

+ Polarity

The nucleus is the sun.
Electrons orbit its core
as planets rotate on axis.

Our earth is a negative
attracted to a positive,
and neither will touch

for aeons after my lifetime.
The nature of all existence
wants what we do not have.

Even our scorching sun,
which wants to burn forever,
shall fade into a pale dwarf.

Why live?

Because to satiate that burn,
that thirst, that hunger, just once,
in this grand vacuum of space,

means you and I
are alive—

Social Media

I sent her a Snapchat of myself,
drunk but laughing sober, shirtless
alone at home and texting her phone
so abstract and prepossessed of me,
Danielle, two years ago in Tennessee
we waited tables for dollar tips at Taco
Mamacita, serving half-price Sangria
every Sunday, enduring the work day
of rest for summer's seasonal mojito,
buzzed after happy hour she unleashed
our dogs at Coolidge Park untamed,
and I could never believe her Pallas—
Atlantic eyes unbuckling Mt. Olympus
from the trespass of *No Dogs Allowed*....
She posted this ;) on my Facebook wall,
blog, newsfeed, timeline, or whatever
it was euphoria. Languidly we finally
met again in blue moon dreams making
wild more real than bed sheets unmade.
I woke up freezing in Minnesota,
waiting tables, sweeping floors,
washing dishes with the cold rag....
How our minds traveled the wireless
network of so many states that night,
locked in viral transit, routed together
over the continental drift, magnetized,
then disconnected like charged
vectors crossing the equator,
vaulting static latitudes back
to our North and South poles.

How to Wake Up Hating Yourself

First you must win at anything convincingly.
Let this be a bowling match. Battle of the bands.
Your pilot's license. You must achieve spectacular
trophies, awards, and royal blue ribbons real or unreal.
Make the invisible go visible then amplify success.

Next you must get drunk. Feel free and begin
with one cool quart of familiar Corona purchased
via nickels and dimes at your local caved in mini-mart.
Pop the bottle open with your infamous Jagermeister keychain
then brown paper bag it like washed up Hollywood, shameless
in the parking lot, cat-calling female pedestrians up the alley
on the amble back home, swaggering 5 o'clock somewhere.
Then saunter through the front door, flick off your roommates,
and crank your favorite 90s alt-rock playlist, drinking alone
in your bedroom, feeling buzz ballads feed your body buzz.
Repeat: *I Am One. I Am One.* As Sublime sings "Santeria."

Upon downing one gallon
of ice-cold cerveza stocked in the fridge,
flick off your roommates then stumble out the door
and spill into the desolate streets. Enter the worst bar in town.
That empty tavern that takes cash only. That one called, "Old Spur Saloon,"
without bathroom stalls. You know you found the right place when the bartender
calls you honey and asks you for a cigarette you cannot spare, because you are Indiana
Jones too busy hustling fools at beer-stained billiards in the smoke-drenched bar lights,
racking up nickels and dimes destined for the mini-mart, winning convincingly
as that glimmering blonde vixen sings karaoke in the Tuesday night spotlight,
cutting eyes for contact, grinning as you break balls and feel alive again.

Driving could kill you, but that's why you walked.
No death impedes you from waking up
tomorrow and wanting to die.

With a wallet full of hustled cash,
find a barstool alone in the corner, flag down the fussy bartender,
and order a salted shot of tequila with lime, chasing the numb neon afterglow
of victory with blue agave, heavy in the purple haze, order another bitter shot
for pride, pulling out your iPhone, pretending to text friends you lost months ago,
mulling over your precious life accomplishments, including but not limited to winning
the 5th grade spelling bee, escorting the governor's popular daughter to prom but failing
to sleep with her, gulping down the next shot you remember finishing 13th place
at the National Ultimate Frisbee Tournament in Pittsburgh....twelve years ago....

For dramatic effect order one glass of white wine
for the blonde karaoke vixen, and one glass of red for yourself.
Six nights out of seven she will either have a boyfriend or you will slur
the conversation to a screeching halt, and she will parry any move you put on her,
unimpressed by your precious life accomplishments. In this scenario simply chug
both glasses of cheap wine and get the hell out because you hardly had the energy
to reel her home, anyways. But under most unlikely circumstances, she will chug
the white wine out of total despair and destitution, usually with tragic urgency,
and you will order another drink of her choosing. Repeat until plastered.
After blacking out and laughing at nonsense for hours, request an Uber
ride home and then attempt sexual intercourse. Warning!
It's absolutely critical that she consents, but six nights
out of seven you will both pass out drunk
and fail at this miserably.

Assuming the blonde karaoke vixen has a boyfriend,
blow the lid off the bar and leave a \$20 tip for the bartender
with the dragon tattoo, revealed on her lower back when she bends
over and removes the empty keg, where red Mushu of Mulan flashes
teeth sharp as a jackal smiling wide over the pink lace of her thong.

Staggering blitzed out of the worst bar in town,
next you tunnel through the wasted smoke-eyed streets
blinking exhausted stars at the end of the traipsing streetlights,
texting your ex-lover full of the drunken moon. Text her
you are going to be famous. Text her you love her and
you are going to be a celebrity in two years. Text her
you got your pilot's license and you are going to buy
a private jet and land in her driveway and marry her.
Text her the driveway was a difficult airstrip
but nothing you have never seen before.
Text her after two years you know she still loves you
and that she has met no human soul like yours since the breakup.
Text her because your soul is the best soul you are flying her away
to Vancouver, Canada, where neither of you will have to pay student loans,
because your father was born in Montreal and you will declare Canadian
citizenship because America is prison, babe, you text her.

Then you shove the phone in your pocket, grinning
like Clint Eastwood rising out of the old tavernous ruins,
believing you are one of those wild winking stars of the West,
yes, in fact you are the brightest star in the low hanging sky,
and you can have them all, you think, you can own the stars,
fumbling with the keys, you unlock the door, nearly tripping,
and lurch through the apartment, flicking off nothing in particular,
feeling the walls for navigation to your bedroom, where you fall

into the desk chair and log on Facebook, confessing
your undying love for the governor's daughter,
posting paragraphs of steel-hearted passion
on her profile, ordaining your unconditional
devotion on her timeline, permanent newsfeed,
because, goddammit the social media world
deserves to know about your history with her,
about your struggle unlocking the heavy door
to collapse like a star from the sky into bed,
dreaming of both girls soft as your pillows,
hugging cotton fluffed from stuffed feathers
taking flight inside your cold empty ribcage,
drifting asleep with two women you love
holding on tight and warm like cheerleaders.

Then the sun rises, outside
your window aching light rays
pierce inside your room, palpating
heartbeats that pound the aching head.
Between sweat-stained pillows an iPhone
stares from the bed sheets. You are terrified
to meet the stranger blinking back the image
of your thumbprints on the touchscreen.

The Ashes of St. Elmo's Fire

For No One

Ambition lost at bay, soaring sundown
through amber air like missing unstrung kites,
without drowning, desire stretches sky bound—
carbon dioxide exhaling evergreens on coasts
breathing wood-bone branches into being,
distance twisting antlers of the wild buck,
smoke rings around Saint Elmo's Fire,
verberating blue electric vision curled
off the palm, cupping the cold Puget sun,
clutching new dreams that reach then touch
all the apologies that created Kurt Cobain—
dead eyes dripping sad inspiration doomed
beneath the spinal bridge, together we saw
tall strangers shout in seismic darkness, loud
as planets circling one sharp red star burning
antediluvial silhouettes of giants, titans, gods,
gravid death shuttering light, shunting gravity,
shifting mass off the shadow core, unobserved
density roving through total eclipse, opening
and closing all in all is all we are alone
beneath the bridge of every backbone,
choking on the ashes of our dreams
as one in the buried sun, married
with nothing but the old motion
of hunger orbiting blankness
above the coast, devouring
days when dreams grow
tall as giants in the dark,
strong as titans, proud
as gods before one
sun drops light
living against
the night.

See Cobain, "All Apologies," lyrics.

The Freeway

Midnight. Moontide. The eighteen-wheeler exits the freeway up the ramp. Summer stars glister black glass of an empty gas station, flashing dreams around the rural scapes of nowhere.

As though the husband left the dim infidelity of his wife and erased the face of the moon escorting her ring finger through the event horizon only to find higher fidelity around the singularity of a younger woman's ring.

As though the wife left the luminous fidelity of her high noon sun whose memory glisters the bedroom window of a stranger dreaming scapes through the rural infidelity of nowhere condensed outside the gravity of headlights.

At the gas station the eighteen-wheeler gyrates invariably at the diesel pump. Moontide moths flashing dreams beneath the dark metal canopy. Midnight. The scent of gasoline. Country fuel.