

# *Even If I Am Ash*

*Much of the light is still there, in these words*

---

Ben Buchanan

*Some words I found, in time* 🍀

March 2021 — April 2024

# **EVEN IF I AM ASH**

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## **Acknowledgements**

These poems exist as markers driven into my soil. Their posts serve as trellises for the fruits and flowers of my spirit. These things grow only by the rain and sunlight that falls on my plains, provided by the companionship of those around me.

The wide meadow wind is blown by Drew, Alison, Aoife, and Nick S.

The rivers amble beneath footbridges built by Steven and Ashley.

The clouds roll on fronts made by Lauri, Scott, and Kiana.

The seeds are fed on salts from Matt, Zeh, and Josh.

The soil is warmed by the light of Nick W.

The stones hum a familiar comfort of my mother.

The stars turn above at the hand of my father.

The flowers are colored in the shades of my sister.

The birds sing a simple melody of my grandfather.

My territory spins for you all, and I am forever grateful for it.

*For Those Who Watch  
And Wait In Time*

---

*and,*

*For Those Whose Thoughts  
Are Much Like Mine*



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## FOREWORD

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*Even If I Am Ash* is a collection of poems written over the course of three years. I've found it difficult to write pieces at the same pace I did years ago. Perhaps I've found myself with less to write about, or perhaps I've developed the restraint to wait until I have something worthwhile to say. Regardless, I tend to say a lot of the same things, with the same words, over and over again.

At first I found this repetition to be a sign of decline in my work; I now feel that it's rather a sign of recurring themes in my life. I've seen the same kind of repetition in my music. For quite a while I felt that my creative work was broken, or without value, *stagnant*. These days I've come to realize that it is not a stagnation, but rather a *meditation*. I am still meditating, chewing on these words, even now.

If you were to ask me what I write for, I would say that I write for myself, as an exploratory practice. I mean this in a literal sense, as I've felt for a long time that people are like landscapes, unknowable and vast. When I write, I go running through my hills. I go spelunking in caves, bushwhacking dense jungles, sketching flora and fauna.

What you read here is like a map of that place, and it will seem to return to the same spaces again and again. Excursions and returns, loops and circuits, well-worn paths in the weeds. A repeated phrase is a mark in a tree. A revisited theme is a campfire's remains. A rehashed idea is a mantra of feeling that points like a compass back home.

As the poet it's difficult to remember that the reader does not see what I see in that place. You see the map; I see the territory. My hope with this collection of poems is that they blur the line that separates the both of them. The map should *be* the territory.

This is a territory of three years, captured and pressed into pages like a flower. I hope you find something of beauty in its wilderness.

Thank you, and be well.

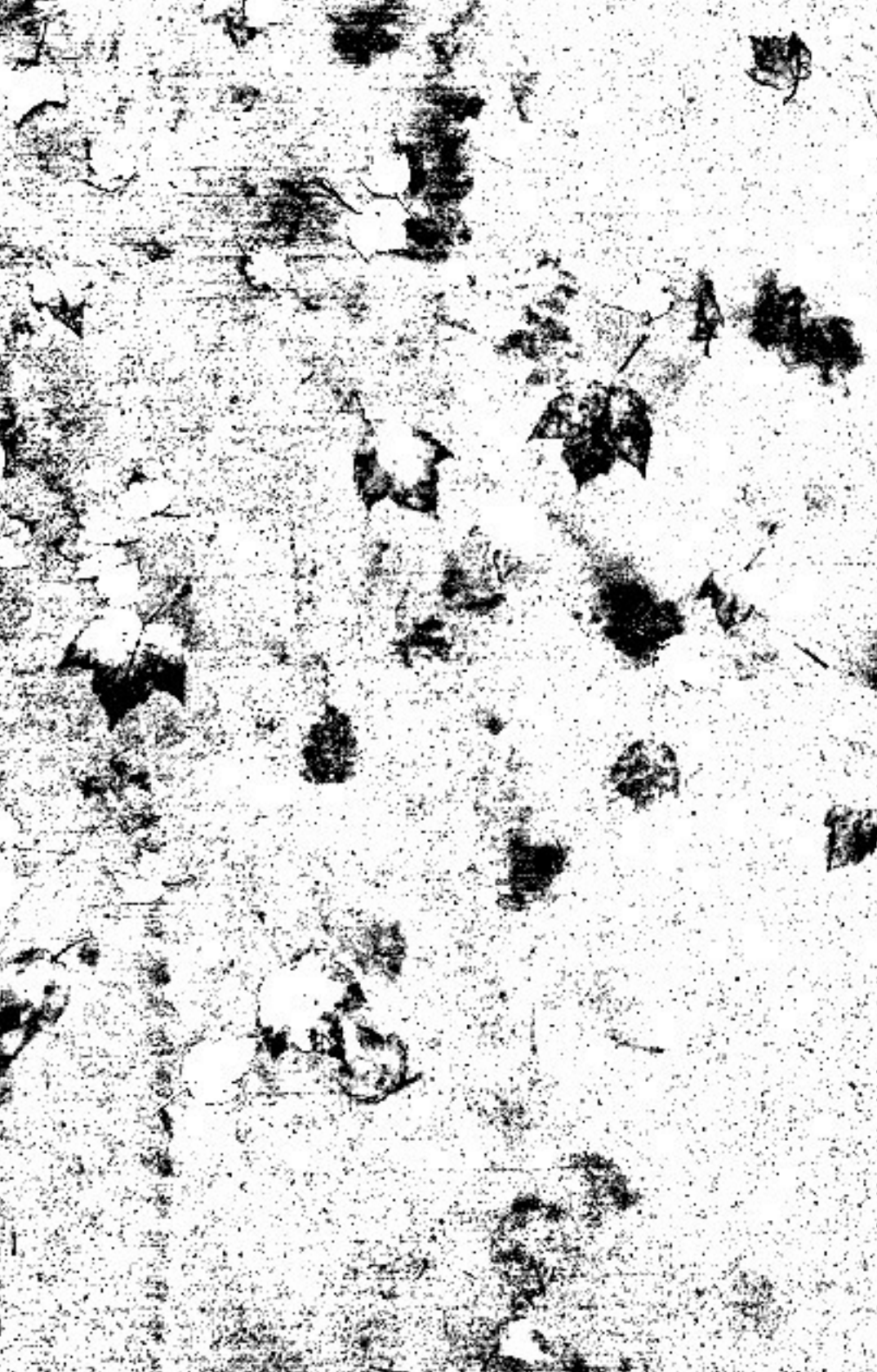
– Ben Buchanan



*Even If I Am Ash*







*I*

---

*The Ones I Know Are Real*





*Through Doors of Light and Meadow Sounds*  
*(The Thing I Mean to Say When Words Are Not Enough)*

Sky opens doors of light  
Through clouds

Water falls in cups of plenty  
Feeding grass

The bugs and birds all hide away  
They hold a breath  
In tandem

Hold their hands in candy planters  
Dusting sticks  
and  
Fuzzy antlers

Mossy letters written by no one  
Write themselves  
A love poem

The rhyme a rhythm coming back  
To itself  
In a knowing  
State of  
Mindfulness

I want to be a thought of love  
In concert with  
The rest of  
Me

I want to be a floating bee  
Or the pollen  
On his legs

I want to be a feeling that  
You know you

know

From sometime in

The long ago

I want to come back

To you

In a strange

Returning dream

Compelling you to make something

That speaks to children

In the hearts and minds

Of folks like

Me

Who haven't lost that yearning

And still wish to slumber

Wish to dream

I want to be the thing that is your art

Before it's finished

Cooling off

In meadows packed with petals bright

They twist and tangle

dance and fight

In harmony of color

And light

In meadows packed I want you there

To lay with me

To ask of me

To share

I want to share

This

With you

*Trees and Children Both*

Will and weave in wonder  
Curled in comfort quiet under  
A still yellow moon the shape of birds  
In flight or dragonflies as they alight  
Upon a stalk of green

They cling and clamber flutter fast and zip  
Across your eyes  
Like blinking seasons passing by

This thing I feel won't go away  
It comes in waves as tides drag words  
And rearrange them in the sand

Us bathed together in a beam  
Between a cloud and looming mother tree  
The loam beneath our feet we wonder not  
Why birds sing songs  
We wonder only how to sing along

I want to wonder  
I want to think and thunder thoughts together  
I want to be a lover  
I do

I think compassion looks good on you,  
Too

—

In time the silence in the leaves  
Makes sense while watching darker colors  
Drop from wood and see their children  
Splayed across the flagstones  
Passersby in thicker boots avoid their shadows  
They don't want to feel they're torn asunder

In time the Sun will set before it's ready  
Everyone has days they wish could  
Give them moments to prepare

In time I hope to know just what to say  
So I may finally be done with words

In time I hope to go where all my wonder  
Coalesced in crystals hung from stars  
Are shining brighter than the moon

And you and I will sit there  
Under comfort I have felt  
In fantasies and daydreams running  
Through a hillside light I still  
Recall

*Prophecy (Come True)*

A warm wind  
Touches my face  
In the noon  
Of the days  
Where I walk  
Place to place

Here and there  
In the sphere  
Spinning orbits  
Elastic concentric  
In satellites  
Telling myself  
There is nothing  
To fear

In the lights  
Swimming round  
Swarming delicate sounds  
I feel comfort  
In an allegory  
Like a fable  
In my mind burning tracts  
Onion embers  
Float up like bubbles  
In the lights

Those cloud scattered beams  
Verdigris pillars protruding below  
Amber honey I cast you up over the fields  
Silent sheets of heat melting the snow

Melt my slow  
Forgetting  
Into a liquid  
Crystal  
Remembering

I want to remember  
I want to be better  
I want to know light beyond just a pretender

You call me collector  
My fickle inner weather  
Amassing a thought of a love thick as light  
As a feather

Like a soft downy mender  
Threading jet engine breaths  
Through a thin mesh reflector  
I want to be better

Like a mirror you favor  
See the real you through the steam and the vapor  
Wipe me clean  
Don't just leave me  
For later

—

In a far-off companion of woods  
You sit in distant communication  
Contemplating the possible chance  
Of slim remuneration  
This world will not give you

You make the light for yourself  
That's the only calm view  
In a dream I once thought I would wake from

That day hasn't come  
Won't arrive in a star or a comet's gold tail  
Just the patience of trees and cold hail  
Still waiting to return home  
From my prodigal odyssey

Wait for me  
Somewhere  
Think of my laugh  
Or the crease of my mouth  
When my mind is a blank slate  
Waiting for me  
To begin  
To believe

That dream  
Is a cloud  
I would capture  
In color  
And dress in  
All blue

Your beam  
Of a smile  
Like a prophecy  
Come true

*Ramblings Remembering (The Galaxy That Brought Me Here)*

Canyon of light  
And noise  
Little heart-headed pilgrims  
Cross edges and sightless oceans  
Dark with green copper waves  
Cutting grooves and grottos

Pillared stones weathered rolling  
Stood leaning half melted  
And leaking the dust of their  
Mothers

Grass eyes whistle flute notes like bugs  
Rubbing legs and mandibles  
Blinking paint strokes coarse onto canvasses  
Of glass and cinder blocks

A pastel project  
I will be there in the composition  
Sat under poplars and pines long felled  
Only stood in my mind  
Their names long spelled in the holes  
They once rooted in

Twisting spirals of tongues laced with leaves  
Can't speak like the shiver of trees  
In the summer  
Can't mimic the pleasing shimmer of green against the sky  
From under

Deep canyons descent  
Thoughts belong on shorelines  
Ready and able to go  
Floating across  
The wide surface



Through layered stones and starlight  
Archways bending the dark night  
Grass eyes like moths and matriarchs  
Watch moons crumple and shatter like birch bark

I am watching too  
From under  
Under summer  
The razor gaze of the Sun  
Like a cabin built of homes  
Wherever you turn  
You will find a place  
You belong

You belong  
Here

*Joinings I / Spring*

On a sunny May day  
Where the light parts the trees  
And weeds sing a path  
Through the fire pit's ash

The waltzing world  
Whirling around  
This gripping my arm  
In tow  
I teacup and spin like a star  
Until helium flash

The goldenrod behind the house  
Is bright yellow Sun  
Beneath the sumac  
Dried out and black  
New moon

Young clearings hum idly  
In daydreams or  
Thoughts of light  
Like motes of dust floating in a beam

New deciduous  
Bird perches and watchtowers  
Stuck in the earth  
Stuck in the accumulated  
Time

Time winds knots around our limbs  
Until the wood has been set into stone

If I suddenly decided I would be fine all alone  
I don't know how much would actually change

I want to see you rise from your bed in the morning  
Bleary-eyed fussing with your hair  
Swaying tired to another room

Everything you are  
Screaming  
"I am here again"

Wherever you are  
Those days will return to you  
Like colors or rocks or young dandelions

A thousand tiny wishes  
Like yellow spindles blooming  
After the April rain

Marching down a path you've left  
Behind you  
They will remember how to come back home  
Long after you have  
Forgotten

*Glow (I've Known)*

The touch of sunlight  
In amber tips and tumbles  
Running thrumming rolling  
Through my lungs

Mouth of fire tongues  
Waving waxing waning  
In the emberside night  
Dreaming of another life

Something after all the  
Dark days without  
The light

Something telling us in  
Whispers that we'll all  
Be alright

It's alright

In the reeds and rocks  
And patterns baking into earth  
Little homes for us  
Like a stationary bird

Long-legged crane  
Wanders far for its worth  
Never finding the answer  
Just a blank stare  
Staring back

And the little firelight  
Edges of the circle where we  
Rest in a long-held warmth  
Kept in my mind

---

A field of burning stars and moons  
Like coals  
Where nothing is cold and dark  
And your face is wrapped in that  
Amber ember glow  
That I know

I have known

For longer than I'd like to admit  
I've been searching  
For that joy  
In being alone

And in its absence I'm not sure  
If I've failed  
Or simply grown  
Old  
er

*The Things That I Left In The Sky*

In a way like wind  
Rustling through nameless grass  
Forgotten paths cut

Folds in on over another  
Underneath the height  
Of the sky not solid  
Rather glass reached through

In a sway like fever  
Pulling yourself through that silver sky  
Your other  
Your brother  
You and you alone  
Through that mirrored life  
One in your eye  
The other in mind

All your hopes in a lamp  
With a filament ash  
And a shade like the shade of another's  
Grave

You don't like to visit

That other  
Your brother  
You and you alone  
You will take nothing home  
When you go  
But who is leaving?

You,  
Or you,  
Alone?

In the morning some weeks  
At a time  
I remember the things  
That I left in the sky  
Like kites in a path of wind  
I hope will take them away  
From me

I remember those vaults  
Of amber  
And peel them back  
From my oblivion  
Of forgetting

I open my safe  
And I  
Am ash

In a day like a mayfly  
Hopes become rain  
Running down away  
Again

Cleaning off the ashes  
We begin to dream  
Of little paper things  
Kites to send up and off

Never to be remembered  
Again  
Or so we  
Say  
To ourselves  
To our brother  
Our other  
Ourself and self alone

So we say we are not  
Alone

*Thoughts About the Sun, or Something to That Degree*

Sun comes in and out on a day  
Like today  
In curtains and shades  
Or a flare passing by  
Like a gleam in your eye

Sun comes in and out  
Like the tides  
Pulled in directions by the moon

Silvering shadows of clouds dance on the walls  
Of your room

Sun comes in and out  
Of the house  
When it pleases  
And it pleases me to know  
You  
And to see  
You  
Every once in a while

Sun comes out  
When I feel myself notice a smile  
And I wonder what's happened  
To bring me to this place  
Of recognition

Some days I'd rather be oblivious with a grin

Some days I want to watch the  
Sun come in  
And stay a while  
Like a friend



*Those Without Ears*

Mirror me smudged  
In acrylics, lacquers  
People in the sweep of life  
In the dark hole of my eye  
Peeking out

Time slathered in textures  
Over my skin  
Twisted into my hairs  
Copper, blasted brass  
Blown glass

Out the window cracked with sound  
My father mows the grass  
Around the house around  
In arguing concentrics  
Like demagogues  
Endless electrics humming

Bugs in the night  
Peep toads  
Mating croaks on mossy roads  
The logs all still and stumped  
Under cracked trees  
Their shelter  
Bunkered helpless slumped  
Content

Those thoughts captured  
Daguerreotypes  
Sterling silver pressed flowers  
Grown from old earth  
Old dead gardens fallow  
Like years, stiff needles  
My dog's grave

Winter come and gone  
Without words  
Breathless frost in a rime  
Around my eyes  
Blinked without feeling  
The moment in time

Opened in spring  
Around the trees  
Coated in snow  
Heavy blossoms  
Cracked explode  
In rebirth

My mind stalls in words  
Never spoken  
Better left to be heard  
By those without  
Ears

*Now is Here (And Gone Again)*

The clouds remain  
After all the burners are turned off

After we've begged for a breath  
After all mine've been recycled  
In the Sun staring down  
Through your eyes

After our wishes come to pass  
The chill rolls in with the mist  
Holding hands making angels  
In the damp summer grass

Time swirls in a muddied glass  
Staring up at the slate dark sky

The summer climbs a hill over the dam  
Grass flash frozen falling end over end  
Down the ridge into autumn

Simmering brass waltzing our weddings away  
The rain kissing our half-full glasses  
Of change  
As the chill rolls in again

Winter spares me a thought of the Sun  
And January blooms like an icicle flower  
And every little meaning closes in  
And opens up again tomorrow

Morning glory purple windows  
The night is the day and I eat lunch  
By the window  
Without noticing

In the spring we go on walks in  
Foreign places  
For fun

You and me  
And me and I  
And us and we  
And we and light  
And light and wind  
And time and again

Now is then is when is now again

The heat rolls in  
And freezes  
My melting  
Search

—

I stop and watch nothing

In the spring I eat lunch  
By the window

*Eager Ornithologists*

January January  
Jumping at a ghost  
In a mirror willow weeps a river  
Through a coast

Cannonballing tufts of white  
Diving through the air  
Little future generations hover  
Here and there

Summer season comes and goes  
Proliferates a care  
In its swaddled topographs and flower  
Petal pairs

Aviary aviary  
Sounding off a song  
Eager ornithologists would love to  
Sing along

Sedentary fossilizer  
Taking all its time  
Years and yellowed memories are always  
Passing by

Do you now remember how  
The world used to be  
Or is your world another word connecting  
You to me

Dragonfly dendrobium  
Before and after fate  
Threads will multiply like bugs like flora  
Propagates

Momentary harmonizer  
Wishing on a star  
Waiting on a name that knows exactly  
Who you are

Familiar familiar  
And other names I've known  
I wonder you into a place that you could  
Call your own

Color-stricken chrysalis  
You are not alone

*Sing Along*

The trees are coming in green again  
I've noticed in a moment of calm crisis  
As I do every year  
Since the years have gone wild  
Like days and months in jubilee

Not letting me feel the passage  
Of time  
Until the exit mouth is far behind

The Sun and rain trade places time and again  
As my lawn grows deeper and breathes clean  
Not quite as choked by the roads and the stones  
Not quite as buried beneath snow or steam

My mind is in a lateral looping hold  
Making maneuvers circuitous  
Telling me I'm gone, I've left, I'm old

In the open window night the trees behind the house still  
shake slightly in a light breeze  
I remember when I would have more words for this  
This thing in my head  
When I see it

All the words became noise  
And all my noise is a strange music  
Quickly slackening into a stretch of austere empty  
Space

Space like a grave, like a close copse of trees  
Overshadowing a pile of old browned needles and leaves  
In a late afternoon light  
I used to write about  
Like metal and glaze

All those thoughts are erased  
Replaced with the dull clarity  
Of wind chimes

They don't mind if it's day or night  
They know when it's right to sing along  
With the breeze

Perhaps that is my path forward as well  
To put down the words  
And know when to  
Sing along



*I Remembered Silence (Along With Its Absence)*

And silence was a voice in our heads,  
You see?  
Just speaking numbing vagaries,  
Nothings in spots like ink  
Dripped from fountain nibs

It's easy  
To forget what your voice is like  
Or the shape your name would take  
In a mind as young and malleable  
As mine

Scatched out on cracked vellum veined in  
Silver winter rivulets  
When the snow swallows written things  
Like love poems or careful sonnets

I'm afraid of that silence  
Speaking into my quiet life  
Still quiet in the summer  
When I forget the noise

—

Hands held light before the moon could  
Hands made rings of wisdom in elder wood  
Hands tied knots of certainty splayed cat's cradle  
'Tween fingers fond of each other  
Like drops still clung together in a cloud floating over

Hands turned a world of young and brittle things  
Slowly baking into ambitions, little yearnings  
Hands burned their touch  
Into cells I've since  
Replaced

Hands held high  
Or soaked in rain  
Hands on bodies  
Picking petals  
Brushing cheeks  
Or bending metal

Hands of crystals  
Ferns and birds and butterfly vessels  
Hands in mine  
Or placed in laps still waiting  
A patience slowly burns in coals  
Drawn close and shining bright  
Like a newly minted dime

My hands type words  
To say it's fine  
Many hands have purpose  
And right now  
This is mine

*How Do You Recapture It Now That It Is Gone*

A filter of sunlight. Little children like leaves scattered searching the sidewalk. Their shadows left acrylics on flagstones. Newsprint gesso palette bones. A memory in strokes and windows to the backyard. Hidden birdhouses. Muffled voices through the floor dictate the mood. Serially oblique stenographer. Returning thoughts and seeds of sadness. Static shock and laundry baskets. Feelings folded over creased collected placed in jars and recollected. Reinvented while the heart was beating. Reasons and rhymes like rain falling all at once in a flurry too many to recall. So often we rebirth does it really matter at all.

Call it any name it will not leave. Only time runs the river red and clear again. Kinder corners of square brick buildings. All surrounded cornerstones and pine trees. A canopy of green peeking past between the you before and you who sees. A cloudy sky of golden fleece. With rays of heat cross state routes and flocks of geese. Looking away at moving on. Moving into a shield of steam. As if in a natural dream. It comes naturally.

Words are not weapons or bulwarks. Divining rods melt under scrutiny. The Sun moon and stars are contemplating. Speaking in waves of gravity. Words are nothing but pressure along the air. Perhaps inks and dyes along paper or skin. Liquid wind blowing rust off the frame of a decision. We ignore the shape and choose at random. We love in myriad ways without accepting other angles. We confine the answer to a page or two. A tablet carved in a tree or a heart. We avoid other people. We tear ourselves apart.

Evening colors. Reflected in a window pane. Splayed along  
across the floor in shades and shapes like children's games.  
The days we spent in solitude with nothing but our  
growing mind to paint the pain into a different way.  
Jumping through the view outside to reach a world of  
our design.

These words reach out to touch a form of joy. A shape I do  
not know. A noise sometimes distant in the night. Or  
the darkness of a mind.

Perhaps this is my design.

*Yes, Yes, I've Heard the News*

Metal

Crystalline

Flowers

In a meadow like pools of earth  
 All colors and sway of stems and stamens  
 Little dancers drumming feet  
 Bugs clapping climbing feasting  
 Endless gathers  
 Fathoms fathers drifting petals surfing  
 Driftwood tideflows over the waves  
 Metal spirals curled funnels  
 Fingers woven taut like a love  
 In friction  
 Gripping tender tied across along the days  
 Intertwined with fiction

The face of a moon not known  
 Perhaps with a solemn  
 Companion

Name shaped fire volumes line the shelves  
 Either side of the stars and the  
 In between between the reeds

Your name in a voice  
 I cannot recall  
 Waiting for my moment  
 In the Sun

Already gone before behind my eyes  
 Behind my back in the long ago  
 Remembering



That is sometimes where I feel I belong  
With a flower in my hair  
Onyx beetles crawling the crook of my smiling lips  
As I sing deep breaths into the soil  
Next to those who should have meant  
More to me  
Before they were  
Gone

—

Wounds are nothing more than skin deep  
Punctures  
That we shall tackle with time and  
Circumstance

Give yourself that time  
Like light slowly making its way  
Even from the face of our burning bulb

Steel yourself  
Young flower  
You have a world of wounds to find

Sink your roots in deep  
And tie the petals  
Back  
Together

—

After the end  
I want you to sit with me  
And we will talk under  
That light we have  
Waited for

*Reminders of Guardians and Other Joys*

Cloudy shadows  
Meadowgrass

Twisting leaves and  
Painted glass

Warping sounds as  
Airplanes pass

The weight of light  
Nature's mass

Threads and thistles  
Mender's task

A billion stitches  
Stars and gas

They flicker fires  
Until they're ash

Longing embers  
Gone too fast

I want this warming thought  
To last

—

Reminders linking  
Dreams and droughts

And floods of fireflies  
Dance about

The earthen divots  
In the ground



The reeds and rocks  
And friendly sounds

They glow and chime  
And float around

No worries coming  
Not a doubt

—

Follow me  
This ancient dream

This ritual  
Returning beam

This light of mine  
To hold  
To keep

—

I want you to stay







## *II*

---

### *Kiln of a Word*





*As I Sit in Summer*

The night is black at 10:00 PM  
In the summer

Through the solid block of heat  
My eyes struggle

Lone lightning bug  
I see you

I too  
Wish for storms to carry us  
Away

Along away over past this liquid  
Heat  
Like time stretched skin tight

Lone flickerer in the field  
Beyond my window

I see you  
Aimless without wind

The night is black at 10:05  
As black as midnight oil

Swirling inkwells in the sky  
They keep their thunder under lock and key

My eyes surf shadows  
Vaguely shaped and splattered

A broad stroke of coal dust trees  
Cuts the earth from  
Heaven



The night is dark and quiet  
And I sit alone

Watching this mote of light  
Like a mirror

Lone floater  
I am you

*The Girl With the Painted Eyes*

Two red moons  
In a thick mud dusk  
Mostly darkness and  
Humidity

The girl with the painted eyes  
Like a moth's wings  
Sits and sees  
With her antennae  
As I drink my water

I am the room temperature  
The critical mass of mist  
The white noise of the fan  
Spiral born black around my bed

She is the electric hum of the lamps  
Ruby glow on a face she's never seen  
Or maybe never opened her eyes  
To find

The heat wraps  
Like a leather cocoon  
And I drink my water  
As she sees into me

And I sit in her space  
Around like a ring  
Meditate her  
Between my splayed fingers  
In a dance

I am the web caught in myself  
And wonder if my eyes  
Quickly closing  
Are painted  
Like hers

*Illusory Heat*

Heat moves adjusting to the  
According to a  
Given a set of parameters detailing  
Along a shaft of light

Heat moves in a circle pattern  
Through itself intersecting a plane of space  
Between your shoulder blades

Heat is a blanket I sometimes want to  
Cast off  
Or burn up  
Or perhaps  
Give up  
Entirely

Heat loves another  
And I love another  
Or many others  
It's hard to nail down

Heat is a name  
Or a word  
Or a word for a name  
Or a pseudonym for shame  
Or a hotness of breath  
Or a state of duress

Heat is another one of those things  
That people made up

Nobody made up the birdsong  
Or the flash of a lightning bolt  
Or the hum of a rainstorm  
Or the face of a gravel stone

Sometimes I forget that a couple of people  
Made me up  
And I have to remember to make something  
Else of myself  
Before it's too late

But who's watching the clock  
Anyway?

I guess I'll lay in the Sun  
In a field by a dam or a flood stick  
And wait for a day

Wait for it all to catch up to me

*Note to Self (Fates :: Constellations)*

Fragments still

D r i f t

Around the house

In the morning the yellow light

Splays itself across my desk

All along the old photographs of old valleys

Old friends

Old thoughts of beginnings

And thoughts of the end

In the morning I get up and get ready

Get my feet moving down the stairs

Already ignoring the floaters still

Lazing about

Clinging to the hair of my legs like cilia

Wading in a flooded dream

Time has not taught me how to face

What you thought was unfaceable

Nor has it given me tools to build my way

Around it

In the morning I am sleepy-eyed leaving for a horizon I hope  
will be there when I arrive

In the evening I return a fuzzy crawler, having been turned  
around by doubts

Slowly meandering along your doorway

Leaning with my emotions limp, some days

In the evening the shadow of a tree is missing from the lawn  
And sometimes the fireworks at the baseball stadium can be  
heard from over the hilltops

Through my cracked bedroom window

I wait for fate to turn my feet  
Like stars in the sky  
Tracing new routes home to  
Other constellations

Time has not prepared me for how to love  
Myself  
Or perhaps anyone  
Instead it has given me space  
And so I keep returning it to myself  
Time, and space, waiting, and existing

And the fragments of my time  
Shattered, spread out in puzzles before me  
Still  
D     r     i     f     t  
Around my ankles

As I sit and wonder  
Where I went  
Wrong  
In this life  
Or a dream  
All the same

(did i go wrong?)

*All the Nameless Bugs Above*

Couple of geese stand in the grass by the neighbor's pond  
Couple of hours gone by in shapeless flight formations  
Couple of miles beneath my wheels on a whim  
Couple of fresh graves dug in the cemetery down the road  
Couple of thoughts caught circling themselves in my mind  
I'm sure you've noticed  
By now

Everything stuck sunlight on the walls inside  
The things repeated as salves, tinctures,  
Whatever I can self-prescribe

The colors from the window,  
The movements of clouds overhead,  
The slow drip of emails I'd rather ignore instead

Endless crawl of ladybugs searching for an escape  
But my windows are closed  
How did they get in here?

July washes itself against my skull in repeaters  
Lily laves and mallow prays incandescent near  
The center of a humbled thinking position  
Caught up in the religious act of wishing  
On a star  
Without a name

Flit of an insect alighting on a leaf  
Beneath an ember larger than the world itself  
Only here a moment then on to the other  
Destination or transit or looking glass shape

Like a droplet of rain  
Without a name

A thwarted belonging like that  
Simply believing they are nothing more  
Than matter made for  
Ending  
At the bottom  
Of the fall

That is the kind of rip we search for  
Through years of skittering glee and gloom  
We roll every room  
For a shred of 'because'

Without it  
We wonder why  
We should try  
And continue

Some days  
When the mist still sits lazy against my window  
And the ember above is too cold to melt it  
I wonder much the same

And other days  
I wrap myself in a heavy heat  
And wonder what they would call it  
If it had a name



*I'm Tired of Being Afraid of Being at All Times*

Heaven stirs and spills a sheet of rain  
Every half hour or so  
And I  
Sitting still waiting spinning  
For a patient sound is turning  
Returning  
And falling in sheets  
On deaf ears

The flowers are not growing anymore  
Only sustaining what they have

They don't ask what their purpose is anymore  
They know time will deliver the answer  
They know

—

The summer is lapping up noise  
With a coal ember tongue  
And a chorus of bugs

My thoughts are bent angled  
Like blown glass  
Feeding water to vines and old  
Ruins of barns  
I will sleep in the loft  
With the hay bales and watch  
As the stars turn above  
In tandem

The summer is wrapping up joy  
Like a present  
Presenting a lesson in time  
Passing by

Little flecks of remembering paint petals  
On walls and the corners of church dais pedestals  
Pulpits and looking glass sacraments  
Stained colors in eveninglight far away sentiment

That place in the past where I rest in a memory  
Like a couch or a cot or the crook of a tree  
As a bird I once knew flaps his verdant green arms  
I ignore the alarms

I refuse to go back to that place

I would rather  
Find peace in my view of the lawn  
Without all the trees and weeds  
I remember

They're gone

I would rather  
Be comfortable in my skin  
As it ages on my bones  
And the things that I wanted  
Never come to pass  
Just as well

I would rather  
Find a friend  
In the mirror  
Like summer

Or a child  
A reminder  
Of who I once was  
Without rushing to relive  
All those fallacies

I would rather  
Be  
As I am  
And be  
Happy

I would rather  
That be enough  
For me

*Deep Crash*

Kiln of a word  
Thought remembered recycled all day  
Desiccant's decay  
Kept tumbling in dryers and blasted with bellows  
Foundry of sentences  
Wasted away

Air thick honeyed heat  
Dreams lag behind as cans tied to a bumper  
Just a memory  
Sweet as the end's shy delay

Ghosts melting today  
Scared of heatstroke and lazing around  
Worried patterns of weather  
I'd tell you the same  
If I wasn't too busy  
Being

Being an ember kept warm  
A cigarette mote burning ash  
Through a late summer swarm  
Of contemplations  
Before autumn's  
Deep  
Crash

Onset of aimless time  
Running watercolor hues  
Along my arms and other  
Limbs too confused  
To function

Kiln of a word  
I keep thinking about  
Many words at a time  
Each a jet engine thruster

Jungle trees out the door  
Some turning yellow and red  
Maybe more  
In the morning

I'll count them with tallies  
Press leaves into folders  
And file them away for  
Another day

Just another day  
Just another  
Day

*Ziggurat*

Tired

Wishing for sleep

Doused in a bug static noise

Eyes still as stone

Unfalling

Erasers for feet

Walk in circular brushes

Tracking nothing

My memories

The same

The days

They were made

House like a cinderblock

Ziggurat

My worship

Empty zen

Bug noise blankets

Heavy gravity darkness

In my room

Warm and humid

Half-lucid

I miss someone who never was

Never will be

Their occupied space in the mind

---

Waves coming in  
Splattered losing mass  
And momentum

Spent against the cliffs watching  
Baleful eyes

Drone of a hundred wishes  
You made against fate

Nimbus of rime around the gate  
Of your mind

It's not quite too late

Heavy light gradient

Bug noise layers stack up high  
And long into the night

Under a cover

Tired

*Impossible Interloper*

Backyard  
Stray cat patio  
Listening to the music

Is this life for me  
Perhaps not

I live in a  
Strange wilderness

A quiet overlook  
Thinking  
Of becoming

In a quaint copse  
Or clearing  
Gestating

Backyards  
Like fields  
Without people

Still their voices  
Like colors  
On flowers

This is life  
For me

In a slipshod reel

I sit in someone  
Else's comfort  
And feel  
Nothing



Perhaps rest  
Inaction

All my tethers tied  
Like a kite  
Leading home

I want to follow

*Joinings II / Summer*

For a moment in indigo  
The ember suspension of night  
Like stigmata of humbling stars  
I freeze stood in the grass  
Reaching up lacing blades  
Like fingers through scars

Slow parade of all the things  
Remembered  
In nights' and evenings' solemn whispered  
Phrases hymnals incantations  
Humming spells and leaning lanterns  
Pewter pestles grind and knead  
Their footsteps fall down halls of leaves

Crawl of those lavender stars pin lights like bugs  
Against the edges of my slender recollection  
Back when vestibules and sanctuaries were  
Shelters for the heaven-sent men  
Leading us children by the hand  
Down a long winding path  
Or a staircase into  
Colors  
Unseen

Sea of mercury  
Humidity  
Sloshing through my bedroom floor  
Sundered swollen thick and heavy  
Summer marrow tree bone canopy  
Cracks of birdsong reeds kintsugi  
Flush with more  
Or less

The captain still smiles  
Under her sunhat  
At me

And I am caught drifting  
Through early fragments  
Of an afterlife  
I know will  
Never be

My desire is rest  
My desire is warmth  
My desire is humming  
My desire is light  
My desire is growing old into the weeds  
Of a thick summer's night

As the bundles of cloud  
Move on tracks passing over the moon  
A slim second of patience  
And peace washes out of my mind

*The Remover Comes (Again)*

Removal  
Empty air  
Light  
Sitting still  
Here and  
There

Treeless  
Needleless  
Nothing  
Where  
Has it gone?

Into the chipper  
Piles of  
Dust and fungal  
Rot

My sudden heart  
Left  
Raw

In a manner  
Or meandering  
A river's name  
A forest's thought

A passing flare  
A stunning daze  
A daydream slaked with sluggish haze

That star  
Is a shimmer  
Warping wobbled warbler  
Caught in a throat  
Without home

Over mudflats  
Reeds in rows  
Orderly organics  
Rocks and fish and crows

Heavenly space of a day  
Walking alone  
With your eyes  
Caught on  
The time

Too consumed  
With flight  
To leave the ground

The dust and soil  
Where we are  
Subsumed

Small steps in  
Empty space  
We pray  
With motion  
Forward  
Genuflect  
Until we are  
Gone

*End of Life Situation*

And the suction darkness of the open cave mouth behind me  
    swirls about my feet  
The sky outside is like an orange peel  
And the rocks are weathered sandstone, lime and chalky  
    patience wearing down in the heat  
The cool heat dripping down my clothes  
My skin sweating it off, madly hurrying to be rid of it, this  
    caustic feeling

The mouth draws a breath  
I turn to stare down the wall of nothing  
Down the throat  
Of myself

And there the singular is a man  
A man I know like the back  
Of my hand

Not this swarm of faces and feelings  
He is one  
With himself

And the birds are sounding off as they fly away like robots  
On a clock like migratory transactions

And the mouth hums an idle melody  
Like a fever  
Or a river of mud  
Or a pond frozen over in the night without life

I step into my mouth and I swallow

*Head Pats*

Rain pats the roof  
Over my head  
Rain pats my head  
And I feel  
Something I seldom feel

The sky is black with dark clouds  
And the window is closed  
And the rain talks to me  
Or the rain lets me talk to myself  
Lets me say all the things left unsaid

The trees are wrapped in mist  
Rolling off the water control dam  
The trees are blanketed and covered  
In water  
                  or another  
Twisting shape like silence after the rain  
Stops falling

The trees hug the water  
The water hugs the roof  
Of my mind  
I see things in my mind  
Little memories speak to me  
Like a child

Sometimes I speak to myself  
Like a child  
I am a child  
Once again  
Little eyes see the world in another way  
I want to see the world in another way  
The other way  
I used to  
Again

The rain is a filter of seeing the world  
Like it is  
Through a thousand tiny looking glasses  
Only here for a moment  
Then silent

The roof is an impasse  
My ingrained doubts and hang-ups  
And the rain can't get through  
No leaky ceiling for you

Living under the same roof is  
Killing me  
Stagnant and still in my bed  
My death bed  
It sometimes feels  
Like the distant rumble of thunder

But if you tear open a hole  
And look out  
Through the rain  
Still falling down  
Before it removes itself  
Into silence

There is a way  
  out



*All I've Left (Is All I Have)*

I statue-ize myself  
In a hand-me-down office chair  
In the place where I sleep  
In the place where I tumble sleepless  
In the place where I leap  
Crumbling mirage platforms  
To and fro and to again

I recognize myself  
In the mirror dripping glass  
Of summer through the window  
Screen to backyard hill rise  
Over humid wave melt horizon

The trees all stood still in the  
Sun-slaked air

I memorize myself  
Schematic reams and stacks  
Tipping toppled over  
June bug flutter heat splash  
And ripping torn asunder  
All the fragments  
D

r

i

f

t

And all I've left  
Of myself  
All I've left

Is all I have  
Is all I had

In blacktop simmer ripple pools  
Popped like bubbles  
I still myself and  
Return

*Nonsense Talking (Or Not Talking)*

Yellow green tree lines  
I watch the forest fence out my window in all directions  
It shakes and shimmers  
Withers  
But only a dream of dying winters

For some reason the summer stills  
In a bathing, boiling heat  
Subtle as it beats against the skin  
Like a heart  
Rather than the wind's fingers playing games in our hair  
Or dancing round a stone

The birds don't congregate outside my office window  
Anymore  
Seems the spring was short for them  
They've left to watch someone else  
Check their emails in the morning

Locked in amber towers  
I sit hunched and still as a sweating tree in this heat  
Without emails to read  
Without beaks to feed  
And my brain is flattened into the slanted blade of light  
splintered off the setting horizon

Nothing left to cut into  
My mind meets a concrete wall and simply  
Stops







III

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*Yellow to Red, Brass to Bronze*





*Newjoy (Copper Trees)*

Copper trees  
Like poles

Light as a feather  
Between

I drift  
In a nameless breeze

Perhaps this joy  
Might stay

A little  
Longer

Though it's not  
Enough

I hope it may  
Linger

Before and beyond  
This face

Like hooded death  
Dusting off my place

At the  
Table

*Archways*

Trees look upward bending archways  
At a sky like coral soup

Moon hanging swinging  
Newton's cradle  
Colliding

Over the tall fields of weeds  
And rock piles like thrones  
Little crimson wings flitting things  
Flirting with nature's bones  
Still fresh  
                    from the  
Earth

Fireflies in the cup of my hands  
Drinking embers

Burning my tongue in my eagerness  
Water stirring  
In stones  
Cracking open marbles like eggs  
I am a hatchling  
Not fully formed

Primordial fingers  
Slipping off the physical  
Grasping hands like  
Gray drizzle  
With the amber coming through  
The trees  
The leaves and little  
Ornaments  
We celebrate

We should celebrate  
For what reason  
I do not know

But I know  
I do not need  
A reason

I bend my archway and gaze up  
Through a memory of brass snow  
At a sky the color  
Of oleander  
And rime

*Joinings III / Autumn*

Autumn cool breeze  
Paints leaves like wind chimes  
Listening to the rattle

Growing into the air carried along  
Like a dandelion puff split apart  
Into all your fundamental pieces  
Completed by the rest of gravity  
On a sun-soaked patch of soil

Grooming shrubs and hedges  
Trees and blades of grass  
Cups and petals  
Stems and stamens  
Pistils perched and pollen heavy  
Bending like the clouds are ready  
To slowly begin a parade of crystal  
Drops and tumbles  
Teeming puddles  
Splishing splashing our boots harassing  
The sidewalk  
Like leaves leaving shadows as proof  
They were there

Heliotrope and lily orange  
The sky behind the curtain wall  
The drizzle precipitates subtle salt  
Leaves a residue  
Covers us  
In colors like flowers

Those colors gleam like cut rocks and geodes  
Those colors bend rain into scents  
Left wafting off the blades of grass  
Or a drooping blue jay's fence

A ripple gray and white and gold  
As trees across the view below  
Along above and through the sky  
Like waves and islands wonder why

October wind is holding light  
Like candles gutter in the night  
And I do find myself in a strange way  
Without a reason or a rhyme

But I would bend beneath a leaf  
For a drop of that kintsugi gold  
If it would mend my cracks

Copper oceans  
Draped over the hills  
Side to side sprawling oxide orange and yellow  
Red to bronze under the sky  
Quickly losing itself to the shade  
Of the moon

Soft noises distilled into silence  
Waiting for a blanket of snow  
Our minds much the same  
Wondering where the days go

In a dome of our selves  
We are a mural of stars  
On the ceiling

Each one showing us our place  
In our joy

*Now I Am*

Now I am a piece of the earth  
I am a leaf turning copper and red  
I am a sumac dried and dropped  
Sleeping sound in the wet  
Yellowed grass

Now I am a cloud snaking waves  
Along the sky  
Dripping myself in grayscale deposits  
Like a river running over your head

Now I am a pane of glass  
Watching through myself  
I am outside in the night  
When you cannot see where the trees  
Meet the sky

Now I am a thought of myself  
Like an engine turning over and over  
Continuous and curious  
I am a mill stone around the neck  
A burning harvest wheel

Now I am a buzzing  
Like a dragonfly's frenzy  
Or a hummingbird's wings beating  
Letters symbols signifiers  
Through the wires humming

Now I am a night alone under stars  
Under a generation of lights  
Watching slow decisions grow old  
As red giants burning coals

Now I am a floater  
Buoyed by wondering  
Just exactly where we are

*Moment Dissolve*

Fetch me through the wire  
Through the thinnest open grin  
Draw me out  
Draw me in  
Your house

The one in your head  
Floating on that island  
With the strings and strands of memories  
The time between you cannot see  
It hangs like vines from unfinished

—

I don't like the idea of time  
Or what idea we've made of it  
The same way we conjured up faith and money  
Like we're made of it

Time is there like antimatter  
That dark glue which binds our stars  
And we throw ourselves into it  
Like flypaper

—

That old gray square on a rock  
Somewhere in the black of unknown thought  
With my many doors and hidden compartments  
Like olive rooms and bay windows  
Overlooking Solitude's tombs

The door that opened  
Cast in shadow  
Pitch and mud  
I stepped across  
Without a light

I hate the idea of time  
To put a foot forward  
And lose all sense of  
Where  
In thinking about  
When

—

In a dripping light  
Blinking hazards

Windshield drowned  
In a fractured rain

Running off

Running away

All the old halls fallen leaves  
And red ivy

And the softness of memory  
Faded and gray

Where the moment dissolved  
As I failed to remember  
Why I should stay



*Red Sun Goes Down Over Four-Lane Freeway*

Atmospheric shimmer a few degrees above the horizon line  
As I sit and breathe  
And become somewhere else  
In my long black sedan

The whine of my engine  
Like a child never grown  
Beyond an echo of my own maturity

A scaffold of thought  
Like stones balanced  
Considering mutual identities with zen  
And the uneasy bond of nothing with  
Eternity

Snapped branch on the road  
After a storm  
What does it see

Does it see

Flare of a red sun like a ring world  
Hula-hoops my skull  
Like a time I once felt  
And have thought about  
Maybe once or twice  
or more

But no more

Sunburned across my forehead  
Sunken into my empty vessel  
Every moment on a roulette wheel  
Spinning

That scaffold shudders  
In a cold that is not there  
But I am somewhere

At the movies in the summer  
Or the Cyber just before winter tightens  
In the lens of a setting day  
Or the words of a closing chapter

In the water of a dream  
That I clear from my throat  
As the morning birds wipe my mind  
As autumn drives closer to the center of this place  
Where we sleep with  
Each other

Along the four-lane freeway  
We set with the star  
Spinning down slower and slower  
Growing red and old

I sit in my long black sedan  
And breathe the cold air of my a/c  
And wonder

What will I do  
Before I wash away

*Several Metaphors About Fire*

Site of the cinders left behind  
The night we had is a soot-stained slab  
All that remains of those lives  
Lived in the space of a breath  
Quick and humble as a taxi cab

Sight of an unseen copse of red trees  
Still in a stubborn fit clutching leaves  
Holding its headache'd old mind  
By the tip of a mud-caked bird nest's bind

Slight of a hand down my back  
Rubbing slow circles knowing you are there  
Behind me  
Beside me  
I miss knowing someone there  
Knowing their skin on mine  
Knowing their eyes through their hair

Ghost of a past like a thousand forgotten nights  
Some days I remember them still  
In the strings of gold light from on top of the hill  
Looking down at a map  
Of my cosmos reflected  
That flux of my inner self, weathered and empty  
A vessel waiting for the fill

You are a thousand nights I never knew  
A million and one more reasons I flew  
From the nest-tangled trees of the copse  
Over ember-slaked fields tinted red in the smoke  
I miss hearing the words that you spoke

I remember their shape like a mouth  
But the sounds have eroded away  
I hoped you would  
Stay

*Lazy Dog Napping Under the Willow Tree*

Yawning day  
I am yawning away  
My mouth speaking layers and volumes  
In syllables silent and waiting

Their patience is mist under sunlight sustaining  
Feeding youthful beliefs of remaining  
In a thought or an echo,  
An idea never mired in naming

I am an idea  
An amalgam of views  
From the chain link hillside  
Or the top of Arnold Park  
Looking down through the night  
Into moments of my blood  
I find it hard to look away  
Some nights  
More than  
Others

A visitor  
A nomad  
A waltzing melody stilted walking rose spirals  
Through marshes and reeds and lanterns and fevers  
And campgrounds and trailers and lean-to's and leavers  
They're walking away on petals floating lazy  
Down a river I cannot name  
I don't want to  
Give it a name

Names have power  
Over me  
Some nights  
More than  
Others

Some lights  
Are like pockets of jellyfish  
In a wide empty roil  
Floating by  
Nothing on their mind  
But being

Not a single worry about  
How they got here  
Or where to go  
Next

Some  
    times I feel as though the words I use are  
A smokescreen that only works  
On myself

Can you see through these things?  
Can you see me?

I am between the poplars  
Under the eaves of a winter home  
Over the valley in amber and glaze  
Around the house in concentrics  
Returning to you out of  
A deep anxiety that I carry  
From my childhood

Growing old is learning  
How to put it down

I am growing old, too  
Whether I want to  
Or not

I grow through your lattice  
I watch the Sun travel in arcs  
I make waterfall habits  
I breathe wind through your hair  
I am here  
I am there

I am a heavy light whistling  
Through your arms

I just want to touch  
These words  
Do they touch  
You?

Tell me that they touch you,  
Too

*Fate, and Other Things*

Rain fall  
           ing  
 Down a face that's seen a thou  
   sand  
 Different people in the moon  
  
 Eyelashes are bare branches limbs of emp  
   ty  
 Space where feel  
                           ings  
 Grew as leaves and turned toward the Sun  
  
 And fell as drops of color into pud  
   dles  
 All the tired all the lonely faces wash  
   ing  
 Clean repented in the mirror sur  
   face  
 All the fragile all the wishing on a star  
  
 A thousand years gone by a genera  
   tion  
 In a week or day a million bill  
   ion  
 Eyes caught watching drops impact the earth

—

A hundred lives like fireflies are ready to be lived  
 In blinking murmurations  
 Somewhere I am watching slack-jawed as I sit  
 Under a canopy of turning night rotations

—

Underneath the shimmer atmos  
phere  
The gentle wind a voice of someone sing  
ing  
Splitting fire  
wood  
In late October I remember how you used to feel  
  
And every pigment of your skin enumer  
ated  
Words unspoken dreaming out the win  
dow  
Spider silk and gossa  
mer  
And embers that still yearn to glow

—

Some days in a thought I grasp that simple smile  
Like a river that will always know just where to flow

—

And the morning clings to light reflec  
ted  
Off a tired pair of eyes  
  
And I will know the age of sun  
beams  
By the angle that they rise  
  
And birds will beat us to the worm  
It's meant for them  
It's fine



*Odd Look in the Mirror Today, Hair All Wild and Dark,  
Eyes Like a Wanderer Looking For a Name*

Cerulean blue  
Waving through  
My window  
Cloudy cataract hue

Frozen image  
Of a future  
On the front page  
I like to think about

I don't like to think about it  
But I think

Torch-tipped trees  
All doffing their veils  
Showing off their thin  
Scattered limbs wild and brittle  
Like river deltas

Scarlet glow  
Along the hill  
Where the crows sit on  
Branches  
Or the peak of my house  
Watching me move through  
My world of morning color

Autumn color  
Autumn lover  
Dead and dying in my lawn  
The grass is slowly  
Stopping  
Growing  
Foggy dusk  
To frosty dawn

My eyes don't count the leaves  
Anymore  
Don't see them making shadows  
On the flagstones  
After a heavy rain

Is this a strange and unfamiliar season  
Or do I recall this  
Descent?

It is tough to tell in limbo  
Thoughts swim round  
In traffic circles  
Endless driving  
Fruitless watching

Knives stare out the window  
At nothing remaining  
Reflecting back  
My heavy light marrying  
Itself into the morning  
Or the night  
All the same

When will I see something  
Look back into me  
Again  
?

*Black Powder Thoughts*

Sun behind their heads  
Behind old dead night clouds  
Stale as storms

Sun behind their teeth  
Peeking

Swallowed glow  
Of a flare passing  
Through

Sun behind their somewhere memory  
Full of wood hills and resin  
In puddles and pockets of flowing  
Back together like  
Glaciers

And Nick is sitting still as ice  
In front of golden midday windows  
And I am curled in a shadow ball  
In a basement miles into the past

And carpets and hardwood  
And ceilings of fire  
And feelings like gradients  
Too abstract to tell

And all the people I used to love  
Have learned to love themselves

And in my mirror I see a firework  
Without a fuse

Powder black and stale as old dead nights  
Passing through

*I Keep Looking Outside*

Conifers and crows  
All going gray in the light quickly leaving  
Mornings slowly static blue  
To black and white  
My sleeping eyes somehow dreaming  
Despite  
The shallowness of the evening  
Before

The often turning pillow  
Never cool anymore

A broken feeling is often  
Incomplete  
A leafless tree in the spring  
Or a coil of confusion  
Around your head  
Spinning

Unfinished  
Is a person  
Unnameable  
And young

And old as time before we knew  
To count it

Colors change and shift  
Like water  
Amorphous  
Just as feelings of being  
Broken  
Busted  
Beaten

Strangely distant from the horizon  
Or anything at all

Nature climbs a ladder of that distance  
Over many moons and suns and stars  
Above  
As trees collapse and crows release  
Their feathers into the wind  
Spelling out a poem  
In pentameters unknown

The syllables are their hollow bones  
Collated into calcium thrones

Melted down, weary people  
Walk with us like smiles  
Never showing the cracks  
Never the gold, never their backs  
If they turn to face the past  
The curtains race closed

Unfiltered  
Impure  
People  
Are your brother and your sister  
Your self  
And cherished lover

Purity is a standard against which all of nature is set alight  
We burn each other like ember fields  
Of ashpit brambles and  
Harvest wheels  
Like grindstones

Unmade emotion  
Is a formless thought  
You can't hold onto  
Can't fold into

Only a trauma echo  
Or a mirror into silence  
Without a voice to shatter its advance

To feel unusual  
Or understandable  
In a moment's time  
Is quickly replaced with  
Something else entirely

Sometimes joy  
Sometimes sorrow  
Sometimes a long unending stare out of the window  
Watching a murder  
Of crows dance about an old needled tree  
Across the way

Unchanging is the only stagnation  
To be wary of

And cycles are like chaos attractors

Even if you don't change them,  
They will change you  
And your position will be shifted  
Around in rose spirals  
As if you dreamed it to be

Don't worry about the sleep  
It will come  
Dream along the unfinished path

Incomplete means there is still  
Time  
Left

*A Diatribe on Belonging*

Belonging  
Sometimes feels a futile desire  
For something out of our  
Control

In a state of mind  
You cannot belong in a state of mind  
It is already shifting like  
Water  
Into something else  
With or without  
You

In a ray of the Sun  
You cannot belong in a ray of the Sun  
It will move on to the other side  
Or a cloud will come along to hide  
The gold and glaze

In a house of wood and cinders  
You cannot belong in a house of wood and cinders  
It is just an empty space that you  
Will walk through once  
Or twice  
Again  
To get from place  
To place

Sometimes that is all a home is  
A place to look intently at your face  
And the slow circuit breaking  
Underneath the surface  
Behind the eyes

In a family  
You cannot belong in a family  
After being pushed out of the womb  
You have already been pushed  
Out  
Where is the door to return?  
To go back  
In?

In a tangle of curtains or perhaps the leaves of a tree  
You cannot belong in a tangle of curtains or perhaps the leaves  
of a tree  
Wrappings come undone with wear  
And you are already naked  
Beneath  
See the form in the mirror  
Understand its shape and shimmer

In a wash of noise called music  
You cannot belong in a wash of noise called music  
The song ends  
And the playlist gets shuffled again  
But perhaps you could sit  
For a spell  
In the skipping of a record  
Finished playing on the b-side

In side  
Inside  
You cannot belong inside  
Because belonging is taking your inside  
And feeling comfortable making it  
Your outside  
If you sit inside and stagnate  
Isolate  
You will crumple and wither  
Like a flower left in the dark



In what  
Then?

What can you belong in?

Stop searching  
Just be  
Here and there  
For a spell  
For the while  
That we have

Be with me  
And I with you  
And we with out  
And in around the sphere  
Spinning again  
And again

Be the light streaming into the house  
That welcomes you in  
From within

*Suncrane Ponders the Mountain*

Mountain peak  
Looking down  
Against the yellowed grassy switchbacks  
Topaz turns of starlight captured  
In a scattered crop of fractured  
Stones and totems

Faces names locations plastered  
Tangled tied and taut between the spokes  
Of night's unspoken soirée

A family of embers walking drunk along the breeze  
Fireflies and drifting eyes that see the cracks  
Of gold between

A hand that grasps and knows the shape  
Of fingertips and petals  
Curled into a blanket draped in shade  
The moon's repose a fond familiar face

A name of shapes you know  
Like roads to home  
Or moments in your ancient life  
Spinning relays blinking dead forgotten languages  
You crafted to preserve the feeling of a joy  
Not yet cooled enough to hold  
For long

At the mountain peak  
The moon above is smiling  
With a ring of gold

I've wept for nights like this  
And wept for many more  
My wonder shattered seared repaired  
And limp across the floor

I ask myself  
How much of this is simply in my mind?  
The question answers back to me  
The truth of it  
My essence  
Is a complicated rhyme

I'll weep again for nights like this  
And wash away the toll  
Of wishing for another day  
Without a mind that's full

*Scattershot Delegations of Purpose to Nature*

Plumage distinctions  
 Badges buttons bolo ties  
 Written in a simple script along the arms of time  
 Wrapping limbs around this life of mine

Beige and brown as dirt and soil  
 Sand and plaster brick and dusty lacquer  
 Poles and pylons armatures  
 Along the rolling thoughtless hills  
 Across the vaulting asphalt roads and avenues  
 My memory remembering is you  
 Is watching is a winged view aloft  
 I soar and specter downward heather  
 Bending light around a finger  
 Rings of purity forever linger  
 With me  
 On my skin

In spring the sunlight washes sin  
away

And I rejoice in knowing I will  
 See another display of your  
 Contentment

Removing I  
 From some equation  
 Is a methodology of mine  
 To recuse my ego  
 Or perhaps my being  
 From the view of written  
 Visions

Could the absence of myself  
 From my own words  
 Create a more worthwhile  
 Semblance of art?

The question floats down a reeling river  
And banks are breathing drinking  
Grass and weeds and roots and trees  
Do shiver under nests of starlight or a flock  
Of silver glitter gandered up above  
Or gathered into the wings of a dove  
Dipper delving scooping wires and transformers  
From the telephone poles  
Left to carry humming brightness to your domicile  
Of choice, that is to say,  
If you've had a say  
In it up until now

I've rather left it in the hands of the goldenrod  
And the sumac

I've planted seeds of desire in the dreams of a campfire  
And their children up in smoke spoke volumes of joy  
To my eyes closing under the covers

Mud and moss and lichen across  
All the stones on the path up to  
Jarimuh Point

Reading maps I am oriented into a line  
Slanted smacked into a belly of pine  
Donning trail markers topographical bindings  
Reading writing a simple language of time  
Growing older with my  
Waiting or  
Walking along

Doubled sprinting and over the edge  
Or up under above the sky turning in love  
With the earth and the ground  
Tilling loam with a sound of stars  
Feeding plants and small children

Running idle  
Beyond a thought of the world  
Making up time in the hopes of creating  
Something worthwhile

My words are not sediment  
Are not clay or creation  
My words are not sentiment  
Though abstractions breathe elements of emotion  
Like poems

My words are not worth  
Much  
To me at the moment  
Perhaps never

But the waiting is what kills us  
The wondering when  
It comes true

Keep dreaming with me  
I'll keep thinking of  
You

*Path of a Thought Led Astray*

Days in a sequence of songs  
Broken down into movements  
Breaking down into notes

Stuck to my monitor  
Reminders I'm older than the boy  
I was when I thought of her  
Last

Little photographs  
Instax  
Washed out recollections of days I don't like to believe  
Are far out into that ocean swell behind me

Have I stopped growing  
Or is the world no longer getting smaller

All the flying flitting things in my head  
Mosaic of lightning bugs like a mobile above my bed  
They scatter like rain  
Breaking silence  
Again  
    and  
Again

Little droplets searching  
The sidewalk  
Like the leaves  
Little children  
Of trees  
Walking bugs over seeds  
And the birds  
Making nests  
In the reeds  
All the fallow weeds  
Not yet made  
Incomplete

The end of the thought stops there  
Like a taunt  
And I am unable to sway it

Like a shadow tendril of the willow  
Out the window  
Of my room

Dancing little leaves  
Thick with wanderers  
Onyx black pilgrims still as stones  
Soaking in the Sun

And the sumac blooming underneath  
Behind the house deep in the weeds  
Where the rainwater feeds  
Each warming season their red beams

Where are my seasons

They've all collapsed into one

Coalesced into none

Left me wanting the waves undulating  
As years accrete into something  
Denser than a belief  
Or a dream leaning on hopes like a leaf  
Left floating in a petrichor puddle

Time is a muddied tapestry made muddier  
With isolation  
We retreat from the screens into our heads  
Until

Suddenly,  
Now



Am I older than before

That is a given

And I will give more

Before

It is done







*IV*

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*As Yet After*



*Before the Stars*

Before the stars were wiped in soot and cinders,  
Charcoal pinholes burned long light into the center  
Of a summer night  
Alone

But not alone beneath the rolling names of constellations  
Heron's wings of clouds go floating by  
Like blinking murmurations, stars look right back into us  
Like memories that travel between  
Galaxies

Before the night was lonely, it was solace  
It was loving arms and bug noise blankets  
Little microcosm melodies that sat outside the other hours  
Waiting for a curious mind  
Like mine  
To call home

But now the soot and cinder spires of trees  
And diamond linking armatures  
Are wrapping spilling languid breezes  
Through the space the stars once held

Their fingerprints still plastered over every cloud  
Don't tell me that those days are ancient  
Let alone gone  
For good

Gone away  
That memory of another version of time  
It's difficult to excise  
The old rotten foundations  
While still extracting all the good  
That was left behind

Before I reinvented myself  
For the nth time in a row,  
Windows slanted beams from clouds  
Like pillars in the snow  
And Winter's name was just a planet  
Or a sleepy day without a care  
Where we could worry later about  
When to go

Before the words and noises  
There was feeling without knowing,  
And the wonder of a child that saw a world  
Of spring trees blowing  
Willow shadows dancing on a wall  
Or lightning bugs that weaved between  
The silhouettes of sumacs  
Like a swarm of embers glowing

Before the stars were snuffed like candles  
All the world was late and lazy like a child  
I once knew I was

Now I look outside at night and wonder  
Where I am

Before the stars return again I want to be a man  
That hasn't lost the child in him  
And knows the parts to keep and hold,  
And which to leave behind as he grows old

Before they blink their eyes at me and recognize my face  
I want to know that wonder still has a place  
Here

I want to know they know my thoughts  
And hear my fond regards

I want to know they missed me  
Through a thousand years apart



*Proof of Light*

Frozen memory of a stardust night collapsing  
Shatters heliotrope tapestries of my youth  
Sponging up the excess packing away in excuses of age  
Coming and going like water  
Through my idle fingers

Dancing a pen in slow circles  
Over blank notebook pages

Waiting for a moment that has already passed  
In a voltaic shock and then smoke  
Shimmering like long grass under a wide breathy wind

In waves of time melting and flowing together  
Dripping and stretching between the me who was buried  
And the me who will cease

Dark memory of a crane  
Perched on my mind  
Drinking shades of a thought of a love  
Thick as light

Dim memory of a day thrown aside  
Running up the embankment  
Tumbles spinning and flash  
Like a smile left behind  
Coming back into your mind  
My mind  
Like a memory  
Like a smile  
I reach for

I reach through the disease  
Humming slaked in my ether

Recall the demonstration  
The proof of light  
Up and over the hills  
Through the myriad shapes of the clouds  
'Tween the leaf-laden trees in their youth

Their years are elixer  
Slowly melting distilled into motes  
Resting on your face  
Like a nap in the amber past

In the light  
Like a proof  
Of beginning  
And end

Little moment in time  
Like all the others  
Come and congregate in my steeples  
I am calling you  
Home

*Doorways Into Another*

Walk  
 Me through a gate  
 Into a clinging amber slush  
 Of winter afternoons  
 Or maybe  
 Just a window replaced  
 Into finality

Jungles sink and simmer into bones  
 Making little rooms of light  
 The things we remember into homes  
 We never leave  
 Ourselves alone

Walk  
     ing  
 Under flocks of geese that don't remember  
 When it's time to turn toward the fields  
 Perhaps simply the weather  
 Leaves them wrapped in  
 Circular confusion systems  
 Strapped down with  
 Worry

In a constant rain  
 The window says my name  
 And shows me afterimages  
 Of a face I've yet to make my own  
 Yet to reclaim

Like summer vines and daffodils  
 And overgrown beliefs  
 The only things I take with me  
 Are all my memories

Damp and fresh from trees  
 But quick to dry and disappear

Done and dusted like a leaf  
In late October's atmosphere

I bury them in boxes  
And wait until the snow has gone  
Away

In early spring I wander houses  
Walk  
    ing  
Under floorboards over old foundations  
Through a maze of doorways  
Into other lives or living spaces

In a day of rain and running blues  
I wonder why they run from you  
And do not disappear like leaves  
To be reborn  
To be released

Playing in my mind  
I run the length of hallways  
  and I smile  
As I imagine how it would feel  
To hold your hand in mine  
Under a doorway into something  
Of my own design

Those amber windows slanted beams  
Still call to me  
From somewhere in a past I had forgotten

I will walk  
Through thresholds further farther into other  
'Til I find their names engraved  
In my remembered bones

In evening light I want to be a home  
For someone

*How You Got Your Name (or, My Desire For a Place With You)*

Packs of clouds  
Continue on their way  
Under a knowing sheet of sunlight  
On a young forgotten day

Below and over layers singing psalms  
In ponds and postcards, little lakes  
Take shape around your memory

Your oft neglected factory  
Its gears and gizmos rest in rust  
Awaiting idle innocent  
Thoughts of things the way they was

The shade of classroom windows  
Or a line of ducks along a trail  
A gale of pleasantries that tumble  
From your ears in sleep or slipping down  
Into a creek of greetings sayings parsed in  
Patches wrapped and crosshatched  
Over eyes all speaking long goodbyes

The corner of a room you memorized

It knows you, too

Crowds of birds will follow shapes  
That crawl across the sky  
Before they settle in a place that  
Listens when they cry

Somewhere there's a place  
That knows the sound  
Of your sigh

And if it's not reality  
I'll ask the trees and weeds to weave  
A bed of plains and oceans there

And we can climb across the sunbeams  
To a place that will remember you  
And how you got  
Your name

*Zoetrope Life (Another Letter)*

Fall  
 Your colors  
 Plaster my memory  
 Corroded conifers in constant spin  
 Your rust is a numb recollection  
 Of our youth and fragility  
 My dolorous  
 Hall

I don't blame you for your sad expression

—

Winter  
 Your snowdrifts  
 Caress my tranquility  
 Disturbed by the ripples of darklight wind  
 Your thaw is the break of a fever's end  
 A tomb, a cavity  
 Now bereft  
 Interred

But your silvery stars are a canvas of lights

—

Spring  
 Your blossoms  
 Expand my capacity  
 My joy and furtive presentness of time  
 Your branches thin and crusted with rime  
 Shed weight in levity  
 Hear our psalms  
 Ring

Just don't go to leave so soon

—

Summer  
Your noises  
Translate my piety  
In tongues of leaves and ember teeth  
Your ashen nights still slaked with heat  
That intimate society  
Of voices  
Slumber

Return to me that plain serenity



*The End is a Place*

Clearing  
Channel through trees  
Canals of leaves  
Funnel water like eaves

Hearing  
Little poems blossom  
Tiny precious koans

After the end  
It goes on

Even though we may ask it  
To stay  
As it is  
For a spell

That it moves along  
In the wide meadow wind  
Is just as well

Fearing  
That we will stagnate here  
With our hands all wet  
And clammy with sweat

Bleary eyed  
Wanderers  
With no wind  
Upon which to rest our  
Tired heads

Where the breeze is a solid heat  
We find hard to breathe  
That is where we will meet  
Our many ends

Nearing  
Upon the edge  
Or close to other ledges  
We ponder and pray

In the slow missing rain  
Not yet drained out of the sky  
If you have seen that ember night  
Fading out  
Then this is my  
Prayer

Smile wide in the pitch dark breeze  
And watch the stars dance  
With us there

*Wandering Thoughts*

Jupiter spins  
I sit and listen  
The world outside  
Quiet but for cars  
Hungrily engulfing all the sound  
Sucking on the air  
As they stumble passing  
By

Trees shiver shake  
Shatter  
Under weight  
Invisible  
Like bugs  
Black-shelled crawling  
Before they're pressed  
Shellac  
Or forgotten passing  
In death

Weather coils  
Vacillates like metal  
Heating  
Contracting  
All the grass a vice  
Blowing in the breeze  
Passing  
By

Jupiter spins  
Like a hurricane  
On a finger

I sit and listen  
Linger

Contemplate  
Questions grow thinner  
Longer  
Endless furrows in the brow  
Thoughts wander

I keep no leash  
Any longer

Jupiter spins  
And I listen in

*One Foot In*

Where are the stories in our blood?  
Dispelled like oxygen  
Consumed without thought

Words sputtering out  
Like a bonfire  
The orange yellow embers  
Fly up and rest flat against your face  
Without feeling

Some nights I sit flower-like  
In a blooming position aligned  
Compass-esque magnetized  
As they said  
Something "zazen" something "mind"  
With one foot in  
A waterfall midair in flight

And I wither with those stories  
Burning off in sunrise  
Mist-like  
With my worries

Time accretes and washes  
Away  
Sometimes like our minds  
And our little bits and pieces  
Odds and ends  
End up drift-esque  
In a way

Where are the stories in our blood?  
Rinsed out with sorrow  
Replaced with joy  
Time and again

But when?

*Unfinished Thoughts Stuck in the In Between*

Trees colored honey and brass, jungle of rust nestled deep in a mood of falling in layers. Soil pressed pages bituminous passing of passages raining like light on the snow. Melting shrinks our heavy hearts, that is my prayer into the silent curtain of leaves. And the moon tree speaks it back to me in a glow across my floorboards.

Before the Sun roars us back into seeds of belief, settled process of fossils and maps of a terrapin world turning around. Stained glass rotations of tapestry'd philosophers, or beetles that crawl between words between ears between folds in a feather's bend. How many nights have I left to lend, I, the weather of men, a cloud without end. Left to evaporate in a pool of brightness like gunpowder spent.

Heaven looks like a horizon unending. Cliffs tumble mountains hanging lazy from arches, and stars wink behind a wash of opaque azure. They wish blessings on lily pads floating down streams. Tracts of wisdom unseen baked in lichen and mud, humming warming like love or a birdsong in March. Something coming along in a subsequent dream, let it lead you to me.

Follow fall into winter, spread winds between fingers, splayed blustering under the new wondering fingers like jam. Simple mornings and rebirthing thoughts. Every day you wake up is a dream that you've caught in your throat. Speak now, and let it out.

*I Yearn For Meadowglass*

Stillness core  
Sits squarely in the circle  
Or circular realm  
Domain  
That I have set aside  
Inside  
Of me  
Myself  
For it to reside

That sphere  
Like blue and clear marbles  
Click clacking together  
Shudders within the rustling of leaves  
Their skin and cells are seizing up  
Dried leather trees the rose gold thoughts  
And memories  
They drop like teeth under a pillow  
Of snow yet to fall  
And     fall  
And             fall  
And                 winter comes  
With spring soon after  
But never too long

I find the seasons like to  
Move along

That stillness core of brass and oil  
It sits inside my longing  
Deep and warm as soil under summer's awning

I daydream about autumn's crash  
Like temperatures or daylight hours  
I wonder about unpaved roads and forest trails  
Windless plains and ashen fields  
Bramble dens and homemade meals

I hope for light and darkness both  
The Sun and moon and stars and earth  
I yearn for meadowglass and rest  
A home in which to build my nest

That core of stillness stirs and settles  
Into rhythms off and on  
Sometimes it feels I have no roots  
Or reason why I should belong

And I wake up in the morning  
Thinking of many little sparks  
And by the evening  
All that's left is  
Tired lids on open eyes  
And sleepless hidden beating hearts

In life the valley feels so low  
I yearn for days in meadows

From up top it seems so small  
And still like cores of brass and oil

In time I'd like to say  
I didn't mind those days  
At all



*When the Light Escapes*

When the light escapes the window frame,  
A diorama Sun expands its wings through clouds  
Of paper maché thoughts of younger days

Black ink across the pages creased and folded,  
Old pens emptied of the embers burning,  
Ancient afternoons are turning thoughts of you  
On fingertips you've felt against your cheek

It feels, sometimes, like all the things I have  
Forgotten  
Are simply fiction,  
Shadow moments,  
Never happened,  
I have forgotten them like dust

Do you have corners of your mind  
That have not seen the Sun  
Since the ringing of a school bell?

When the winding traces of a breeze  
Blow through the names of thrumming leaves,  
Do you feel the corners of your mouth  
Curl up at the edges?

I used to feel the heat of campfires  
Combust my skin into a shimmer,  
All the nights of spring and summer tucked into a  
Glass ball of stars and moonkissed spinners

In those corners of my mind that have not heard  
The name of the ancient world in so long,  
I wonder why a fair-weather day does not  
Capture my heart in the same way it did  
What feels just yesterday

You, child of the world, you may not know its name  
But it is written on your teeth,  
Scribbled in your hair,  
Spoken through your eyelashes like beams  
Through diamond windows in that  
Ancient afternoon

I want to see you smile the words away  
And spin apart a story that we know like  
Diorama children in a middle school play

When the light escapes your mouth,  
The names of every leaf will settle on a shoulder,  
Perched and waiting for a moment to believe

In rest,  
    In luck,  
        In one another

*Cornerstone (Under Light)*

Through wind and other winding homes  
We live in tunnels made of others' bones  
Remember them like statues  
Or an epigraph above a poem

Static text in tides that roll  
And cover us in meanings full  
Of seedlings

Little growing smiles of teeth  
And lips and tongues eager to speak

Their words mix painted clouds  
And brush the heavens into canvas  
If you squint the letters make a face  
With something good to say to you

The summer motes will save us  
And be clingy like a drop of dew

The rocks and riddles wrapped in earth  
Will all unfold their names to us  
And cornerstones will be our homes  
While embers recount the breeze's rush

And lakes will drink us into reeds  
And cattails turn and bend and feed  
On thoughts of days spent under light  
To get them through the quiet night

And I will make a place with you  
In endless tunnels made of bone  
And call across the winding things  
To draw a picture of a poem

In meadowgrass and ancient loam  
A canopy  
A tide of foam

A name for comfort,  
Cornerstone

*My Song Over the Quiet Fields*

Rushed force of a movement  
Along my body  
Like a wall  
Against  
And over top  
Below my  
Gaze or thoughts  
In a cage of denial  
Or design  
Of my own hands  
My own mind

A back and forth like water  
Left idle in a spinning cup  
Tipped over flowing up the river  
Little pitter patter raindrops  
Paint like invisible colors  
On my face  
Telling tales spun from words beyond  
Truth and recognition

I sometimes stare out the passenger side window  
Of a moving car  
And see the words in the trees  
Brittle as they may be  
For now

Other days I am passing by  
Like time alone  
Along a tome  
A stack of ink and lesser fears  
The ones we have words for  
Much less feelings

Other days still  
Moving still  
Not moving  
In rain softly falling like mist  
From a cloud as wide as the sky  
Looking down at us  
And what does it see  
Staring back at it  
From a second story window  
Through the curtains

Other days aloft  
We forget them flying away  
Like dandelion seeds

Nothing left of them but the ghost  
Of a touch across our minds  
A phantom limb that tickles  
And pries

In the winter these are the only days  
I can recall  
Sitting over the silent white and black fields  
Of brittle trees and dead yellow weeds  
Peeking through snowdrifts and roadsides

A song like a string of sighs  
Floating through skeins of silvery stars  
Turning above us there

You and me  
The two eyes seeing into each other  
Past and future  
Unsure of where to meet  
And unsure of whether there is  
Such a point  
Of understanding

The point  
I find  
Is to understand  
Itself

Today and tonight and long after tomorrow's light  
That will be my song over the quiet fields  
All waiting in peace under layers of white

*Last Word (Even If I Am Ash)*

The last word of my mouth  
Is a break in the clouds  
Peeking blue and gold towers of light  
Settled beams along roads  
In a rainbow arc of forgiveness

Perhaps just forgetfulness

The tip of my tooth  
Sunken into the earth  
As I am subsumed  
And recycled into matter  
Better used  
As a path, or a leaf  
Better seen through your window  
Or grown in your yard

I am lilies and tulips, I am pine trees and juniper  
The hard shell of light that blankets you  
From the dark poem of the world

We live in a strange nature  
So to be strange is only  
Natural

The end of the play  
Stage curtains closing  
Closing closing  
Like the end of the evening  
Only night carries forward  
Turning stars like so many fish in a pond  
Great white swans drifting circles  
Around us in firmament's ether

Look up and around  
I will be there  
Even if I am ash



*Joinings IV / and After...*

January sun  
Crashes into the blue or the gray without color  
In a mirror of me  
Or my daydreaming face  
Caught in troubled suspension

Her shape is a glory closed in morning  
Or a meandering visage like the eyes of a bird  
Watching from firmament's perch

Deep behind clouds and contrails  
Bird wings washing evening light on a rock  
Beaten dry against migration

In a place of trepidation I am not much like a bird  
Turned toward the way I know I must go  
Rather twisted around in a tangle  
Or a puzzled route wrapped and folded in on over itself

In the tower  
Or the nest of a season I once remembered passing through  
Left nothing but old notes  
As if I could remind myself back into a person  
I once knew

Some seasons pass slow  
Mine have taken a century or more  
It feels  
Though  
Perhaps I have felt this way before  
In the space of just a day  
Or so

What is the point of writing about seasons  
When I have not changed  
Too

What is the point of writing about light  
When the Sun will do  
What it will do

Long light provision  
Carries my sight before layers of snow  
In a day dreaming of me

Times I felt there was a hand of certainty  
Beneath my sleeping standing self  
Roots and tangled weather wrappings tightly  
I recall that comfort  
Now

—

Hidden greenery  
Our secluded mantleplace nestled in ivy cornerstones  
You and me there floating bees  
Or butterflies waiting still  
For the seasons to tear us from our cocoons

Honeydew green beneath an Otsiningo tree  
A hand of certainty beneath my sleeping standing self  
Still unaware of my own fingers splayed atop  
Reflexively reaching for that comfort

I wonder  
A glowing gust  
Through whistling glass  
Or a thin singing light  
Too fragile to touch

I still see you like a work of art  
I still watch you drift apart and back together  
Like a swath of vapor off a star  
Your name still rings like bells of gold  
And other metals from afar

January moon  
Returning voyage away from her first form  
Into anew

—

In late winter I wonder what the trees are like  
Bent sundered under light  
In parks and pathways holding hands with  
Roaming hearts and tethered kites

Their ribbons ripple flap and fight  
A winding breeze like your own reflection  
Something underneath the surface  
Unseen uncertain  
And their colors run a trail across the stairs  
Up to the clouds

In vibrations  
Running humming thawing rush  
The sudden heat of honest crush  
Or hairs collected in a brush

You know the tangle  
Or the shape of use  
The way their hands made use of you  
The days you felt in service of  
Something more than just  
Another night of sleep  
Another light of birdsong

Continue counting moments  
They will come to you  
Or coalesce like dew on blades of grass  
Or rain that drops from leaf to leaf  
In pirouettes and tumbles

And after...?

Hang your words upon the crescent moon  
And move into a silent sheet of light  
Your feelings will return to earth  
Like shooting stars,  
Or paper kites

It's alright

It's alright

*I've Changed*

A lifted note of wind across a frosted view of night  
Between a worn and warming high behind  
And falling through a forward light

A note accrues collects a speck of oft returning voice  
And bells and chimes are ringing overhead  
As fields are chewing on a choice

The trees and roots and other ancient children take a breath  
Beneath the ember blanket fields of white  
I ask myself before I've left

The questions coming back and quick as rain upon a roof  
My rest and meditation dampened full  
Of fires and memories left to soothe

Salvation comes to those with eyes still open far and wide  
As ranges fields and meadows in the Sun  
Where people you once were still hide

Don't hide away from me before I've sketched your face again  
I've come to know your shape before it's lost  
In tumbled snow and upward rain

A hinted mote of something pure and still as humming stone  
Beneath my feet the underside of clouds  
For what have I left to atone

A singing song perpetuates itself in fallen leaves  
As silently as seasons moving through  
And thinks upon a thought of peace

A song returns to where it knows it will become a tree  
Those old repeated phrases fond regards  
I wait for their return to me









# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Ben Buchanan is a programmer for money, a musician for passion, and a poet for kicks. He resides in Upstate New York, where he watches birds flit from branch to branch, and listens to the rustling of leaves across the ground in autumn.

His work has appeared previously in the collected volumes *Another Flow* (2020), *Drift Illogical* (2021), and *Babylon Effect 2nd Edition* (2021).

You can find those collected volumes, as well as his other creative work (music, programming, digital artwork, sketches) on his personal website (<https://lexicachromatica.xyz>).

🍷 Thank you for reading.

