

Colorado Dawn

A picturesque pastoral
in muted grey and soft blue,
yellow paintbrush lifting up
the veil of night. Everything

struggles to wake up. Cattle
and horses lazily graze
as the lights outside flicker.

Sun a milky white, we have
another 5 hours or so
until we reach Denver. Sky's
grey in morning, but I see
azure atmosphere emerge.

I open my canteen to
swallow cold clear water from
a wild river a mile out.

Streetlights, telephone pole lights,
they eventually switch
off, letting loving sunlight
shine into the bus, all us

struggling to wake up just like
the cattle lowing outside.

What a beautiful sight to behold, as
a mantra buzzes brashly overhead!

Every bump in the road, every crack.
Denver in 5. Denver in 5. Denver in 5.
Every cross overcast by sunshine.
Denver in 5. Denver in 5.
Every thought crossing my mind, smiling.
Denver in 5.

A Promise to Future Generations

1: An Introduction

I promise y'all that
we will fix all these problems
in the future, but

that's a guarantee I'm making
while we mess everything up again.

I can't believe this is the future we're leaving y'all; it's a jerk move.

A clown president?
What the hell were we thinking?
Probably ratings.

Rating each other was a new way
to express how we all had felt.

90's kids did it; we teach children this terrible tradition too.

All our hearts scream when
the screen goes black, and our face
is reflected back.

We bang and beat and stamp our feet
waiting waiting waiting waiting for

the relentless beeping sound filling up this endless awkward silence.

2: The Promise

I was guilty of it in the past, but
I promise you future generations:

I won't raise you on these curses,
given to us by
an old wrathful God.

I will walk with you, hand in hand,
through the woozy glens
and ravaged forests.

I will name the trees, and the trees
will name you back. This
is what I give you:

Nature will not be the same after us.
But I will make sure you see her

on her deathbed, so
she can at least hold your hand
in her withered and

wrinkled hand, the mask
and tubes and machinery
beeping around her
(a symphony)

as she looks you square
in the eye, as
the light
dies.

"But don't worry, kid,"
I say with tears in my eyes
glancing up towards
the moon so bright. "The sun
rises when the morning comes."

3: A Promise made at Night

And maybe, future generations,
maybe, we will be quick and certain
and, we will fix it before—

it's too late.

It's the last thing
on my tired mind
as I shut off
all these machines
surrounding me,
surrounding me
like loved ones should.

I was addicted
and obsessed with
swiping left and right,
 watching events,
switching from channel
 to channel to—,
searching the net with
 a flashlight from
 my attic,

reading and gleaning
things that the sun's already
 illuminating.

4: Reality of the Situation

You will inherit
 a sleek young silicon world.
It will not matter
 when dead lights in Nature's eyes
are reawakened
 by holographic tech. No
it will not matter
 when her creatures are on screens
 as big as the horizon.

and Plato will sigh, rewire
 his circuits, and don sackcloth,
and scream these promises from
 the rooftops and some balconies.

But no one is listening!
 No one will ever listen!

and, maybe future generations,
 maybe I'm that screaming man
and, maybe, I should let my voice rest

 because why would I scream if
 the trees are all gone as soon
 as my mouth opens.

5: The Final Sigh

Beeping from the countryside.
Beeping from the streets outside.
Machinery whirs; gears turn.
A patch of land forms.
 it foams
 it groans.

Long sinewy arms made of bark begin
to roll dead ground into small little balls,
and then punt them to the bones of children,
wrapped up perfectly inside some bin-bags,
 who rise up in shambling motions and kick,
 who begin to creakily sing and drink,
 who beat on drums and strum on ancient lyres,
 who lay bodies down by funeral pyres
 and weep and laugh and dream
 and scream and sigh and sleep.

The circuits that held these long forgotten promises I'm making are
lying dead in the streets too. The pages they were printed on fuel
the fire in the pyres burning on the corners. And only one promise
remains! this:

 Nature will endure, even if
 we don't live to see it.

Weaker than Most, Stronger than Least

She told me:
 What I hold here in my hands
 are the keys to the Universe.

 and What you hold here in your heart,
 is the locket of Desire.

Blooming flowers burn
cause of the drying season
and no rain since '11.

But the asphodel
and lilies burning outside
fills the air up with

sweetness and woodsmoke.
I'll hold your hand as clouds sweep
the sky. They're clammy and cold
and fill me with joy.

We had been rotting shambling zombies,
stumbling through the barren desert.

But now, at last, we can finally
feast on the living, together
side-by-side where

the basses boom, the
guitars grind away in dive bars
at the edge of town:

our date night destinations. Where we ask the band:
Can you play our favorite song? The one that goes

FUCK you, FUCK you,
I don't have to
LOVE you, LOVE you,
even though I do!

We may not get married. We may not have children,
(especially in this climate). But, God, I swear:

What I hold here in my hands
are the keys to the Universe.

and What you hold here in your heart
is the locket of Desire.

Colossians 3:19

for Aidan

Our love is like
a demilitarized zone,
its border weakening
with each passing week.

Someday,
and I'm not saying when,
one of us will take a villager or two hostage
and negotiations will begin.

We'll involve other people
friends and family, but mostly friends,
who aren't really qualified to help us.

Our love is like
the Shankill in Northern Ireland:

pockets of Protestants and Catholics
lying in wait, both too stubborn
to move, or make a move,

refusing to lose. Friends and family
tell us: *there's professionals you
can go to.* But

we're not going to them.
That's admitting defeat.

Our love is like
an arctic winter in Argentina:

too cold to support life; yet,
life thrives in it, somehow.

Penguins dance on mountain ridges
through the old Chaco grave-sites
and abandoned dwellings; some
of the homes still hold people
shivering, shaking, shambling.

If these beings can survive
an arctic winter in Argentina.
Why can't we?

So when the officiant asks
if anyone has any objection
to why these two should not be lawfully wed, I'll blink and
hold back tears, hoping that not a single one of our peers
pipes up, because, honestly,
even if I don't love you
and you don't love me
at least we can not love each other
together.

The Introduction to *Sea Wolves*

We didn't talk much about what was going on.
I wish we had.

I wish we had talked more:
about your parents' divorce;
about the taunting, the teasing;
about the dysphoria,
about the shapeless creature
you saw in the mirror every day;
about the time I stole money from you
(well, technically stole money;
(I'd really only stolen a gram or two
(of weed when you weren't looking));
about the feelings rattling your skull
like car keys on a kite
in a thunderstorm
waiting for lightning to strike.

And when the lightning struck
where was i? where were you?

A thousand miles away;
a mere phone call away;
a skype message away;
a skype message
would've done wonders.

When the lightning struck,
I was not there to witness it
and its weird wonders
and calculated measures.
I was not there
to see your broken image
screaming in the dark.

(but I could hear it)

Someone special to us
told me you died alone
in some foreign hospital bed,
the one we all knew
you'd end up in
eventually.