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1. Babble
2. Stick a Pin in It
3. Little Box
4. Depth
5. Opposites Attract

## **Babble (1)**

Sometimes it's good  
To talk to yourself

Sometimes the person who knows you the least is you

So the next time you have a sandwich  
A smoke  
Or a spew

Remember yourself  
Try to remember  
y o u

## Stick a Pin in It (2)

I've written so many sticky notes to myself  
That I now wear a dress of paper

My skin is covered with tattoos of  
Save-the-dates  
Grocery lists  
And favors

My calendar looks more  
Like an equation than information

They only taught me  
To balance atoms in chemistry

Balanced schedule equals  
Balanced checkbook equals  
Balanced diet equals  
Balanced life

Ha

You'd think we were mermaids  
Covered in all these scales  
Telling each other all these tales

Life's an amusement park

To the right of my cart  
A figure fixing their face  
For the snapshot camera as we pass

Impossible expectations

I spin my tea cup 'round and  
Make my hair look

windblown

Not knotted and

60-

mile-an

-hour thrown

Use the weight of my

Insecurity

To Ring the Bell

Shatter the House of Mirrors

Use the glass to protect myself

From the clowns who follow me

Their smiles upside-down and backwards

Reflections and versions of myself

My dark eyes a marker

Note to self:

r e m e m b e r

### Little Box (Sestina)

You stare at the photo of the pretty little box  
All situated neatly by the fire.  
Loved ones gather with smiles.  
The air is filled with love.  
What is harder to detect is the hate:  
Weighty—like a stone.

Something funny happens: that stone  
Transforms into the box.  
It contains and stifles and shuts away the hate  
That is slowly kindling the fire  
Consuming the love  
And the smiles.

But you put the photo down, and smile.  
Try to remember the times of skipping stones  
Of eating candy hearts with messages like “Hugs” and “Love.”  
Your eye is drawn to the little box  
All situated neatly by the fire.  
Once again feel the stirrings of hate.

Here’s the thing about hate:  
Its natural habitat is half-worn smiles.  
The nice and sweet only add fuel to the fire.  
Within no time it becomes your cornerstone.  
Without being properly notified, you are now in that box.  
What was once unconditional becomes conditional: love.

Nothing says “love”  
Like annulment papers delivered on Christmas Day: hate.  
So sometimes you look at that little box,  
All situated neatly; it twists your smile.  
Memories destroyed in a village stoning,  
Flambéd by torch-fire.

But you don't want to be engulfed by their fire,  
Void of love,  
Drowned by pockets full of stones,  
Infected by their hate,  
Wearing their halfway smiles,  
Constrained and contained by that stupid box!

But what if their hate, like the consuming fire,  
Has already transfigured your smile, and littered your stomach with stones?  
Are you already that little box, having lost the capacity for  
l o v e?

## **Depths**

Can we choose how we feel?

When the humdrum of the day  
Settles into the quiet expansiveness of night...

You are an empty playground  
For other's emotions to rumage.

Your insides ice-cream-scooped out.  
No one's refilled your container.

d r a i n e d

## Opposites Attract

You know when you get that itch?  
That scratch to do something?

You feel the               restlessness  
Settle in your bones

                                  Composed  
                                  And yet  
                                  Nerve-endings  
                                  Tingling  
                                  Fuzzy with  
                                  Potential energy

                                  a lovely feeling  
                                  a deadly feeling

                                  You're teetering

                                  Between the soft-edged,  
                                  Pillowed ring of sanity  
                                  And the razor-sharp  
                                  Jagged cacophony of insanity

                                  Irregular heartbeat  
                                  Hands so still they shake

                                  One foot glides across the sand  
                                  One foot lurches across the ocean

                                  Opposites  
                                  Balanced

                                  Two magnets ready to  
                                  Slam into each other



Fearing the destruction it will wreak  
Intoxicated by the feeling that you seek

How long can you stand at the precipice  
But refuse to fall?

Power  
Terror

Juxtaposed on the edge  
Of a pin-thin wire

Goosebumps of contentment  
Settle across your skin

Their sting a pleasant burn

*s n a p*