

Excerpts From:

A Lifetime Not Enough  
*Poems*

Consider this an archive. A photograph. A note scribbled on a scrap of paper that you work hard not to confuse with old receipts. Consider this a drunk text. A human interest story, one you've clipped and kept and pressed safely between the pages of a book. Consider this whatever is in your top desk drawer. The odds and ends, the clutter you cling to.

This is everything I cannot let go of.

**On Collective Trauma Blocking**  
February 4, 2024

back of freezer ice pack  
pressed against a pulsing sprain

skin red  
burned by another extreme

the numbing too is painful  
and unhelpful

swipe, scroll  
the death toll rises  
27 thousand

numbers, lives, bookended  
between the advertisements

and when will it end?  
reality and pretend  
both straining

an elastic about to snap  
a hope too pure to get back

then the winning impulse  
to click away  
willfully redirecting our worry

eye cream  
football team  
fading fads  
aesthetic regimes

protecting an illusion of beauty,  
of a freedom free from expense,  
and the lie that any life is

expendable

**Boulder, CO March 22, 2021**

Some tragedy  
is so absurd

the body does not know how to hold it.

Instead, it refracts off of me  
in a clatter of  
inappropriate laughter  
like silver spoons  
falling hard and heavy  
on the glossy floor  
of a restaurant  
we can barely afford.

Shock is an alarm  
that will always find  
a way to sound.

## Bedtime Routine

Is it the same for you?  
Each night  
before washing away  
the day's mask and mud  
while I wait  
for the tap to run hot,  
memory seems to slip  
like a ring down the drain.

I can see it as it happens  
but am too slow  
or too powerless to stop it.  
What was it?  
That street we used to love to walk  
late lunches  
senior year  
the rose house  
brown leather oxfords  
thrifed then donated again,

and everything else  
held once  
then let go,  
accidentally  
inadvertently.  
Just a band of silver  
slipping.  
Just a slow tap  
dripping.

## **An Echo of the Quake**

February 25, 2021

a squirrel  
lies lifeless  
its warm orange underbelly  
camouflaged in the double yellow lines  
as if  
it was planted there  
in a spot-the-difference trick  
they say war has begun  
but my day goes on  
driving slow  
tires noisy on the snow  
and I know  
the world is changing again  
should I feel so embarrassed?  
admitting how hard it is  
to spot the difference  
should I feel so overwhelmed?  
seeing how sharp it is  
every little death  
an echo of the quake  
oceans away  
and still too close to home

## **With Love, An Interested Party**

you communicate to me now  
as if in public notices

*Notice is hereby given*

I call for you like a lighthouse

*Item #2 is located in the appealable jurisdiction  
of the Coastal Zone*

my white hot light is circling like panic  
that I am trying not to trip over

*. . . and includes Conditional Use Permit No. 19-028*

when did you decide to trade in your chips  
for an imagined ending?

I wait

*The action taken by the Zoning Administrator is final*

wondering when you might return to burn through  
the night with me  
or if you'll only fall into it

*Unless an appeal is filed to the Planning Commission by or  
for an interested party . . .*

remember the tide  
its returning  
its incessant drive to  
stay alive  
    stay alive  
    stay alive

## Corner Store Wine

in one hand  
I held a pink candy-striped plastic sack  
carrying red wine  
through the rain  
we climbed the hills of Sozopol  
back to that cat-tongue peach hotel  
I could have stayed there forever  
on that stain-camouflaging couch  
listening on repeat  
to Rhythm and Repose

learning for the first time  
why you must dance it down  
laughing as your sister  
extends an offering of  
sober-up crackers  
but it didn't matter

in the other hand, I held you  
neither ever let go  
learning, instead, to live with only one free hand  
as long as you're on the float  
with me  
dancing carelessly  
to Take on Me

even when rebar is hidden  
on the dance floor

even if the cuts leave a scar  
I want to be wherever you are