

Cuddle Up Angel Night

Four layers of shirts and I'm ready to go
Gotta go for her heart
Artichoke for her heart
And some chocolate for me.
M wipers make streaks
Blurry red blurry green
But "time exists just on your wrist so don't panic"
And it's a cuddle up angel night.
I feel like a star in the vague orange light
The street is my set
And maybe I'm not so brilliant
Cuz my tires are slipping
But I gotta get the mayonnaise
So we can watch Marlon Brando
And the worlds sexiest entrance
Until her blue eyes will get red.
Think of something funny
Make her laugh
Make her laugh
So she won't start thinking
"all I need is you, I just need you"
Cuz she's better off with James Dean
And it's not that cold, just wet and white
And the trucks barrel by cuz they're missing the point
But "it burns baby burns baby burns"
And sometimes you just have to move slow
Cuz everyone else is getting take out
And she wishes she were too
Cuddled up with her angel
Not broken in two.
And I gotta make her laugh because if I don't then she'll cry
And I can't let her cry cuz her eyes will turn red
Blurry red blurry green
And my hands grip the steering wheel
Cuz I know that I can't
Can't stop her from thinking
"I'm never going to get it together again."

The garden is wild and overgrown
Grass and weeds mix with occasional proud tulip
and sometimes its difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins.
So I pull hard and watch the tulips – hoping they don't fall

He is shirtless and digging in another part of the garden
Sometimes our paths cross and I don't miss his nearness
until we separate.
We are both scorched red by the sun but too busy to notice

My mind wanders
It disturbs me how often my brain repays TV shows I've watched
It seems to be the most comfortable place to dwell in empty mindlessness.
Some weeds come out easy – others put up a fight
They make the victory all the sweeter

The baby
(hardly a baby anymore)
is picking dandelions and squeezing, dying her fingers yellow.
Her hat is too small and her ears stick out –
she plays too close to the road.
I watch her with a familiar ache in my stomach
I cannot look at her without seeing the entire spectrum of her two short years
in every glance

Next week I go back to work
For so long it's been just the two of us most of the time
now we will have to let others into our world.
But can anyone truly know her as well as I do?
I know her every gesture
every glance.
I know what she wants before she even says anything

She spots me watching her and tries to wade through the tall columbine flowers to get to me
"No, baby," I say gently, and she stops.

At night I crawl into bed
skin still radiating heat.
I close my eyes and try to sleep
but in my mind I'm still pulling grass,
and hoping the tulips don't fall.

Imaginary Love

Two bodies embrace
Arms locked
Face buried in neck
Fingers clasping backs and shoulders
“Everything will be ok,” someone whispers-
Or maybe no one did.

She closed her eyes and he swore he felt
Felt that tear she swore
She never cried
A drop of pain rolling down his neck.

Breathe in-exhale
A breath so light
Not a hair was disturbed.

Holding closer
Closer still
Closer

And then they were apart

She'd fixed her face
Fixed it in place
So that he couldn't tell if what he felt
Was real

If what she felt was real

Real enough to cry that one burning tear
Flowing out from her throat
Her chest
Tangling knots in her stomach.

She's turned and gone before he can ask
Reached out to grasp thin air
But his neck is still warm
Almost wet at the spot
Where she cried
Or didn't
Her imaginary tear

Moments

Driving through winter

His family and I, eight altogether.

“Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful”

They’re playing a game I’ve never played

A game from the past, their contented childhood.

The rules are simple: when passing Christmas decorations, be the first to spot them and declare

“Beautiful”

And you get the point.

The game continues,

I watch in silence until Josie-

Doe eyed, dimple cheeked, silver hair Josie,

With an endearing gap between her front two teeth says,

“I say that the whole world is beautiful. Boo ya.”

I guess she won the competition.

Later on we’re in a room full of people-

But it’s only him and I.

We lean against the frosty windows as he talks.

All of a sudden, I say it,

The words escape my lips and hang in the air, unheard by him.

He shifts slightly and continues to speak.

My words are swallowed up into the dark hole abyss of unheard “I love you’s”

Louder, more courageous words line up on my tongue

I hold them in and watch his face-

Deciding to wait and try again later.

“I say the whole world is beautiful”

Boo ya.