

I'm happier these days, I suppose

Chicken & Whiskey

Meatlocker door,
the entrance to a speakeasy,
and shots,
maybe one too many,
that drew those words from you.

It was nice to feel wanted.
When that girl approached you,
pulled you in for a kiss,
told me no man
could ever love
the way a woman could.

I don't know that she's wrong.

But you said you craved
my body,
and I craved yours,
even moreso when you disparaged it,
asked me in the Uber
why I lied
when I told you
you were gorgeous.

It was because I saw
so much of her
in you –
the sweeping dark hair,
long stocking legs,
and a smile so reticent
and unaware
of the power it holds.

You sat on the counter,
swayed and fumbled,
nearly fell into the flame
that brewed your uncertain tea.

You grabbed me,
asked me to burn with you,
sent fire through my spine
as your hands felt for my belt.

"I've given up on love,"
you whispered.

*"Of love,
for love,
there's nothing here but time."*

*"No,
there's time here,
but nothing."*

And so you were her.
And so I loved you.
For the evening.

And in the morning,
when the booze wears off
and you tell me that you're leaving,
the fear will grow again,
and I'll say to you,
far too practiced,
far too easy:

Goodbye.

What it feels like, in the Ice Age

“When you go,
take the sun with you.”

She said it so casually
that I almost missed
the misted cheeks
and ruby eyes
that came with the command.

It was a command, to be sure,
not a request.
And though I had not the power
to take it,
she had the power
to give it.

So I was Apollo as I left.
And in the darkness
that sprang up behind me,
I could not know the darkness
that was before her.

I did not want it: the sun.
Or maybe that's not right.
It's not that I didn't want it,
but that I couldn't hold it,
or couldn't keep it,
or couldn't give it any more
through fission and fiction.

And so it faded.
And though I tried to give it,
in bits and pieces,
to the world,
they wouldn't take it.

It was dark then.
The rooms I walked in
both smaller
and larger
in the blackness.

Smaller in my ability to know them,
larger in the way they yawned
and obfuscated
their many doors from me.

To walk among this darkness
was to admit that the only reason
for continuation
is the avoidance
of cessation.

So I was Orpheus,
swimming in the River Lethe.
Then I was Artemis,
hunting down her brother.

I said I'd find you,
those many years ago.
And when I do,
I'll bring with me
the sun.

To being in love with you, once again.

It began
with some stupid
freestyle rap
on the patio of a rundown house.
You say you don't remember,
but I do,
and that's enough
for the both of us.

It ended
with some stupid
freestyle rap
he sang
that felt more a siren song
than mine.

"I will wait," I said
as I leaned against the gnarled bark.
I stood rooted there
and waited
all these years.

It's funny
what I remember
from the interregnum.
The moments when you looked away,
or told me
on the tennis courts
there's nothing more to search for.

And funny too,
to learn,
that you remember much the same,
though with opposite force.

Both lovers spurned
in the stories we tell.

Yet here we are,
once again,
and it's the little moments now
like when your cupped hand
finds my chest,
or when you laugh and shake your head,
that I know:
you were always worth the wait.

The one sunny day in a week of rain

Seventy-five and his bed is a couch,
as we sat around the crackers
and wilted blocks of cheese
that were such an accomplishment
of hospitality.

He seemed better to me,
but worse to you,
and really,
what have I ever known of him?

The air is thick
as we drive away,
car full to bursting
with soundwaves unspoken
but ringing in our ears.

I know you are worried.
The tremor of your father,
now of your brother.
Soon of you,
you know deep down –
but you hold out hope.

His memory fades,
as did Granddad's.
You miss a turn.
Just distracted?
We don't know.

The air hangs heavy with concern,
disquiet humming in the silence.
And as the soundwaves mount,
unbearable at last,
you decide to grab one.

“What a gorgeous day.
I'm glad that you are here.”

I hadn't known that one was there.
Hadn't heard any so lovely.

Sixty, and your voice still strong and steady.
That's why you amaze me.

A note to myself that felt like poetry. Sorry if it's not.

This notebook spans a year and a half of my life. The most difficult year and a half of my life. It starts in the depths of depression. It ebbs and flows from that point. It encompasses manic episodes, and calmness, and sadness, and anger, and confusion, and happiness, and love, and so many other things. It talks of death. A lot. Even when it doesn't seem to. It is, at times, the greatest expression of me ever compiled. And, at times, it is the worst.

It is what it is.

And I'm strangely proud of it.

I am here.

I am this.

And I am not.

And in this very moment, as I write these words, I feel joy. For whatever that means.

It means *everything*.
