

Mulligan

How many moments in a year?
How many heartbeats? How many breaths?

Can love travel back in time &
heal a broken heart?

If I get in a plane
and travel far enough West
can I keep reliving
the same day
over and over again?
Can I get all my do-overs
and fix all my past mistakes?

Would I do it
even if I could?

I am the accumulation of
my mistakes & triumphs
I am
my errors & successes

I would not be the woman I am today
without the girl who stumbled & fell
who was hurt and hurt others
whose heart was broken and healed

my scars are my pride
my mistakes are my virtue
from errors come my strength

there is no fear left inside me
only passion
only heart

scar tissue is a remarkable thing

The Edges of Love

Where are
the edges
of love

I have yet
to find them

lost is not
in love's
vocabulary

my love
will reach you
no matter
where I may go
I may leave
But my love
will always
stay

love
does not know
what tired
means

whatever is
in my power
or not
in my power
I will do
for you

No matter how
many mountains
there are
to climb
canyons
to search
miles
to walk
I will do
to get to you

Where goes you
So, too, goes my love

and where goes I
so, too, does your love

Wherever I go
You are with me

Wherever I am
I am home

For my heart is full
My eyes are bright
And I know
I will see you
Again.

Birth

I am not born yet
And yet
I am born one hundred times a day
One thousand times a day
Painfully, preciously
I am born into every moment
I craft myself
I build myself
I am trying to be born
I take my first feeble steps
I fall
I fail
I rise
I am born again
The cries of a newborn child
fill my heart
ring in my ears
I breathe new life
I am born
I reach
I fall
I rise
Born.
And again.
Born.

Stories

Our bodies carry stories
of cakes eaten or forgone
challenges accepted or declined
sometimes ink into flesh
calling out
for all to see
everything
we believe in

other times,
more subtle
a wrinkle left from a furrowed brow
or a laugh line from a smile
provoked by a lover
who stayed too long (overstayed their welcome)
or left too soon (without saying goodbye)

a chipped tooth
a tragic fall

scars and bruises
of childhood summers
and grownup winters

tans and tan lines
exposed and hidden flesh
exposed and hidden secrets

calluses, warts, a bum knee
all there
the stories of our lives
little echoes of what has been
written out like maps
imprinted into flesh
indelible like ink

Where I Danced in Those Shoes

There is nothing like
the beating of a fine salsa rhythm
under your skin
or merengue for that matter
bachata, tango, samba
it does not matter
it is music that invades your heart
captures your soul

and just as the music rises
in a gritty New York basement
full of dancers
just as passionate for the music
as yourself
the beat pulsing in your blood
the heel of your red dancing pumps

cracks

broken beyond repair
you stumble, gasp in shock
and fall into a nearby dancing couple
an action taboo in the extreme
a mistake you haven't made
since your first classes
in a suburban New Jersey home
someone's mother taking hormonal teens
through our paces

the eyes of the perturbed couple
change from jagged glares to soft with sympathy
as they realize your plight
you mumble your apologies
face as red as your shoes
and limp your way awkwardly off the floor
you know you will never dance in these shoes again
and you wish you could go back
to those places you danced in those shoes
they were your sole companion
as you danced your way around the world

sometimes it was the exotic and sublime
the damp humidity, moist against your skin
the overpowering scent of seaside salty air
sweat covered bodies
not a writhing mass
but an intricately choreographed
yet still impromptu

celebration of all that is movement and music
as the dancers of Barcelona
teach you what it really means to dance

you gaze down at the broken red shoe
wondering against all hope
if there is any possibility of salvage
but you know better
these red slippers that were more powerful than
Dorothy's ruby red ones
had seen their last dancing days

unlike that night in Prague
where they outlasted you
at the wedding of Julie & Arno
where you danced flamenco with a man
who seemed to be having a seizure
and you wondered
had he ever seen flamenco before
it was three in the morning
when you finally kicked off your dancing shoes
and even later (or earlier) before you fell into bed
exhausted, knees and feet aching
but that part of you that yearns to move
sated for the moment

but tonight
the evening had just begun
your green eyes scan the dance floor
as the dancing pairs
taut with concentration
absorbed in each other
pivot and glide across the floor
leaving you to morn your loss alone
shoeless, you wonder what it was about these in particular
that attracted men like no others

as it was lakeside in Neuchatel
where you held all hearts hostage
changing partner after partner
at a secret salsa meetup
the terrace of the university
only after dark
otherwise the uptight, upright Swiss
frowned their displeasure
at joviality, passion, and noise

those shoes did not always take you somewhere
so rare and new, there was also
hours of dance hall & living room practice

living room practice you are certain
your downstairs neighbors appreciated
as indicated by the banging and cursing from below
but neither neighbor's impatience nor strained muscles, tired feet
meant anything at all
mere tokens on the shrine to the venerable dance Gods

the air is thick with memories
you wave them away from your face
and make your way barefoot towards the door
enviously eyeing the sheen of patent leather reflecting light
as the footwork of other dancers
entwines them amongst each other

defeated, you drop the red patent leather pumps
into the dustbin by the door
not looking back
you exit to the parking lot
as you do, your dance partner
comes from behind
unseen but felt, warm and reassuring
he sweeps you into his arms
carrying you across the dangers of the parking lot

tomorrow the search will begin
for new shoes
and new adventures to have in them
but that is tomorrow
tonight will be spent with your love