

*Aleppo*

Why don't we remember the children?  
Dying, crying, asking for help -  
where is God  
in this land of Hell?  
Babies  
fresh on this earth  
with a full life to give  
hearts barely beating  
-now their hearts are barely beating.  
Fighting for the right to live  
under crumbling cement -  
mimicking the way  
bones break  
into fractured pieces  
of a soul  
that has already left  
this destroyed body.  
And yet,  
babies blink  
and they scream  
and they grasp for anyone  
to hold them:  
provide them comfort  
only experienced whilst in the womb.  
We remember the Holocaust,  
while forgetting Rwanda and Armenia;  
Native Americans and African Americans.  
History repeats itself  
because people forget.  
Remember. The. Children.  
The sweetness of their laughter  
pure, untainted  
destroys the pain  
that life creates - -  
and yet  
voices crushed  
by smoke / dust  
unable to give sound

ring in my ears  
echoing in my silence  
questions reverberating:  
why won't you help?  
Deafening bombs go mute  
in the presence of our taciturnity  
and that same sound of laughter  
mocks humanity:  
babies die while babies laugh.  
With each passing line  
a baby dies  
asking the question:  
where is God  
in this land of Hell?

## *Touch*

How depressing it is to know that we will never touch.

A hug,

    A caress,

        A kiss.

All fruitless attempts for a contact we have never and will never know.

Is it so awful to be star-crossed lovers?

To meet the one then move on knowing it can never be?

It is so much more painful to be side by side, looking into the universe that is each other's eyes and know you might as well be that far apart.

Destiny is a cruel master and the three Fates giggle as they watch our futile attempts to become one.

Pulsing with energy, the cosmos wish this union to occur.

However, it also insures that it will never be, for it knows the danger when two stars collide.

Explosion, power.

A light so blinding all the stars in the universe must turn away in fear.

But maybe it is better that we never meet hand to hand.

The dinosaurs' world ended in fire, so might ours.

If a glance is so consuming, I fear what would happen if we could defy cosmic order.

It's in the way we are made –

    Gravity pulls us together while the smallest substance of our being pushes us

    apart.

Like Newton's apple fell into the earth, I wish I could fall into you.

I wish our atoms intermingled in a way so that onlookers would not know where I ended and you began.

I wish we could call down the Gods and demand our right to meet.

But mostly, I just wish we could touch.

*Stranger*

Like a lamb being led to the slaughter  
I open myself up to you.  
Your words –  
Being either the needle to stitch me back together  
or the knife that tears me to shreds  
– hang weightless in the air.  
Suspended in this moment  
Time fights to drag them down to Earth.

“He’s gone.”

The world shatters in porcelain,  
shrapnel embedding itself in your skin.  
Nerves firing endlessly  
as the arrows of time hit your breast and drag you to sea.  
Some force yanks me back  
in the other  
direction  
making the distance between us  
immeasurable.

Over time,  
the waters recede  
and I look for a hint of your face  
in their deceiving blueness.  
A sparkle  
– perhaps it is your smile?  
It is only the sun.  
I know it is foolish looking,  
Time has you in her grip  
and she refuses to let go.

“She’s one.”

The sea has gifted me  
the sight of glimpses of your face.  
There is the smile  
I ached over.  
Your eyes are still as warm as I remember.

“She’s two.”

The image warped –  
it is because you  
do not recognize  
me as I recognize  
you.

I am a  
stranger  
and am treated as  
such.

In my effort to find  
you  
I forgot to remind  
you  
of who I am.

“She’s three.”

You rage against me  
and I pull away  
no longer able to recognize you.  
Perhaps we will meet again  
at some long forgotten path  
with tales of adventure  
under the ocean  
and on mountain passes.

“She’s four.”

Today a stranger stopped me  
on the street.  
Do I know you?  
You have a lovely smile.

*Darkness*

I slip into the darkness like a lover.

Quiet.

Familiar.

It sneaks up behind me and caresses my neck.

Melting inward,

I cease to exist.

Lost in a state of reality that man cannot touch.

It begs the question:

Who am I when no one is watching?

Living in a society where the judgements of others confirm that I am actually here –

I disappear without those eyes.

My will,

Faltering at best,

Cannot keep me grounded.

I am terrified of that darkness that swallows me whole.

It claims me as one of its own and indeed I recognize this place.

I've been here before,

Once upon a time.

I fought to leave.

Desperately.

Panicked.

How could I let myself return to this place where dreams come to die?