Lament for an HP Envy Laptop

O world! O life! O laptop!
On whose keyboard my fingers
Shall never more clack - alas!
The IT tech says it's your time,
Or rather, your graphics card, "and frankly,
It's a miracle it's lasted this long anyway;"
What kind of bullshit consolation is that?

He must be wrong, he must be!
What purpose, then, of leisure
Without Wifi, or mem'ry
Once rendered inaccessible?
Does not your cooling fan still whir with life?
Does not your power button flicker bright?
But you were made to last a generation!
The Best Buy Geek Squad promised so -

Surely, it hasn't passed so quickly?

To hell with you, then, o laptop!

O wretched, useless junk!
So suffer your sticky keys
IN CTRL+ALT+DAMNATION!
Go rot on some forgotten plastic beach
Where sun-baked seagulls starved for crumbs
May feast upon your rusted chips!
What, you thought yourself
Irreplaceable? Well damn you!
Damn your impotent pixels
And toothless gigabytes
And sorry-ass excuse of a CPU!

Foolish! To have entrusted you
Ev'ry poem and first kiss,
Each backroad and birth date
As though balloons in toddlers' hands.
What is it you demand of me, o devil?!
My first-born is yours; my 401k;
All the lyrics to Taylor Swift's album "Red."

Take them all, dammit!
I just need you to turn on, please.
Please. Just one last time!

Tracing Paper

Oh.

Ohhhhh.

Oh, how the words once flowed!

How they once looked so - pretty.

How the pen wanders off Without vision, and often Into traffic.

How the hell did I reign it in, Make it sing, teach it to look both ways?

From what well did I draw upon Without direction, dictionary, Thesaurus, distraction...

Oh, how the writing hand cramps!

I looked it up, once:
I have a "lateral quadropod" grip.
Thumb wrapped across the pen,
The pen resting on the top of my ring finger.
Apparently, it's not the party trick I once thought it was,
But I still think it's pretty neat.

My grandfather would scold me for writing this way,
Told me I was writing like a cave-man (a "Cromagnon," actually).
We'd spend hours at the kitchen table
Practicing how to write the "correct" way
But my hand refused to learn,
Until he gave up and sent me home screaming.

I was in third grade.
I collected snowglobes from yard sales.
I played Star Wars Battlefront on the PlayStation with my neighbor Neil.
I broke my leg in soccer camp; got to cut to the front
Of all the rides at Hershey Park that summer.

I can still smell my grandparents' kitchen: roasted garlic and onion.
I carried their kitchen home with me in my clothes
And my mother would feign omnipotence,
Saying that she knew what my grandparents were cooking for dinner.
It fooled me for a long time.

I still get comments about my handwriting from my grandfather, My family, friends, coworkers - you get it. He was only joking about the cave-man thing, And I screamed a lot as a kid, so.

I just find it interesting, is all.

How the mind recedes, reveals itself a shallow tide in moonlight.

Hippo Hippo / Brain Go Brr

Tonight's one of those "candlelight-nude, Floating in sweat and Epsom salt" kind of nights. One of those "staring at the broken ceiling fan Wondering what ice cream flavor those Salvador Dali clocks would've been" kind of nights -Rocky Road? Never tried it. Too on the nose Anyway. Cake Batter, then? My earliest memory: My sixth birthday, barefoot, climbing the splintered Staircase of my mother's porch. Is she waiting At the top? I don't know, I never look up. Too many Splinters... One of those "'I'm feeling really blah-blah/ I want to blah-blah" kind of nights; they laughed in '69 When Boom Bang-a-Bang tied for first place at Eurovision, But damn if it wasn't catchy. Straight to the point, too. One of those "I should've bought an air conditioner" Kind of nights. White noise with a scoop of Neapolitan. I should've been a drummer. Boom bang-a-bang indeed.

Pikes Peak Peanut Pusher Reaches Summit

Today I read of a man, a peanut-pusher, the fourth
Of his Sisyphean pastiche, who fastened spoon to nose
To flick a peanut to the summit of Pikes Peak; he flicked
Through the night, flicked on all fours, flicked without sleep or pleasure
For peanut's sake, for the love of peanut, flicked for seven
Days until his work was finished, and indeed, it was good,
Then flicked himself home and rewarded himself with flicking
Through televangelist TV; and I thought to myself,
What a poet, what a lover, what divine lunacy
To suffer one's time for peanuts - half worn-down by the trail,
Half lost to the night, abandoned, but not forgotten,
Dozens upon dozens of shells to peak insanity All for the purse of a well-earned nap; and I wondered then
Why I'd wondered what lengths a man will go to avoid doing his dishes.

Love, My Neighbor

He introduces himself
From across the hall
With a box of matches
And a carton of eggs
And asks me to choose.
"Choose what, exactly?"
I ask. He flashes a smile.
"If I should strike up
A conversation,
Or try to crack a yolk."

I run into him again,
A few days later,
Carrying groceries
Up to his apartment
With one-trip-from-the-car
Determination
And the bags and weight to match,
His lanky arms shaking,
His face beet-red, yet beaming.
When he sees me, he stops
And squats in the stairwell,
Cranes his neck and grins:
"Piggyback ride?"

I fish his house keys From his pocket instead, Forget about it

Until the morning,
When I find
An envelope
Taped to my door;
Inside it, a copy
Of the key to his apartment,
Wrapped in an origami
Heart with a sharpie-scrawled
Message on its back, reading
"For next time."

It makes me laugh, Makes me blush.

I check both ends of the hall For cameras that are not there.

It makes *no sense*.

It makes for a wonderful Wastebasket ball,

And aching bubblegum pit In my stomach.

Another week passes.
Maybe two. At night,
I trace the drowsy cracks
On my eggshell ceiling
With sizzling, bloodshot
Eyes. I peel off the sheets,
Shake off the invisible
Doctor fish operating
On the snakeskin
Between my toes.
I hear him singing
In the parking lot,

But it's only the wind.
The rain tap-tapping.
The cricket-buzz
And car alarms.
The blood flow, lapping
In shallow coves
Of covered ears.

Some nights, I catch a glimpse
Of him through my window
While waiting for the sleeping pills
To kick in.

I start to record his habits In finger streaks

on the glass:

He star-gazes on the weekends
From the bed of his truck
With a moonshine perioscope;
When it rains, he hops over the fence
Of the neighboring baseball field
To dance barefoot in outfield
And pluck dandelions with his toes;
He waves good morning to the pigeons
As though they were mail carriers
In another life - I guess he has a point there.

It's Saturday.

I think.

Twilight.

Peach fuzz, hazy.
I shuffle into slippers,
Step out for a smoke
Beneath a moonless sky.

Too dark to see a thing,
Too dark to even try.

I imagine he'd appreciate The reference.

"I do."

He emerges from the shadows
Of the stoop with a wool blanket
And a bottle of Lagavulin.

"Mind if I join ya?"
I shrug. "Be my guest."

"Well, I was hoping you'd say

'Friend."

He snorts.

"But I can work with 'guest."

Wordlessly, we agree to take Opposite corners and unfold The blanket over his truck bed. We climb up, pass the whiskey Between us until The murky sky begins to hum And the air whispers its secrets As casually as the comforting Rhythm of his breath.

He suggests we count the stars, Points to patches of haze overhead And claims they're constellations, And maybe it's the booze,

or lack of sleep,

Or his stupid handsome face With its stolen features,

But I play along:

"What's that one called?"

"Debby Ryan's Belt."

"Ha, okay. What about that one?"

"Virgo... Virgo Mortenson."

"That one was a stretch, dude."

"Okay, okay, your turn."

"Um... okay, uh, that one's a flock of birds."

"Just a - flock of birds?"

"Yeah. I think they're can-Aries."

He cackles, brushes

My shoulder with static electricity.

"Damn, you had the set-up and everything!"

"Just trying to keep up with the best."

"Wow, okay, keep it going! What's that one?"

We keep at it for hours, Or for what feels like hours, Until the orange whiskey haze Fades to morning-blue And he nudges me awake.

I nod. "If you make it a promise."

[&]quot;So, will I see ya later?"