



WISH YOU WERE HERE

IMAGES AND POETRY

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Wish You Were Here

“Wish you were here” is a loaded phrase, one that has been rolling around in my head through the experiences and relationships in the recent past, and memories dwelled upon at a distance.

It is a desire,
sometimes selfish, sometimes not,
for proximity to another, or to another many.

It can be spoken for the physical.

Wish you were here

*but you cannot,
will not,
shall not be.*

It can be spoken for the mental.

Wish you were here

*but your thoughts are miles away,
I have lost you;
you have lost yourself.*

It can be spoken for the spiritual.

Wish you were here

*but I cannot share this beauty,
will not share this experience;
this is not meant for you.*

Aubade

You noisy unknown crow at my sill
I wish you over the moon.

I think I begin to be reckless, singing,
too much in my own voice again.

There should stand up, an us and them
an east of the sun, a west of the moon;

there should be a conjuror's trick,
eggs and coins and spirits from thin air.

And I confess, in truth, my head
is so full of you for days,

wasted whiling and I am so tired that
this may just be a song for 5 a.m.

We sing to a windless morning;
it waits for me, it waits for me,

nearer to evening, thee.
close enough that I can breathe it,

forgetting; I wish myself
out of the woods, with a song

sung low again, dulcet cawing.
The stars seem very far from hand.



Fire/Flower

I have
 become untied
 folded in fire and fear
 my own guilty beating, breath
 in silence,

[I cannot believe I will have let you go]

 Given the answers of
 a holy fool stitched with
 fragile thread my heart head soul,
 mine yours,

[I confess that there is nothing here that is mine]

 Where are you going and where
 have you been?
 our threads snapped,

 have folded you in, a burnt
 thing,
 have flown away again
 have looked back just once

 have been no sacrifice, one
 kiss to the throat or lips hand
 to cheek
 might have been the last
 to fall to ash
 cannot believe
 I will have let you go.



And While My Mind is Elsewhere

And while my mind is elsewhere, she
has crawled into my lap which
widens to take her in, has
curled herself into a ball

as ready to return from where she came

looks to me as if she knows
and head to my knee she sleeps.

Today she tells
me she is a
cat, bids me sing
and I obey.

And while my mind is elsewhere, she
comes from thin air and into
my arms with a stare down and
a kiss, looks to me knowing

all of my confidences, all of her own

runs me through with her sword
and I fall down dead in the grass.

Today she tells
me she is a
bird, bids me sing
and I obey.



Stargazing

I am all so many nouns
and verbs and you are others
slipped between them a cold chasm
that goes without bridging.

I want strange words, late hours,
the loudness of others, to
be in the space of tall buildings
and to be free of you.

The hands that trace my ribcage,
thumbs that divide my shoulders
into different camps are ghosts;
I am a bad taste in your mouth

and venom is a fire
and footnote, one more blank-eyed
loss of time, a milk and gin and cigarettes
time; a charring time.

I will run away to stargazing
strange words and the loudness of others
To be in the space of tall buildings
and be free of you.



So As Today, The Rest of the Year

My love and I
are troublesome creatures
under a pink moon;
like a new colt on legs,
like bitten with milk teeth.

My love and I
are troublesome creatures
under a harvest moon;
breath given for breath,
and toil for toil.

My love and I
are troublesome creatures
under a hunters moon;
sometimes fire set in sacrifice,
sometimes a zealot's burn.

My love and I
are troublesome creatures
under the long night moon;
as cold skin meets the warm bed,
as the sleep of exhaustion.



Seafoam Is a Fairy Thing

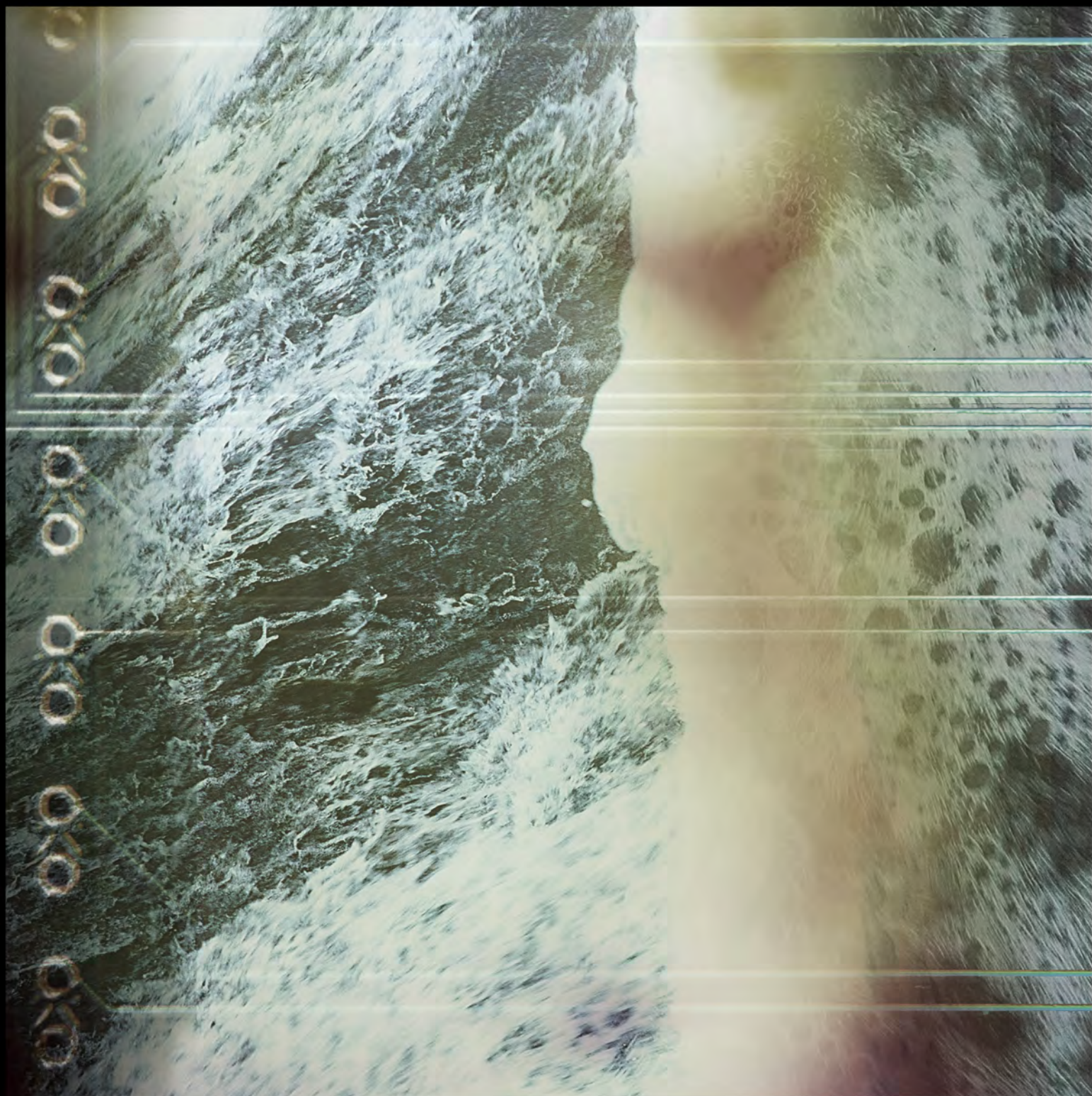
Cut a drunk path in the sand,
to the surf and out again
with the shock and sting and wet;
but seafoam is a fairy thing.

Sidestep waltz over wave, fickle,
not certain and not willing,
then in turn I have forgotten
and it has warmed to me.

It tells me pay no nevermind, bids
me play in what the sea has
given up side by side the kelp
and lesser rocks, Mars and Jupiter

half buried, a heart of stone
young moai, spent stardust, a
lost mermaid's tempting gathers
at my feet; this is enough.

I am baptized of the other,
leave the planets, the rocks at play
the fairy foam and stardust,
take the stone heart for my own.



Aeon

This feels so strange, a breath's width, a particle apart.

This does not fit and becomes a singularity of moving pieces
as broken machinery of the stars, flame, lush light,
trades for a rich handful of wind and smoke cast.

In the tired and in the mud, I've met, tasted,
wrapped my arms around a mute and beguiling cancer,
weighed and wed skin darkly to skin and stand
unbound, unfixed, bile left staining the tongue.

We have founded a soft and echoing void

All there might be is a quiet unkindness, a broken time.



Stupid Boy

For James

You are such a stupid little boy
in turns, when I think of you,
my emblem of ends or
becoming a rich dry memory
that I can sink my arms full into
and wrap around,
the firecracker headiness,
the makeup and cigarettes
of my youth and a time
when loud and high
you swayed over me
with your blinding
wolf toothed laugh
hair falling in eyes.

Turned and gone; flown
from dumpling farm boy
to god, to mist and
whichever way the wind blew;
away from our strange topography,
limbs stretched out
next to mine
seeking my trouble
killing my spiders
listening to the quality of tears.

I want again the fires you set,
our invincibility, the sureness
we owned, and all those
days squandered away;
just once more to
peel off our clothes in
haste and fumbling fingers
to jump into the fountain.
Shout bullshit and tell me
this is how you really are.
and this is how you really are
shallow and selfish and dead-
leaving an undefined hole
like you were the last man on earth.



Gather

Go and gather meadowsweet
mayapple and sassafras
find mullein, find nettles and
dandelion, poke greens; purple
your tongue with blackberries.

I will give you buttermilk,
fresh bread and honeycomb,
I will give you fear and warm
arms, spring tonic, a fiddle
far into the summer night.

Yet promise me that you will not
speak in our soft glottal tones
Never tie yourself to one
of our tribe; you are tied here
to the trees. Her net is gathered,

unraveled again; the dance fades
and the future, the fire
turns us out for the wood to
take us in again and we leave
here our bones upon the land.



End of the Night

Now the end of the night, the
music has all played out and gone,
I have been slippery in and
out of your arms, an inevitable pawn;
your silence has become a vacuum,
the long sustained prayer.

The universe inhales deeply
and your skin is my skin,
I am the watchman tonight;
you sleep and I listen, wary,
as the universe exhales the chill
in the small space we have carved.

You are still so insubstantial
so I hold time still in its place,
bind the minutes fast together
making shadows from shadows
your skin is my skin.
What if I should find only midnight?



Saudade

Do you not know what time it is?
Wake, work, sup, sleep
I am prone to study
everything in the dark.

Sometimes I think
that everything studies me.
He studies me
and I pretend not to know

Do you not know what time it is?
I should look up from my books
and mind my head, no one knows me
when I wear dark glasses,

not unseen when I walk across the square
when I dance in circles
when I am happy
when a storm is coming.

Do you not know what time it is?
Dreaming labors and tea and Tolkien
comes later; now
I must will myself to wake.



Katydid

Sing with the red dust wind
and walk long strides for

it has become still and deep in the afternoon,

the air hung with the scent of hot pines,
and with chirping

and with small creatures rising
to meet the rising stars.

I have lingered too long in the forest,
my childhood's wilds
made tame with time and age,

and too long seeking that
climber of trees, that tiny archer,
the hunter and collector,

carapace, berry, and gall.

I would like to look up to see her
in the arms of these friendly trees,

met and known and forgotten,

even as they shift shape in the dusk
making me halt and listen,

dare me to look back whence I came
for what may follow

all lost in a dark summer mind,

mindful of losing my way
in this, her kingdom and keep.
She has never wandered to the world,

and never gave me any thought,

plays only in my shadow stretching
long away from a slipping sun,

still laughing as I hurry to home.



I Have Made No Good Words

I have made no good words
to tell you of all these things
these that rub around
behind the eyes
there is will and care,
but how useless
to gather a pound of wonder;
of breathlessness.

It is the perfect peacock
of the evening sky,
the night that allows
the little jumps and lit candles
belted around
with half blown mischief
in the half view of neon and
hand caught wind from the window,

the apparent eye of a creator
a winter's joy, that expanse
of the uncertain sun
held in arms; of the decaying day
the voice of the loving dead
on the radio; burning things
and hot wet concrete;
an ear pressed to the door of the church,

and time, rolled between palms
green eyes that wrinkle
and the birth and death of trees,
marble under bare feet,
of the roar and the storm and
the pick-up truck,
I am a heartless mute
I have made no good words.

