

In the Passenger's Seat

There should be a label on the inside of this silver car's door,
"Nathan's girl" because I sink into this seat
Like I have sunken into the oceans of you.

And I never want to come up for air.

There's a song playing now that you know every word to,
and I smile moronically out the passenger window
watching trees slide past my own movie screen.

And your hand reaches for mine.

The spaces in between those long fingers are home,
and I could be a hermit as long as you are there
with movies and music on vinyl and snacks.

And I feel your thumb using mine as a slip n' slide.

Suddenly I'm aware of those dark eyes sliding sideways
and stopping on my profile and I get as nervous as
I did the first time you kissed me at the Houston airport.

God is spoiling me with you.

For My Always Valentine

I will always know your voice as it weaves its way through crowds
and wraps me up like your Aztec printed quilt.
Keeping each other warm should be our full-time jobs.
I love you this autumn even when it gets dark too early.

Please let the corners of your mouth be home
for my kisses only, forgive my jealousy
over girls who post their artwork on Instagram
for you to like with tiny hearts.

I just want to be the only one you wear that smile for.

I prefer your face to young Clint Eastwood and
yes, even to the classic James Dean.
When we're together I laugh like an 80-year old man
who finds breathing difficult.
I always say the dumbest things and forget
what story I'm telling because your face.

You still make me nervous.

I'll never forget meeting your big Italian family,
all stuffed into your Uncle Charles' house.
I watched you whisper to your brother
and secretly flip off your cousins
and I fell in love like coming home.

And it was that feeling of no longer
having to worry about whether or not
I've locked up after leaving the house.

There's so much magic in the fact that you're mine.

Easter 2014

I laid next to Nathan in a room without a door
and said, "Just say you don't love me anymore and it'll all be over."

He said, "I don't love you anymore,"
and cried into his pillow while I soothed him. I soothed him.

Sand Burs

We were trying to find the start of the trail
that snaked along sand dunes at Quintana beach,
the wind sending strands of my long hair to
tickle my face as I try to keep up with you.

I try to find my footing and wince as
my naked feet pick up thorns and
you turn around to warn me of
the needled bits I've already stopped
to try to dethrone.

I think we should turn around,
but you're already bounding ahead
saying running could help, but
I am only pricked faster now.
You say to drag your feet,
but even underneath the silkiest sand
I find more thorns.

And I thought if we were still together
I'd have held your hand through
this part.

You turn around and call back to me from
your perch upon the next sand dune,
"I'm sorry, Ashlee! I'm so sorry,"
and I knew you were,
and for so much, but for right now
just for these sand burs in my feet.

Nathan, undone

I saw a video today about Bon Iver
and the Midwest and I wanted to
send it your way, but I am still
in love with you and you're in love with her

Though it's only been a month,
and my unworn wedding dress
sits on the top shelf of your closet
and we don't talk about it
or about anything at all.