#1 *Poets Who Try to Live with People* (working title)

Maybe you’ve heard of them

They are called Poets Who Try to Live with People

PWTtLwP

(PTLP)

They wanted to make their group name

more delightful for the articulators,

Something sonically popping

But since most of them

are non-joiners and

wouldn’t come to any meetings

It was settled: they’d go

For a long name with no acronym.

keep it complicated

A title you’d forget.

Here’s how, say, 90% (if we were

mathematicians & could statistically

gather) of their

living situations go…

They usually move in…

the most of them being

homebodies without their

own actual complete

satisfying or sanctifying

home… so they move in.

Usually the conditions aren’t ideal.

They have to move some furniture

build a wall or a door

(some of the members

Hemingway’d it up in

their development and

are quite Carhart-y

and carpenteristic).

Some of them

tried with the subtlest

sweetness, with just their

pinky toe on the earth,

each of their joints soft

and pliable having always

bent around and around

staying whimsical to survive

and keep their tulipviolet

colored irises vibrant and wet

enough for their pens.

These tried with flowers, picked

from fresh fields, and little notes

filled with phrases

of other (dead) poets

left on tables for their

beloved. These more soft-jointed pliable

poets don’t mind messes.

Dirt pieces in the corners

of drawers are even adorable

to them. More important are

the dozens of dusty novels they

moved in with; Hardy & Joyce &

Pound & Günter Grass And

Hemingway And All the Russians.

But after time, whether more dispositioned

like Kafka or mother Theresa or

a sweet combination of both,

Like a Labradoodle

They all find the quiet damper that

Goes over their hopeful candle.

Sometimes moving out (often) is not

so straightforward for this group.

They leave, having to break a heart

But really under their own skin

exists a longing heart begging

for that partner to

voraciously come around &

dramatically profess

he cannot live without the

said, departed poet, after all,

that he will fight for her for sure.

Sometimes she endures this begging

by turning a desensitized cheek

to his words & whims until her little

next oasis sinks or floods,

when at that time she realizes her

mistake and recognizes that she wants

nothing other than to have the Baby

of the man she just pushed a way

for a whole season.

It’s usually this way for

at least 90% of them

And the thing about PWTTLWP

is that they never pay

their membership due,

which is a scruffy

56¢ a year

so I quit talking about them or caring

to supportively help figure them out.

#2 (Untitled)

There was a girl

who was born without The

Happiness gene.

There was a girl &

maybe there still is

a girl but it is

hard to know because we only

know because we

could hear her so much in

her early years

fighting.

She had not yet been diagnosed

by that final, convincible source:

the last medic,

the latest medic.

Even He would not take her under his wing… into his

hospice – “I cannot make you happy…

and,” he furthermore stated, “It

seems, In fact, I am certain you are not

capable of Happiness, you are… I must confess…

missing – entirely—the Happiness Gene. Now, “he

finished, “I am sorry but you will have to

excuse me. I have a tennis match I

am nearly late for.” And he changed his shoes

Right before her, we were told, from Pointers to

Tennies and grabbed his racket and left Her.

She looked in the mirror there in his office.

The light, she knew, was beautiful.

She could recognize that.

The Daylight, we mean, not the clinical lights which

were not turned on, for His office provided

easy natural lighting through the late ‘70’s Frank LLoyd-esque

rectangular triptych of panes facing the s. west windows

where the afternoon sun traveled and

filtered nearly perfectly each day

through the trees –and angelically

and easily, gently effused into

this doctor’s office.

So the light was beautiful as

she looked in the round wooden

mirror—a mirror very different than the

kind you’d imagine in a modern doctor’s office,

because this was not that kind of office.

Especially for a dry, unhelpful and quite poetically

un-magical doctor, he had a very pleasant office.

Without seeming obviously so related at all the

office felt only a few steps away from possessing

a barn/hay-bail rustic vogue bachelor type of

interior, the way his medical tools shone

nearly handsomely on the oval tray

adjacent to his desk, the lofted openness of its

design; both his office & examination room

were combined into one space (and did he even have a waiting

room or a secretary--it’s impossible to say).

In fact, his entrance door seemed to lead

immediately to a less enjoyable hall, this door

had little x-crossed opaque glass in another, smaller,

rectangular shape, nearly like a high school.

But anyway, in this doctor’s office was the place

where she’d look in the mirror after

he’d left for tennis; leaving even his door so that it

would lock behind her, he said. And (he didn’t say)

his money tin there in his bottom right drawer of his desk

which was His uncle’s, and before (and originally) his Father’s.

She actually could smell money (perhaps being born with that

gene) and without even having the thought surface had

already subconsciously figured out the 3-number combo

code on his pea-green lockbox there

and already had counted $981.83 in the

Box but (even though left, easily, for her to take it,

especially entitled after such a sorrowful, even

mean, diagnosis) she would never. The chaffed sense though

of her learned morals rubbing always against her Homo sapien

savageness & general primal irreverence for anyone else—somewhere

in her unhappy Body, was surfacing just enough

in her apparent sense of being. However,

she recognized it only as a slight Hunger, on

a level of consciousness AND

in the mirror, despite her inability evidently

and finally to make herself happy,

she did recognize that she had, in fact,

not gotten necessarily

worse-looking with age or

at least if she had she had also somehow

developed something like an

occasionally felt appreciation for

her freckles and for how a few of them had

stayed, committed, to her lips and upper-cheeks

And she could, at least, marvel at how her

eyes, so fragile & exposed had

remained, generally untarnished &

un-attacked by the outside world

still taking gushes of light in sweetly,

innocently & openly after all of these trying years.

That was, yes, the last time we saw Her. We’re pretty sure

she must still be Alive & Around, for

someone would have to say, right, otherwise… if she was

not?

Or maybe she did go off and prove that last

diagnoser incorrectly, prove him wrong.

But maybe she no longer cared to post her

process. Maybe she found revenue in another

form of work.

I bet she’s living in that little cabin now,

the one she told a friend of a friend of ours about,

years & years ago.

No running water

no electricity

no stove, even

just a little fire-pit behind a shed.

or maybe there was a pot-belly stove.

I mean, I bet she made someplace, finally, cozy

I did hear she had a surplus of that gene,

the one which allows us to know how to make

things cozy. yes, she had a surplus of that gene

perhaps as a compromise for

the one

missing.

3.

ELATION

 this poem

is

 all feeling

Turn Off

Screen

lights

Windows, turn off windows

 Invisible fan on the ceiling

 take off socks on my

 bare feet

 Cry from the dried emptiness

 the

 shame of how nervous I got.

My overies

 your overies

let’s Overies say Overies write Overies

 *I don’t want to eat chicken eggs anymore*

 I’m not pregnant

but everything is making me

 nauseous

Do you know How easy it is

For Me to Be LATE?

To Take the wrong train

and to the wrong city

to get off rail

even on a rail

to flinch at the rails

 nervous system feeling

 already the feeling of

 A person’s Body…

 if they [don’t think of it!]

 [don’t!] jumped

 I of-course would never

But probability, which must mean

*the* *mentally probing Animation of Possibility*

can…. I trailed off

 didn’t finish

 Do you know How

Blank Blank Blank it

 it is For Me to Do

Blank?

 Me Me Me?

It’s a Symphony

 And Here is the

 Silent Part you

 were Hoping For,

 the silence in Music.

It’s not New

It’s not New

 it never has been

This is What I’m about

 I said

“We are Instruments”

 My heart Beamed

 17 dreams

I leapt, as high As I would

have As a child.

 guess what? the body does not get old,

 the mind stops letting in such strong riveting elation!

 We Felt

 Today

 Elation!

 I felt great and Now I am

 Sending

the hope of

 my heart to you

the mirror

 of the world

 in our eyes.

4.

 *Get Out*

I *wanted* to

show up on time

 but

I was countering the

tyrannous oligarchy

calling on the syntax of

the culmination of all of my

ancestral strength and

infinite light lines plus

my own dreams in color to

plan my (again) exodus from

a threatened land.

Even the winter winds are screaming

this inevitability. Look, I

*wanted* to continue to grow my

dinky urban business and

walk away with a square certificate

But when you put a

crown on a tetnus’d pig

whose mouth is foaming who

uses his handicap to the

advantage of dictating into

a tiny edged device

useless disgusting emptiness

and hits send with his

clawed foot, it’s fucking time

to run.

Even the tribal council of Grandmother’s

whose power ends (in this current

platform) before it begins & who, when

quoted most (even open-minded people) say

“uh who…?”

TOLD US that these men, these so-called

presidents of N. Korea, Russia, The U.S.A.

they are not men, they are “moys”—big boys who never grew out of

sandbox massacres and gross lunchbox growling power plays... the

kind you’ve seen in the classroom who look like not only were they

the last to be potty-trained-- But they still do not wipe well,

if they wipe at all.

I *wanted* to finish the love song. Show up for the

extraneous concert rehearsal, plan my next record,

figure out How to work in the Industry

BUT I had to convince my boyfriend of the reality & gravity

of this violent political situation.

He is the son of patriarchy though, and was more interested in his

new $300 jacket and how it looked in the

mirror than hearing my sincere premonition-informed

request that we find Legitimacy overseas,

and soon! I signed up to be a creator,

not a legislator, not a defensive defender, not

a game player! I *wanted* to show up here, for

my little coiffing at the girly salon for a

pedicure treat, BUT I was busy trying to

save my 20 digits from should-be-unspeakable

Bombs & Bills passed that make No Sense And

Rob Me & The world of Liberty. I *wanted* to

give a shit about discussing what you thought

of the last film you saw at the Angelika

Theatre but I was Preoccupied with cortisol;

attempting to meditate on proactivity

motivating my destiny elsewhere,

*so I can live freely.*

*so I can live sincerely*

*so I can live in safety.*

*so I can create*

my masterpiece, which has NOTHING to do with

this imprinted image of

outworn patriarchy

glowing like a

whorehouse neon sign in

the center of my head

when I look inside

& try to Breathe

& live my Beautiful life.

5.

TITLE: *\*not having expectations for a meeting you have high expectations for despite not wanting to have any*

OR:

*Meeting the Very Academically Accomplished Scholar for Dinner*

OR (long title):

*The Extremely Accomplished Academic Man who meets you for dinner, who you’ve never before met, who importantly tells you during this meeting-of-strangers-dinner, that his life is actually “so busy” he doesn’t even have time to meet his friends [leaving you to thus feel guilty for taking his time, as you are not even his friend but just a stranger who works in a field in which he is incredibly achieved, about which you thought you could perhaps glean new inspiration through meeting him. This leaves you to assume perhaps he thought you really contacted him because you were interested in something …else]*

Fuck the disease of

One-up-man-ship & why i

would manifest dinners

with strangers,

men who are doing it, one-upping, while i

eat my Asian greens

salad.

 “You win, you win!”
You win the moment!

I put my fork down wrong,

it knocks the plate & somehow

levitates with help from

the fleshy side of my fist into the

restaurant sky, nearly missing

something; not even

sure of what I’m saying.

Clearly this is just “my interpretation”

of what’s happening because my

current company, the One-upper, is so learned He

has tapped infinitely into The Beginner’s

Mind & so I am asking all of the

questions.

I think I began with “So why did you agree to

meet me, a total stranger, for dinner…

simply after I reached out to you, impressed

with your work, querying to meet for

a tea if you had time…”

He turned it into dinner

about which I had hesitancies.

For I like to Eat in Silence like a
monk; subscribing to mindfulness wanting only to

share a moment with someone humble enough to

give recognition to how amazing it is, how sacred life is,

how, whatever Wordyou want to use, Deeply Profoundly

fucking lucky we are to Eat anything at all.

To me, that is a fundamental awe-worthy foundation of any meeting.

It would go like this:

You: An array of colors, Fluffy halo of Hair curls, come Emitting

Rainbows, Eyes Open.

“YES!” you cry, you dance, you Breathe.

We meet, you say, “Let’s take a Big Breath together, let’s

Bring our hands to our heart, let’s bow, let’s give thanks, let’s

sing a low tone, let’s play, let’s dance!”

Me: A cotton Flower in the Air, hovering by the

restaurant façade to catch the moon light, confirms your beauty

immediately in a way that does not elicit more confidence within you

but human compassion.

We order---- > Glee, a double of Soothe the World And one Fill Up On Hope

for desert.

We Hold Hands, in no way Do we entwine, Attach, Feel subordinate to

Roles. We let Real Tears come into our eyes.

We sing the octaves of every organized musical scale of all of

the cultures in all of the world

and make a vow to meditate beyond politically-set boundaries.

And you tell me of a place where I can Dance to Free-Flowing Avant-grade

Improv-Classical Music, A Place Where Debussy still lives.

You don’t tell me about Books, you deliver them to me by Osmosis.

We make a finger painting

we hug & say “I Love You” And make no plans to

entangle…

I walk away with a tiny temporary tattoo of your greatest poetic

worldly offering on my pinky fingernail, it looks like a

cloud:

And from me, you have the smallest infinitesimal present ever

tied in a silverpink bow, in a Box, it is a circle

that Appears & Reappears, filled with Soul-songs, Filled

with Birds in the Sky, filled with Holographic Photographs

of moments that will always

set you or others free,

Peaceful places to set your mind aside

or soothe your mind like a Grand Mother.

One-up-man-ship dies under your

car tire as you turn the

wheel away from the curb & drive off

luxuriously, and listen to yourself,

the music you’ve written and recorded, on your

car’s CD player.

One-up-man-ship dissipates

like the gathered precipitation on

your windshield once

the seat-heater has

been switched on.

Oh god, never let me google

“how to make a good

first impression” again

or feel I gave all of

my self away trying to

hook your enthuse with

something. Or concern

that my wary traveled face

struck with sudden blemishes

for having eaten

airplane peanuts with

processed ingredients

turned you of from perceiving me

as valuable at all,

or that the few times

your eyes lit up with

anything I said

was in response to

my overshare: my

boyfriend is a deep-sea

explorer.

I mean, really,

do I have nothing

left to brag about?

I take the subway home, to a hastily-fled-messy house,

& then squat, belly down in “frog” pose, unwind my

composed self; I’m un-composed.

the sound of breath.

Who is this?
Who is this?

Hungover from conversation quip,

I never realize I’ve gotten on

until I’ve sunk upon the

One-up-man-ship.

6.

 *~~SHOUT OUT TO~~* ***~~BAKING SODA~~*** *~~[By An Extremely Sleep-Deprived Person]~~*

~~First of all, it’s crazy I can even be~~

~~classified & it’s crazy that lyrics~~

~~are written to be sung again & again,~~

~~reinforced when~~

~~everyone knows deep in their~~

~~[place we named—as though to~~

~~halt its infiniteness] heart that~~

~~language, with time, keeps~~ **~~moving~~**~~.~~

~~Now I am so tired~~

~~because for days I haven’t~~

~~landed that 10-hour sleep~~

~~marathon I oh•so•need or~~

~~quit imbibing even the~~

~~slightest stimulant~~

~~[I’m including herbal~~

~~chocolate tea here—as it~~

~~seems to still do the deed~~

~~of keeping me~~

~~in the cheapest version of semi-sleep through~~

~~the night.]~~

 ~~But you are not my doctor,~~

~~you are a reader,~~

~~someone who can~~

~~flip through my catalogue~~

~~of ideas~~ **~~here~~** ~~&~~

~~depending on the frequency of your brain~~

~~decide what or~~

~~what not this~~

~~called-poem~~

~~does.~~

~~Firstly, I am here to announce~~

~~language—it~~

~~truly keeps moving.~~

**~~Maybe a heart~~**

**~~does not want to be~~**

**~~called a~~ *~~heart~~***

**~~anymore~~**

~~Or maybe it wants a cooing sound~~

~~before it or a shrill EE~~

~~after it. or maybe it~~

~~wants to flip flop~~

~~every moment,~~

~~each time it is called, called differently.~~

~~Perhaps we should have invented~~

*~~utterance variables~~*~~,~~

~~a prefix or suffix~~

~~to be able to give depth and~~

~~precision to our language more~~

~~accurately, in a way that these words~~

~~and social colloquialisms~~

~~could, like rocks, naturally altercate, keep moving.~~

~~Like “LEEE” screamed after~~

~~the answer “I am fine.” to~~

~~the question “How are you?”could mean~~

~~“I feel very limited by that answer~~

~~at the moment.”~~

~~and even more….TEELEE… could go on to~~

~~relay “…because while YES I am Fine I am also~~

~~influenced by the extreme dynamic~~

~~of my environment & feeling sometimes~~

~~slightly disoriented & searching for how I~~

~~can most successfully be purposed—~~

~~I feel a bit unplugged!”~~

**~~I mean I believe many people~~**

**~~who say “I am fine”~~** ~~or~~

~~“Good, How are you~~**~~?” would really~~**

**~~like to give more of an~~**

**~~orientation to How they really Are~~**~~!~~

~~This would potentially prepare the asker for the~~

~~ineffable undercurrent of their mood~~

~~and more so allow the replier to feel~~

~~that the asker actually cares about the~~

~~true esthetic of the contour of their~~

~~unique energy.~~

~~That is the poem.~~

~~That’s what’s happening,~~

~~what I am attempting to iterate.~~

~~So I woke up~~

~~needing 4 or more hours or 4 days more of sleep.~~

**~~My body feels like a salted pretzel~~**~~.~~

~~I can feel my kidneys searching for pillows.~~

~~Idly, I began my morning things,~~

~~which felt neurotic and vacuous,~~

~~train track heavy.~~

~~everything felt “a mess”,~~

~~which is the expression of my~~

~~unregulated neurological system.~~

~~or~~ **~~the effect of living with a man~~**

**~~for over one•point•five~~**

**~~years.~~**

~~Deciding to work for an hour before “working out”~~

~~[perhaps not the best decision] I~~

~~saw that~~ **~~my new computer~~**~~, which is~~

~~not really mine but~~ *~~gifted~~* ~~by~~

~~the above-mentioned man, in a long-term~~

~~loan type of way, had the~~ **~~gooey remnants~~**

**~~of a sticker~~** ~~on it~~

~~[it came, brand new, but from a place I cannot~~

~~disclose, and, for the record, it is being legitimately~~

~~borrowed.]~~

~~However, the computer has been sitting~~ **~~untouched~~**

~~in the corner of my enormously lovely desk for at least a month~~

~~for reasons difficult to explain but which~~

~~directly relate to the fact of its borrowed quality,~~

~~which further complicates the temporariness of~~

~~my always-unsettled zip-code.~~

**~~I know, when I leave a place, I have two arms and~~**

**~~one back.~~**

~~What I carry, in this decade, are my~~

~~instruments and my technology.~~

~~I cannot leave with something being borrowed;~~

~~I will not be a part of thieving.~~

~~He said~~ **~~the computer~~** ~~is mine, and I am readying to use~~

~~it. To transfer my documents, etc. onto its new~~

~~swift drive.~~

~~BUT, having removed the sticker it came with,~~

~~plastered over its surface, I was left with the~~

~~unsightly rectangular remnant of its~~

**~~gooiness~~**~~.~~

~~Lacking sleep and thus having little~~

~~sense of working priority I, the person,~~

~~made it my aim to~~ **~~remove t~~**~~he goo.~~

~~First I tried with gentle soap and water~~

~~[a fail]startover~~

II.

Title:

**WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO BUT REMOVE THE GOO**

**FROM A STICKER ON SOMETHING and
WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING TO SAY BUT TO OVERDRAMATIZE
THE ABSOLUTELY EMPTY EXPERIENCE AS THOUGH
SOMEONE CARES ABOUT THE LITTLE FASCINTATING
EMPTINESS OF THESE THINGS.**

HE is YOU and THEM

THEY gave me a COMPUTER

IT wasn’t even theirs

BUT it wasn’t stolen

it wasn’t NOT THEIRS

It was FROM HIS SCHOOL

where HE WORKS.

It was NEW.

It was BEAUTIFUL in a WAY that

COMPUTERS are BEAUTIFUL.

Its DRIVE was smaller though

THAN MINE

which still CHUGS and has its FILES

all of ITS FILES
in SOME WEIRD nontransferable

ARCHIVAL order.

SHE

is ME is Now and Then is

I is Omniscient and Subjective.

SHE said THANK YOU!
She said [Can I get a New Hard•drive From You, Too?]

HE is YOU

said YES but not STRONGLY like he was SURE

and then he TOOK longer THAN He Usually Does

to Give it To Her and ALSO it was the OBJECT

of a FIGHT when he TOOK back the GIFT which

was REALLY NOT A GIFT because she HAD ASKED

for it even MORE than ONCE REMINDING him.

I AM NOT SCREAMING IN THESE CAPS.

*I am not screaming at you* I am not silent in these

italics I AM NOT SILENT.

THE THING about the HARD•DRIVE is REALLY INTERESTING

if YOU’RE A BABY ELEPHANT and CARE about EVERYTHING

or IF YOU’RE a GOSSIP COLUMNIST who

BELIEVES HIM when HE THINKS he is FAMOUS and

PEOPLE are watching US on the street JUST because he

has been in One BBC FILM and Once GOT over ONE MILLION

VIEWS and went VIRAL, not VIRILE. HE never

went VIRILE.

NOW, I will tell you ABOUT the HARD•DRIVE it GOES

I WAS mad and decided to scream after He ORDERED it

about something ELSE not ABOUT THE HARD•DRIVE

I said “*i just want to scream at you*” AND I DECIDED

to call him things that my maturelytrained preternatural SELF

had NOT Called him exactly [yet] but thought like EVERY DAY 1200 times.

AFTER that I left, THE Door SLAMS shut ANYWAY when you leave

unless you [who is neither HIM or ME, but the ONE reading THIS *theoretically*, who

is like the BABY ELEPHANT and *actually* CARES enough

to read this empty life-vacuous-lost-in-neurosis story

who would, theoretically, never even have THE OPPORTUNITY to close THIS
PARTICULAR DOOR because they would not NATURALLY be in THIS HOUSE]

ANYWAY

THE Door SLAMS shut when you leave it NATURALLY SLAMS. unless you

gently shut it which I, preternaturally

NEVER WOULD and SO I LET IT SLAM and DIDN’T LOCK IT which showed I WAS

SERIOUSLY Mad.

THAT day he did NOT BRING my new HARD•DRIVE home but instead HIS old one

since my NEW ONE arrived to HIS OFFICE and HE DECIDED it was SO

SHINY that WHY SHOULD SHE who is ME who is HER too

GET IT?

OF Course this LITTLE SLEIGHT would not cross EVEN his Conscious MIND BUT

he was clear enough to vengefully find a PIECE of TAPE to TAPE to the OLD HARD•DRIVE

and scribble UNLOVINGLY MY name on that piece of tape BECAUSE HE was

COVERTLY MAD AT ME because I WAS SLAMMING THE DOOR and

YELLING AT HIM.

IF You (the Elephant) CAN’T FOLLOW THE HARD•DRIVE

STORY YOU ARE Not ALONE (though YOU are right now ALONE

reading this) IT IS not supposed to be that CATCHY.

I FOUND HIS HARDDRIVE when I CLEANED

the HOUSE the NEXT DAY by MYSELF

like women have SINGLEHANDEDLY done

1200 million times for the however many,

150,000 years, that we’ve HAD HOMES

and now We say we ARE equal breadwinners BUT We are STILL NOT ALWAYS

so GodDam you have to LET ME

GET THERE by not perpetuating THE FACT

THAT I ALWAYS Clean THIS Home.

I HATE cleaning with HIM though.

The house just CAN’T GET CLEAN when he is there.

He has to GO, He has to be OUT

for it to BE CLEAN.

Because HE makes it dirty, just by

scratching his head.

IN THEORY she FEELS THIS

but in REALITY, as long as the Lights are Low or Off

it isn’t so bad.

SO She found the HARD•DRIVE and anyway SHE Of Course

confronted him

He smirked.

He never smirks.

LIKE A GUY who gets caught cheating but doesn’t care.

I SAW that smirk on an ex-boyfriend once, a real loser douchebag.

I said to him “I DREAMT you were SLEEPING with ANOTHER GIRL”

and he said “What Color was Her Hair?”

THEN he smirked.

Some MEN like to Be Found Out.

It is like a REWARD to them “OH YEA, You’re Bad, You will

Always BE FREE, you bad, *uncontrollable* man!!”

I don’t LIKE TO see MEN Smirk. It feeds the fodder for my dreams

where I AM RUNNING TO FIND (a different) YOU (from my early

20’s, an *irreplaceable*, *unforgettable* YOU) and WHEN I FIND HIM

he is UNresponsive. He doesn’t care that

I HAVE FOUND HIM OUT.

I POINT

I SCREAM
I BLAME
I STOMP
in THESE DREAMS

they don’t care. THEY KNOW that *THEY KNOW*

they were militantly *GIFTED* with callousness.

THEY can GO ON

untethered, un-tithing.

MEANWHILE, I am wilted.

What is a petal once she has

fallen ON THE FLOOR?

this is the underscore of my feminine

stitches, the embroidered phrase in my grandma-gifted pillow.

WELL, what is a GUN once it HITS the FLOOR?

this is the overscore of his masculine

laugh bellowing as he repositions

the hardness of his

AMMUNITION in his

BOLSTER GIRDLE.

my GIRDLE holds up dainty lace

his GIRDLE holds up tanky guns.

ANYWAY, days Later
I GOT THE NEW HARD•DRIVE

of course.

Of Course

Of Course.

I am the ONE

SHE IS ME IS HER, and More

WHO only will LOVE HIM once he FINALLY GIVES UP.

It is worse than being a MACHO DREAM BULLY,

being a sufferer, a self-PENALTIZER of the

PUSH PULL, “*push him away, you don’t want him*

*pull him close, like baby-cloak cotton*”

*IT’S NOT A SONG BUT IT CAME WITH A MELODY.*

*1,2, minor 3-----(half note). 2, minor 3, minor 3, 2---bend to 1.*

*I think* IT WAS an OLD SEPHARDIC KIND of MELODY.

HEBREW SCHOOL STAINS composers’ EARLY BRAINS

just as much as SUNDAY school gives R&B SINGERS Their

Ground.

OKAY,

SO THE WHOLE thing about this POEM that is

called

WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO BUT REMOVE THE GOO

FROM A STICKER ON SOMETHING

is that

I TOOK his computer

that he GAVE to me

but he said it would only BE

until HE left his WORK

in VACANCY

(the Sephardic Melody, it’s still there…..)

I felt HESITANT.

H-E-S-I-T-A-N-T

because

Nowadays, A COMPUTER is like
MY PLACE.

I can’t give UP MY PLACE

when (even in 5 years)

he may just

QUIT his JOB!

I know, I know, I know

HE is a NICE man,

it will take him at least

5x more GRIEF

to truly just

PUSH ME out In the Cold.

I might have to SLEEP with SOMEONE ELSE
or SLEEP with someone ELSE

or something like

SLEEP with SOMEONE else

for him to really GIVE me a HEAVEHO.

So

I TOOK THE COMPUTER

because I am PRETTY SURE I LOVE HIM SO MUCH

I couldn’t even sleep WITH someone ELSE

even though sometimes

I am FEELING LIKE AN OLD WOMEN and
JUST 2 years ago,

OH.

THE NIGHTS that were HAD.

In SLUTTY years.

Dear, SLUTTY COMING-TO years I thought I’d HIT IN STRIDE

for a LONG HAUL.

Amiss, Amassing my QUINQUENIUM in SPAIN

HOWEVER, he probably SAVED ME.

From some SPANISH TRANSMITTED DISEASE

which I MAYBE have AND JUST don’t KNOW

because MAYBE it doesn’t even have an IGG TEST for it;

Or it is Unknown.

I KNOW its not AFFIRMATIVE to SUGGEST but I

~~would DEFINITELY be the PERSON to catch an~~

~~UNKNOWN disease~~. (I CAN’T AFFIRM THIS).

THE *COMPUTER* it HAD GOO on IT.

HE REMOVED the SCHOOL Sticker

FROM Its TOP.

BUT didn’t remove it all the way

UNSURPRISINGLY.

HE LEFT me with THE HARD LABOR.

THIS IS WHERE our STORY Takes OFF!

I had one HOUR.

Just like now.

Except for NOW I only have 10 minutes to WRAP this UP!

I was set to LEAVE THE HOUSE.

I was Sleep Deprived

from Living with the Above Mentioned

Him He You Them.

It’s Been A “HELL in MY HEAD” (--phrase uttered

by my first irreplaceable YOU’s African drum teacher, a

reference that only I care about and has---*likely*—

distracted A Reader/The Reader/The Sole One Reader

who will READ this).

It’s been

A Hell•In•My•Head (in W. African/Malian accent) TRYING to SLEEP in this APARTMENT
in LOUD NYC for the FIRST TIME

living FOR THE FIRST TIME

with THIS MAN.

BUT I saw the GOO. I had one Hour.

I tried to get it off.

With my FINGER NAIL.

You Know, it’s a computer

so you are SUPPOSED to be CAREFUL

with HOW YOU TREAT ITS SURFACE.

I TRIED with my

•Thumbnail

•Pointy Finger Nail

•Spray and Wash, wiped away instantly with a damp cloth

•Spray and Wash, I let it sit for a while and then, again, with the damp cloth

EVEN THOUGH SPRAY AND WASH COULD BE DANGEROUS TO PUT on A

COMPUTER I STILL USED IT.

I knew I was getting INTO ROUGH waters.

but there was
No Motion.

THE GOO would not GO.

GO GOO GO GOO GO GOO would not GOO would not GO would not not GOO GOO

GO GO

[ADMIT you want to say THAT]

THEN

HERE IS THE

EPIC END!

I TOOK out the BAKING SODA from the Refrigerator.

Now, Baking SODA

WE ALL KNOW

is MIRACULOUS.

I *FREAKING LOVE* BAKING SODA.

THIS POEM WAS ORIGINALLY TITLED

“SHOUT OUT TO BAKING SODA [By an Extremely

Sleep Deprived Person]”

NOW here is what is amazing:
EVEN a COMPUTER deserves Natural Care!

The baking soda, in a moment, with a damp CLOTH:
IT REMOVED THE GOO!!!

Now:

•What Whitens TEETH?

•What Cleans PORES?

•What, mixed with Apple Cider Vinegar, shampoos and conditions your hair?

•What do some freaky ladies use as douches (I MAY BE making that ONE up)

•What Can be ingested to Calm Acid Reflux?

•Can sober up a drunk person diluted in water?

-Help Pastries Bake?

-Keeps your refrigerator clean

-lighten your skin, if you’re going for that?

IT’S BAKING SODA!!!

BICARBONATO de SODIO (SPANISH)

[It saved me in SPAIN, from numerous calamities and perhaps even

previous *uncontrollable* men].

One GOOD toss and SHAKE from the box

PURE magic.

VOILA

a circular rub under a slightly damp paper towel and

the GOO was GONE!
AS was the slight discoloration from having used the

hazardous CHEMICALS from BEFORE.

Maybe I AM JUST SICK of the CAPS-LOCK, but the end goes like this:

Like Bananas

which were

so easy

for apes to

open

and thus

supported the

hominoid

evolution,

baking soda

really deserves

a lot more

public

attention/

accolades.

maybe even a holiday.

in fact,

I will sub out

President’s Day

as long as this

supposed-one

is in office for

a new day, *National*

*Baking Soda Day*.

Because I feel so thankful

for its leading role,

and its work

in the world.

AND NOW,

I sign off

FROM MY

OLD

Computer,

WHICH I can still

TAKE WITH ME

in my TWO ARMS and on my BACK

if I have to FLEE
in this

WINTER STORM.

7.

**Nor’easter**

I never heard of the word Nor’easter until today

and it is beautiful.

Thriving on colliding opposition, warmer air

underneath colder temperature…

moving contrarily

in counter clockwise paisleys.

a cyclone of multi mini cyclones

collected into storm.

rain and

sleet

and

snow.

Understandably, if you are

left on the curb,

on the highway,

stuck on a small island offshore,

naked

or

holding one of those circa 1980’s

t.v. antennas on the roof of

some rural Connecticut house by chance

you might not find a Nor’easter beautiful,

might not have a chance to fathom

why it has dropped its “th” for an apostrophe.

Was it because sailors named these storms,

was it because it was so loud on their ship no one could hear each other,

was it because it was considered uncool if you spoke perfect English?
Like Sailor Ebonics?

Evidently it comes from the old British grammar,

“nore”, it is proper, in case you wondered.

The one today

introduced itself

said *Hello, I will do you a big favor.*

*I will let you get all of your favorite books on the bed*

*and play that long-forgotten game you had in childhood*,

*The Bed is a Boat.*

*Even more, I’ve given you*

*your whole house alone for the week*

*in these days before and after my*

*appearance, so you can remain*

*charged with the ‘charge of your soul’.*

*I won’t make the storm too gruff,*

*you can still go out for hot yoga around 4 pm.*

*You can write all day and have your favorite*

*breakfast all to yourself, since I am a storm*

*and I have no human mouth (i only eat saline off*

*sidewalks and siding from houses).*

*I will let you*

*have an agile time with me;*

*for you, yourself, are a perfect storm.*

*In fact, your mother almost named you Stormy.*

*You were born in one of me,*

*1977.*

*I brought you here.*

*No one was on the road except for the car that*

*got you to the overly-lit hospital*

*where doctors numbed your mother.*

*You cried for me when you were born,*

*you loved me, you arrived just for me.*

*You were my present.*

*You saw my littlest flakes and their patterns*

*like none other.*

*I bathed you in their vision, slowly,*

*turning the story of each flake*

*in your baby-dreaming brain*

*delicately, like a baby mobile,*

*infusing you with the miracle*

*of each one,*

*behind the lids of your eyes.*

*I taught you their song.*

*So,*

the Nor’easter said to me today

*I will hit harder somewhere else,*

*someplace where someone needs a deeper*

*wallop.*

*a heavy dose of my most severe teachings.*

*Maybe in central Pennsylvania,*

*where they always risk forgetting poetry.*

*You know,*

the Nor’easter said, (though would prefer not to be quoted),

*I am an expression of the eternal mother,*

*even though people are throwing that phrase around too much*

*for my taste these days.*

*You know,*

*I am the One who is Beyond Name.*

Here, in early nightfall it snows evenly

after a periodic pause around 3 p.m.,

so I could go to yoga class.

It snows calmly;

it says

“there there”,

“hug yourself”,

“you are your best friend”.

Somehow when it snows like this

people remember they are made of water

they remember they are pure

poetry

that they are fortunate to walk in

the swift sunshine for many days

on an even sidewalk,

even if it is so

concrete and not an endless strip of

strawberry patches.

Now, shovel scrapes

Snow plows.

The Nor’easter can bring you a dream if you

listen to the proclamation of

its vorticity.

If you look up the word vorticity

and *get* what it really is

about.

8.

(It’s STINKY)
Maybe It’s called

*STINKY CAT FLAP DOOR*

Some people

have attention

spans still.

We don’t know who

they are

because they have

no

social media profile.

They have real

quiet full lives

and read books,

everything is

dog-eared in

their world

and they come

back to it

all if & when they

rarely leave their moment.

They listen to rain

there is no hum in their ears.

They do not over-fill on

sparkling water after

dinner and kill their digestive fires

they do not gulp their meals down

their stomach still has lining…

They never left their

relationship

from their 20’s

and they don’t

have to dream &

redream about

their first

love who has

very little

to do with

them

or

write poems still referencing

them as their current

boyfriend

walks down the

crummy lit hellish

ghetto apartment

hall and turns the

key in the door &

says hello & somehow

smells like blue ocean

mixed with a bagel

shop: maybe just

salty & oily

and how he’ll put his

unwashed city face

against your just

cleaned slightly burning

from a combination of

products face & how

you’ve had a headache

all night.

Some

people are

some other people &

actually you can

grow your attention

span back the way

supposedly some people

have grown back

limbs at least

their little pinky finger limb

sleep calls you, okay

but listen to the loud

candle sputter as

your lids get heavy

you breathe with

the moon;

remember yourself.

There are books on the table

your instruments

standing upright & ready to

be played. you can’t blame the

buzz in your ears on him.

Even after

all the room on

the page runs out

And your ankles cry

swollen laments of

sodium & time &

things you don’t know

you’re allergic to

but you are

And your heart

closes like

a cat-flap stinky door

colored 1970’s

plastic lime-green.

9.

*LEARNING*

My orientation is Moon

that is enough.

It cannot be measured

the statement necessitates no filler words,

it Begets itself.

The end of linearity.

There is no Finish point

or point of origin

The Doing is to

Simply

Fully

Care for my Vision.

It is the most generous I can be.

There is no delegated curve of generosity

when your orientation is moon

nothing is ranked,

everything is for it,

even lies & sacrifice.

Nothing needs to be forgiven because everything

is in her Basin

washed, set out, returned, rinsed and rung.

Do you think

a particle of ocean water

complains, is biased towards being

part of an ebb or flow?

Maybe yes

Maybe no

it does not matter.

My orientation is

Moon

There is no end

only magic time

to go

sprout,

to be seed

and to return.

And all of these words I

weave in this lifetime

are seeds.

Do you think the moon cares if

words are vulgar or clean?

Maybe so

Maybe no.

Impure was crafted by the world

of men to describe women’s body

functions.

Whether my ovaries Do or Don’t the moon does

not mind.

Now even though my

phone is ringing

I am for the moon.

I am hers

she is mine;

together we

own

nothing.

10.

*Unfinished*

Clinging

is a death

prayer.

Who are you when

you pray?

Have never been

simple enough

to keep a steady

sense of hope,

while praying for

a higher good to

to grant me a

thing. I mean

I DO believe in Higher

Good we can call it

but it always feels

like magnetics; if it’s

meant to be than it

is. If I am IT than it shall

be MINE. If I Nourish the Path

Eventually I will CREATE the Way.

So, yes, I see myself THERE

and

it would be a great honor

to receive the opportunity,

but

Clinging is a death prayer.

*\*a note about above poem:*

(this poem is somehow but not directly related to Thomas Hardy’s

writing in Tess of the D’ubervilles where, on page

49, he writes….

“In the ill-judged execution of the well-judged plan of things the call seldom produces the comer, the man to love rarely coincides with the hour for loving. Nature does not often say “See!” to her poor creature at a time when seeing can lead to happy doing; or reply “Here” to a body’s cry of “Where?” till the hide-and-seek has become an irksome, outworn game. We may wonder whether, at the acme and summit of the human progress, these anachronisms will be corrected by a finer intuition, a closer interaction of the social machinery than that which now jolts us round and along; but such completeness is not to be prophesied, or even conceived as possible. Enough that in the present case, as in millions, it was not the two halves of a perfect whole that confronted each other at the perfect moment: a missing counterpart wandered independently about the earth waiting in crass obtuseness till the late time came. Out of which maladroit delay sprang anxieties, disappointments, shocks, catastrophes, and passing strange destinies.”

I feel that Hardy points to the complex magnetics of the “laws of attraction” and even to the possible future of becoming more fine-tuned with our desires to manifest specific *things.*

When it comes to manifesting things---a wise woman told me recently---Envision yourself there, laughing, bringing joy--- and then let the vision go---and bring in the energy you want in your life by visualizing that the universe is conspiring for your happiness, and that you are actively building this reality. I think in the above poem I wanted to express how “hopeless praying” or giving our power away solely to a wishful thought feels just like Clinging to me… and how, in the past, any time I’ve wanted any *thing* by clinging to it, it always felt like I’d gotten off course from being In My Self. I lose, by clinging, the orientation of ME as center of operation and place ambitions and motivation into making THAT mine. Not sure if that makes sense, but this was the essence of the poem.

11.

*Leaving the Oven on “Keep Warm”*

An hour walk from home

she realized

she’d left the oven on.

She was in a class

luxuriating in exercise,

complaining in her head

as per norm when

She realized she’d left the oven on

at home

on warm.

The class,

based on even, calm intense

stretching

became a canvas for her

worst case

scenario

projecting.

All of the distress

unsatisfied

ennui

irritation with the plumbing

the smell in the entry

the commute to anywhere

interesting at all

the oily salty tendency of her

boyfriend’s skin

exaggerated by her neurotic fear

seemed utter bullshit,

the expression only of her shitty, ungratefulness.

She could come home after her

little privileged exercise class

to ashes!

Her guitar

and everything else…

gone.

Would he forgive her,

her boyfriend?
Would she lose his love, too, in the fire?

Realizing how fortunate she

was to have his companionship, utter

support.

How trivial her issues with

the just-too-high nasally pitch of his loud voice on the phone

the few-notches-too-type-B of his personality disposition

his seldom found pubic hair in the shower

the never wrung out sponge

were.

He was away in the very southern-most continent of the world

bravely swimming underwater

and meanwhile, she was burning down his apartment!

After all her bitching

when he paid the rent

because he said when she moved in, “I am alread*y* paying it”,

footing bills for all their practical things, etc.,

she couldn’t even keep the house from not burning

when he went away.

In exercise class, her luxury,

she played the worst-case scenario out in circles with her breath.

*Inhale* She would have to stay at her friend K’s house, who

doesn’t even like her, anyway.

*Exhale* Until her boyfriend came back.

Then, like any other major catastrophe when one

person is really totally at fault:

like a car crash when one parent kills both children

or

when a sister sleeps with her sister’s husband

or

when a boyfriend steals all of his girlfriend’s parents’ money,

she wouldn’t really be forgiven.

She could already hear him in the few months they’d

try to make it work thereafter…. he’d just slip it in…. at the grocery store…

a quick poker in the cauldron.

She’d say, “can we get Avocado Oil?” and he’d say,

“Yes, but we don’t have a fucking cupboard anymore so

I’m not sure where we’ll store it, you know?!”

or she’d say

“I really want to order more essential oils to create

better feng shui in the house” and he’d say

“Yeah, that sounds just fucking great accept we

don’t have any rooms with bad *feng shui* anymore

for you try to fix, do we?!”

or she’d say

“We really should try to get away this summer and work

on Tantra or take some type of guided intimacy course” and he’d say

“Yea, that could be fucking cool except we don’t have a bed

anymore for us to intimately fail in---or for you to not be able to sleep on anymore

because it’s not

fucking princess-y comfortable enough, right?!”

So he’d leave her.

Maybe for a firefighter.

A gorgeous, strong, independent, so-feminist-she-doesn’t-even-need-to-talk-about-it

blond firefighter girl.

or Asian firefighter girl.

They’d get a new house and she would be out.

Out without even a bag, because everything had burned.

Already, she is constantly paranoid about having only One Set of Keys

when he is out of town,

but she is Equally Lazy and keeps finding reason to not to get

another Set made.

She tries to insure she does not open her left zipper pocket where she’s deeply shoved them

when she is out of the house; she does not like to draw attention to her paranoia because

she is paranoid that by drawing attention to it she will only

manifest the ill incidents she fears.

“J*ust yesterday I was telling someone that I was so scared I’d LOSE my KEYS*

*and amazingly, today I LOST them!”*

She’s always often realizing that she will undeniably experience something

like a self-brought-on accident because she is barely paying attention and when she tries anyway it is just as difficult to handle the minute details necessary to operate things seamlessly plus in life you have to die from something, and sometimes she looks at young people and pretends

she is watching a commercial documentary where their date-of-death and reason-for is flashed over the oldest version of themselves. She sees a robust young man in her exercise class and

pictures him toothless, bedridden, *March Twelth, 2040, Lymphoma*. She wonders, does he feel the early signs yet, even subtly? And what does she feel, she wonders. will she lose her face, *will the ugliness I vainly see now one day be missed because I will undoubtedly become uglier from The Accident*?

But on this day, having left the toaster-oven on Keep Warm, her ignorance has truly

come to pay its due.

She envisions her sprouted almonds on low heat, suddenly retaliating on hour 3,

smoking insidiously

on their tin tray.

The electrical cord frays on its own

like Weird Science,

it catches the flint of the matches that are in the drawer,

sparks and starts.

The fire hits the oils in the cupboard bottle and

the last bit of avocado oil promotes the decadence.

All over the house

the fire travels

slowly, meticulously--

starting with the list on the fridge of what to order from Vitacost.

Scratch off Avocado Oil darling

she won’t need it where she’s going.

Into the refrigerator even

the flames lick and slap her OCD order of everything-in-lines.

Top shelf in the back, his processed foods

Second shelf neatly stacked, her sprouted grains and prepared go-to’s.

Purple mason jar glasses break, shards split the rest of the

electric chords in the house.

Cigarettes come over from next door to light up.

The expensive statue his Italian famous friend made which she’d

forbid in the house and put on the fire escape even though

it cost $24 thousand dollars supposedly, it even heats up

like an ember, coalesces with telephone poles and

the Gingko trees from the edges of the park across the street.

Everything flammable on the block screams

“PARTY!!! It’s a rager!!”

She can’t endure the vision longer…

She realizes burning 400 calories more and sweating profusely is

possibly not worth the “irreplaceable” files on his hard-drive

and, mostly, the

ONE

love of her life;

the precious guitar she’s had since 1993,

which has collected her callouses, blood, tears and more

which was finely taken care of by the most precious

guitar luthier named Jim for 20 years,

and he already died this year.

She can’t lose more!

She realizes

in her exercise class,

how grateful she is, after all, for her

cozy home.

How well she keeps it

How many moments of peace she has had there

midst the clamor, the irreconcilable distress of the

entire building, from insulation to sometimes broken-down elevator to

the terrible pumped-through music in the shaft

always ruining the songs she is writing in her head

daily.

She realizes how she couldn’t bear to ask him to forgive her

already he would become so irate with her

in the instances when she’d absent-mindedly forget

about the filtered water filling up her

vintage green beloved mason jar, left in the sink.

Things are Precious to her, she’d told him.

“Look, let me show you how to dust the books on the bookshelf,

you have to take this Danish Dust Mit, mildly damp with

warm water mixed with just 2 drops of lavender, one clarysage and

three tea-tree and then you gently caress each book

you touch it

it is like their message

you say to the books ‘I want you to know you are loved’

you let them come to life, and, importantly,

you bring each one evenly to the front of the shelf, try it.”

She told him

Everything is everything.

How you do anything, is how you do everything.

She heard Pema Chodrin say that on an old recording of a talk.

He was apt always to throw his clothes on the floor,

all over the house,

nothing symmetrical,

nothing closed completely,

nothing opened for freshness,

nothing procured slowly with love,

nothing but work•work•work.

‘I won’t be able to handle this long’

she’d infiltrated into the walls

‘He should have started caring

about his energy years ago, I can’t

wait for him, he will never be the man I need’

she’d coated on the bathroom tub,

coded into the shitty grout and tile always showing

food dropped and sticky things on the floor

in the narrow kitchen.

But now,

she had to get home!
She had to save the space!!

20 minutes before class ended she decided her abdominal muscles had

just enough toning to dash out early without suffering from too much underuse.

She told the quizzical teacher as she silently picked up her mat midst the class-in-pose

and whispered

“sorry, I left my oven on!”

and the teacher, who is a mother, and gentle, and wholesome said

“Oh my GOD!!!! GO!!!!”

She didn’t shower at the center,

she put her boots on, jacket,

like it was an Emergency,

and made it home steadily,

hopeful.

At the building door

she did not smell smoke.

Up the elevator,

still no sign

(but a pop-song “LOVE me NOW, LOOOOVE MEEEE NOW NOW NOW”

which lingered, as per norm, in her head long after arriving at Floor 4)

Her key turned…

She entered.

The most peaceful house

ever.

Like a dream when you’re 90 and you get to revisit your earlier years

because you are Tiny Tim or someone

and you have the opportunity to go back

and Do Right.

She felt glee to arrive.

Took off her boots which painfully always takes forever which is a point of contention in general

and then her sunglasses into their place which are also a burden to get back into their case

the bag

on the insecure hook wobbling in the drywall

the jacket in the too-full closet or second thought

to air out over the odd wicker chair that is supposed to be a patio chair

but is in the entryway that no one sits on because it is uncomfortable and

no one sits in the entry way because it is dark and small

Tosses her old lazy-looking every-day sneakers that were on sale two years ago for 45 Euros

into the shoe basket which shed cheap wood

chips on the floor she constantly has to vacuum

her worn-thin exercise clothes which are just cut-off hand-me-down leggings---strait to the portable washing machine in the----

YES

kitchen---

where there was NO sign of fire.

Just some sprouted almonds, on day 2, with teeny tiny signs of having

been sprouted, now slow, low baking

on “Stay Warm” successfully.

Not even barely starting to burn.

She opened up the little garage door of the toaster

“Hi!”

she said to her little almonds. And then again,

“Hi! I’m so glad to see you doing so well! Thank you for taking such great care of yourselves

while I was gone.”

She tasted one.

They were not even done.

But they tasted promising.

Her utter sense of total gratitude and relief lasted for about 5 and one-half minutes.

She got her home exercise mat out

to finish her work-out she’d abandoned.

She decided to set her timer for a

short meditation.

She’d gotten all worked up;

her adrenals were probably pumping—she

could tell by the giveaway sign that her

tongue was stuck at the roof of her mouth

rather than resting.

Like 98% of the day her tongue was ferociously

pressing that roof of her mouth

or scratching its tip on her sharpest teeth.

Her boyfriend, his adrenals are all fucked up.

He actually scratches the enamel off of his

front teeth with his fingernail.

Busy, the both of them,

trying to figure out how to get the

Hell out of the ghetto,

out of their apartment

to afford the

Fine Life,

where she could get a

Blue French Bulldog Teacup Size

and hire someone maybe to

fulltime nanny the baby she

can’t be bothered with

but would perhaps have

if her boyfriend

could only

lay his

things in straighter

lines

in the

house.

12.

*The Chiropractor*

There I was

at the chiropractor

for a second visit,

the follow-up.

Part of my $150

consultation package.

After the adjustment

he told me to sit upright, opposite from him

he sat on an adjacent adjustment table,

There are six in his clinic because he and his

wife adjust multiple people at once

in the same room.

Anyway,

there we were

talking “about life”.

He said,“I’m not trying to

blow a lot rainbows

up your ass,

I’m just saying

that everything is a Tone.

You have a choice,

to acknowledge something, and let it go—

or to hold on to it

forever

and be in pain.”

Uuuff.

 I told him,

“Look, I do so much

inner-work,

I’ve been in the cave.

I understand what you’re saying,

it is basically that I have to be

like Buddha

in order to feel

Well

on this planet.

But I came to you to see if you could

help my neck

and my back.

Do you think you can?”

He said, “I don’t mean to sound

arrogant,” (he said this last time, too, which

makes me think that he is arrogant and a lot of people

must have told him that he sounds

arrogant, or maybe he thinks he sounds

arrogant even though he doesn’t mean to sound so).

I don’t know if it’s his build,

his stocky lumberjack kind of build

that somehow lends to a natural

kind of arrogant vibe before he even

opens up his mouth.

Or if it’s the tone of his voice

stop-short, intense, know-it-all kind of delivery.

An adenoidal throat clamped kind

of false heart-opened type of

affected-assuring sound

blatently slowed down

suggesting some put in hours learning

mindfulness communication but incompletely

and just for marketing value.

Void of curiosity, perhaps?

Uffff.

I wish I liked him more.

Because I think the modality he

practices (working with the

body’s Tones)

is valuable.

Anyway,

he said,

that I could and should

remember

to open my heart,

more or less

he said this.

And it’s true

I listened earlier

to a pod-cast

interview

with a woman

who’s famous

just for writing a book

for women

about how they

could remember

the dreams they had

in their bedrooms

at 16 years’ old

not the dreams they’d had

while sleeping

but when they were

fantasizing about their

future

daydreaming loftily,

excited about the enormity

of life’s possibilities.

That sounds like

privileged upper-middleclass

frilly bedroom matching

sham and bedspread kind of

girlhood dreaming to me.

Not every 16-year old girl

dreams about the

enormity of her future.

Some of them

just dream about

how to get out of Korea,

or Iran. Or New Jersey.

Nothing self-glorifying or all self-importantly enormous.

Unless you consider

freedom enormous.

I guess I considered Freedom

a birthright.

And maybe that’s the thing.

Maybe the encroaching

stiffness

happens

when people decide

and discover

that Freedom wasn’t a

birthright after-all

but something to

gradually lose

as the delusion

of naïve youth

wears off.

But I don’t know.

I’m walking down the street now

with a heavy-as-hell grocery bag

in my hand

with groceries that were

expensive-as-hell

way too much for what they are.

Even though I’m not a farmer

and it would take me all

of my life’s savings to even

learn how to make cottage cheese,

so maybe the groceries are kind of cheap, actually.

“Set in their ways,”

the chiropractor said

about the stiffness

and why older people

become so stiff.

In my grocery bag

are the same things

I always get.

My ways.

That I’m set in.

I agree with

the chiropractor

but then

how come

if it’s really just a mental state

that makes us so stiff and set

there aren’t more 80-year olds

running marathons.

How come

if it really is just a mental state

there aren’t as many 45-year old men

pounding their girlfriends

the way they did when they were 18.

How come

if vitality

really is just a mental state

there aren’t more

75-year old women

touring around the country

as a one-woman show

carrying all of their equipment

on their back.

I mean, will the generation

after the generation

of the millennials’ grandchildren

learn in their transcended-hover-schools

about how once

people bought into

“stiff ageing?”

and will they

talk about this with their hip un-stiff parents

who do back-walkovers

running and climbing over fences,

parents who

leapfrog over each-other for fun

swinging on monkey bars,

modified and age-resistent

grandparents

rolling around

making love

in the back of hover-taxis,

and time-space-travel bathrooms,

etc.?

I still sometimes hang upside-down on the subway handrails when

the train-car is near empty, even if I’m all alone and not riding with a friend,

but admittedly, as the years pass, I more often use the station handrails to pull myself

up the exhausting staircases, cursing NYC’s underground.

I told him,

the chiropractor,

that it sounded like

if I was going to be

pain-free

I’d have to

become

enlightened.

and he said

“Yes, it’s true”.

This felt far too esoteric of a

remedy for my all-over

chronic pain.

I felt frustrated because it seemed he was

being a hard-headed man on some level,

and his young wife, his chiropractic partner,

would soon figure out his stodgy masculine

attitude, which is an expression of centuries of stuckness,

and she would want to rip off her

embroidered clinician red button-down cotton uniform

golf-like clinician shirt that said “Dr. E\*\*\*” on it, matching his

“Dr. J\*\*\*\*” red button-down golf-like clinician shirt

and head for the wild, topless hills

in a deep world of profound mystical kinds of skeletal adjustments;

like the kind that transform women

into birds.

I walked out of the office

with the information

they’d given me

about their packets

of future sessions

I could purchase,

about the 16 sessions

I should buy in One Swipe

to get a 30% discount.

Not only would I have to be

a Buddha,

but I’d have to be a rich Buddha.

What a combination.

Maybe I was just mad because I didn’t feel

he liked me; I mean, his bed-side manner

was so *arrogant*

I had to ask him “are we arguing?”

when I thought we were having a conversation.

I am way over men creating that dynamic in

conversation; especially

healing practitioners.

Then, as I left, instead of

Shaking my Hand

as a possible client,

he dismissed me before I’d

left their counter.

The largest object on their office counter was the sign

“The best way you can complement our practice is to leave us a

Great YELP review”

Instead of saying Goodby or Thank You

The Chiropractor looked at the clock and said

to his wife who was scurrying to close shop

“Shoot, we’re going to be

late.”

(I was the final Saturday appointment, they had

elsewhere to go.)

When I walked

home,

with a heavy-as-hell bag

and saw a couple of

Brooklynite men

you know,

Herschel backpack

flannel shirt

sticking out from

underneath an

expensive retro

bomber jacket

and fleece collar

hat with upturned

ear-cuffs,

also fleeced,

looking kind of

like modern hunters.

I pretended I was

in a Jane Austin novel.

What would they

be like then?

Only slightly

altercated,

maybe wearing smoking jackets,

walking their horses up the lane,

carrying a small satchel

of solely quill and parchment

for love-poetry writing

as well as the latest imported Nathaniel Hawthorne,

enjoying a Saturday

headed to court a cousin who could promise

ample dowry

and

change their

circumstance.

Anyway,

I looked at their faces

and my attraction waned.

They didn’t look like newborns.

They looked like people who

had experienced

Love and Loss

and who had decided

to become stiff

who had become already

set in their ways.

That flexibility of a baby,

of an infant,

the ability to roll around,

roll backwards, extend, fold forward,

invert,

all of that has to do with

absolute flexibility,

being in the moment,

up for adventure,

hold nothing back,

cry when you need to cry,

sleep when you want to sleep,

poop when and where you need to poop.

I’m not sure if I’m up for that.

Maybe I am

not willing to let my pain go

like the chiropractor asked.

I said to him

“please don’t pigeon-hole me as that.”

I don’t want to be known

as “the girl who likes her pain, no!”

What I like

is the idea to embrace it all.

It feels like the feminine wisdom.

That’s what I was told

was the feminine

(oh, fuck, did you catch the ‘that’s what I was told was

the feminine’---why are we women always being

told what everything is, even

what ‘the feminine’ is!)

but I told him

I want to embrace that.

and he said

“yes, and you can embrace it

but you don’t need to hold on to it.”

I still told him

don’t call me the girl

set in my ways

who is holding on to her

pain, why don’t you look at

the man in the mirror like MJ?

*I didn’t say this to him actually.*

Anyway,

I’m walking home with this

heavy-as-hell grocery bag

and, like he said,

even though my fingers are

frozen in the winter,

that suddenly is prolonged,

or is late-hitting after months of winter mildness,

and my nose is running and I forgot a tissue

I’m not going to complain

Even if I’m no longer

laying in the bed of my

16-year old room

even if

I’ve loved and lost

I can--and I will--

revisit the memory

of that spirit

of mine

it’s not too late,

I don’t have to lose it

I never lost it

the pain

was just the beauty

sleeping

like a movie.

13.

*Bittersweet*

IF

bittersweet

was more sweet

than

bitter

it would be called

*Sweetbitter*

instead of

Bittersweet.

Bittersweet is

a thing

a real single word,

not hyphenated, not

auto-corrected;

Even “auto-corrected” is less

a whole word than

bittersweet,

actually.

Bittersweet happens when

you dream of

the love of

your life,

honestly

the love of

the century,
who somehow

was washed

away

by the kind of

historically

displacing sea

that

rips families

apart,

procures war,

and

sprouts seeds

who meet

an unduly fate

being sewn

by those who

supposedly own

their crops;

the seed slavery.

Because of

the historically

unlit

places where

we have not

expressed yet

true

worthiness

and

respect

valuing the

pure magic of

existence,

somehow you

lost from your hands

the most-precious seashell

you loved

bittersweet was

being a mermaid

deep in the sea

coming up for air

to sing of your devotion

just

before the tide

broke your extraordinary togetherness

to smithereens,

obliteration—

this beautiful way that

god erases her

drawings.

Bittersweet is

dreaming of him

ten years after or

more

knowing that the most

selfish part of your

premonitive psyche was protecting

yourself from his next

heartbreaking steps in his

life without you.

You survived the news of his marriage and

of course, anticipated

the chance he might soon-after

procreate,

but wondered, since it has been

ten years now,

if perhaps they cannot conceive,

admittedly you even hoped

slightly, they would not.

You’d even thought, in fact,

perhaps you’d woven a magic spell

over them, that the only

child he was supposed to

conceive,

would be yours.

Then, you lived

your life,

even if partially

posthumously,

forward

And he lived his.

Your daily correspondence

turned weekly,

monthly,

seasonally,

yearly,

biannually.

And you almost always wrote first,

sometimes even two or three times

before he’d answer

And he never says

sorry for

the slightly sexist

behavior he had

when you were

together

before men

knew better

And he never

acknowledges that

he slid right into

his deeply committed

next relationship

while not yet out of yours,

genitals nearly

overlapping.

Bittersweet is when you

dream of him for weeks strait

and wonder why,

analyzing it on a Freudian level,

and even cry spontaneously,

and deeply,

remembering how you’d cried

for two years consistently

after you broke.

Remembering the

flower gardens

and strawberry patches

showers bathtubs

rivers ponds oceans

and perfect conversations

literally pieces of language

which have rung, hanging, in the air for over

a decade

miraculously and

beautifully.

Bittersweet is when you write him

a very ungarnished type of direct

email just saying “Hi, I’ve been really

thinking of you intensely, are you okay?

It seems like we should be in touch

more often, I find it strange we are not.”

and you receive the next morning,

while quickly checking your messages

before committing to yourself that

you WILL return back to a deep

slumber his reply, unexpectedly.

Bittersweet is reading that

he is fantastic

elated

heart-opened

and provided for

because, especially because

he has a new baby, his firstborn

son.

Two weeks old

in the universe, he writes.

Bittersweet is the attached photograph.

Bittersweet is that says he will call you soon, but you realize that he will likely forget

between diapers and soothing his wife and receiving flowers.

Bittersweet is how you possess a critical mind which checks firstly

for his grammatical punctuation, etc. before comprehending the content of his writing.

Bittersweet is the part of you which then overly-analyzes his

clichés

“it’s been *grand-central* over here”

“his *working title* is…. yet to be named”.

Artistic, soft, pliable, passive language, language he was handed down and just accepts.

More generosity, of course, from the world, strait to him and his all-provided for universe.

When does he get to know heart-ache? Bittersweet is summing up his life and

even speculating such, because this questioning drains your soul.

Bittersweet is having to remember that he was not enough for you, even if he

elicited inside of you the greatest desire to give; mountains, worlds, a thousand songs.

He was not

Strong enough.

Assertive enough,

Clear enough,

Choosing You enough.

He left you on a beach.

He said “she’ll never have a body like yours”.

You used your body to your advantage as much as you could.

It was all you felt you had left

on bad days.

On the worse days,

your body was even a worthless stranger,

and you could not keep hating it into

contortions aimed at perfection,

it, too, would cease responding.

Bittersweet is trying to find the

attached photograph of his baby

semi-ugly and knowing you cannot

bare to look at it more than twice

but look three times anyway in total

just to let it sting the temples.

Bittersweet is the rotten inevitability

that when you try

truly

to muster up the most eloquently sincere

excited language to congratulate him

for this life-changing moment and creation

that you will not be able

to authentically do so,

that your expression will be just partial.

You’d wanted to reach out to

him

before you found out about his bountiful baby

because you’d had a new coming-to

realization about how damn

exclusively fraternizing your early years were

together

and how he was so wrong; and you

finally, in 2017, had grounds to prove him as such:

a male-dominating

rock-star born with a silver spoon in his mouth

boarding school privileged asshole

who sort of kept you down.

You were going to paint this picture lovingly,

of course,

indirectly

hoping to awaken him to his

sexist thinking, hoping to get him to reframe everything,

to have a tender breach of heart

to hear his breathiest “Wow, I’m so sorry.”

But now you can’t.

You can’t bring up

irrelevant pieces from his past.

Maybe you can wish him well

in a way, in a Bittersweet way,

you could write back.

“Congratulations on creating a

Son, may you raise your man

with an awareness (especially musically)

to elevate and prioritize the women in his life so

(especially in his earliest, first relationships)

they feel included, valued,

seen and supported.

and not like decorative furniture

while he rocks out in a listening-less

environment pumping decibels

with his all-boy jam band.”

and/or

“May you teach him to never drop an ounce of the

precious magic that is handed to him,

especially his first gifts of sincere love,

especially in the form of a beautiful, young and open-hearted, musically

inspiring woman, who exclusively pours her poetry into the vessel of his experience-hungry soul,

May you relay to him wisely how rare this magic is,

and how his heart, and the worlds’ heart, utterly depends on how he treats

such power, and how if he mistreats it the general fall of humankind will be the result

of his doing such.”

Bittersweet is pushing back the possible reunion date

of your togetherness until

your 80’s,

is feeling that the only useful way to spend the morning would be by

pretending to yourself that you are asleep, with your eye-patches over your eyes

and ear-plugs attempting to drown out the truck horns.

Bittersweet is then, deep under the duvet, remembering that

in those lost years, you often didn’t love him either, admittedly.

And that maybe the only sharply distinct yet widely potent all-encompassing love

you’ve infinitely known is the love of your own

romanticizing.

Bittersweet is not Sweetbitter.

But I’d rather recognize

all of the distinct pieces

than blend the distinct bitterness, in the end, into a sugarcoated cake

as per holiday traditions.

I’d rather the clove, the almond extract

then the macaroon, the butterscotch praline.

I’d rather keep it real

and bittersweet then

pretend we never made

mistakes, and are they even mistakes

but places we hang our coats for a moment

before stepping out again into the world of

turning-towards tomorrow.

14

*The Mediterranean*

I lived there

by it.

The Mediterranean.

This morning in Brooklyn I woke vying for it.

The way I casually walked the promenade

with various friends.

When it was worth meeting.

Sharing.

Exchanging ideas.

Staying Powerful

midst the tumult

of visas and

permits and

employment and

dreams.

Plans.

Love.

Women

whose conversations were swallowed in the

listless green-burgundy-blue

diamond water

tugboats in the far distance

proving

there are still tugboats

The sleazy city under the summer sun,

A beach of naked people.

*“cervesa cervesa,*

*masaje mesaje.*

People selling temporary tattoos

and *Empenadas.*

who listens to the Mediterranean?

Have we all just eaten

furiously from her

body?

Spitting fish-bones

on the shore

just after 24:59,

European military time.

forgetting about maybe

catching sand-fleas

kissing a

French man

whose name is no longer in my phone

whose name I forget.

but I remember the sky.

I listened to the sea

she said,
“*I don’t know girl,*

*you are probably smarter than this, but*

*you have been drinking a lot of red wine*

*and I understand, that shit’s good.”*

I am so heavy here

heavier than the most brooding

sea-clouds.

I drown him in my sober, somber heaviness

every day.

Just Tuesday, I was “ruined” because I accidentally consumed

palm oil.

Neurotic.

The sea is gone.

I apologize to him for half the month,

under a moon-less smog.

“it is my moon-cycle,

always so late,

always so stressed,

always so under-slept,

you are perfect---- it’s not you.”

but then later, again, it is.

it is him

I come with a great trough of blames.

I could literally sell these custom-made troughs.

I could have been a decent trial lawyer

protecting high-corporate criminal assholes successfully, really.

feeding him like a rural

farmer

feeds pigs

a trough of blame.

I want to meditate

in the morning hours

by the Mediterranean

again.

wriggle in my own

matching

listlessness.

Ready to get out of that place,

that empty lazy

city

hungover.

All of my original fortitude and promise!

Now this I could have truly

bottled and sold.

Priceless vitality and

gusto.

I defined myself by being

undefinable

but when that wouldn’t sell

I tried to be one

of The Definitions

and when that wouldn’t sell

I don’t know

what I did.

it all blurs.

Now I live in a world of mirrors;

and where are the smart, understanding

heart-felt people?

Where is the free university?

Where is the public health-care

and the row-houses

and the life I organically fitted into right off the bat?

Where are my bicycle trousers,

my fulfilling 9-5 something,

Where is the simple corner store,

the man I married so in-love,

in my twenties

Where is the old dog who is now

almost 15.

Who lays on the floor

with my children

who are already almost grown.

Where are my in-laws

who are more well-adjusted than my own

family was?

where is the community garden I’ve given myself to for seasons?

where is the theater where I organize

beautiful expression

to life?

where are the people who’ve known me for centuries

and trust me because I am a *“Xxxxxxxxxx”*

and our families have always done business.

Where is the embracing of birth and death

in my daily life: farm things born

old ones on deathbeds

legs spread

new voices cooing.

Where is the normalcy of these things?

Where are the more black-and-white hardships?

When did pain get vague,

luck, shame, mishaps, choice, lust,

when did these get vague?

Here it is sterile, is it sterile?

I’ve made no choices, have I made choices?

Developed nothing.

All day long I try to learn how to repeat “thank you thank you

thank you” in my head.

But somehow just drown my boyfriend in negativity, demanding:

“Can you learn to breathe more slowly?

Can you learn to not drown me out?
Can you arrange things more neatly in rows?
Can you not throw your underwear on the floor, HOW can

you throw your dirty underwear on the floor, what REALITY

are you ignoring when you rudely do that TO the house?”

What does one who cannot create anything do to

“grow up”?
Does she join a monastery?

A place where Nothing is

Supposed to happen?

thank you thank you thank you thank you

I think

as my hope for action,

and wait until

Friday

when the answer will come

and I will know if I’ve been accepted into the

highly exclusive

Program

which *cannot make or break me*

which would *be their luck to have me*

which if they *don’t accept me is because*

*the Board are all MEN or women who may as well BE men.*

And then maybe I will move to a small Italian island

or Boulder, Colorado, even though it is that rough combination of

globally-minded and homogenous.

I am sick of escape plans

of

*go here and it will be better*

of fantasy plans.

*move to new York and it’s amazing--- there is a boyfriend there! you can fall*

*in love in new York! what’s more romantic?*

*Goodbye!* I said, to the Med, and

thank you thank you thank you thank you.

a few hours of sleep

thank you thank you thank you

and I can rebirth myself from these

frenetic

exhausted

neural paths.

15

*Myopia*

My boyfriend

only stays with me

because

he is farsighted

and cannot see

how disgusting I am

close up.

My boyfriend

only stays with me

because

he is nearsighted

and cannot see

how disgusting I am

far away.

Myopia

Hyperopia, Hyper*Metro*pia

Anisometropia

Presbyopia

Physiologic

Pathologic,

Fuck it,

I get them

all messed up.

I get everything messed up.

I even have to look at the burner diagram

every single time I light the stove

EVERY time

for burner correlation education

and I still turn the wrong burner on

80% of the time.

The Wrong Burner.

I have had to learn to love these things about myself.

But my boyfriend does not have to.

Anyway,

His glasses are so thick.

Spherical Corrections

in

Diopters

bifocal

trifocal

get fit

with

your

lens profile.

Cuss if you want to.

I’m not a fucking

optometrist.

It took him a couple of years

but eventually he could

see

me:
The fulltime monster.

16

*Shadow Dictionary of Names*

*First Edition,*

*Boys*

It’s judgmental

biased

absolutely wrong to do

and

unscientific,

but maybe could help you either understand something about

your own name, someone else’s name or

also find a name for your child.

So, I’m going to tell you

what these names mean.

**Bill:**

you are a woman’s friend

and friend only, always

they will never see you in

any other way

even though when they’re

old enough

they will wish they had

because you are smart

however prone to

becoming an

alcoholic.

**Marco:**

You will promise people shit.

Even if you never say a word.

Your tall presence loves

to “humbly” steal

all the attention.

You will never worry

about money

and have so much

abundance

that you can easily

seem enlightened

and express gratitude.

Because you are

not bitter.

You can’t think of

anyone you need to

forgive and your

wives will always

bear your burdens.

**George:**

You will be loved from

afar

like you’re a star

because you

love afar, too

those who don’t ever

need anything

from you.

The moment any

women, particularly,

SEEMS

like a woman in need

even though she

probably isn’t

you will

turn her into

a biblical serpent

in your eyes

and distance yourself from her forever

as the antichrist.

**Hugo:**

You are a glossy photograph

A feather

falling in the light

You are a one-time

allotted short traipse through

a private garden

of “how the other half lives”

in the middle of hell.

You are a sophisticated

ghost of a person

with secret affinities

undesiring to be revealed.

**Albert:**

How unfortunate

anyone is who has

to meet an Albert at all.

Alberts will suffer for years

but they will never know

they are suffering

by keeping everyone else

suffering around them.

If you know an Albert

beware!

Without any display of charm

he will lower your standards

make you attracted to

a type of soulful ugliness

you feel

possessed to fix.

He will be both

arrogant

and like
a little cartoon pig.

If you are

reading this and you are

an Albert

you should change your name.

**Andrews:**

If you are an Andrew

you will always try to imitate the

Original Andrew,

Who is made of

Amber and basically

bronzed

somewhere very far away.

Still if you are an
Andrew

you

don’t lie much

and live for a longtime,

however unassertively.

**Nick:**

Nick you will never fit your name,

Nick you are beautiful but

move like a train

You are eclectic and spontaneous,

without a sense of home.

**Frank:**

If your middle name is Frank you will

be boyishly cute forever, until you die.

You will have big cheeks and

strong endurance to carry things

and be able to cultivate some

semblance of personal sophistication

regardless of your heritage.

However, if your first name is Frank

you will offend everyone with your

barking voice.

You will seem inconsiderate and

should never start smoking because

you will smoke at least 2 packs a day.

This *Shadow Dictionary of Names*

*First Edition (Boys)*

ought to go on forever and be

alphabetical

but this writer

has grown tired of

drawing her attention to the

shadow of men

and would prefer to

paint or

take a bath.

17.

*A Bad Poem about Gary Forsyth*

*Who we could not Develop.*

Gary Forsyth lived on

the 4th floor

of a contemporary

apartment building

across the street

from a distinguished

funeral home

in Seattle.

Though city-center,

the view across from him

was mainly park

except for the

stately

hundred-year old

funeral home

over which his

kitchen window

looked.

A compulsive binger,

Gary was trying to change

his eating behaviors.

Working with the most

expensive nutritionist

in the city of Seattle

he’d agreed to

eat his meals only after

taking 5 deep breaths

And eating

only when doing nothing else

but concentrating

on the sensations of

biting and

chewing.

In the rainiest seasons

of Seattle

Gary Forsyth

watched from above

on the fourth floor

beyond his fire escape

the hearses

daily

parked

outside the

Wythe Muller

funeral home,

adjacent to the

Wythe Muller

park.

Mostly he saw the tops of

umbrellas

people ushering each other in

sometimes little children

wearing dresses twirling playfully

or else holding onto the

stringy hands of

adults

mourning or

burdened by the interruptive

agenda of death.

Gary Forsyth chewed

without much feeling.

He was supposed to keep a journal

so he could Notice

how his

eating went.

What he Noticed

was that

He would get excited for

his meals to begin,

especially breakfast.

Breakfast was when

the expensive nutritionist

declared he could have

the most amount of

Carbohydrates

because

She said

his
Carboxylation

Rate

of Burning

Energy

was strongest

in the morning.

Propelled out of bed

by the thought of bread

Gary Forsyth

took his butter knife

but because he had

spent one year living in

Parma Italy

he liked Olive Oil

on his morning bread

instead.

With a fat tomato from the farmer’s market.

and herbs de provence

sprinkled generously

all over the plate

Gary Forsyth would often

end his breakfast

using his pointer finger

to lap up the remaining

shallow pool of

oil and herbs when

he finished his last

bite

and suck off whatever oil his finger had amassed.

Sometimes, in the rare instance

an extra puddle of olive oil remained

from the precisely 1 tablespoon he was allotted

for his meal

post-toast,

he would turn the little

plate upward and patiently

wait for the oil to

make its way into his mouth

drip by drip.

He usually then considered licking the plate

but he didn’t.

He thought about writing down his

inclination to do so in his journal

but he didn’t.

When Gary Forsyth was finished with

breakfast, his ambitions died.

Any inclination he’d had while

waiting for the toaster over to

Bing

dissipated with

the Seattle Rain.

He felt only saddened and thought
“What could possibly be next

today?”
No one wrote him.

No one called.

He kept no plants.

No animals.

Still, like clockwork, he made it to every meal and

Gary Forsyth would look at the

coffins

carried out from the hearses

during breakfast and lunch.

For dinner, he’d light a candle

as the expensive nutritionist had

recommended

to create some ambiance.

The window had darkened

there was little scene to be seen

and he was alone

but the candle was a nice touch

It made him pretend

to think

that he ate more slowly than

he actually ate.

He was furious,

Gary,

he was.

He was angry at something

he would never know.

This anger if he would feel it

might propel him to

a new position

in life.

Something he could palpably

experience.

Gary Forsyth had inherited precisely

1.3 million per year

as an allowance

provisioned by his

grandfather

since he was 21.

His grandfather, among other inventions,

had patented the

mechanics for the Umbrella.

Gary had no siblings

He was thirty-four and a half.

His parents wrote him off,

more or less,

after their divorce.

Neither wanted him.

He lived with his grandfather

on Orcas Island in the summer

and in Bellingham, Washington

the rest of the year.

His Grandfather was still alive

and once a month

on a Sunday

Gary Forsyth would go

watch Golf

with him.

Gary Forsyth did

have one

preoccupation,

He was on the

board of

directors

for the Seattle Aquarium,

even though it was not a

paying position,

his Grandfather got it for him

as a favor.

Gary was a boring motherfucker

and he knew it.

The only thing for him

in the world

until he’d die

was to count his

calories

and watch hearses

through the rainy

window

making sterile decisions

about marine animals

in captivity.

18.

 *The Finishing Piece*

This is the finishing piece

I mean

This is the end.

I mean

I had the words to this

all coming perfectly

and then I had to put the groceries away

cut the carrot tops off

cut the carrots in half

put the halved carrots in

filtered water

in

open-mouthed repurposed jars

in

the fridge

so they last for a week

tighten the loose faucet part

with a wrench that is just

one rotary-fastener spin too small for the

circumference of the faucet part

so it doesn’t really work

and who can remember

which way to turn it to

get tighter

Yes it’s righty-tighty, but

whose right?

This is the something-or-another (it wasn’t

“finishing”, but it wasn’t “final” and it definitely wasn’t

“ultimate”) piece, and it is a melody

I mean

this is the end.

This is when my pen bows and

says

“thank you it’s been real,

but it hasn’t been.”

The pen is angsty.

It doesn’t want to still be living

in this apartment,

rushing to get its ink out

before a man unlocks a door

it doesn’t want to have to live

by an allotted occasional

home-alone-ness

and erratic schedule of

other-person-ness

coming-home-

anytime-ness.

This is the finishing piece

I mean

This is the end.

I can’t even commit to a plan with you and

we live together.

I mean

I can’t guarantee that on Saturday I

will

in fact

want to leave town

and I can’t guarantee

that I will feel like finding that hotel again

by looking through my past emails

in the upstate town we can’t even remember

but it was near Tivoli somehow

we found it late in the night last year

when I was looking for a FIRE

PLACE

of course

I am always/was always

the person with the vision/mission.

The mission/vision

was always fueled by something small and sincere.

I am small and sincere.

I know that if I told you

I would not elicit your compassion

and I don’t even know if it is

Your

compassion I want.

Maybe somebody else’s

Compassion.

Someone who will understand that my frame

This body

for the first 20-something years of its life

or more

literally did not capacitate how much

weight it carried around the world.

People used to guffaw

“I can’t believe you can carry so much!”
Parisians gawked,

“Il est inconvenant pour une femme de transporter tant de sa vie sur son dos!—oh lala, la lala la la la!”

or something more grammatically correct and naturally Parisian they’d say but I have used Google Translator.

I mean I really did carry so much all of the time.

Not just one trip.

One thousand.

More than one thousand.

The trips ate my memory.

Suitcase, Instrument(s), Another Suitcase, a Side-Suitcase.

I wasn’t even a materialist.

I mean, it was really MY whole life’s possessions

I carried.

People would say “Wow, what do you have in there? You have SUCH a big bag!” and I would think “Yea? Let’s see

everything you own on your back”.

Until the end of my third decade, I could pack it all up

in two suitcases

One guitar case.

How many times my mother drove me to a terminal, to head out,

freshly refreshed after a lux week in her comfortable abode

Theaters, Cafes, University Stages, Festivals, Clubs, Bars, Bistros,

House Concerts, Government-funded Events, even Corporate Gigs,

out would come the Book.

My books.

With my set-list.

And guitar strap.

And I’d roll my luggage away after the show to

someone or another’s house.

Once I played in the middle of Saint Louis and I said, while playing (I

must have been 24 or so) I

said

“I don’t really have a place to sleep tonight, if anyone feels like

housing me.”
Honestly I said that.

That night a man brought me to his apartment.

I made sure to let him know I had a boyfriend (as if that was ample defense,

1000 miles away in Saint Louis, after midnight, in a stranger’s apartment)

I was young then and didn’t care about fresh linens.

He gave me his bed and he slept on the couch.

He was such a gentleman.

I only remember that the next morning he left me

alone at his house

(where I, assiduously, proceeded to roll out my yoga mat

and do my 90 minutes of sun salutations, which was all

I needed when I was 24 to feel healthy).

He told me to let myself out but to NOT let his cat out.

He told me that the door would lock behind me when it closed.

I tried so hard to keep his cat in the house but

for some reason the cat was so feisty and determined to get out of the house

that the only way I could load all of my suitcases and

instruments into my

solo-girl-on-the-road

black touring van

with the black tinted windows

was to actually hold the cat while lugging my belongings to the car.

This way I could make sure the cat wouldn’t get out

and I could take out my heavy bags one-at-a-time

leaving his front door ajar

without locking my things in the house.

I had to carry the cat

the cat would not run away.

Anyway, the cat scratched the hell out of my chest.

I still have scars.

I have the equivalent of a cougar paw tattoo over my heart

in scars from that Saint Louis Cat.

These are just the kind of things that happen by the triple-dozens

when you are carrying your life on your back traveling around the world

identified as a touring artist but really just scraping by.

I used to use other people’s shampoo in their shower.

Meanwhile, when I finally had a house and bought my own expensive shampoo

I was tempted to hide it when someone bathed at my house.

I was not fair in my hospitable exchanges.

I put electric tea-kettles on gas stoves by accident.

I smoked up a host’s kitchen, burning her electric tea-kettle.

I actually destroyed two electric tea-kettle’s this way

on two separate occasions

in two different people’s houses

in two different parts of the country.

This is what happens

when one is ½ asleep at the wheel after playing night-in, night-out

Years later

even with the performances start

one is still conditioned to be ½ asleep at the wheel.

Sometimes I would have to scrounge up $150 for a motel in the middle of Kansas.

I would take my guitar out and write my best songs.

Once, in New Mexico, a hotel guest knocked on my door and politely asked, at 2 a.m., if

I could stop crying so hard.

Because my boyfriend had broken up with me while I was on the road, playing.

He had returned from Japan,

He had sex with a Japanese rock star.

I picked up my guitar then, I had whittled my world down into just

two friends

My guitar and my van.

No one to turn the key

in an apartment door.

Everything was imagined.

And alive.

Now everything is Real

and dead.

Now I use affirmations

to keep my brain interested.

“Thank You!”
I am training myself to utter

when I wake up.

I used to wake up

naked sleeping on an incline of rocks

smelling like bonfire

dreaming of Hawaiian Killer Centipedes

in a sleeping-bag I never considered washing

reaching for my book to write down

the incredible symbolism of

dreams,

my road map.

I used to literally not believe that “earth” dirt was “dirty”.

No deodorant.

My mother picked me up from the airport,

her head shaved after chemotherapy.

I thought she looked eccentric, finally.

And more beautiful than ever.

I pretended she was an extreme artist

who had shaved her head.

I was wearing a Hawaiin Momo

that I thought was soft and feminine.

That was probably $3 at the Hawaiian Good will,

that I probably did not wash before I wore.

She said to me

“Do you know people in the baggage pickup are looking at you because

they are wondering where the body odor is coming from?”

And I said

“Mom, I wash my body with Avocados, right off the tree.

I am so pure, this smell is ME, mom.”

I cannot believe I was parented so loosely.

Even at 19.

I was not adult enough to be allowed such Freedoms.

*You were your own person, there was nothing we could do!* They say now

when I ask How they could let me have made my early life choices.

*We sometimes worry you’ve joined a cult but then we realize*

*you’d be more likely to start a cult, so then we don’t worry*

They said then when I’d visit them

a bohemian, in their windexed suburbia.

Such freedoms I always had which

positioned me to never know freedom.

How can you ever know something you do not have to reach for?

My life became a delve into the difficult because I

was raised in such comfort.

So I started to carry everything.

Everything I carried.

And now?

Now I can hardly carry a small satchel of groceries.

I count slowly to try to stay central, to stay calm.

“By the time I get to 62 counts I will have reached the

dusty ugly 915 awning.”

915 is the street number of the Apartment.

It is the apartment I moved into and tried to

make beautiful.

God, I did so much here to make it

an apartment for a happy couple.

For what reason?

“knock knock”

he is knocking.

“I am just really trying to write a poem, you know?”

He seems angry with me.

I don’t know what to do.

I am so tired.

I carried so many things for so long.

I just scrolled to the top of this page to remember how I started,

I mean--- I generally knew, but I forgot the phrase,

and I wanted to end where I began

which sometimes can be epic

and other-times can be the poor-woman’s

cheap way to end something.

So she can go

“Check In”
with her very nice boyfriend.

Who she tries to be attracted to

when HE likes her back

and not only when

HE

decides he is

Done with the

relationship

and that they must

Quit

This.

This is the end

I mean

This is the finishing piece.

I can feel my heart.

Underneath the fizzy

sparkling water

New York Vanilla Seltzer

O calories.

I want to curl up in something.

I want to see my mother,

she is the survivor.

She is the optimist.

I want her to validate

“Yes, it’s true---YES, it was crazy

you carried so much.

Yes no one stopped you,

Yes in retrospect maybe we ought to have.

Yes if you have your own children you

should never let them carry so much

when they are young

and cannot feel

the impact their

seemingly-invulnerable limbs

will feel later

when they have to develop

crushes on their chiropractors

because it is the closest

person who can maybe

understand how much relief

they skeletally seek.”

Crack me open

Run me over

Squeeze me out

Set me strait

this is the end

“Thank You”.

19.

*A Hotel Somewhere in The Hudson Valley with a Fireplace*

In the dark

in your family’s car

the dog hair

and dark dirt marks

on the leather seat

were covered by

the night’s blanket.

I rolled the windows down

to release the

bacteria

the human sweat stench

of unattended upholstery

collected for miles

on the seats.

I wanted to find a

Fire

Ideally a bonfire

somewhere in fucking New England.

It’s hard to Google

“Outdoor Bonfire”

and find any options

in the New York City area.

You agreed to go searching

with me.

But

It was my lone mission.

The mission turned into

finding a bed and breakfast

sexy

enough that we might

revitalize

our lost

intimacy.

I found one

we drove

in the dark there.

The place wasn’t right

there were no guests

and the women took us

on a 20-minute tour.

I wanted to object,

I wished I’d said

“can you take us on a

30 second tour?”

before we began.

She was already offering us

sugary cakes from her

kitchen buffet.

We eyed the accommodations

the 1980’s Jacuzzi in the bath

Could we have

sex there?

No

The furniture wasn’t right.

I didn’t want carpeting.

How could we get out of the situation?
You didn’t want to hurt her feelings.

How could we say

“You know, your place isn’t sexy.”

I told you to tell her we wouldn’t stay

as she headed to the office,

assuming we’d take the place,

preparing to handover the *gold-don’t-taste-it*

*because-it’s-metallic-even-though-the-color-suggests-*

*sunlight-but-remember-you-learned-this-by-age-3-*

*don’t-put-the-metal-thing-in-your-mouth!* keys

I told you to go over and

ASSERT

I said

“You need to learn to assert,

here is your chance”

(Castrating, castrating, always).

You walked toward her

but you couldn’t tell her

“You know

we are just going to take off

and keep traveling tonight.”

Instead, you walked past her

and went to pet her dog.

I had to tell her.

Afterwards,

we got back in the

collected-epidermal-stink

of your family’s car

they so generously offered

just as you

were so generously offering

your willing attempt to return

from our routine constant tidal rolling away

from each other

and I YELPED

one last time

“Fireplace”

“Hudson Valley”

“Boutique Hotel”

And we found one.

Minimalistic

Still open

Affordable

Run by a young

sexy

guy who

had escaped

the city.

The room was quiet

clean

*someone else had cleaned it*

*not me*

that was a turn on

alone.

We shut the lights off

to make the dark

darker

And we had sex

just because we were paying $200

for a hotel room.

I think you may have thought of someone else.

When it is so dark,

isn’t everyone doing that?

Isn’t that the point of turning the lights off?

The next morning

I sat by the little hotel

pot-belly fireplace, in the main entrance.

I brought you some bread

from the one baker

in town.

We read newspapers

and pretended

something

peaceful.

Until later

when I suggested that we

Clean

your family’s car

before returning it

as an expression of

Thanks.

But they didn’t notice

the effect of

our hours

going through 2 plastic cylinders

of auto-wipes

removing all the shit they’d

also

dumped on you.

20.

*Every Man I’ve Kissed Becomes a Legend*

This is a

Book

that is a

Movie and

Song that

I do not want to write

but want to write.

That I want to write

but do not want to write.

The easiest way

to give life

to its

persistent

plea for

such

is to quell its theme

by poem.

This is my lazy out.

I could make it simpler

It could be a haiku

but

the gripping uniqueness

of

the core

of

its complex idea

is too long

for the however-many-syllables

-i-forget

of a haiku.

It’s a

poem

that is a

book

that is a

song

that is a

movie

that is a story

which I gave to

Woody Allen,

he might make it

but he didn’t respond

to my letter

which I gave him

at the end

of his

Squeaky

clarinet concert

at The Carlyle

hotel

on the

commemorative

night of

my birthday.

*So here it is*, Title:

“EVERY MAN I KISS BECOMES A LEGEND” ©

Reality:

This Frickin Phrase

has been

circulating around

my brain

all day and

night

Since I started

turning it into a

song I shouldn’t

have

turned it into

a song

since I was already

trying to

utilize the

title theme

in my

*newest*

book initiative

whose unsettled

genre

seemed to be

written as a

serious

parody

of myself

(a hard tone to

maintain unless

written in one go)

about

the so-called

path

of being a

Composer,

Solo,

Female.

The reality

is that

my path

has been

one

*immersive*

after another

of

finding

highly

potential men

who

were missing

the rigorous

training from

one or both of

their parents

to become

perfectly

successful.

Insert: Me.

Regardless of profession

(I’ve worked with farmer,

drummer, physical therapist-cum-*acteur*, marine biologist,

restauranteur)

regardless of their title.

When we met

I smelt

a cusp

within

them

even if I knew

it

might

take

years

to

reach.

I designed and

implemented

practices,

which

most were absolutely

reluctant

to take

on

However

the fruits of

my own

practices

inevitably

benefitted

them

all

in

total.

My aggressive

Alpha

capability to

form a

masterpiece

from any

lump of

clay

of them

resulted

in their

fantastic

*endeavorous*

energy,

however

resulting

in leading

each

man away

from

me as

lover and

toward another

typically 20 years

younger

more physically

demure

in every

way

type of

girlfriend

with whom

they could

either practice

our

infidelity

or

break from

me

entirely.

Most who

broke from

me entirely

married that

next happily-found

significant-other

who seemed

to be able

to take

their place

in the

dynamic

of

the-molder-and-the-one

-who-needs-to

-be-molded.

Now

let me

get

this

strait

to you.

I never

intended

to

turn

any

man

i kissed

into a

legend.

at

all.

*(self-inflated tone here until asterisk)*

since age

four

I was

clear

seeing

stars both far

and near

that it

was

my

path in

life

to stay

with what felt

to me

like

God

interpreted

by

those

who

witnessed

my expression

as

art,

music

and

performance.

So naturally

versed

was I,

needing

not a school

to create

hundreds

of melodies

thousands of

tunes

I turned

every

name into

a play

and

every leaf

into a

tree

of symphonic

bouquet

I worked

assiduously

on my

instrument

and I

always meant

every thing

I finely

scribed

from multiple

dimensions,

attached to no

character of

“I”.

Finely

developed

prodigal

perhaps

by age 8

and

then came \*

the onset

of

otherness

resulting inevitably in

plenty of neurological,

physiological

strange patternations

of personhood.

However,

every man I kissed

became

a legend

I noticed

just like

in the early

childhood

books

where

you read

of a

character

who turns

everything

he touches

into

gold

or chocolate

anyone who

touched my

lips

received,

almost like

my essence was

a tube of

toothpaste

squeezing

profusely

out

ameliorating

their mouth,

the onset

of their

own

legacy.

the

start of

their becoming

a household

name.

And so now

what

amounts

is the reason

why I haven’t

finished

the

song

story

movie

book

essay:

I’m not

sure

how it

ends.

Though

I do know

how it

won’t

repeat

I do

know

how it won’t

repeat

I

do know how

it

won’t repeat.

and

p.s.

I’ve only

written this

because i

was

promised

by my, let’s call it, muse

that

if i do

*something*

with the

title

it

will

stop

on-

repeat

singing a Broadway

orchestrated

version

of

this

title phrase

and

let me

make

my little

sprouted bean

lunch with

rye

toast.

in

peace