

## Ode to a Friend

Your ears furl back when  
you hear me say it.

A social response - or  
does it help you hear me?

You must know by now I  
don't mean everything I say.

I tell you the weather is poor,  
but you're never deterred.

I tell you it's dark out,  
as you continue to paw  
persistently at my heart.

You remind me of our late walks  
in college - when we were world fresh  
and a small blue ball out back  
made us feel alive. Love wasn't  
a question but a wordless  
conversation; ending in commas.

## The Pillars at Monument Park

What broke you?

Was it the divorce?

Or was it a slow rending?

Your sides, scarred by time,  
slope unevenly; as though gravity  
granted us a preferred side  
(no less fanciful than God  
granting us symmetry).

Did you begin to give way  
the day your sister did?

Who mourns your graveled flesh  
more than I? Rough, hewn tears –  
like alabaster pools reflecting  
back our strained, uncertain faces.

If it's true that time has worn  
and torn down the chemical bonds  
that once left you strong – defiant –  
then share with me a thought;  
did you at least know love?

## Ascension

This body is a relic.  
Like the Parthenon,  
her marble ferried away  
by nocturne thieves,  
so too do I feel the  
imbalance of missing parts.

Like the warehouses, with  
dusted panes and rusted beams  
trembling from traincars,  
so too do my pains  
belie scars from heartworn  
mobs trespassing on my soul.

What fault of man sends  
droves to admire the intimate  
decay of inanimate structures,  
while this body - this delicate  
vessel - has known such beauty  
that it has wept, made love,  
fathered, grieved, and bled?

Given sentience, would not the  
stained stones beneath the Basilica  
opt to rest their burden just once?  
Yet flesh for stone we lapse -  
ingloriously, surreptitiously  
this body bears its burden still.

## Among The Stars

The first intergalactic probe,  
sent screeching into the  
unrelenting inky expanse,  
spoke to us in clicks and beeps.

Two clicks for an asteroid –  
three meant a comet.

And one beep followed by  
a resounding silence meant  
*Danger – System Malfunction.*

Men of science passed days of  
interminable silence by sipping  
black coffee and discussing the  
nomenclature of celestial somethings,  
until a click – or tepid beep –  
would collide hopes and fears,  
dreams and tears, and champagne.  
For each click signaled the expanded  
embrace of one more cosmic remnant.

Imagine the diurnal weight of those  
binary conversation. Did the men  
of science ever weaken their resolve  
at the thought that no more clicks –  
or mournful beeps – would find them?  
Imagine the gravity of my thoughts when  
your words, pregnant with brevity,  
and infinitely more complex than  
beeps or clicks, pass like lone bits of  
carbon on the dark side of our universe.

Making love in the morning

You are clarity. You are conviction –  
bracing these walls that echo back  
the self-same syllables of a life  
filled with careful parentheticals.

The contours of existence soften  
when our waters meet – bloated and  
unrecognizable in hindsight.  
You pull me inescapably closer.

The sunrise has meaning, its light  
pours through locked windows to reveal  
a warm, tired miracle – wrapping  
itself in this amorous congress.