

## *Shameful Realizations*

He gazed at her incredulously,  
Feigned by fears of possible  
Projection, ideas of her own  
Guilt bubbling to the surface,  
Forming poor accusations of  
Misguided longing, mistaking  
Hearts on apps for hearts in  
His eyes - His own thoughts  
Desperate for comfort and  
Regulation, wishing that her  
Fears weren't mirror images,  
Mere snapshots of his own  
Issues, the ones that cause  
Fingers to tap at curious pages,  
His neck to cramp at the sound  
Of her phone vibrating on the  
Coffee table, the same thoughts  
Screaming for something or  
Someone to cancel them out -  
Yet the thoughts cycle in and  
Marinate longer than mother's  
Prize pork feast, almost like he's  
Addicted - not only to the feeling  
Itself, but to the constant solace  
Provided when he realizes that  
Soon, maybe tomorrow, he will  
Arrive at fate's door - empty handed  
Which makes him feel alive, and  
Lighter, remembering that  
Even though flower petals find  
Bright rays of pink and gold,  
The stem of which is typically  
Built by shades of green  
And he hated that damn color.  
He hated it more than he hated  
Himself – but then again, he also  
Loved the way forests look when  
Sunlight drapes it's chloroplastic  
Foundation, outshining iridescent  
Petaled suns, pigments frosting  
Potential beds of withered, naked  
Cadaverous vines and maple leaves  
Hidden beneath billows of fresh,  
Thriving vegetation, while bearing

Berry blossoms and star-shaped  
Fruits, plump and secure in the  
Sanctity known easy enough as life  
And where there's life, there's hope  
And where there's hope, he finds  
Her – all over again.

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*My Fee*

My daughter comes over  
Once a year and cleans  
The entire house – monitors  
My vitals while also counting  
Bottles and paper bags that  
Surround my oxygen machine,  
The same one I used like  
Clockwork when we lived in  
The Sierras, but the same  
Machine I use during what  
We call *emergencies* –  
Moments where the inhaler  
Is as useful as soup during  
Mid-July; moments where  
The muscles that hardly  
Coat my bones begin to  
Tighten, molding into  
Protective blubber that  
Becomes black ice thin  
As it's essence breaks my fall  
Before shattering my knees  
Along with the glasses  
Stacked high over the last  
Few months, corroding with  
Lilac and hunter green  
Monsters, furry and exotic  
Mink clusters blossoming from  
Bacteria long forgotten  
Releasing odors cloaked by  
Ammonia and stale pores,  
Caressing my blanket tighter  
Than she once did years ago  
Now she just watches, steadily

Texting in the corner of the  
Room, knees locked against  
Her chest while I hopelessly  
Ask questions, asking for  
Some sort of sign that she  
Still loves me, even though  
I'm unable to do the things  
I used to be able to do –  
Even though I love people  
That only know what I know  
And that's what hurts my heart  
The most – is that she does  
*Love* me, but I never can truly  
*Feel* that. A penny is worth  
A thousand words, but my  
Heart is worth only three –  
I wonder if she ever knew  
Retribution for a mother's  
Relentless heartache by  
Proxy of a disease and a  
Lifestyle I never truly knew  
Would affect us like this

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*My Last January Morning*

This might be my last  
January morning, my  
Last breakfast by the  
Brink of the stream,  
Coursing quicker than  
The pounding in my  
Chest, resulting from  
The warm, crisp cup of  
Coffee we finally decided  
To try last Tuesday night -  
Steamed to perfection  
With whimpering lips  
Biting back floods of  
Starved salivation,  
Hearts dreaming of  
Nightshade and daybreak  
Craving milky sundries

Plush with whipped batter  
Yet encrusted with a  
Toasty visage, bubbling  
Near the fireplace, sticks  
Bearing marshmallows  
Crackle in the shadow of  
Smoky dances, feathering  
Like a thousand wings into  
The foggy winter air.  
Yes, this might be my  
Last morning stroll  
Around the naked stems  
Crowding the old rose bush,  
My last glimpse of  
Teardrops formed by icicles  
Bearing dew with the fervor  
Father's hands would bear  
Christmas gifts decades ago -  
Decorating the vines that  
Blossom with winter berries  
That color lips violet for  
Eternity - the amount of  
Time one has to recount  
Memories that cloak reality  
With minute factions of  
Viable truth, duplicates  
Void by nature, frivolously  
Distributing doubts and dreams  
In the minds of hearty thinkers  
And weavers, people trying  
To mimic the cosmos by  
Crafting their reality with  
Control – force. Except,  
I'm okay with this being  
My last January morning  
Because not only is my  
Love beside me, but I have  
My memories – just like  
That space man in that story  
Kaleidoscope. I've got my  
Memories, so my dreams  
Can rest in fantastic realms  
For eternity, knowing time  
Will never be wasted again

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*Daycare*

Do you remember our Sunday morning strolls we'd take before dawn?

You used to like that last sip of whiskey,  
drowned in a giant thermos full of  
coffee that was burned every morning

Your mouth was always a sulfurous steam engine  
burning buds and staining sheaths of plaque  
thicker than those hanging in your old office building,  
the same brick sanctuary burned bad by wirey bandits  
in late July –

New York's fragrant goodbye,  
kissing the sky with fragments of  
Your biggest dreams

The one man band razzes tantrums with with the tip of his toes,  
even to this day –

tambourines shaking as his teeth chatter behind  
an old c-minor harmonica –

Playing that old Bob Dylan song we  
danced to on the boulevard across  
town

Wicker arms were dressed in red and golds  
as twinkling lights supplemented the stars,  
all while grand caravans screamed "Hey Jude" emphatically,

You laughed like we were in Daycare,  
a laugh that always made me feel  
like a Child

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*Paper Weight*

I'm in love with a woman  
I've only seen in my dreams  
During the twilight of conscious desire  
And while my heart drums desperately,  
Awaiting the attention of distant memories.  
I always see the bubbles,

But never hearing them pop –  
No splash beneath the surface of the turquoise sky  
I've only dreamt of her drowning  
In a nightgown, the sun burning  
Holes in the Arctic's surface – blinding her retina while air traps  
Water, salt grasping her vision,  
Leaving quiet cuts beneath  
Salmon shades, fluttering  
Feathered lashes with little discomfort,  
Fighting instinct with minimal effort.

Daydreams full of fluid orbs  
Full of her breath, air that her  
Lungs won't contain, but gladly exhale  
Suffocation by will, deaf to my desires  
Lost by admission, finding solace in  
The steady thumping of her heart  
Plumes of hair arise like smoke,  
Her scalp burning with rose fire.  
Confusing freckles for shadows,  
My eyes wonder near her bare shoulders,  
Shaking slightly to the rhythm of a song  
She sings internally, a thought transpiring into  
An ethereal vibration, shaking the molecules  
Surrounding the vast void that knows  
Nothing but her.

Sometimes I hear that song in her chest,  
Humming while seaweed wraps around her lips,  
While ubiquitous school fish study her curves  
And nibble at the fringes of her torn cotton gown  
Other days I imagine she stands tall,  
Her arms stretched towards the stars  
That hide in light's shadow, tip-toeing  
Along the perimeter of a misshapen bookshelf,  
Each shelf containing two rows of soggy pages,  
The sea breeding monsters that wake  
Between the leather bound journals,  
Utilizing her favorites memories as the foundation  
Of the school's new playhouse.

One wall knew the first meal  
She ever bought her parents,  
A reward shared after several lucky scratches;  
The floor knew her favorite songs,  
Composed of sun burned cardboard sleeves

Decorated with vinyls whose ridges bore mountains  
Between which swam her neighborhood  
Friends, splashing chlorine up her nose as  
She swallows the water being  
Shoved through the gap she quietly  
Hid behind pale, plush lips – the same pair  
Mouthing along to songs I hardly understand,  
Like those of foreign lands with tongues  
That sew strings between dreams  
Unknown to my land, as well as my heart

A paper weight fluid with callous remorse  
Will never once feel remorse for me,  
An unprompted observer of her tangible essence  
Lying hopelessly at ivory heels, belonging to  
Someone I wish to lie with  
Every night of my life, even if  
The days will only give me  
Daydreams full of fluid orbs.