature of a mother to her horrid terrible true nature; malice, jealousy and deceit. His mother, the eldest princess, and father, saw this witch, but even kept her nature from his younger brother to protect the family.

As time went on, people began saying he was different; either cursed or ill, an affliction of the mind or body or both, but one afternoon, he mysteriously died. The maiden dressed in black, cried at his funeral, cried during the eulogy, but evade careless after ale; she told everyone she was a witch, and ran away once she realised what she had done.

The princess had no option but to tell everyone what the maiden truly was; an abuser, and a cheater.

She domestically, verbally and emotionally abused the young prince, and took everything he had that was of value, even his self-worth.

The Moon

The moon was still.

Perched on the edge of the horizon like a child on the edge of a swimming pool, bathed in orange.

We all at some point believed the moon followed us on car journeys, like we believed in monsters under our beds or imagined creatures following us outside the car window.

The winter breezes are cold and sharp.

I find myself in my mid-twenties, in the passenger seat, wishing the moon was following me,

Because it's easier to replace trauma with something? anything familiar to who you were and what you knew before.

It's dark now,

I'm drunk now, and the moon is high.

The city lights shine like the burning stars against the night.

I sway along in my seat to the same heartfelt 90s hip-hop tracks I've been listening to for the past twenty-four years,

Healing, recovering, repairing.

Through hazy eyes, we drive past a neon sign quoting "I get knocked down, but I get up again",

And I remember, that's what I've been doing all this time.

I am strong.

I am one of the strongest people I know, and I wouldn't trade the pain for what I've learned.

Winter Sun

Only when the Sun
Sits gently at its lowest,
It shines the brightest.