

From Oneline

Volume 3



Edited by
Meghan Dargue

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Kobayaashi

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This volume is dedicated to
the words themselves

without which
we writers
would fall
silent

.

FROMONELINE : THE ORIGINS

Where can just one connecting prompt line take us? That's what the FromOneLine community of writers have been exploring on a regular basis since 2019, taking one line (usually as the starting line) and writing a myriad of scintillating short stories and poems all stemming from that same line. In August 2021 the first volume of FromOneLine was published, followed by the second volume in December 2021.

This is our third anthology, featuring just a small selection of the writings which emerged as part of #FromOneLine.

The writings to make it into this volume were chosen from a staggeringly high number of submissions. Poems and pieces of flash fiction which have danced me through a rollercoaster of emotions. Words that I have returned to time and again to discover new feelings, or just to delight in connecting with familiar ones. I hope you will enjoy exploring them as much as I have, and may they inspire many more writings and adventures to come.

I urge you to seek out other writings by the authors featured in this book, and be sure to tell everyone you know about them too!



THE LINES IN THIS ANTHOLOGY

Writers of the FromOneLine community are invited to suggest lines to be used for the prompts. The lines featured in this books are accompanied below by the name of the author who donated the line.

Everyone wore a hat	from FrancesJMacGregor
If I were your jukebox	from Gdidd
The ball rolled into the undergrowth	from Daniel Cummings
I thought I'd survive without you	from Martin J Horton
In the darkness of daylight	from C.X. Turner

What had happened was
Only one more
The day I was caught
An owl-eyed child
The shells crunched underfoot
If I rise before the sorrow
The shadow seeped over the wall
I am too lazy to sleep
It started on a Sunday
Lend me your voice
There is a crack on the wall
The dead walked the moon
I ran towards the melodic humming
My hand closed over the handle
This is not my bed
I am not sure which came first
It just wasn't enough
The box outside my door
A butterfly in the classroom
They used to hold hands
There was nothing before
In a cave of trees
Just a letter, lying there
A spoonful of dreams
Help me if you can
After the storm
The birds on my grave
Opening the door I saw
A bit of afternoon rain
Well, it's done now
It took time to open
For what it's worth
I tripped over
On the edge
It wasn't the right key
Make sure you clear up
The morning air felt still
You never say my name

from Elisa Dominique Rivera
from megwaf
from Asha Chauhan
from Tizzy
from FrancesJMacGregor
from Jenny O'Gorman
from Devlin Myles
from Nisha Talreja
from Eric Daniel Clarke
from Noor Mahal
from @MrKobayaashi
from Carl Ripley Locke
from Fizzy Twizler
from Isabella du Lac
from Rustybonz
from Alla Ilenčíková
from Wendy Aldwyn
from Elizabeth Belt
from MN Murthy
from Carly D
from Jaime Stanford
from C.X. Turner
from FrancesJMacGregor
from Rashmi
from Natasha Faith
from Alla Ilenčíková
from MN Murthy
from Seema Bokkasam
from @MrKobayaashi
from Eric Daniel Clarke
from FrancesJMacGregor
from Isabella du Lac
from Wendy Aldwyn
from Alla Ilenčíková
from megwaf
from Eric Daniel Clarke
from FrancesJMacGregor
from @MrKobayaashi



THE WRITERS IN THIS ANTHOLOGY

(In alphabetical order) : @adivayeatts, @MrKobayaashi, @VWC_Writes, A. A. Rubin, Alla Ilenčíková, AltBirdingFacts, Aman Abdi, Aneesha Shewani, Angela, Asha Chauhan, Audrey Semprun, Author Peyton Storm, Beth Cusack, bill stephens, Bithi Paul, C.X.Turner, Carl Ripley Locke, Carol Roberts, Catherine Beavis, Chris Papps, CL, Connie L Biskamp, Danish Yumnam, Denise Carruthers, Diotima, Doris Winn, Élan, Elizabeth Belt, Elizabeth Guilt, Elle Hart, Elisa Dominique Rivera, Eric Daniel Clarke, Esha Jaiswal, Ethan Patrick, Fiona H., Fizzy Twizler, FrancesJMacGregor, Gabriela Marie Milton, GhostPoet Chelle, Her Grey Side, IA McCleery/IntrovertAwakenings, Jami Lyne Kellett, Jass Aujla, Jeffrey Haskey-Valerius, Jenny O’Gorman, Jillian Calahan, Jimmy Webb, Jo Ann May, John Tannhauser, John(jd), Jessica Bourke, Julie Shiel, just me poetry, Justin Calimquim, Justin McManus, Kaitlin Deaton, Katherine Traverse, Katie Willow, Kiana Donae, Leena Antony, Leslie Almborg, Lisa Boyadzhieva, Lisa Williams, Loss For Words, Love, Jane, M. B. Stephens, Michele Grieve, Madhavi. K, Maggie Claypool, Maree Jaeger, Margaret Lonsdale, Margareth C Waterboer, Maria A. Perez, Martin Horton, Maura O’Leary, megwaf, melisa quigley, mike olley, Mikhaila Polak, Mila Hasan, Mirai Amell, MN Murthy, Monique (starfish_72), Nitu Yumnam, Noor Mahal, r miller, R.M. (Storm) Worley, Rachel Nash, Randy Graf, S.T. Hills, Sadhana Rana, Sarah L Lord, Seoti Bhattacharyya, Serlina Rose, Shelly Smith, Simon Collins, Stephanie Henson, Suzanna Lundale, Syreeta Muir, Tess P., Tina Mowrey, VerityAlways, Victoria Greenaway, Viola Dawn, Vipul Vij, Wandering Biku, Wayne AC Smith, Wendy Snyder, Wilder Rose.

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO :

Mr Kobayaashi, Scruff, Max, and The Boys.



CATHERINE BEAVIS

everyone wore a hat
of dark mourning hues
but Beth wore daisies
in her golden
curly braids
everyone stood
in the sombre shade
but Beth
stood aglow
in butterscotch
glimmering sunbeams
everyone cried with grief
but Beth
beamed with happiness
watching her
grandad's spirit
finally at peace
waving goodbye
with love
& soaring high
to his
tranquil elysian



DANISH YUMNAM

Everyone wore a hat
So what shall I do?
It's their choice,
As simple as that



RANDY GRAF

Everyone wore a hat
I had to wear one too
My white skin and long teeth
Both screamed Nosferatu

But under cloak and hat
I was invisible
I'd corner one and drink
Their blood til I was full

I do love happy hour...



MARGARET LONSDALE

Everyone wore a hat. I chose two because you never know.
The mood was dim. The crowd was thick. A single pale blue
light illuminated the lectern at centre stage.

I wished I'd worn sensible shoes. I wished my olfactory
sensibilities were less acute.

A calliope loop oozed from somewhere behind heavy black
velvet curtains. Shapes shifted and swayed. A gaunt figure
shuffled into view from stage left, his cosmic cowboy hat
pulled low like mystery. "Ahem," his mouth coughed, "let
this final Hat Hacks and Holy Poets thing get under way."



CONNIE L BISKAMP

Everyone wore a hat
tight chinstraps
silver rifles
gold medals
on red woolen coats
with shiny buttons
silk stripes
upon ivory pants
donning tall boots
we march about
train tracks
under a massive pine
with stars twinkling
upon branches
to celebrate
Christmastime



AMAN ABDI

Everyone wore a hat
Tin Foil was the material
Fashioned in elegance
As they made their way
To a church with no name
Where dear Pandora led prayers
Made of hymns of schizophrenia
To a god
Who watches them struggle
To live another day.



AUDREY SEMPRUN

If I were your jukebox
I'd play you a love song
And play it over and over again
Until you'd finally hear me
And listen to the end
The part that whispers
way down low
I feel you in my soul
Please don't let me go
No. Please don't let me go
For I feel you in my soul



R MILLER

if i were your
jukebox and you
slid a quarter of
an inch into my slot
i'd sing you a blues
song full of longing
for more

and if you pressed
against my button on
repeat i'd mmm your
name like a gospel hymn
hallelujah until the world
thought your name was
ooooh God



x If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox

ELIZABETH GUILT

If I were your jukebox, life would be perfect, wouldn't it?
You'd throw in a kiss, and I'd perform dutiful wife. You'd
toss over an invitation and I would be your laughing date
for the evening.
Instead, I stare down the flowers, I ask questions that make
you lie.



NITU YUMNAM

If I were your jukebox,
I'd ask you to consider
gifting me as a charity

In an old age home
Or in any orphanage
In the proximity

Orphanages & aged
People oft suffer from
Episodes of anxiety

In those turbulent times,
I'd cradle them playing
a lullaby or a litany



box If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox

JESSICA BOURKE

If I were your jukebox
I'd sing you my blues
and not have to worry
about missing my cues

I'd play you my soul
looped to repeat
I'd play you my soul
a lost melody

I'd spin you a track
of the truth of my folk
from all the times
and places
and ways
that I broke

I'd rock out to you
with a hard
heavy
beat
and bass that shatters
the place in-between

but

I'm not your jukebox
my life's not a song
the words that I use
come out all
wrong



If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox

DIOTIMA

if I were your jukebox
I'd let you
play me for free

s
 g p
n i
 i n
 n

our favourite track
on repeat

filling the room
with our
old school
rhythm & blues

b e a t s



ALTBIRDINGFACTS

If I were your jukebox, you'd slam quarters into me all night long, pounding pizza and root beer until you got sick. Everyone would say: why waste quarters on a jukebox when BattleZone and Galaga are right there?

But you'd be listening to me and Blondie, not them.



box If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox

AMAN ABDI

If I were your jukebox
I'd need repair
Like a magician you left me there
With a silver coin stuck in my ear
If I were your jukebox
I'd juke left
Then I'd box right
Then listen to Rossini
'The thieving magpie' all night.
If I were your jukebox
You'd have stolen my heart
And taken it to the gallows
To tear it apart



JUST ME POETRY

If I were your jukebox
I'd put on a show
slow deliberate actions
building anticipation
carry the single
drop on the table
needle travels
hiss before first note
the experience
would leave you nostalgic
forever imprinted



ÉLAN

If I were your jukebox
you'd never need another dime;
any button you could press would
blow a kiss at ev'ry record ride--
I'd be flipping vinyls in a flash of fever,
jiving as the disco lights,
just so
all 45 revolutions of
your favorite
selections
could keep you sweetly synchronized, lingering; jazzing
in anticipation by my side.



KATIE WILLOW

If I were your jukebox
I'd accept your choices
Without judgement
I'd understand
Your different moods
Resulting in choices
Loud, calm, sexy
Angry, bouncy, joyous
Silly, funky, serious
But always you.



If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox If I were your jukebox

LISA WILLIAMS

The ball rolled into the undergrowth and came to an abrupt stop against my leg. They hadn't realized I was missing. Hadn't realized I was gone. Hadn't realized I was dead. A dog followed the ball, sniffed then retrieved it after a long howl. He was the first to sound the alarm but no one listened. Night followed day followed night and the world continued just the same. They found my phone. Police filled the park, my last known whereabouts. And then in the undergrowth I was found. Taken for the second time that week then finally allowed to rest.



VIPUL VIJ

The ball rolled into the undergrowth
it wasn't so hard to find,
he swooped it out with his mouth
looking at me, to throw one more time;

my happy friend, my star of eyes
he made my life sublime,
giving me unconditional love
in happy and hard times.



The ball rolled into the undergrowth

MAURA O'LEARY

The ball rolled into the undergrowth.
Following it led to a weirdly Carrollian adventure.
Kinky kangaroos; lusty lobsters;
quirky quaggas and seductive shoelaces
all gathered around a purple fire celebrating
their new leader, King Adidas.



NOOR MAHAL

The ball rolled into the undergrowth
The years passed
He was an old man when he found it again
It rolled him down memory lane
Shedding years of his frail body
He kicked it again



BITHI PAUL

The ball rolled into the undergrowth. They groaned. One of their dogs was sent to retrieve it. The dog disappeared, but the ball was thrown back.

They resumed playing cricket. Finding no dogs to get the lost ball, one of them went to the carnivorous bushes.



KATIE WILLOW

The ball rolled into the undergrowth, and we followed without thought. I burst out of the mass of saplings and brittle, yellowed weeds, to find myself teetering on the edge of a drop off. You were nowhere to be seen or heard. And then your hand grabbed me and I was someplace else...

The gate into another realm was open, yet invisible. I would never have found it, hanging in midair just over a cliff edge, if my brother hadn't stumbled and fallen straight through. When he pulled me through I had no idea what was happening. The new world was darker and full of green, twisting vines and trumpet shaped blooms. Insect sounds filled my ears and I stood still, taking everything in, concentrating on breathing. My brother's face was full of reckless glee and he bounced from foot to foot. "Come on, let's explore!"

"Wait!" I said, "we need to make sure we can find our way back. Help me mark the doorway."

My brother started scrabbling in the dirt. "Here, we can use these," he said, passing mossy, pink stones to her. I carefully laid the stones in a line where the gate was, and told him, "we mustn't go far."

Behind our backs as we walked away, the moss unfurled from the little rosy rocks and the tendrils dragged their little bodies off to their nest.



The ball rolled into the undergrowth

ANEESHA SHEWANI

I thought I'd survive without you
But I couldn't say goodbye
For the words lay tangled
At your doorstep
Afraid to cross the threshold
Into a life where you
Would not be waiting
At sundown, by the yellow lamp
A book in hand, the kettle whistling
Eager to tell and know
Of just another mundane day



WENDY SNYDER

I thought I'd survive without you
I was right until I was wrong

I'm both everything and nothing
I try and I flop

I mope and I dope
I sleep and I flee

And I realize eventually
I won't need to survive any more

Someday, I'll just be with you



I thought I'd survive without you I thought I'd survive without you I thought I'd survive without you

DIOTIMA

I thought I'd survive
without you
after all,
you were not
air, food,
water or shelter

yes, basic needs
are still being met

but, living and existing
you see, are two
very different things

and oh,
how I miss
being ALIVE



VERITYALWAYS

I thought I'd survive without you. Thrive without those
green gilded leaves, no more home to nests, never again a
shade tree canopy.
But no, couldn't. My bare trunk was a muse for art, poetry
and some vile minds left permanent marks. I can't wait to
leaf. To Live - Again.



ELIZABETH BELT

I thought I'd survive without you,
Jekyll to my Hyde.
I never dreamed evil needed
Good to thrive.
I search the furthest
Reaches of my brain.
There's nothing, only me inside.
I want to rage
Instead of embracing defeat.
Laughing I evolve again.
Who am I?



MARTIN HORTON

I thought I'd survive without you.
I was wrong. Couldn't even make a cup of tea without
dissolving into tears. Looking at your poppy mug set me off.
You'd only been gone a week. Stuck – seeing you sipping
your cuppa, slowly coming to life.



JASS AUJLA

I thought I'd survive without you,
Then why does my soul haunt
The places we used to exist?



I thought I'd survive without you I thought I'd survive without you I thought I'd survive without you

JULIE SHIEL

I thought I'd survive without you
Breathe deep and unclench my jaw
Revel in nights without screaming
Allow chaos and chrysanthemums
Autumn leaves and the remote moon
To heal my fractured soul.
But you were an insidious assassin
Corseting my fragile breath
Twisting me into unnatural forms
Strangling the wildness that fascinated
As I stood waiting for a love
That was no longer there.
Now I can't find myself,
The girl who was dangerous magic
Half mad, fearless and feral
Fallen in a dreamless slumber
Clothed and displayed
Under ice I can't break.



R.M. (STORM) WORLEY

I thought I'd survive without you, that I could move on with
life and not remain chained to the past. As the years have
passed I've come to realize that while I'm still breathing
there is no sense of healing, and never will be. Your loss
took a piece of my soul, too.



RACHEL NASH

I thought I'd survive without you.
I thought I was strong
Taking it one day at a time.
Others had managed it
Yet, temptation proved too great.
I missed your smell,
Familiarity,
Comfort.
I could no longer resist...
The taste
of
Chocolate.



BITHI PAUL

"I thought I'd survive without you."

"I'm sorry for-"

"Telling me I had no one in this wide, wide world?"

"For not telling you no one had you either."

"Oh."

"They are missing out on something special."

I smile at my reflection in the mirror. "I know. Now."



I thought I'd survive without you

ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

in the darkness of daylight
we like to get lost
sometimes
because beginnings are not easy
too bright for our lonely unforgiving souls
we choose shadows
as best as we can find

comfortable grey blankets
cat fur
and sleepy whirring
purrs behind closed shades
inside a box
in a closet
downturned blinds give us
just the right amount of freedom

we turn up at midday
turn around to stretch
and turn down every opportunity
we crawl back into a spiral staircase
we stare back to make sure
we checked every corner
the right amount of darkness
is the light that makes the grey



M. B. STEPHENS

In the darkness of daylight
I lost my way
I may have sheltered in words from you
when the world grew too small
and I failed to fit within its measure
How easily my back arched
into the curve of their being
as I melted into a sanctuary of your making
Soft as down
they whispered their comfort
into the shell of my ear
until the shore stretched before me
...endless as the sea...
I found comfort in the infinite
ebb and flow of time passing
Sanderlings raced the horizon
...I sat and watched in silence...



STEPHANIE HENSON

In the darkness of daylight,
I am my own cocoon.
Sheltered from the burn,
Hiding in plain sight.
Cloak around my heart,
Flickers of beating light,
A shadow of my former self.
Existing among others,
Blocking out the noise,
Within a burrow of solitude.



darkness of daylight In the darkness of daylight In the darkness of daylight

ELISA DOMINIQUE RIVERA

In the darkness of daylight
I consulted the skies for signs
Of the new dawn coming
But the silence portends
A malice waiting in the horizon
Ready for the second scarring
I signalled with my metal arm
To the last of humanity's children
We're ready.



LEENA ANTONY

In the darkness of daylight
I am still asleep
outside the margin of a dream
eking out interlocked hearts
from an almost empty breath.
Tattered, they look like
two teardrops from either eyes
yoked together by kind fingertips.
Maybe, once I wake up
in strange arms
I'll forget
sorrow is sinful.



C.X.TURNER

In the darkness
of daylight

I try being kind
to myself

One eye open

From the hollow
of a tree

I can see
a leaf pirouette

Beauty in the bleakness
Slowly

I crawl towards the sun



WENDY SNYDER

In the darkness of daylight, mother moon hides the sun behind her skirt. Animals freeze, look up at the sky, and quake. Children run to their moms. Moms run to their husbands. They clutch each other, waiting for the end of the world.

Mother moon steps aside and says, "Just kidding!"



darkness of daylight In the darkness of daylight In the darkness of daylight

MN MURTHY

in the darkness
of daylight

a warm smile
can light a candle

a finger of kindness
can lamp a heart

and a chest of hugs
can violet the twilight

in the darkness
of daylight

you & me, can still be
humans-sans-maps

with eyes flickering
with love & catchlight



VERITYALWAYS

In the darkness of daylight, she traces the spine of many, voraciously and curiously, devouring them. For her, it's indifferent from dawn to dusk. Learning, growing each day, dreaming of a worthy life, building an amassment of aspirations. For Braille helped her distinguish beyond colors and read past embossed letters.



darkness of daylight In the darkness of daylight

WANDERING BIKU

In the darkness of daylight
I cast no shadow, numb
to the sun's warmth
or the wind's chill.
I exist only behind my eyes.
Passed through by strangers
in other dimensions,
my dry stare fixed to a
nothingness three steps ahead.
Stable but soulless.



MIRAI AMELL

In the darkness
of daylight
I find you

Hidden behind a wilting flower
tousled
by the wayward wind

In the unformed song
of a hopeful sparrow
I find you

Trying to whittle away
the night
From my eyes

From your soul



darkness of daylight in the darkness of daylight in the darkness of daylight

JULIE SHIEL

In the darkness of daylight we found
An ill boding raven's corpse
Felled on the ground.
An unkindness gathered
in the blue twilight hour
The wise woman cried witchcraft
And climbed the old clock tower.
We sheltered in forest,
She consulted with sky
Burned herbs and cast bones
And said 'Something's awry.'
'The Morrigan comes
Wearing feathers and claws
Bringing sorrow and war
Armored soldiers and outlaws.'
The insidious crone
Drew her tattered robe tight
And prayed to the goddess
In silver-limned moonlight
Now conspiracies of birds
Crush our Autumn ripe crops
And the old woman hangs
From the tree on the hilltop.



darkness of daylight In the darkness of daylight

JESSICA BOURKE

What had happened was
I built a mausoleum for hope
6 wide by 6 high
I burnt memories of protection
Into the sides and painted the roof with the stars that
Fell from the sky then I locked it up tight

Now my nights
Are filled with dreams of myself breathless inside



NITU YUMNAM

What had happened was inevitable. His absence had left
termites inside of me, slowly killing me, making me
vulnerable.

I couldn't see silver linings nor extricate myself from the
void until he returned, touched me, hugged me, and we
became inseparable.



JOHN TANNHAUSER

What had happened was
Important
But less
Than what we find
It's leading to



LEENA ANTONY

What had happened was
I told you my secrets
I set my vulnerability upon you
higher than love.
(or were they both the same?)
With one wave of your hand
and a whiff of toneless whisper
you turned them into
uninterrupted wounds.



STEPHANIE HENSON

What had happened was a rumor was started,
Words were twisted and misconstrued,
Ever so slightly but changed the meaning immensely,
It was an irrevocable hit to the reputation,
Ultimately displaced me from the cool kids,
And altered my high school experience forever.



ERIC DANIEL CLARKE

What had happened was,
well, you know, things can
be misheard, what I thought
I said, she thought I'd said
something else, what did you
say, I'm not sure, I'd like to
think it wasn't what she heard?



BITHI PAUL

What had happened was my cut wings grew back. They were not like the previous ones. They were gossamer light and invisible.

Enemy guards left my window open. I looked down the tower. If my wings were weak, the fall would kill me. I had to try. I flew.



ESHA JAISWAL

What had happened was
I was swinging on the moon
Serenading the night sky
While he came along
Chasing the horizon
Our gazes met
The stars blushed
And night witnessed
Our beginning of forever



FIONA H.

What had happened was I was stuck in the light at the end of the tunnel.
I thought I could live without you, but I was scared of the spiders that sat beside me. I cut my hair because you didn't like it. You were my lucky number. Now I must vanish; don't call.



ANGELA

What had happened was something that could only be
uttered in whispers or screams - no in-between.

It was the kind of sadness
you feel in your marrow,
the source of nightmares and unspeakable sorrow.

Even years later
words get stuck &
tears flow
when your name comes up.



VIOLA DAWN

What had happened was I fell into a comfort. A specific one
I'd never known. Cups of tea in mugs of sentimental value.
Brandy in crystal glasses & clementines on the side. But I
missed the quilts of home and the smell of pumpkin pie. I
just didn't know it yet.



NOOR MAHAL

What had happened was a journey
A perilous voyage of discovery
Starting with the vulnerability
Hidden deep underneath
A veneer of respectability
Reaching out to the stars
To a world of endless possibilities



JILLIAN CALAHAN

What had happened was
my car wouldn't start

so I couldn't make it
for date night.

What had happened was
I wasn't feeling well
so I couldn't meet you
for dinner.

What had happened was
I had to work late
so I couldn't stop by
to have drinks.

What had happened was
the sky was falling
the Pope was visiting
and my cat's in jail

I guess I'm just trying to say
what really happened was
I didn't know how to tell you
that I love you.



VERITY ALWAYS

Only one more,
What do I have to lose?
But will I stop and turn into a recluse?

They told me about it.
Recovery and the route,
Addiction and the root.
But will I give in and be devout?
Can I forget and focus?

Their words echo,
It will result in hallow.

I count the truffles again,
The Chocolate Advent Calendar.



STEPHANIE HENSON

Only one more star to wish on,
One more four leaf clover to find,
One more heads up penny to lift,
One more ladybug to land,
One more pot of gold at the end of the rainbow,
Then luck will change . . .
From bad to good,
Live happily ever after.
Or I could make my own luck.



RACHEL NASH

The day I was caught
Crisp autumn leaves
Crackled underfoot
I was tired
Lay down for a rest
Beneath the canopy
A flock took flight overhead
Then I heard the dogs
Curled in a ball
I could run no more



ELIZABETH BELT

The day I was caught
I listened to my children scream
Caught as well
But shredded
Eaten
The anguish I felt
They'd been hidden
Protected
Maybe we should have hid
In the forest
But then it would have been the owl
Life is hard for a rat in a chicken coop.



ight The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught

ÉLAN

The day I was caught
sliding beyond tomorrow,

tapping into hidden crossings,
straining pulses, throbbing thoughts,

trafficking past
edges of vanities in today--
my lip rips in two

bleeding
 between staying and going
buffering the moment
against
 breaking the plane.



BITHI PAUL

The day I was caught coloring flowers, people found out the truth. Shocked, they stared at the real color. All of them had turned blue with sadness. Even yellow sunflowers had stopped smiling.

I threw away my paints. Wonder disappeared from eyes of children.



Caught The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught

R MILLER

the day i
was caught
sobbing he said
he'd give me
something to
cry for

like a fractured
skull wasn't
enough of a
reason

so i wiped
my eyes and
raised my
chin and he
gave me
something for
that too



LESLIE ALMBERG

The day I was caught between sunbeams and brushstrokes,
you moulded me into a sculpture. I was freedom, defiance, a
wildflower petal craved, caught and curated. Now I sit on a
shelf, pressed parchment thin, crumbling into shadows.



ight The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught

FIZZY TWIZLER

The day I was caught, was when it happened, the end of
Christmas.

To them I was a rare pearl butterfly; but I'm the Christmas
oracle.

Caged, Santa can't hear me call.
Thus, no more presents under Xmas trees—for any
kid..good or not



WENDY SNYDER

The day I was caught
I chomped a fly
And got hauled out
Up into the air
I couldn't breathe
Someone held me tight
They squeezed my waist
They jammed their
Hand in my mouth
Cut my skin
And stole my lunch
Then they tossed
Me back in



caught The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught The day I was caught the

ANGELA

An owl-eyed child
she has always viewed the world
with a rare depth and perception
uncommon at her age.

No matter how dark the night
she still looks for the light
this fierce daughter of mine
who soars quietly in my sky.



MAURA O'LEARY

An owl-eyed child standing still.
Sensing all.
Silent as a mouse.
Observing.
He could feel the elastic band of tension.
He didn't move.
The violence started.
He didn't move.
Mammy had told him no matter what happened,
he must stay quiet.
Stay hidden.
Stay safe.



LISA WILLIAMS

An owl-eyed child sat behind me in the school photo. 1976, but from that sea of hot scowls and scuffed shoes I could still remember everyone's name, every single name except hers. I couldn't even remember seeing her face before. Long before photoshop she looked like she'd been added in, like she didn't belong. I see her in my street the next evening, impossibly still so small, seemingly the same age as in the photo. But she disappears before I can say hello. I need to see her again, hear her voice, know her name and learn her story.



AUDREY SEMPRUN

An owl-eyed child
A wasteland of innocence
Peel back the layers
Defying gravity
And the pull is magnetic
Drawing you into her inner circle
Leading you to a place of void
The moon howls and she cries
Knowing the depths of No.



ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

an owl-eyed child
of mine
you appear so suddenly
and you draw out my feelings
in bright colours of stars
in thick lines
bold strokes
you call echoing
echoing
echoing
in these words
of ours
that we spin and we weave
and entwine
these pillars of the night
these fairy lights
these prophecies of yesterdays
and memories of the years ahead

C.X.TURNER

An owl-eyed child
I close my eyes and see
Dark wings winking
Weeping in the moonlight
A solitary cry
Child, fly with me
Soothe the sadness
In those eyes
I reach out
He is gone
At dusk
A feathered silence
Flutters by



NITU YUMNAM

An owl-eyed child,
when peeking out the window,
found his neighbour feeding pigeons.

Witnessed humanity,
man nurturing nature,
caring for creatures
without expectations.

Rushed to his mom,
asked her to buy grains, feed hungry animals & birds,
henceforth all seasons.



MARIA A. PEREZ

The shells crunched underfoot.
I thought the sound soothing until I realized what I was
walking on. Bone fragments of all sizes. I tripped on a skull.

"Why have you brought me here?"

"To teach you sacrifice. A war was fought here so that you
could live in peace."



LISA WILLIAMS

The shells crunched underfoot, their delicacy destroyed.
"Sophia!" I elongated the vowels at the end making the
name last longer in the air. No response. The few people
braving the beach looked around, not knowing if they were
looking for a dog or a daughter.

"Soph..." The ending of the name lost that time in a choked
sob.

An unexpected wave crept higher than the others dampened
my shoes, as it retreated it stole the sand from under my
feet. I turned to steady myself, eyes scoured the sea trying
to focus as the sun danced on wave tips making the saddest
of scenes sparkle with delight.

I knew I should phone, get help, report her missing but my
phone was the other side of the beach. I still held her small
ball, which as soon as remembered dropped from my grasp.
The sea was there to catch it, rolling it over shingle before
whipping it away out of sight.

I knew then she was gone.



The shells crunched underfoot
The shells crunched underfoot
The shells crunched underfoot
The shells crunched underfoot

JILLIAN CALAHAN

The shells crunched underfoot
and I thought that maybe
if I took my shoes off,
it would cushion the blow.
But no matter how softly
I begged my steps to land,
the shells still crunched beneath me.
I think that's when I first learned
that sometimes we break beautiful things
no matter how hard we try not to.



ELIZABETH BELT

The shells crunched underfoot
The day we met.
You pointed out and named
Shells you knew and
I taught you
To recognize live ones.
We talked about anything and everything.
Like two old souls reconnecting.
Then I crawled back into the sea.
Wishing you were an octopus too.



The shells crunched underfoot

SERLINA ROSE

The shells crunched underfoot
as they strolled along the shoreline,
hand in hand,
'neath the fading sunlight.
A beautiful portrait of lovers
embraced by a tranquil twilight.
The shells crunched underfoot
and the tune was a dreamy chime.



KATIE WILLOW

The shells crunched underfoot as the man walked the beach
with his camera. The waves and the light mattered more
than the weight of his feet. In this moment a pebble gained
the greatest of importance. And permanence.



BITHI PAUL

The shells crunched underfoot. Memories of past,
scattered on the shore of the sea of life, broke. I
watched the sun set, soaking up the apricity.

Death would descend with coldness of night. Moon
would welcome me in the sky as a Star.



The shells crunched underfoot The shells crunched underfoot The shells crunched underfoot

ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

the shells crunched underfoot
as we were walking down the steep sandy hill
otherwise silently
careful not to sink too deep
we didn't even look at each other

maybe one day
when we get to the sea

the waves splashed around us
as we were swimming
otherwise silently
careful not to drown
we didn't say a word to each other

maybe one day
when we find the place

the seagulls laughed
as they were circling the island
but we sat silently north and south
careful not to get too close to the heart

maybe one day
when we find ourselves back home



@MRKOBAYAASHI

If I rise before the sorrow,
Lull my tired and aching bones to sleep,
For
I've no wish to face the horror
As a million broken mothers weep.
So
Stop the sun upon the morrow,
Hide my guilt and torment six foot deep.



SARAH L LORD

If I rise
Before the sorrow
Takes me
Before the darkness
Overwhelms me
With dreams of falling
Always falling
Ever burning
Into cold oblivion
Then I shall rise
On wings of morning
Ever burning
Bright star
Morning star
Lucifer
Belonging



If I rise before the sorrow If I rise before the sorrow If I rise before the sorrow

M. B. STEPHENS

If I rise before the sorrow
I dream of gathering light
as it ignites the horizon
...a bird fluttering softly
within the confines of my palm...
I long to fill my cup with its resonance
letting the harmonies consume me
with the simplicity and complexity of being
I will sway in the purpling haze
graceful as dawn
and the shadows that haunt
will shrink within its timbre

...if I rise before the sorrow swallows me whole...



SADHANA RANA

If I rise before the sorrow
I would pay off my mortgaged tomorrows
Warm my polar heart
In the Northern Lights
As an aurora splashed my sky
Salt marsh tears would dry
The lonely loon would fly
That dream I would realise
Before once more it died
If I rise...
If..



KATIE WILLOW

If I rise before the sorrow wakes, can I leave it sleeping
soundly in my bed and tiptoe out my bedroom door?

Dress quietly in my brightest clothes and escape to spend
the day singing, dancing and laughing?

But what would the sleeping sorrow dream up for me, then?



ETHAN PATRICK

If I rise before the sorrow, I have learned to ride the wave to
avoid the ruminations of the past and of tomorrow.

One day at a time, I have learned to take the ride step by
step to avoid a free fall through this head of mine.



S.T. HILLS

If I rise before the sorrow sneaks into me, I might avoid
feeling downhearted.

If I stay in bed, I can hide under the covers.

It's comfortable, warm, cosy, yet lonely.

But HA! There you are, popping into my mind when I need
you.

Always smiling, always there.



If I rise before the sorrow If I rise before the sorrow If I rise before the sorrow

JOHN TANNHAUSER

If I rise before the sorrow
I will remember your words:
"I melt in you"
"You are my bones"
And: "May you bury me"
For you would rather go first
Than bear that burden
So I pray
To spare
Your gentle, abiding heart
And that it not be
Just yet



DENISE CARRUTHERS

If I rise before the sorrow
I'll swallow her breath
Mourn to morning

I'll be white knighting
Righting wrongs of yesterday

Sewing tears on sadder lashes
She'll feel my phoenix from the ashes

So long into slumber
To an ember twilight
I'll sing her down in hallelujah



JIMMY WEBB

If I rise before the sorrow,
I will wait, watch it unfurl,
let it catch up, for time has
slowed it down. The ache
that used to pang will ask
for acknowledgement,
before the echo drifts away
and the day is full of bright
things to say.



R.M. (STORM) WORLEY

If I rise before the sorrow can grab hold, there are moments
of clarity where glimpses of tomorrows hold no pain or fear.
Too many yesterdays, however, have given me a bleak view,
so I can only hope to just persevere.



ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

if I rise before the sorrow
borrows death's wide black hood
and covers my face with tears
I will not count the constellations
I will not starve my dreams
I will not run from fate
if I rise
I will fly
on



MAURA O'LEARY

The shadow seeped over the wall.
She curled through the cracks like tendrils of ivy.
She crept over the lichen-entombed ground
towards the faint glow of the house.
Pebbles of laughter rang out.
Celebrating, before her body had even turned cold.
She'd ensure they'd never smile again.



DIOTIMA

The shadow seeped
over the wall
slowly spilling
pooling at her feet
soon, it crept up her legs
wrapping around her torso
eventually, gripping her neck
finally, engulfing her completely
she let out a long sigh
relishing how
the dark clung to her



The shadow seeped over the wall

ÉLAN

The shadow seeped over the wall
folding the dawn in daily origami;

carrying propitious years in aging arbor,
elongating hopes in cradled nests,
singing perches, and forgotten verdure—

a spilling silhouette of ripened providence
in wry repose across an uneven canvas.



LEENA ANTONY

The shadow seeped over the wall
lured by my melancholy's
extraordinary charm.
It's so strange to think
the other day
with you
my heart slept peacefully
beneath your hands.
I will swallow my pride
and admit
I am dark, hollow and adrift
without you.



The shadow seeped over the wall The shadow seeped over the wall The shadow seeped over the wall The shadow seeped over the wall

KATIE WILLOW

The shadow seeped over the wall until you bade it stop. It paused, undulating and full of thought, so full I could feel it: the need to escape and find weaker prey. Your hand swept the air between us and the shade began to dissipate, wisped away into the light.



WANDERING BIKU

The shadow seeped over the wall
and there it stayed, eyeballing me.
Some days it would creep up the garden,
sometimes right to the windows
and I would have to check the locks.
But it was never not there.
An insatiable black hole
consuming my confidence.



BITHI PAUL

The shadow seeped over the wall and entered into the house. It slithered into their beds and took over their minds.

They woke up, feeling gloomy. The shadow smiled. It could not keep the sun from rising, but could make sure they would never feel its warmth.



The shadow seeped over the wall

ÉLAN

I am too lazy
to sleep
my suspender arms s t r e t c h e d
while my feet,

two fleshy weights
bound around

an exotic
flower

lotus-eaters
style; my eyelids
unduly limp to lift; my
head locked
in *concentration*
of poorly
keeping focus on t h a t
rhythmic sound like snoring.



I am too lazy to sleep I am too lazy to sleep I am too lazy to sleep I am too lazy to sleep I am too lazy to sleep

SEOTI BHATTACHARYYA

It started on a Sunday. The end of the world as we knew it. A pale, purposeless Sunday that looked and felt like any other - up until people just started acting crazy, falling upon unsuspecting ones, felling them mercilessly with bloody slashes of papers or wicked jabs of pens.

Those of us who were still inside, survived. We watched in helpless astonishment as the streets, the sidewalks, the walls and doors and windows, even the leaves on the silent trees transformed into speckled red, our vision swimming in blood.

The gloomy Sunday passed. Monday turned up, even worse.

Days passed. The numbers dwindled. We tuned in to bits of news whenever we could, eager to learn more about this shocking turn of events.

That's when we heard of the Humeroid.

With humanity's end upon us, a group of scientists worked sleepless nights creating a machine called the Humeroid - some quirky blend of artificial intelligence and a quasi-human form, with the power of invading the minds of everyone on Earth. They uploaded all of humanity's best traits into it. Once complete, it swept into our dreams, cleansing us overnight; stealing all of our negatives and replacing them with forgotten positives.

When the process was over, the Humeroid disintegrated, taking all of our knowledge and the fruits of human labour with it. We walked the earth once more, a fortunate few, robbed of half of ourselves yet wiser for it, exuding hope from every pore.



JOHN TANNHAUSER

It started on a Sunday
'Cause I recall a roast
Whether it was lamb or chook
Is not what matters most

The table started trembling
The stench of fetid ghost
The guests all ran off screaming
Now I no longer host



SHELLY SMITH

It started on a Sunday
the Legos spilled all over the house
or was that the pieces of our lives?
we stepped on them, hopped in cursing pain
and with Monday, the winter came
on a single gust of wind,
or was it a twister of many angry words?
Tuesday brought the night,
the darkest night of soul
a time as long as it was sharp
and how those hours carved us
into unbalanced shapes we couldn't define
or recognize
still, we looked into the rest of the week
with eyes naïve enough to believe in sight
how alarmed were we to find
that the rest of the week was worse.



R.M. (STORM) WORLEY

It started on a Sunday, I remember, the day when I met you.
A small crack in the defenses so carefully constructed, I
never expected that first 'hello' would forever alter my life's
road.



@VWC_WRITES

It started on a Sunday
the act of unbecoming

a figment of faith
dove on a spire
observing the mad world

at times, I folded myself small
into a poem
read only by the lonely

distant bells tolling
for the quiet ones
under a wintry sun
the sacred art of being no one.



BITHI PAUL

It started on a Sunday night when my utensils disappeared from the kitchen. It became a regular occurrence. My furniture and clothes went next.

My bed vanished this Sunday. Thanking Death for the warning, I finished my last book without sleeping in time.



ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

it started on a Sunday
I took a chance and walked out
I made an enemy of forgetfulness
and every time I opened my mouth to speak
words would start pouring
like the rain that overcame
my sun-day hopes
I still took the risk
and talked about all the things
I didn't before
and I opened all the doors and all the windows
water flowing in and out
we swam in everything I held back
from you
from me
and from the world
the world was an ocean
and I was free



WANDERING BIKU

It started on a Sunday,
panic always did.
Counting the minutes
before bed, dread on
the rise, from my
belly to my eyes.
I hated going to sleep
cos I hated waking up,
my prayers unanswered.
No sudden nausea,
virus or flu just the
terror of another
week in school.



CARL RIPLEY LOCKE

"It started on a Sunday morning." Ace sipped her tea.
Ice cubes clinked as Jes swirled her cup. "What did?"
"When clouds turned red."
"They weren't always red?"
Ace shook her head. "They used to be white."
"White clouds and red rain?"
"Rain wasn't red either."



LOSS FOR WORDS

It started on a Sunday
memories creeping in
of you and I
by Monday
I cried
thinking how you died
and cursed your God
by Thursday
I couldn't stand
the bottle in my hand
trying to take the pain
Saturday
I couldn't cry
I felt dead inside
Then Sunday...
started again



MAURA O'LEARY

It started on a Sunday and finished on a Monday.
The Saturday people were first to be annihilated.
Followed by the Fridays.
The Thursdays were quickly erased.
Mondays followed Wednesdays.
Tuesday's children survived.
The destroyers cherished grace.



It started on a Sunday It started on a Sunday It started on a Sunday It started on a Sunday It started on a Sunday

R.M. (STORM) WORLEY

lend me your voice
and you will see
madness and devotion
as closely intertwined
as breaths and heartbeats
cradling certainty in the soul
a shadow animus
reflecting the nature that birthed it

"my enigma"



SYREETA MUIR

Lend me your voice?

Flying words,
berry bright in your beak.

Mine are empty:
reasons, nests.
Haniwa for the dead, and

I'm so tired
summoning them,

they do not speak
for me.



lend me your voice :lend me your voice lend me your voice lend me your voice

MELISA QUIGLEY

There is a crack on the wall
In the shape of a heart
A shaky rendition
Of how our love started
Joined together
Along the same lines
The painter wanted to patch it
But I said to leave it
We're marked in history
The rest is a mystery
As we take one day
At a time



ASHA CHAUHAN

There is a crack on the wall
Of my heart
As I flip through
the pages of life
Memories peep out of it

A flashback of childhood
Drenched in
Stream of emotions
I pine to relive
those magical moments



There is a crack on the wall

WILDER ROSE

There is a crack on the wall, an alluring escape that
demands him to love me loud on this silent night,
December's merry ambiance under our feet. We are
adventurers of our own tale, with the sway of the trees.
We know a love like this is a miracle, ever as before, like a
star for one more night, or birdsong on the rise of dawn.



NOOR MAHAL

There is a crack on the wall
Let it grow, let it overflow
Let the light shine through
It will spread, surely, slowly
Silently breaking through
Until the wall will crumble
And you'll feel the warmth
Of freedom on your face



MARGARET LONSDALE

There is a crack on the wall/above my kitchen
windowpane/Mornings I drink ginger water/hold my
breath, count to nine/then I climb to/a place of purple light
tangos/silken moss everywhere/rainbow icicles shimmer in
cloudless sky/Pulse of distant Blues/rhythmic waves,
magnolia air/Clear river ripple beckoning/Fiery-throated
hummers in waterfall spray/Skin and bone fall away/I am
eyes only/heart with new wings/Fledgling expecting to fly.



There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall

@MRKOBAYAASHI

There is a crack on the wall - not in it, but on it, skirting the infinite no-space between wall and not-wall, never quite existing yet eternally there, defiant. There are things inside the crack, and they are making their way out...



MADHAVI. K

There is a crack on the wall that built itself between us. It glowers by day - a malignant eye, a basilisk stare. By night it seeps into our dreams - a restless rustling consumes us!

We keep an eye on the crack. With a cruel intent, it scowls - crooked and charred.

My love and I, we each hide behind a mask of mundaneness. She smiles at me archly - it doesn't reach her eyes. I smile back and she shivers.

The crack is splitting wide open now. We're passengers en route to a heartbreak!



SHELLY SMITH

There is a crack on the wall and it speaks to me. It whispers unintelligible things. It glows blue light and ticks like time and I've grown weary of listening. So I take a sledgehammer bigger than me and I broaden it into a hole. Then I peer inside, I leave this place behind and step on through.



ELIZABETH BELT

There is a crack on the wall in our art studio.
It has taken on a new life. People have filled it with marbles,
beads, clay, broken tiles, tiny dolls, toy cars, bits of broken
mirror, sea glass, shells, crystals. Around the crack a mirror
village sprouted. Tiny fingers move the pieces. An eye peers
out at me. Hello?



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

There is a crack on the wall in the exact shape of your eye,
now that I think about it. I haven't been able to find the
source of its growth.

Every time I see it, I can't help but think of you. And each
time, it seems to grow just a smidge closer to the image I
have of your face.



JUST ME POETRY

There is a crack on the wall hidden behind a shelf. Often out
of mind, a story behind stories. Sometimes reaching for a
book I remember, hesitate, a smile spreads.
We danced, music loud. I snuck a kiss, surprised you kissed
back, we tumbled hard into the wall.



There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall

DORIS WINN

There is a crack on the wall. It appeared during the night. In my dreams that wall was a doorway through which a friend, long dead, re-entered my life and told me of my future. So now I'm lying in my bed, staring at this crack, and pondering. Eventually I rise and walk to the wall and run my fingers along it which causes a childhood song to play within my mind. 'Oranges and Lemons say the bells of St Clements'. The crack opens a little wider and I find my fingers slipping into it. 'You owe me five farthings say the bells of St Martins'. I slide my shoulder into the widening gap. 'When will you pay me say the bells of Old Bailey.' Knowing I'll never grow rich the bells of Shoreditch ring the death knell and as my whole body slips into whatever lies beyond the candle goes out and the chopper falls upon my head.



HER GREY SIDE

There is a crack on the wall
And I put it there
To remind my mind
Of the break inside
That riddles the same
And gnawing grows
Splitting thoughts
Painted in ache
And to what end of demo
Do I begin to renovate
For I don't yet know
How much more
These bared bones can take.



JESSICA BOURKE

There is a crack on the wall
one

.

.

two, three
echoes of you
loss on a screen

There is a crack on the wall
four, five
run my pinky along
slip a promise inside

There is a crack on the wall
six, seven
outlined in blue
codes of contention

There is a crack on the wall
eight, nine
scars of december
imprinted missed time

There is a crack on the wall
ten, eleven
pockets of fear
of unwanted lessons

There is a crack on the wall
eleven so far
precisely the same
as the cracks on my heart



There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall There is a crack on the wall

JILLIAN CALAHAN

There is a crack on the wall. Subtle, but just noticeable enough to bother me. How could I have missed it? I blink and suddenly it looks just a little bit bigger, but how? I think it just sticks out like a sore thumb now and I wish I was numb so I didn't have to look at it anymore. Now my head hurts and a twinge of pain bursts behind my vision. The crack in the wall grows. I blink again and now it's twice the size as it was before. I blink again and again and again and now the crack has torn apart the ceiling. My eyes widen as inch by inch the roof begins to split. I expect to feel the rain I hear so clearly outside my window but instead, all I see are stars. My skull feels like it is being torn in two. The big dipper. The little dipper. A shooting star. I scream in agony as light surrounds me and white hot heat swallows me like the sun. I see nothing now. I feel nothing now. I can close my eyes again.

I wake up in the psych ward, head pounding. I've been here before. Something catches my eye. There, in the corner, is a crack on the wall...



TESS P.

There is a crack on the wall,
A fissure into the future.
When I'm feeling frustrated,
Deadbeat and down;
I get close up
Hold my breath
And try see hope
Beyond these battlefield bricks.



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

The dead walked the moon, in search of satisfaction in their afterlife: love requited, vengeance achieved, or life mourned.

Instead, they found peace in the stillness of space. After all, it experienced time as they did: infinitely and with only one purpose.



DIOTIMA

the dead
walked the moon
finding solace
in his soft light
some curled up tight
hiding in the craters of his eyes
waiting patiently for
past loves to reunite
others preferred
to spend their time
laughing and playing
sliding down
the curve of his smile
for they knew
they'd be
waiting awhile



The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon

SUZANNA LUNDALE

the dead walked the moon
in those days long after the
green planet went from
green to brown to green again

the ghosts of man's great folly
paced the moondust and craters
that captured the hearts and
minds of two generations,
muttering to themselves and
kicking over stiffened flags
designed to stand ever
to attention in the
absence of breeze

flags, corporate logos of
nations long fallen into disrepair,
scanty shrouds to wrap the
dreams of those same
breathless generations



VIOLA DAWN

The dead walked the moon and that's why it haunts us. But
astronauts get there and it's this weird rock. It's a trick. The
otherworld thinks we're jerks. Deities think we're jokes. Big
gun gods are like disappointed Dads rolling their eyes at us.
Demons dig trauma.



The dead walked the moon

SHELLY SMITH

The dead walked the moon, for they love best the light of night, love to watch it float behind them like a child's balloon. See it bob, tethered there? Keen and shining with the reflection of the day, so proud to carry on the illumination of its counterpart. Just like the departed, and how they remind us, rising from their rest to bring it out every dusk. As an offering to all those seeking in the dark, they stroll across the cosmos, hold it up with love for the blindest eyes. And in their great patience and not to overwhelm us, they pull the cord every dawn and hide it in the sky.



CARL RIPLEY LOCKE

"The dead walked the moon and feared nothing. They conquered everything, brought down the expanse of yesteryear's hope which we thought would save us. It fell in a spectacle we deserved. So I'm begging you. Don't come here." The captain pressed the stop button.



BITHI PAUL

The dead walked the moon. Extraterrestrial travels were in vogue. Still, somewhere on Earth, each day a girl continued to learn she was a woman in a man's universe and cut wings of her female dreams.



The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon

SIMON COLLINS

The dead walked the moon
Looking up towards the Earth
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust
In merriment and mirth



DENISE CARRUTHERS

The dead walked the moon
their footsteps fell like thunder.
Cracking giant steps
and their voices echoed
in the craters and the caves...

Above the sky rocked with storms
Whereupon the earth trembled;

"Who's been sleeping in my bed!"



MIKE OLLEY

The dead walked the moon
on the 13th of June
and said it was very pleasant
If you stay with your guide,
avoid the dark side,
and stick to the sunny crescent.



LISA BOYADZHIEVA

The dead walked the moon
In the distance sounded rumbling
Their suits heavy, heads weary
"We mustn't stop," he said,
"for we might fall within"
I knew he was right

From beyond, the dust rises
Only to remain in limbo
By the absence of gusting winds
An endless road



MEGWAF

The dead walked the moon. Earth didn't want them,
Heaven turned out to be a fallacy, and Hell was overflowing.



NOOR MAHAL

The dead walked the moon
It's where they go at the end
Never question the enormity
Of this tranquil statement
Given as an insurance
Against the infernal alternative
To compel you to forget
Any belief you might hold dear



The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon

JILLIAN CALAHAN

"The dead walked the moon."

Mr. Gibbon mumbled the same phrase from the same chair in the same corner day after day. No one knew what it meant. He had been here at the Riverwalk Memory Care Facility for so long that I don't think anyone cared to figure it out anymore. Even though he said the same thing every day, I always made sure to say hello to him. Hoping that somewhere in his mind, he could still see that someone cared.

It was my last day of volunteering at the facility. I saved my final goodbye for Mr. Gibbon. At first, I didn't utter a word. Just sat with him as he stared out the window, watching the first summer's rain.

"The dead walked the moon," he muttered. I sighed deeply.

"Oh Mr. Gibbon. I wish I knew what was in that brain of yours."

"The dead walked the moon."

"I know Mr. Gibbon. I know," I said quietly.

For the first time ever, he turned to me and looked me right in the eyes.

"1971. Project Perigee. Top secret."

"Mr. Gibbon?"

"It was my fault."

"What was, Mr Gibbon?"

"4 astronauts. I miscalculated the fuel. They couldn't come home.... They couldn't come home. We just left them there. When they landed, the dead walked the moon, and they didn't even know it."

Before I could ask anything else, he was gone again. Lost and mumbling, somewhere on the moon.



The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon The dead walked the moon

RACHEL NASH

I ran towards the melodic humming,
Wondering what was making
such an enchanting noise.
As I turned the corner,
Two tabbies disappeared
Down the street.



MAURA O'LEARY

I ran towards the melodic humming.
It lured me as the sirens lured the sailors of yore.
Not knowing if I were going to share the same fate,
I kept moving towards the sound.
To my joy, it was a swarm of bees
which somehow managed to survive the annihilation.



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

I ran towards the melodic humming, certain that it was you.
Soon, I saw it was many of you harmoniously growing in
volume. It took every ounce of me to resist your happy
sounds. As I was about to falter, I felt someone's touch and
a wave of shame washed over me.



@VWC_WRITES

I ran towards the melodic humming
a tune caught in the throat of birds
soft thrum of rain on repeat
a low burr of dragonfly's wings

if once I was a small death
now, I was a little alive
timpani of wild horses

tundra of desire singing
we are, we are.. we are loved.



LESLIE ALMBERG

I ran towards the melodic humming
to discover what the universe sings

There I found a tired mother
bound by exhausted guitar strings

She traded in her humour
wove delicate strands of light

She tuned in to Andromeda
and wrote the song of life



melodic humming I ran towards the melodic humming I ran towards the

VIPUL VIJ

I ran towards the melodic humming
trying to find, from where it was coming
pain in her voice touched my soul
in this melody my tears did fall;

It was a song of a broken heart
longings in verses tore me apart,
I found her finally playing a guitar
sitting beside a fallen star.



MADHAVI. K

I ran towards
the melodic humming
I ran towards
the fading light

Memories flashed by glistening golden
Every cell gently thrumming

Somewhere behind me
I feel an undulating

Music begins to recede
Darkness is overpowering

I know I'm not dreaming
I know I'm not awake

An unlit stillness throbs around me



FRANCESJMACGREGOR

I ran towards the melodic humming
Feet a-stumbling
To find you,
Bloodied thorns
Beasts with horns
I'll find you!
Memories haunt
Task daunts
But I'll find you,
Now I'm here
Hums disappear
I can't find you,
I wake to face
Cold empty space
No trace..
Of you.



S.T. HILLS

I ran towards the melodic humming coming from the
picture-perfect cottage.
An abandoned experience of bliss poked my inner smile.
When a man with dazzling eyes opened the door, took my
wrist and gently put his lips on my hand, I knew romance
hadn't vanished.



melodic humming I ran towards the melodic humming I ran towards the

FIZZY TWIZLER

I ran towards the melodic humming
A cherub with curly hair
Was strumming his bow like a guitar
At my front door
Same time the postman knocked
Locking his eyes on me
I felt a spark & then in each other's eyes
We saw love hearts
Cherub gone—forgotten



A. A. RUBIN

I ran towards the melodic humming,
like a sailor drawn to the siren's song--
--and dashed myself against the rocks of memory.



MEGWAF

I ran towards the Melodic, humming as my feet pounded the earth. Each verse timed to perfection, this was better than counting. I hit the ship as chorus broke, raising my voice in harmony with the explosion behind. No-one would be singing by the time we hit the cadenza, they'd be nothing but tacet timelines in an orchestrated battle.



AMAN ABDI

I ran towards the melodic humming
To understand the physics of souls
And all I got were elliptical curls
Of people being controlled
Singing in laconic syllables
The guards were on patrol
And then I woke up.



@MRKOBAYAASHI

I ran towards the melodic humming, as we all did. Like
fools, ripe for slaughter. Sure enough, the closer we got,
the more beautiful it sounded, drawing us in. Soon, the
bonds which held our bodies together loosened to the
hum, and we dissolved into sound...



LISA BOYADZHIEVA

I ran towards
the melodic humming
Curly shimmers of light
blinding my sight
A quick glance back
a world in rubble

And as moons erupt
celestial dust crumples
Right before my eyes
truth is finally revealed



melodic humming I ran towards the melodic humming I ran towards the melodic humming I ran towards the

MIKE OLLEY

My hand closed over the handle and instantly I realised my mistake. Jones & his gang's hidden giggles should've told me to let go but no, I'll be stuck here all day, opening the door for all. At least until the fire brigade get here to release my superglued hand



JOHN TANNHAUSER

My hand closed over the handle
And that was when I froze
Scratching on the door outside
Put in mind some horror shows

I passed it off as fancy thought
Then opened up the door
Overpowered straight away
Fido'd knocked me to the floor



FRANCESJMACGREGOR

My hand closed over the handle of my lovely new house.
The thick walls held history and promise of happiness. But
that night I woke to a faraway sound, as someone walking
with a stick on wooden floor, nearer every second..thump,
thump, thump, CRASH..



My hand closed over the handle My hand closed over the handle My hand closed over the handle

ALTBIRDINGFACTS

My hand closed over the handlebar mustache of the first guy. I swung him around and he staggered headfirst into the spokes of Bicycle Guy's penny-farthing. BG fell with a clatter and lay motionless.

The Portland Gang's reign of terror was coming to an end.



WILDER ROSE

My hand closed over the handle to your soul,
relishing thoughts hung aloft,
gently opening the rusty door,
red paint cracking into garnet embers,
rekindling my whispers woven into the shadows,
because when we collide, I lose all control,
but here I go, asking

please,
let me come in.



SYREETA MUIR

My hand closed over the handle, brave, like a Swan, the house is so warm. Fire greets me, never met, but we know: Forest has forgiven me. It's good, so I place a foot on stone floor.
But of course, it's only leaves. There is no house.



My hand closed over the handle. My hand closed over the handle. My hand closed over the handle.

VIPUL VIJ

My hand closed over the handle
caressing it with yearning,
for beyond this door was a world
where there was no suffering;

But the handle didn't turn
door was locked from inside,
notice on the door read:-
"Entry Permitted Only After Dying".



JUST ME POETRY

My hand closed over the handle, axe head weight felt in
my arms as I begin the swing. Above my head it
balanced as I keep my eye on the notch. Mind clears as I
focus. Repetition of the motion so calming.



RANDY GRAF

My hand closed over the handle
Just as the chest began to buck
The damn thing was awake again
That is about right for my luck

I could hear the foul beast inside
As it did whine and mewl and gnaw
Opened the lid to check on it
Sharp teeth were the last thing I saw



My hand closed over the handle My hand closed over the handle My hand closed over the handle

KATHERINE TRAVERSE

My hand closed over the handle of the study door, stolen
key cold in my grip. My sister's ghost whispered "Don't,"
as I shut her out, locking myself into the pitch-dark room.
A pulse, and candles flickered to life all on their own. I
squinted in the sudden light, taking in the shelves of
forbidden magical texts.
The answer had to be here. I refused to be haunted by her
any longer.



WENDY SNYDER

My hand closed over the handle
Which was unexpectedly warm
Smoke seeped under the door

The back of my neck tingled
I hesitated
Hairs stood on edge

"Not this way"
Whispered into my mind

I listened
And backed away



My hand closed over the handle
My hand closed over the handle
My hand closed over the handle
My hand closed over the handle

MARIA A. PEREZ

This is not my bed
Constraining bars
Too much white
All these monitors
Harsh lights overhead

The decor is all wrong
Window without curtains
Such an ugly view
This is not where I wanted
To sing my last song



LEENA ANTONY

This is not my bed.
It is the space between
words and silence
where I feel as if
I've never been so bitterly cold,
where there is no warmth
of love
or even the tepid breath
of infatuation.



This is not my bed

ANEESHA SHEWANI

This is not my bed
So ruffled, yet unslept
Lying across its width
These feelings unkempt
Gather torn hopes,
Tattered, battered, shattered
Knocked out senseless,
Into your soothing arms
For how else will I ever
Shake away the bitter taste
Of blood on cracked lips



NITU YUMNAM

This is not my bed.

It isn't festooned with the strings of your scent or your
loved-filled laughter;

its strings aren't smitten with your amorous touch
either.

This bed isn't mine;
it can't be mine.



WANDERING BIKU

I am not sure which came first:
the stupidity or the spoon-feeding.
We are spoken to as idiots,
fed soundbites as if full sentences
will bore and bloat our busy
little minds. We are told and
no longer ask or demand of
the patronising wet-nurse.



ERIC DANIEL CLARKE

I am not sure which came first,
the dawn of light, the end of dark,
who measures words, who counts,
who prays, we wake, we sleep, we try,
some eat, some bleed, fall down, get up,
and yes, at times restart, give in, I am,
I'm not, the earth is flat, we all go round.



@MRKOBAYAASHI

I am not sure which came first,
The endless ocean or my raging thirst,
The unrelenting midday sun
Or the cool, calm sea I drift upon
Or if, perhaps, I am not here,
And all the world has disappeared



I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first

DENISE CARRUTHERS

I am not sure which came first
In or out

But an end flew past
fast as swifts & turns
& Möbius strips

Never never
close to coming
first or second,
I fall into the hollow
that swallows shame,
follow its ouroboros
until I'm sure

It's eggs for egos
I don't care where.



MEGWAF

I am not sure which came first
the stifled cry of a frozen thought
or the flood of thawed regrets
all I know is which left last
like a whisper of soot
clinging
to ash



I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first

@VWC_WRITES

I am not sure which came first
the breaking or the softness

there was a beautiful song
& sunlight caught in stained glass
then years of ache

winter had settled in my bones
but always some yellow flowers
in the near future
like a promise waiting to be fulfilled.



AUTHOR PEYTON STORM

I am not sure which came first. Was it his eyes that took my
breath away or the ease of his words and the picture they
painted? Was it his quirky humor that not everyone could
follow or the fullness of his bottom lip, of which I'd chance
a taste, my hushed, secret desire?



I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first I am not sure which came first

ANEESHA SHEWANI

It just wasn't enough
The way you stared
From across the hallway
Devouring me bit-by-bit
Wanting a touch
Craving a sound
Guttural, deep
Screaming fulfilment
So, we just stood there
Our eyes locked,
The keys thrown away



MICHELE GRIEVE

It just wasn't enough:
all the thought-regression
feeling-repression
body-squeezing
soul-tweaking
fat or thin
I couldn't even begin
to ever be enough.

It was never my job
to fill out your soul,
to sew up your scars.

I resign.



It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough

MAREE JAEGER

It just wasn't enough;

stands

in the shower
sloughing off dead skin
can't scrub hard enough
red raw.

walks

through the bush, deep into eucalyptus
gathering earthy souvenirs in the grooves
of boots.

sits

with coffee and an empty chair
awkwardness of no sugar on the table.

talks

to strangers, takes their pulse.

lies

on a king size bed
closing down the eyelids
exhaling into dreams.

the way to say

wasn't enough.



ough It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough

WENDY SNYDER

It just wasn't enough
Ketsup
There never is
I turned the bottle over
And dumped a bunch more

Oops, now I need more fries



RACHEL NASH

It just wasn't enough:
Violin, recorders, guitar,
Piano, of course,
Free drum kit - who could resist!
First pay-cheque flute
Electric cello and
Two year saving saxophone.
So I went to auction and bought a
Cornet!



It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough It just wasn't enough

MARTIN HORTON

The box outside my door contained all I would need for my adventure. Hunting knife, crossbow, throwing knives, blow darts, dried venison, fig and date cakes, and of course that essential: mead. As dawn broke, I whistled for my trusty steed - a wheelchair designed by the finest blacksmith in the shire. Lost my legs to hideous beasts. My right was frazzled by the flames of a dragon. My left was wrenched out in a fight with an ogre. He thought he'd won until I took him out with one of my blow darts. Straight into the back of the neck, and down he fell, and boy did he make a heck of a noise when he fell.

Ahhh, it will be good to be back on the road again, facing demons and the nasties that exist in this fairy tale kingdom. Fe fi fo fum, let's have some monster bashing fun, and may I find my dearly beloved princess at the end of it all, hoorah!



NOOR MAHAL

The box outside my door
Is one I never ordered
An allegory of my trespassing
Which came without my asking
The Netherworld rang my doorbell
And though I did not answer
Death, like the box, came in uninvited



AUDREY SEMPRUN

The box outside my door sat vacant and abandoned I took it
inside and gave it value and a purpose It began to thrive and
a little ballerina appeared one bright and sunny day and she
began to dance as the music began to play

Remembering Scott



CATHERINE BEAVIS

the box
outside my door
emerged in starlight
a pearlescent portal
luring me in
scents evoking
memories
of bygone days
drifting back to
guitars on a beach
fireside dancing
beneath a
serenading moon
wistful moments
of a
timeless love
all revived
in the box
by my door



The box outside my door The box outside my door The box outside my door The box outside my door

AMAN ABDI

The box outside my door
Reminded me of the box she always had in front of
her
A clock with a metronome
“To keep time of the swing” she would say
As she applied her cherry rose nail polish
With all the accuracy of a viper

A vixen she was...

And she knew it



ELIZABETH BELT

The box outside my door
Has scents of dirt and dogwood.
It's come from the mountains
From Granny.
She's sent me an early spring.
Birds have filled my lawn,
Neighbors wave yoo-hooing to me.
Grinning ear to ear I open one flap.
Lilacs and bees...
Should I open it all the way?



RACHEL NASH

The box outside my door
Long awaited order of books?
Tantalising treats?
Toilet roll supplies?
Bomb?
Hold on, that's next door's address!



MADHAVI. K

The box outside my door
Sat red and unyielding

Remnants of my unrequited love
Returned so
Unceremoniously

I stood looking at it
A bowl of raspberries in my hand

The resonance of vermilion
A fresh gash on my heart

A healing wound bloodied again
Where do I go
To escape the pain?

My hopes and dreams
Drift away into the darkness forever

But where do I go?



The box outside my door The box outside my door The box outside my door The box outside my door

SARAH L LORD

The box outside my door
Is from my sister
It doesn't say so on the label
It doesn't need to
It has a certain familiarity
A cheerful malevolence
Imparted in part
By its many layered wrappings
A cubist rendition
A modern mummification
Hermetically sealed
Against all intrusion
Enough gaffer tape
To deplete global supplies
In that online emporium
You know the one I mean
The one more ubiquitous
Than a yowling stray cat
In a 60s spaghetti western
The postman bless his socks
Hands me a Stanley knife
I admire his optimism
And take it from there
Three knives
One scalpel
And a saw blade later
I surrender

Pass me the angle grinder



JIMMY WEBB

A butterfly in the classroom
painted blues and greens on the walls,
told stories of cheeky fairies.

If only the adults saw.

She sprinkled glitter on freckled noses,
joined in with all the sneezing,
they roared at the private joke.

If only the adults saw.

She promised bright futures,
whispered in ears of silent souls,
flitted out, wrote 222 in the mist...

...If only the adults saw.



NOOR MAHAL

A butterfly in the classroom
Frail and lovelorn
Flutters away in a spray of colours
Whilst the lecture proceeds
Clouds tempt my mind
As it wanders through the window
My foot taps a tune
Only I and the butterfly can sing



Butterfly in the classroom A butterfly in the classroom A butterfly in the classroom

KATHERINE TRAVERSE

A butterfly in the classroom puts everyone to sleep, blue dust from its wings settling over nodding heads. Even the teacher succumbs, yawning. The butterfly lands on the corner desk by the window. A boy sits, wide awake, considering the clock. It has stuttered to a stop. The boy waits patiently, letting his classmates sink deeper into sleep; letting their thoughts stretch and settle, like perfectly steeped tea. Glittery smoke drifts out of their ears and around their heads. The boy rises from his seat, plucking at the smoke; it tears off into his hand like candy floss. He happily samples his classmate's dreams. They taste bitter and sweet.



SARAH L LORD

A butterfly
In the classroom
A touch here
A settling there
The dust of summer
On mismatched wings
A chimera of sunlight
And cool reflected shadow
He
She
Neither or both
Only the butterfly knows



KIANA DONAE

a butterfly;
in the classroom with
wings newly emerged....

a reminder;
she will soon fly off
eager to see the world....

full of delight
...& wonder
a kaleidoscope of colors

no longer a girl;
she is the butterfly
with wings fully emerged.



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

A butterfly in the classroom is more than enough to distract from the day's lesson plans. Its spectacular colors and movements may inspire fear or inspiration or plain awe or any mix of feelings.

And to think that the butterfly has simply lost its way for a moment.



RACHEL NASH

A butterfly in the classroom
Fluttering gaily above heads
An iridescent display
Holds the children enraptured
Until it escapes through an open window
Into the net of the man in the white coat
“That will be useful in Biology”



WENDY SNYDER

A butterfly in the classroom could have been magical if it weren't pinned to a board and dissected.



JENNY O'GORMAN

A butterfly in the classroom is a gift; in them you have found one who can blend and blaze in equal measure.

I've never been a teacher, not formally, but I look out for butterflies. They're always the ones with new interests, fervent, esurient.

Cherish them.



FRANCESJMACGREGOR

They used to hold hands
When golden bands
Mirrored lovers' love
A-sparkling

They used to share jokes
'Ere bonds became yokes
And tears began
A-falling

They used to share smiles
But weary miles
Are finding them
A-breaking

Now different paths
With little wrath
But they're alone
And weeping.



A. A. RUBIN

They used to hold hands on red sands and wait, patiently,
for the Earth to appear in the Martian sky. They had gone in
search of alien life, but that was long ago. Now, they were
left only with each other, stranded, with no fuel, so close to
home...and yet so far away.



*They used to hold hands
They used to hold hands
They used to hold hands
They used to hold hands*

DENISE CARRUTHERS

They used to hold hands
threading moonbeams in twilight
entwining fingers.

Now,
as he breathes out the last
she traces a heart in the air;
"It's all that is left"
she whispers to his soul
"take it with you..."



@VWC_WRITES

They used to hold hands in the rain
becoming one with its nuances

greyscale melancholy
that wandered lost paths
in search of home

now a red umbrella
passes his window
a bright memory in a mad world

yes love
this is how poetry is born
between the ache & the storm.



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

They used to hold hands when they were young.
Back then, it only meant comfort.

But when they grew older, others would laugh when their
fingers were entwined.
They realized touch meant more,
though they couldn't reason out what that more meant.

And soon, frustrated and embarrassed,
they would instead stuff their hands into their pockets,
enduring the discomfort of growing up.



MIKE OLLEY

They used to hold hands, not theirs but the disembodied
hands of others, bite the nails and chew them. But it wasn't
enough...

Now they hold feet, bite the nails and chew them.
The cheese tang is addictive.



*They used to hold hands
They used to hold hands
They used to hold hands
They used to hold hands*

SARAH L LORD

They used to hold hands
As if frightened
They might lose each other
In the turbulent
Undertow of the city
As if the connection
Once severed
Would dissolve forever
In its acrid acid rain
As if their words
Would slide away
Half formed
Without a shaping touch
As if touch itself
Was their language
Their need for words
Long gone



BILL STEPHENS

they used to hold hands
she, like buddies,
he, interlocking,
even then,
holding hands,
said it all.



They used to hold hands

MIKHAILA POLAK

There was nothing before the spontaneous break up that would have indicated she was unhappy. She seemed to have just woken up out of love one day. And she told him so.

The words landed with surprising lightness, gentle and apologetic. They embraced, accepting the end.



@MRKOBAYAASHI

There was nothing before you
my existence was void
a numbness, dull-fingered
an anti-existence
like dying alone.
Then you
light exploding
in slow constellations
brought light to my darkness
to welcome me home.



R.M. (STORM) WORLEY

There was nothing before that could've prepared me for what came after. Was it happenstance that we crossed paths? I have to wonder, given the shell game you played, & fool that I am, I fell for. Guess that's what I deserve for getting too close to a thief of hearts.



There was nothing before There was nothing before There was nothing before There was nothing before

RANDY GRAF

There was nothing before like it
Everyone agreed
And up until it came along
No one saw the need

First it was just a phone that moved
Then it became smart
Now there's not a piece of our lives
That it's not a part

With that little screen
Infernal machine



SHELLY SMITH

There was nothing before us, not yet. Though the horizon was lightening just the slightest bit, options were all still in shadow. And there was nothing behind either. No matter how we reached backwards, we could grab nothing. Oh, we still felt the draft of the empty space, and we swore (loudly and often) that it was here with us now, but we could not touch it. We could not drag it up to sit in our laps, to stick our hands inside and suss out the issues. We could not fix them. But neither could we push them in front of us and ask the days ahead to carry our dead weight.



ERIC DANIEL CLARKE

There was nothing before,
who knows the answer,
science, faith, an eternal
question, souls recalled,
received wisdom, perceived
black holes, logic in vacuum,
we're here, we're not, all mortal,
beginning, end, question recycled.



VIPUL VIJ

There was nothing before
in my life,
before she graced it
with her smiles;

Each moment she painted
in colours so bright,
mesmerised I stayed
each day and night;

She taught me to love
staying by my side,
holding my hand
in darkness & light.



AUDREY SEMPRUN

There was nothing before
and there will be
nothing again
everything will eventually
go back
to where
it's ever been
even affection only stays
for a season
so give me a reason
to believe
everything I've ever loved
just leaves



WANDERING BIKU

There was nothing before.
No perception, no conception.
Darkness, silence,
the blankest of slates.
A state of pure existence,
energy waiting to be
set in motion,
potentiality,
the calm before
the cosmic storm.
Yet within this void was
all there ever would be.



DIOTIMA

in a cave of trees
next to an ocean
of fresh cut grass
we battled dragons
and sea monsters

in a forest of
chain link fences
and swamps of
sidewalk cracks
we fought for
good over evil

in a simpler time
we were naturally
brave and just
we were
our very own
heroes



JAMI LYNE KELLETT

In a cave of trees
my soul is free

whippoorwill whistles echo
in whispers of wind

treetops sway
worries wane
it takes me away



In a cave of trees

JO ANN MAY

In a cave of trees,
I grew to be
a robin's neighbor,
a watchful sailor
riding the breeze.

I looked for the pirates while feathered babies were fed.

In my crows-nest
existence, I served the kingdom of birds.



MARTIN HORTON

In a cave of trees where the humming of bees brings a
person to their knees was where you first heard my
whispers

In the morning mist, when all that's heard is the caw of
crows and a fox's bark, that's where my lessons began

'Enter the horror to discover the light' was the last thing you
said before you left on the final star before daybreak.

I never saw you again, but every now and then, I have a
sense of you appearing in my dreams.



In a cave of trees In a cave of trees In a cave of trees In a cave of trees In a cave of trees

CARL RIPLEY LOCKE

In a cave of trees, tiny mushrooms hid from the sun. They scampered in the shadows as dusk fell.

"Woohoo!" A purple one cartwheeled out of the cave. "It is time to fuck someone up!"

"Nel!" Ro poked Nel with a twig.

Nel cringed at the pang in his side. "What I do?"

"Quiet! Can't we have one night of peace?"

"Hell no!" Nel flicked his wee, fleshy hand. "It is our duty to maintain order in this fucked-over land! How we supposed to do that peacefully?"

"Do you realize what you're saying?"

"Yes." Nel stood tall. "And I even know my last words. Want me to tell you?"

Ro groaned.

"Bite me!"

Ro snickered until a boisterous laugh broke free.



ESHA JAISWAL

In a cave of trees
Where wild flowers
Bloom in moonlight
Through the maples
Soft, shy petals
Turning into words
Leaves whisper
Pine confessions
The wind has found
Its line and rhythm
Slowly
Softly
Breathing in
These moments
A poetry is born



M. B. STEPHENS

In a cave of trees I will lay languidly
arms stretched wide
long into forever
The moon sways beyond reach
with the conduits of time
as I drift aimlessly away
...a wish set free...
The forests will mark the days eternal
...rings of memories...held in safe keeping...



In a cave of trees

SYREETA MUIR

Just a letter, lying there

Brown paper, glue
and potential
future regret,
tremble on the mat -
just a letter -

ink and no news,
signs and signals
kind regards,
much love and
history -

nothing to be afraid of,
lying there.



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

Just a letter, lying there on his bedroom floor. He stared at it for a moment before picking it up and unfolding the top flap. The same three words he'd received for months.

You're not real.

"Maybe," he said as he stared at the words. When he unfolded the bottom flap, he saw his signature at the bottom. He sighed. His anxiety spiked as he contemplated if the words spoke truth.



Just a letter, lying there. Just a letter, lying there. Just a letter, lying there. Just a letter, lying there. Just a letter, lying there.

FIONA H.

Just a letter, lying there
Too long ago
Haven't you heard

Romance is dead
A song in my head

Where are you now
Tremble away
Just killing it
This Valentines day



C.X.TURNER

just a letter, lying there
in beats
of gilded stillness

framing perennial grief

whilst life undulates
over sea glass and
sandstone

I count starfish
balance rocks in white sea foam

salt-bitten and grazed
always in between
the waves



Just a letter, lying there

CL

Just a letter, lying there,
so innocent and inconspicuous,
bearing stains on yellowed paper after all those years.
I have picked it up so many times,
before putting it down again.

Your last words to me.

With a sigh, I open the letter
and finally start to read.



ERIC DANIEL CLARKE

Just a letter, lying there
found on return, a week
of junk mail layered thick
picked up, shuffled, let slip,
as if a plea, don't bin, please
read, decades on, words link,
of her, of him, pull close,
erase past doubts, mistakes,
love's last post, of her to him.



Just a letter, lying there

MARGARET LONSDALE

Just a letter, lying there/thin survivor/untouched by
wreckage storm or flame/This risk I take, this need/for
talisman/Just a letter, intent unknown/and no
return/Embrace as a mother would/precious child/Close to
my heart concealed/asleep dreaming/Paper messenger-
bird/renewed reason to keep on/

One day when I again find my way/a cave, some faraway
safe haven/By calm flicker of pale candlelight/unfold her
wings/reveal the quiet secret things/she holds within



VIPUL VIJ

Just a letter
lying there,
hoping someday
it will reach her;

With no address
on the top,
for it's to be delivered
to heaven's door;

With a trembling heart
I look up at sky,
saying, "come my sweetheart,
read it and reply!"



Just a letter, lying there
Just a letter, lying there
Just a letter, lying there
Just a letter, lying there
Just a letter, lying there

JOHN TANNHAUSER

A spoonful of dreams
Has a curious taste
It can be quite bitter
Should it all go to waste

Taken steadily, and prepared
With a measure of grace
Will bring out true sweetness
Now, go win your race!



ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

a spoonful of dreams
every night
you feed me tirelessly
and so deliciously
I swallow your moonlit eyes
I bite your fingers
and lick your lips
you taste like fire
at midnight



ANGELA

A spoonful of dreams,
with my hand cupped protectively around it
to keep them from spilling out.



JIMMY WEBB

A spoonful of dreams to dilute the
cupful of nightmares, swirling,
swirling, a bitter taste
of torment.

Sweetness lingers
on your lips. Leaves your
tongue in the tones of soft words
that make all those bitter things alright.



JILLIAN CALAHAN

a spoonful of dreams
in a bowl full of nightmares
my insomnia



RANDY GRAF

A spoonful of dreams
"You need that" she said
That was my one thought
As I went to bed

Head on the pillow
And quickly to sleep
I plunged into dreams
My slumber so deep

I held his sweet face
And kissed it so much
We slept holding hands
I still feel his touch

I ran my fingers
All through his short hair
I jolted awake
And he wasn't there

Then I remembered
Chilled me to the bone
He's gone forever
And I'm left alone

I miss you my son



A spoonful of dreams A spoonful of dreams A spoonful of dreams A

ANEESHA SHEWANI

A spoonful of dreams
Makes me think of
All things sweet
Yet I wonder what if
They are sour or bitter
Like memories, nightmares?
Can I stir them all
In to the cup of my life
Without the fear of rousing
Demons that I had denied
A place at the table
A setting in my mind!



MONIQUE (STARFISH_72)

A spoonful of dreams
outside places where I sleep
when I feel suddenly inspired
where letters & words smoulder
images are flying together
the soul becomes a seer
moments of fevered being
I follow my urges that lead



MICHELE GRIEVE

Help me, if you can?

The voice was small,
inconsequential,
virtually undetectable
but it was there.

Help me.

This voice was her own,
now grown, this was her at five,
a voice when hope and stars
should still be alive,
the decibels of the day it died.

Help.

So fifty-three took five
to be a child again,
climbing trees and building dens,
daisy chains of care-free feelings.

You can help me!

Yes, my precious one,
you can rely on me, and
if I seem distant,
if I cannot hear,
rest beneath the aspen
and I promise I'll be near.



Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can

JEFFREY HASKEY-VALERIUS

“Help me if you can,” gasped my grandmother on her way to the sky. I could not hear her over the Amazing Grace pierced by my sobs, we sons and wives and grandchildren huddled round to sing, to lament, to be, just be, as she left. It was only later in my dreams, much later, years, she came to me and whispered once more—help me if you can, if you can, you can—that I remembered her apple peel and nilla wafer breath in my ears. I woke and went to her headstone, lay on the grass that had come to be, cradled the cold earth atop her. I did not know what she needed from me, for what could a woman who survived so much, survived into death, need from a shell with so many inlaid cracks? I did what I could. I wrote a poem and threw it into the wind, watched as wrinkled hands appeared and clutched the words I could not find when she’d been alive.



WAYNE AC SMITH

Help me if you can
A plea, my best plan
To overcome my fears
To dry my stressful tears
Mired in a deep, mental low
Mismatch to outward show
A simple hello or smile
Could make life worthwhile
This stranger you call friend
Awaits the spur you'll send



LOVE, JANE

Help me,
if you can,
to see the world
as you do,
and teach me
about life from
your varied
point of view,
then allow me
to walk a mile
in the diversity
of your shoes
so that someday
I may
finally understand
what it feels like
to be you...



JENNY O'GORMAN

Help me if you can, for times like ours demand nothing less
than the fullness of compassion.

There are fragments of each of us scattered, reflected,
multiplied through untold worlds. Together we are as
expansive as the universe.

Take a hand. Reflect love.



Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can

R.M. (STORM) WORLEY

help me if you can
you see
the letters have faded
every attempt to read
the memories left behind
results in blurred tears
I would simply burn them
if I could
but how do you separate
pain from once-remembered love
without turning the heart
to a cold cinder...



@MRKOBAYAASHI

Help me if you can,
I can't quite remember -
I know you, I'm sure,
Or knew you perhaps
In those bright days of youth
I can barely recall.
You would smile
As would I,
And perhaps we would dance,
But I can't quite remember...

Is there pudding for tea?



you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help

VIPUL VIJ

Help me if you can
in this dreamland,
I'm trying to find love
lost in this wonderland;

Some naked truths
and blatant lies,
are keeping it hidden
away from sight;

In this search insane
I've suffered enough pain,
take me now to a place
where love still remains.



AUDREY SEMPRUN

Help me if you can
every time I turn around
I forget all the reasons



Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can Help me if you can

KATHERINE TRAVERSE

After the storm, they go out to see what has washed up on the shore. The offerings are always the same: gold coins, waterlogged flowers, bones. (The sea gods have little use for these things, but mortals never understand what gods really need.)

One day they come out of their salt-crusted shrine to find a basket tangled in the seaweed. Inside, a baby wails.



CAROL ROBERTS

After the storm
Life moves differently
Walking ahead
turns a new beginning
Threads turn wisdom
on coiling ends
Do we create a circle
Do we breathe time
Are we still strangers
Or does the soul know
when stories intertwine



SYREETA MUIR

After the storm we rally, swat permanent snow into piles.
When Peggy's born we adapt, watching her grow amid
intermittent eclipses, concomitant quakes, incongruous
humidity. Her tiny hands tap the glass of the dome. I cannot
describe our sorrow.



A. A. RUBIN

The birds on my grave converse with my soul. Each night they come, and each morning they leave, bearing my stories back to their flock. They have agreed not to pick my bones so long as the stories entertain. Each night they have left satisfied, at least so far. Each morning, I worry, and--nearly panicked--I write.



LISA BOYADZHIEVA

the birds on my grave
tweet a blissful song
shocking sound waves
upon frozen ground
magical creatures wake
yielding an escape
with paddles bashing
on a thousand pebbles
going neither forward
nor backward



CARL RIPLEY LOCKE

The birds on my grave irritated me with their incessant chirping. I extruded through the dirt but missed them by an inch.

"Mo!" The grounds keeper wagged her finger. "Leave them be."

"But I'm trying to rest in peace!" I sank back into my grave.



KAITLIN DEATON

The birds on my grave
In a murder crow:

"Three for the money
Two for the prose
One for the lonely
Under she moans

Wood of nightmare
Rocking-horse won
Pen bit, soul saddled
Lip clopped woe"



KATHERINE TRAVERSE

The birds on my grave sing me back to life whenever someone decides to try and cheat Death. No one asked if I wanted to be a Reaper, but here I am—walking down Main Street, fifty years past the death-date written on my tombstone. It feels good to wake up, to be alive and among the living again—I didn't exactly go to the grave gently to begin with. But that's a long story.

The birds flying overhead, tracking my movement, remind me that all of this is temporary. I am officially on Death's clock; I can hear it ticking down. I don't like to think about what happens when a job is done, so instead I focus on how I'm about to ruin some wannabe immortal's day. In a dead-end job like this, I have to get my kicks where I can.



FRANCESJMACGREGOR

The birds on my grave
Fall silent
The air hangs still
All is chill
Vile demons thrill

Frail blossom
Withers
Laughter sways
Away
Fog swirls on the bay

Sense fearful cry
A-keening
As paddle fails to turn
Fields burn
Sad stomachs churn

Can we only weep?
Forgive us our
Omission sin
It doth begin
And none shall win.



GHOSTPOET CHELLE

The birds on my grave
Rave and rave and rave
About the ways I would misbehave
I needed saving, they'd say
I have a craving, they'd say
Depraved Raving
But hey
Listen to them fall silent now
As my desiccated hands plow
up thru loose earth
& catch one for brunch
Flying munch, feathered lunch.



JILLIAN CALAHAN

The birds on my grave
can't read what is etched
into the granite,
but they already
know my name.
They were there
when I was born.
They were there
when I died.
And with me
they shall remain.
Because the birds
on my grave
knew my ghost
long before I did.



The birds on my grave
The birds on my grave
The birds on my grave
The birds on my grave

JAMI LYNE KELLETT

The birds on my grave
sing songs and lullabies
as leaves rustle from treetops
the rays of the sunrise
bring warmth to my cold body
echoes in the woods
are music to my ears as
daybreak ends on the horizon &
dancing begins under the moon
I feel so alive



SYREETA MUIR

...the birds on my grave still giving me the side-eye - about the maggot incident, presumably - miracle they got supper, in my opinion, several months and no sign of anyone else, incredibly quiet here...but! a cool, dry night again, so that's nice.



JENNY O'GORMAN

The birds on my grave hold conferences in every language. Their orations are expansive, profound; a universe condensed into a single chirp.

I regret that I did not listen more broadly when I was alive.

Death's magpie tells me this is common among humans.



SARAH L LORD

The birds on my grave
Said the vampire
With the smokers cough
And the voice of Michael Caine
[I was thinking more Christopher Lee..?]
Waken me with their chatter
The cup and saucer clatter
Of their wretched knit and natter
Driving me mad as a mercurial hatter
[And now you are making me rhyme..!]
The babbling inanities
Of vicissitudes and vanities
Sprinkled with profanities
Lives riddled with uncertainties
[You've been on the sauce haven't you..?]
Yet the commentary never ceases
Snippets of gossip like press releases
Z list celebrities' tame caprices
Dissected into the smallest pieces
[When darkness comes I will hunt you down...]
But these are no mockingbirds
There's no real malice in their words
Mother maiden and widowbird
They come to me to be heard
[And sip your blood like wine...]
And now before the shadows grow
Deep beneath the yew and willow
Their voices are a soft receding echo
Why do I feel so worn and hollow
[What the...undearth is too good for you..!]
Said the vampire
With the smokers cough
And the voice of *[CHRISTOPHER LEE..!!!]*



The birds on my grave The birds on my grave The birds on my grave

VICTORIA GREENAWAY

Opening the door I saw,
patinaed floorboards,
and silken cornflour
curtain chords.
The lady sits
and gazes at the broads,
and dreams of goblets and swords.



ANEESHA SHEWANI

Opening the door, I saw
Blue and Yellow on the porch
Splattered with Red; they sought
Peace, hope, and solace.
With compassion in my eyes
And sweetness in my words
All I did was console the hurt,
I did not reach out my hand
Take a stand or clear my stance,
Or invite them over to the safety
Of my large, cushy home
For I feared the Red will stain
The carpets and walls
Splash and ruin the decor
So, I stood there, until they bled
Right there on my doorstep!



DIOTIMA

opening the door I saw
a room filled with mirrors
I slowly stepped inside
forcing myself to look
at the reflections taunting me
in some I saw
my naked self
my scars
my saggy skin
my birthmarks
my stretchmarks

others showed
my hopes
my dreams
my stubbornness
my quick temper

I lingered on the last mirror
soon, I felt a sense of peace
wash over me
as I stared back at the familiar
dark brown eyes
freckles
full lips
unruly wild hair...
I was relieved to see
the woman that you love
and her half smile
reflecting back at me



KAITLIN DEATON

Opening the door, I saw London time-warp to a shuffled rotary dial rhythm. City chatter muffled into prank calls to crushes. Red blurred to vintage black—my childhood basement's telephone booth corner. Ring, ring time machine. Closing, I heard goodbye.



CL

Opening the door I saw
you finally returned to me.
Battered and bruised,
looking the worse for wear,
but sporting the brightest of smiles.

And as I flung myself
into your open arms,
tears streaming down my face,
I started to stumble
and fell to the ground,
because I tried
to embrace
a memory
of you.



CONNIE L BISKAMP

A bit of afternoon rain—
old concrete
damp dirt
fragrant air
this brazen
uninvited stranger
heightens my
melancholy
mood
resounding
thunderclaps
ravish
my mind
pitter-pattering
muddy splashes
soggy curls
slick heels
mascara
streams
rain
conceals
my tears



A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain

JOHN(JD)

a bit of afternoon rain
slicked black the asphalt roads

lying water hissed from tires
as over tarmac they ran

the growl of the engine
in chorus with turbochargers

sun breaking through clouds
sparkled off pavements

driving in April showers
into the distant west



JENNY O'GORMAN

A bit of afternoon rain was a welcome relief in the Time
Before. That's what Katy says.

Xyr parents are old enough to have been alive back then, so
Katy knows lots of things like that.

It's another flood day today. The sinkholes aren't any
kind of relief.



KAITLIN DEATON

A bit of afternoon
rain cloud sadness,
the curtain between
head and heart.

Reflection suppressed
and skin so thirsty,
I suffocate
on shadowed twilight.

If only to speak,
if only to feel
the subtle melt
of emotions

extrude before
rest.



JO ANN MAY

A bit of afternoon rain dripped from the eaves and left the star jasmine leaves shining. The air sparkled with its flowering scent; a scent too sweet for the moment. Mom was crying, and a man was driving away.

Too young to recall his face, later I learned his eyes looked like mine.

I've searched many places and a lot of strange faces but I've never seen the man with my eyes.



A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain

C.X.TURNER

a bit of afternoon rain
touches me still

on a twilight walk
your presence

I inhale
the smell of moss

shadow-bruised fog
the blink of stygian bullets

puncturing loneliness
tired light dissipates

...were you ever really there?



ALLA ILENČÍKOVÁ

a bit of afternoon rain
on your forehead
soaks my lips
your warm breath
on my neck
reminds me
to hold you tighter
your hands
envelop my bones
until we blend
with the evening sky



ELIZABETH BELT

A bit of afternoon rain
Fell
Gently
Tip
Tip
Tip
Tippity tip
Top tip
Never mind the damp
A walk in the woodlands
Gathering armfuls of
Forget her notes
Releasing paper airplanes
Filled with memories
I wished to forget too



RACHEL NASH

A bit of afternoon rain
Not enough to dampen the spirits
Certainly not enough to
cancel the picnic
Just enough to make
the sandwiches soggy



A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain A bit of afternoon rain

SARAH L LORD

A bit of afternoon rain
cuts through the dusty summer haze
in a scatter of brittle light.

The scatter becomes a rush of
silver threads, weaving together
cool fresh barbs on fever hot skin.

Suddenly it's easier to breathe,
to laugh and to dance, arms outflung,
face upturned and streaming.

The rain has a music to it,
a magic, a rhythm thrumming, drumming
and running from roof to gutter.

Leaves reach up and out in
greedy supplication for every drop,
every spray and spatter.

Too soon it stops and all that
is left are the dripping echoes and
the final steps of the dance.



DIOTIMA

Well, it's done now
we had crossed
the point of no return
tried so hard not to slip
to keep a steady grip
but with just the slightest
brush of your finger
across my bottom lip
I knew there would be
no turning around
on this impromptu
lust fuelled trip



VIPUL VIJ

Well, it's done now, she said
no more tears of loneliness, I wish to shed;

Take me in your arms and let me sway
let people say, what they may;

We are lovers my dear, there is nothing wrong
let's live our life, together we belong;

Till the end of time, I'll be your sweetheart
lovers in arms, never ever will we part.



we now Well. it's done now Well. it's done now Well. it's done now Well. it's done now Well. it's done now Well. it's done now Well.

JILLIAN CALAHAN

Well, it's done now.
Our ending.
I cut you off
like a dying branch.
Like a rotten vine.
Like a gangrenous limb.
We grew apart,
still tangled at the roots.
Slowly dying for each other
because neither of us
could make that first cut.



RANDY GRAF

Well, it's done now
He shook his head
Our last chance gone
We'll soon be dead

You made the choice
I had no vote
You poisoned us
That's all she wrote

The choice I made
Reduced life span
Why'd I open
That expired can?!



Well, it's done now Well, it's done now Well, it's done now Well, it's done now Well, it's done now

ETHAN PATRICK

It took time to open the gnarled vines that locked away the light.

When I first arrived there was only the stench of death, but through nourishment our community formed. We have cleaned, irrigated, plowed, planted, and built a garden of life.

The stench of death, replaced with the sweetness of life.

In time the vines untangled and we were awash with light. Buoying the spirits of everyone it touched, bringing peace in its wake.



JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

It took time to open their eyes.
But when they finally did, the first thing they saw was
a flash of all that they had missed:
sprouts growing into trees,
metals being mined,
the sky growing thinner,
an explosion of light.

They stood up and went back to work.



It took time to open It took time to open It took time to open It took time to open It took time to open

MADHAVI. K

On the edge of my sanity
Where velvet dusk haunts me
In a perpetual game of hide and seek
Where steam whistle rain
Hoots at my jaded whimsy
Where the mirrored sweep of stars
Reflects my abiding agony

There I dangle

A faint whiff
Of soggy regret
Hovering over me



SADHANA RANA

On the edge
of a crumbling ledge
where space and time
were broken lines
I lay suspended
motionless in a void
who was it that cried
who rejoiced
The five elements dissolved
one by one
no longer 'me'
this reality was gone
Layers of self stripped free
Anarchic sage



BETH CUSACK

it wasn't the right key
'twas as flat as could be
but we sang it strong
and the song grew on
'til it sprouted wings
and its rhyming stings
breathing fire
upon our frames
we loved it just the same



ELIZABETH BELT

It wasn't the right key
Fumbling through a fistful of
Skeleton keys
Watching them drop
Metal petals off a keychain flower
Click
Lights on
Someone's home
It's a breath
Winds of serenity
Blowing the wishmaker
Seedlings scatter
A door opens
Home at last



it wasn't the right key it wasn't the right key it wasn't the right key it wasn't the right key it wasn't the right key

JILLIAN CALAHAN

"It wasn't the right key," Tessa mumbled sleepily. I climbed into bed, trying not to wake her. I was home late again, third day this week. She's probably mad. We'll talk about it in the morning.

I woke suddenly with pain over my breastbone and a nurse next to me. I was no longer in my bed.

"You don't have much time. Take this key. Look for a chest and you will find your answers. Now go!"

Without hesitation, I sprinted down the hallway, out the hospital doors, and into a forest. When I turned around, the hospital was gone. So I just ran. Trying to match the pace of my feet with the beating of my heart. I tripped over branch after branch, never stopping. The last time I fell, I didn't get back up. I tasted dirt and defeat. Just ahead of me, covered in leaves, was a chest. I scrambled to it and shoved in the key, but it didn't work. I sobbed. The burning in my chest even more evident. That's when it hit me. MY chest. I looked down at the keyhole and tried again. Click! It worked. My chest opened with a burst of light. Revealing another key, then darkness.

I woke again next to Tessa. I reached over to wake her. I needed to tell her how much I loved her. Until I saw the blood. And there, over her chest, a bloody keyhole. The key from my dream still in my hand.



MADHAVI. K

It wasn't the right key
She knows that now
His heart remained impregnable

Her love's labour dismissed
As a cradle of webs, leaving
A taste of sour fruit in her mouth

The magic of forever
Just a mirage, beginning to deliquesce
Beneath the sun's new rise



KATIE WILLOW

It wasn't the right key, I realised as I saw her eyelid drop
and the connection we were forging dissipate. I jingle
phrases in my mind, trying to find one to show openness, so
she can see I am not locking my self away.



MARGARET LONSDALE

It wasn't the right key/the band decided without me/And so
I sang my ragged song/Drunks in the crowd all sang
along/Sundays I put on a lofty tune/A hound's voice
howling at the moon/Now I've surpassed mere
harmony/Dissonance my new ragged specialty



It wasn't the right key It wasn't the right key It wasn't the right key It wasn't the right key It wasn't the right key

CONNIE L BISKAMP

Make sure you
clear up some time
for yourself
and don't "pencil it in"
write it in caps
with indelible marker
broad strokes of bold colors
a reminder
you matter
short change your body
you'll rob your mind
don't neglect your spirit
grasp precious time



AUDREY SEMPRUN

Make sure you clear up
all of your footprints
in the sand
and let the ocean
take your name
into the horizon
as she will look towards
the ends of the earth
and always remember you
but leave no marks
upon her heart
and leave her gentle
as a wave



Make sure you clear up Make sure you clear up Make sure you clear up

JAMI LYNE KELLETT

Make sure you
clear up
cheer up

no one wants to hear
your sadness
the madness

head up
chin up

stay positive
act positive
be positive

no to negativity
oh, the insensitivity

after all -
you
know
you
will be ...

"just fine"



Make sure you clear up Make sure you clear up Make sure you clear up

ELISA DOMINQUE RIVERA

The morning air felt still,
A shrapnel of emotion
Almost hit us, but we
Tiptoeed around life
Escaped via dust particles
Among the debris
A missile carrying memories
Stole what was left
Suffocating with despair.



SYREETA MUIR

The morning air felt still, but I'm restless. Mind fidgety,
thoughts wriggling like haddock in an estuary. Not sorry -
it's a strange kind of melancholy. A white dove murmuring
in a myrtle tree. A kingfisher kind of mischief.



JAMI LYNE KELLETT

the morning air felt still
a ship set out to sea
it was me and ocean blue
floating aimlessly with tide



The morning air felt still

KATHERINE TRAVERSE

The morning air felt still enough to make my teeth ache. It was the sort of day one receives bad news. The visitors arrived in the late afternoon. They came up the stairs with covered faces and red hands. Mother received them in the parlor, polite as ever, but I saw her hands shaking. I stood by the back door, watching the storm roll in, ready to run.



@VWC_WRITES

The morning air felt still
as if waiting for your breath
to cradle the day

see the magnolias, open quietly
as tea is brewed for a lover
with thoughts of staying
to watch spring come into focus

you are safe here
between hope & lambent light
no wars
no need to hide.



The morning air felt still The morning air felt still The morning air felt still

JILLIAN CALAHAN

The morning air felt still.
Not a single gust of wind
nor gentle breeze were felt.
As if time itself
was holding its breath.
Waiting to hear the sound
of beating bird wings,
but it never came.
And that is how I knew
that you were gone.



SUZANNA LUNDALE

the morning air felt still
when we walked out
of the trees that day straight
to the docks to catch a ride
styx crossed and ferryman
paid but tourists we
in the land of the dead
where nothing is as we expected
and we prefer a houseboat
on the water something cozy
with a nice view of the damned
sunning themselves clutching
sandy beach-reads on
threadbare shrouds ever
reaching for cool drinks
nowhere to be found



The morning air felt still

MN MURTHY

the morning air felt still
i prized myself to a walk

with the typewriter
& the teapot asleep

i left for the lake
where the clouds
& i bathed, daily

with the lake
still snoring

i lit a cigar
& rode a rock

the idyllic stillness
recharged my soul
in one beep



VIOLA DAWN

The morning air felt still, and that's strange because morning air always moves a little. Afternoons are for stillness. But no...it felt like the world had stopped. I stood...willing the air to take me with it...wherever it had gone. It hurt so much. Feeling so little.



*The morning air felt still
The morning air felt still
The morning air felt still
The morning air felt still*

JUSTIN CALIMQUIM

You never say my name anymore.
It puts me in an odd place,
fading into death, but continuing existence.

Perhaps one day you will breathe life into me again.
But until then,
I shall try to find meaning again.



SYREETA MUIR

you never say my name:

Pirate

tongue and
heart mine
a dialogue
never quite defined

still

I like to say your name:

Lighthouse

to myself
the sea
the boundless
blue box of the sky



You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name

LESLIE ALMBERG

You never say my name out loud
it sticks to the roof of your mouth
burns your tongue, leaves your lips dry

You never say my name out loud
yet it echoes synaptic hallways, howls
the blank unfettered night a cry

And I have settled for silence
mispronounced



LISA WILLIAMS

“You never say my name.” I’d thought this a thousand times but had never said it out loud. The words hung between us waiting for his answer.

“Don’t I?” He knew. We both knew. Names were a way of getting caught out. Saying the wrong one at the wrong time could tumble down his carefully stacked pile of lies. He thought I didn’t know and I was fine with that. A shock at first obviously but over time I’d adjusted my mindset and was planning a couple of moves before him.

“I’m working away this weekend, again.” Of course he was. I nodded as if sad he wouldn’t be there but joyous that it seemed the planets were aligning. It was this weekend me and the kids were hoping to move out. We’d got a new place, friends had helped paint and furnish it. We’d leave without him knowing and when he came back ‘from work’ on Monday we’d be happily starting our new life.



You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name

GABRIELA MARIE MILTON

you never say my name
a lonely stocking
falls in lassitude
Sundays leak monotony and coolness
velocity of winds
the perfection of the afternoon's poplars
dreams are blue
this spring will come
without you



@VWC_WRITES

You never say my name
as if I am a secret
or a rare thing held between
spring and its shadow

perhaps the first flower
on the vine
no one notices

but this be salvation
for beauty is tainted by labels

in this world
I'm a bird only you heard
let love remain anonymous.



You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name

ELIZABETH BELT

You never say my name.
You have never said a word to me.
Such hatred in your eyes
When I catch your attention.
And yet,
I'm drawn to you.
It's time to correct karma.
I yank your hand.
Pull you into my car.
Drive and drive and drive.
Hours.
Weeks.
Months I spend with you.
One night
I tell you our story
The way it really happened.
Stitch by stitch
The invisible thread
Sealing your lips to me
Disintegrated.
I forgive you.
Your first three words
In hundreds of years to me.
And then you said my name.



You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name
You never say my name

