

my warm and stupid life

*Those lips 'll be the death of me,
all blood red and brutal rouge,
the color of a robbery gone wrong.*

I have a pact with my bones -
I bring them food and they've brought me here,
to the smoothing of my hair in your driveway,
a kiddish (skittish) heart
that's overgrown its bowl.

Nothing could have prevented
the look *up* -
to the fat bellies of geese
(still locked in their formation)
their look *down*
upon our warm and stupid lives.

Their wind trails might remind us
to let go of the chase,
that we'll never have close to
what we wanted.

But this is bigger than us,
this stealing daughters from their fathers,
with mating meaning more than simple math.

Perhaps you have a compliment, or cue,
you ask the relatives (all ghosts) who line the shrubs,
their smoky mouths now holding in their breath.

Their feathery brains soon
blown to bits
by the boxing ring of doorbell,
the open door (all pigtails),
the more than welcome "thought you'd never get here"

Tolerance & Goodwill

We're landlocked now -
our ship set aground
by one of us (or both of us),
the irony of harboring
resentments.

Doctors now below deck
sifting facts from all the fables –
clearing tables of those maps that
couldn't keep us.

Tell you history was never meant as a
personal thing,
this “all of us, or none of us”,
our cannons choked with
tough and blustered love.

So call up your men there in the dark -
the personas that you've pirated within you;
the loser, the liar, the junkie and the thief
(with plungers) sucking madly at the mud.

Heaving-ho in one collective push,
the newly christened 'Tolerance & Goodwill',
where no one has to
lose to learn the lesson.

We'll raise the water, raise the flags -
refuse to end in stalemate,
where one of us
just lets the other go.

Speed dating & stoopid love

Seems I misread the "speed dating" sign for
"a quiet place to die"
and I am a boy/buoy adrift, and step into my name-tag like
a fevered dream.

They expect honesty in our intros, so I'll go with
"I'm a van with a "Caution: Cakes on Board",
my brain's a ghost town (and that's *if* the money clears)
and most yoga moves are completely out of reach (like a career)."

How about we start slow, and just
wink at each other violently from across the room?
Trick our nervous systems into being happy?

The gypsy fortune teller said I would meet "some horny broad"
some time this winter,
who would make me want to chew my own fist
but maybe that's all I'm really used to --
chasing things that are impossible.

"I'm flattered," she says "because nothings says I love you like
I give up."
"And you're fun and all, but not in real life."

The problem usually starts when I open my mouth
but humor has a way of getting clothes to fall off somehow
and she seems 'special' with her moods
and now there are too many balls in the air, and not enough legs.

Maybe this is our "meet cute/rom-com" moment
(with him looking back, and her looking back)
the couple making out in the rafters, and
crashing through the wedding cake.

But back to reality -
my trusty fake moustache seems to be working
and she's invited you to the dance floor -
those hot, red meat lamps heating us like stew
you (jacked on orange soda) and her (getting cheated on and
left at lots of places)

(cont'd)

That bell ring reminds us it's all just a
random game of
who gets to spend time with whom,
that we humans dig giant holes for ourselves
and there are far too many people in the world for
everyone to be successful.

Maybe every conversation *is* an intervention
(a carnie running his rides too fast)
(the damage to your heart already beginning)

The world will go on, just as cheery and lustful
and you will keep dancing (or not)
like that cooking show with the
inappropriate laugh-track
then calmly put your body back into
its cage.

Airfield

what fools have seen these lights?
believed in love, on an airfield out of town
all the teens before us,
the telescopes, and the gutless stars

there's a tent flap where you'll find us,
a gurgling 8-ball with its yeses and no's
"am I lying beside my future ruin? my fisticuffs
against the wind?"

what would I tell people about us –
that we own books on heroes, which will never be us
that we have dimension and depth, yet never
feel like us

tell her all the things you need to say
before she's a missed train from a dream
(all that regret just steaming by)
the coach lights getting smaller, as the future knows they must

"can I afford to miss anyone right now?" she asks
all ribbons for belts
all outstretched arm with a camera
(don't make a face this time)

and the blanket of pine trees above us
leaning in close
waiting for the return answers
willing to forgive most anything.

The Sugar Shack (at Bullfrog Bridge)

The bayou bullfrogs are bouncing in the ditch
telling us to “risk it, risk it”
and the crabs now planning their escape,
elbowing their bodies off of plates
(the moment we come in)
all ‘deviants in a diner booth’
or the set-up to some long-forgotten joke.

Take in the sightlines of parking lot, and fry cook, and
cash inside the till.
This is brunch with a holster in it,
a shot of onions to the heart,
and we do not want to lose our life
just to learn the lesson.

(I used to call you *Sleepy Moon*,
your wheezy dog *Bagpipe*)
but all this striving and obsessing about the future
won’t get you any further down the road,
them hotcakes any faster,
'cause a mile is always a mile,
and will not bend for no one.

The game plan seemed to mushroom overnight,
the motel carpet ripe with yards and yards of
horseshit from us and everyone else, *traipsing*,
(that’s all that we can do in this world)
and the hot plate can only boil away
so many bad decisions.

And now out the diner window there are signs everywhere -
not just *Fresh Bait* and *Mama’s Melons...*
but real sunlight in those trees - like angels
doing their best to do good in the world,
telling us to turn back,
staring hard upon our slept-in clothes
(the kind that you’ll be stabbed in)

(cont’d)

And the phone booth wasn't part of it
(*This salt shaker is you, and... where the hell is HE going?*)
but I needed to tell you about the bullfrogs, Sleepy Moon -
how they're telling us to 'risk it, risk it'
and that I've lived my life too small
and missed every train I was ever meant to be on.

But the payphone clicks goodbye
(the next words costing more than quarters)
and the cord is dangling down just
like a demon.

Have you ever been enough for someone?
said to the air, the weeds (the angels?)
and now it's masks down and hands up
and everyone always getting what they deserved.