

What you need to know: these 4 poems are part of a sequence called “love songs for the misanthrope.” They are all written as response pieces to contemporary songs. I’ve listed the title of the song, and either the musician or the album, after each piece, should you want to check it out.

## I'm just not that into you

If you feel lust when triggered by environmental cues,  
say a tear in a woman's dress, does this mean you love her,  
or even like? No. But follow through long enough,  
the habitual gestures of solicitude and longing,

keep taking that ivory drug of lyric ultimate meaning  
and without doubt you'll begin to mistake that chemical drive  
for something cerebral and sure. You'll never even think  
to ask, what has she come to expect from you

or question the rivers you follow, you'll break you know  
on the things you've refused to understand, and she, or your instincts  
one or the other, will take the blame, so that one day just after sex,  
out of your mouth will burble "I'm just not that into you."

—Fuck me if your white-line coma didn't just break  
along with any respect she might have had for you  
or you for yourself. And this thing about the brain being a dam,  
well yes. That's what it's for my nerdy friend. The whole bloody point—

to make use of the power inherent in this so-called living river  
for something other than dry humping and the addiction  
to white lines and narcissistic glances. Spawn in that  
you silly motherfucker. Nerds in white linen,

where lineage paddles a successful career. It's what you really want,  
where your rocks glimmer from the true bed of your living's desire.  
So you were told, you should want the gently flowing Arcadian dream,  
where love, wearing a beautiful skin, locks away the longing?

They lied. Have the wit to recognize.  
Don't be the reddit fool who claims an IQ belied by one stupid mistake  
after another. Hooking life from another barely classifies as a temporary  
abstention from hunger. Tune up that dam. Shore up the crumbling walls.

Fix that leaky sluice gate. And goddamn it, if you want to spawn,  
build a fucking fish ladder. That, you see, the brain can be used for.  
Weren't you supposed to be an engineer? And here's a clue,  
it's basic human respect, not fetishizing rips in her apparel,

that's a cement strong enough to divert energy from hormonal  
raging rivers. Don't feel it? Still lonely and uncomfortably lost?  
Not your instincts, nor her fault you can't goddamn well tell  
south from mutherfucking north. Want a map of the local waterways?

Rip your own tighy-whities, follow those pale glimpses.  
Of course what you might find, more a sludgy pond  
than a clean running river, but oh you stupid nerdy mutherfucker,  
lay down your life in the looking, squirt your talent onto your own

shiny rocks. With a dollop of random mathematical permutation  
some unlooked for accidental cohabitation will cover your bright seeds,  
and eventually the fry will leap, and whatever the state of the pond  
in which you end, ther'll be something growing. It'll finally be worth your knowing.

Written to "Lightness" *Death Cab for Cutie*

## mutherfucking louise

so here's this young guy horny and lonely  
looking for a girlfriend, of course he's socially inept,  
didn't you see his fantasy, black bustier  
and carrying a sword, no butterfly tats for this  
make-believe lovin' intentions, he imagines an elfin lord  
or the head of a WoW big-boss on her inner thigh

sure there's a real girl sitting just to the left of him,  
but shit no, no reality for this hard up lovelorn,  
instead the hottie in the comic shop,  
must be there for him, and damn if he's never  
going to set her free he says, jeezus  
mutherfucking louise, what a stupid-assed nerd

you'd think with his ability to translate  
arcane numerical codes and launch handily  
into sophisticated discourse referencing binary  
lemmata, he'd get that the fantasy of enslavement  
might not work for his intended

that it might be patently-fucking-obvious how tired  
she gets of such rampant stupidity, and the bitter sea of it?  
that he'd be the headless troll iff'n she got mad  
enough to take up an actual sword instead of just  
the one she built from disdain

all to beat his loneliness, and shit  
all he had to do was pay attention  
to that occupied spot ever so slightly to his left

Dude.

I stand by my misanthropy. People are stupid.  
Mutherfucking louise.

Written to "Girlfriend" Matthew Sweet

## poor little lost boy, damn I'm but sorry for you

What? Don't like being used, you silly little twat.  
Poor little lost boy, your friends done pinky swear  
and spit shake and still they took to the girl instead of you?  
Damn, I'm but sorry for you.

Poor little lost boy, she's takin you to court?  
What that little love tap? Nothin you'd ever had  
to pay to before. Poor little lost boys get gunned  
down on the streets, and it's only your bitches and hoes  
getting strung and hung? Damn if you  
do, and if you don't, it's the princess' fault  
no street slaps for her just the club-knock,  
the domestic bliss of some poor boy's knuckled shack.

Poor little lost boy, you ever think what else  
you give beside wallet fat? Damn no, the back  
of your hand in't no gift. None of that 'bout  
the balls, no sir. You think that shit taste  
like cinnamon ice? Shit, there's more  
taste in this broken song sung by white-boy  
nerd in his slow sweet way. Just get on it,  
you wunder-boy of the broken lyric.

Shit. If you can't figure out the cost of what else  
you might be good for, then really what's you  
done for? So get back on it, find something  
in the lyric air, something stronger than jealousy,  
let go the poor boy schtick, then you wouldn't  
have to be hatin on the woman who, so says we all,  
clearly done her job better than you done yours.  
Poor little lost boy, damn, I'm but sorry for you.

Written to "bitches ain't shit" cover version by Ben Folds

## your now ex-woman's bathroom mirror

So you had a woman you were too stupid to stay nice to  
you end up on the couch after telling your dreams  
of goth girls, black boots and eye goo, how you'd  
love to hump one, and you wonder why that now  
ex-woman-of-yours disparaged your nerdy IQ?

leave her alone, she don't want you back  
try the furry crowd you dickless wonder  
you could hide inside the skin of another  
you could pretend to be something you're not  
pretend to be that inbetweener you imagine

goth girls be like, with their kettle and black  
doorway to wonder. jeez, you are one stupid  
mutherfucker. not realizing that you only want  
goth girls to ride, clomp-footed over their disdain  
for you, not realizing that you only want

black leather and steel rings in noses  
because you think your camus in french  
is better than their attention to nerdcore.  
you hate them so much? Or just what  
you see in your now ex-woman's bathroom

mirror? Grow some gonads. Get a place  
of your own and hammer the glass in your own house.  
Find out what you really look like. And next time  
you get a woman to see you, try being in your own skin  
and leave other people's the fuck alone.

Written to "goth girls" McFrontalot