

" I REMEMBER MY SUITOR
WHO IS ALSO MYSELF,
AND IMAGINE THEM "

KAYLA EPHROS

*NEVER
GO
TO
YOUR
ROOM
IN
THE
DAYTIME*



LilyPad Press

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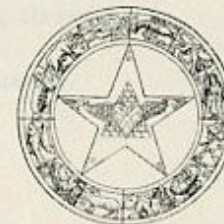
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First Pressing

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Some People

are vessels for multiplicity
while others have edges more bound,
insides more like solid rubber

but regardless we're fragile machines

imagine snipping a vein with
some nail clippers

tears fill my face in a balloon way
so I breathe instead of cry

waking up in the morning
with only what's inside

waking up with the future
bursting at its seams

who can zone out on something imperfect?

she who pre-grieves

and sometimes it's seamless

Beside the Barn

the warm wind is
all around me
not sure how simple I can be
but the grass is dry gold
and I'm on this
farm

today I wanna eat
and sabotage
how to handle
the bouquet of desires

Wrong, So Wrong

the more I eat
the more I die
funny how that works
the more I _____
the more I die

poetry word blanks
in the bank
say
eat
again
I'm hungry

(●^●)

no one has their shit together at this Passover Seder
everything is all wrong, everyone is standing
not sitting, let alone reclining, everyone is chatting

this year's plague is just my right height
I notice I am the only one with blood on my pinky
so I dramatically drop some onto a cocktail napkin

2017 comes too close to me and I run into the woods

2 tickets to the symphony @ 8 pm

this other town
where the cowboys
pump gas
so crunchy
and easy
surprisingly
small circles
to spin in
the loved ones of
one cloth of
one grassy patch

and so us misfits
from coasts and
stuff bumble over
to the amphitheater
get an ice cream
get a cocktail
sit on the grass
get a bug bite

I keep going
other other other
panting like a dog
stacking lives like
a cat
other versions so far still
from the reality-core
the boring center
console of the carousel
the core swaddled

with cloth from which
the relatives are cut
torn and pierced with
recognizables, just old
now, just life

even when sharing
the patch with
the symphony and
their recognizables
the first seat violinist
is an alien

St. Vincent's

Mima has a nurse called Mimosa
at the rehab center, meanwhile
a Mimosa tree is blooming in her backyard
in the next town, blooming
in her old life in Bloomfield

it has a few lanky branches
shielding the garden with its
baby pink, Velcro flowers

Mima loves the mimosa tree so much
she sits and stares at it from her wheel chair-
a shiny apparatus foreign to her aura
she says she's read about the tree in poetry
or something

which reminds me of the purple jacarandas,
California, the universe between
coasts, between me and (my
mom spells it) Me-ma

I think of the poetry word bank
to fill in a blank and she says
I love you
for the first time

Slayer

first you see someone's face
like the center of a flower
especially if they are at all
soft
the petals most always
surprise, a petal ripping
in one direction
the delicate flesh
wet at its tear
I see a Slayer concert
where the flower girl
of note
has petals in the crowd
of metal

Barn Dream

two blond sisters are courting me
and I make out with one of them
I realize I haven't even fully
seen her face, so I pull back
and notice a large, pink
pimple? around her lower lip
and I go, oh well

to my surprise my mom is nearby
and I guess she doesn't mind

the one I've been kissing asks
me to spend the night with her
I agree, lightly

later that night I am settling into
the bed that I understand to be
the one the sisters share
and I see myself from afar
as if through the lens of
a surveillance camera

I'm just looking at my phone
trying to look ready
for anything

and like a Japanese prank show
the kisser busts out from a tower
of yoga blocks in the corner
and I'm shocked
by the end of the dream
I can't believe I was so naive,
so blind to the fact that
I had been targeted

the kisser presents me with a silver chain
that I love, I clasp it around my neck

but everyone is against me
I learn there's a camera
in my chain, what have I done?

I learn I have turned a child's
insides into insulation foam

his mother presents me with
a model for what had become
of her son's internal organs

it was an odd, classroom object
intended for education
its hard plastic shell painted
in attempt to mimic colors
of tissues

sprouting hectically
from the center of the
plastic mass was
some still wet foam

studying the model,
I could almost remember
wringing the evil child's torso

Instrumental

when bliss runs its course
and the week's teeth are bore
gripping to the oval of time like
a greasy carousel pole, up and
down to remember how it felt
to want a horse

Beach with Dad

just ate an ice cream cone
that turned to a piercing
feeling of dread

for what now
and what's next

I think that the present must remain
so I pout with the face of
a big soft puppy
to have it let me
have it longer
hold the present
like a dolly

turn over its nature
to my plea

this car must go slow
stop at everything pretty and just
crawl

or let its wheels roll
in place
as the sun melts it
down

let it go so there's no more

go
the cone again pierces
through some soft wall in me
something old maybe
and I go

did I just eat a shape?
and think of
a stainless steel carnival

Lava

brooding as
beach spy
collecting kisses for my belt
notes on bodies, notes
on my future as teen
boobs, obviously, a car
an attitude
a tan
not two weeks but eight
DTS (down the shore),
mad friends

desperate to be Harriet (the spy)
charming in baggy clothes,
nonchalant,
keen on simple foods and cats,
vulnerable wrists in a wheel pose
on the bed

and the way the pencil lead
made my mouth water

oh,
kiss! kiss!
we'd beg our parents

just a little spark?

feeling hopelessly young
in my belt at the picnic table

L'Chaim

making peace with the beach
in the morning
after a night's sleep of
wondering whether
the black edge would crest
and fold us

But Now

all I can think of is
obliteration

singing the word over
my voice certainly
has its own arena
and sure it gets lonely

how healthy is that
to sing weekly with
the church choir,
so healthy I am
jealous?

obliteration
strikes me

as healthy
every so often and
I'm surprised by
this capacity for
submission

but now
there's no such thing
as paranoid enough

the tsunami must be

hiding in this mist
the sand even quick
as a warning?
what are all the things
people have said about
oncoming tsunamis
I think about all of them
all the time

and you can't see me now singing

Treat's Moment

last night demons
this night music
my head on the chopping block
I look to one side and feel
decapitated

Root Genre

laying flat on my back like
a blow up girl
like a medical illustration
sketchy and colored 3D
attempting to delete
all my organs
in order to meditate, but
in order to delete
I think they must leak
soon floating
in my own organ juice,
my plastic seams
becoming a bit dirty
my page becoming a bit stained

and I try
to imagine
one dove
flapping around
inside
my organ-less body

but I can't help
but focus
on the valleys ahead

Ty \$

I wanna give you a poem
from when the wind was
blowing and incense
were lit, peppermints
on the desk, when
there was nothing else
to do that day

Lily Padding

eyes fixed
unfocused
drooling for the screen
could be any familiar window
any heavily watched
telly
what are all the movies
where kids go into TVs
I think about all of them
all the time
one leg after the other
and they're gone forever
portals

Dear Diary,
I'll still die in you! But prompts roll out
the undivined tarp

write a poem that reflects another poem,
like a mirror

I remember being five
and closing my eyes
and loving the feeling
now I wanna say
that I always hoped
death would be like
closing my eyes
to the sun

I Can See Your Fucked Up Blood

through your face
cuz it's so clear and pink you
red hat baby

not sure where to
dispose of this
negative pile

and then there's
pollution

and we're supposed
to love in return

scrolling backwards to
sob @
fathers day tweet
from Michelle
to Barack

and it's still trending
to crush a crowd
with a car

daughters out there are tilling
and trying, weeding with fingers
full of rings, digging in hopes of
reenacting magic

a diamond for later
when something
is different

for the jubilee

that was my
torah portion
abhorrent baby,

I predict
you'll shrivel
before the
renewal of
the land

Individualism

is normal
as (almond) milk
as bread
as 1 dirty napkin
as 3 flies, she says
she's a fly

Mary says
I want to marry me

but can't remember
where that came from

I remember
my suitor
who is also myself,
and imagine them

but I'm just
studding this shit list
with a pleasant bend

because I will
lose the feeling
of that sunny sexuality
I can already feel it passing
my body moving forward
without me

when I look in the distance I see
the buzzing facades
of houses and
I fear
they are now made from TV's
I hear an informed voice
of course they are
of course surveillance, reality
but what about me
regurgitating it frantically
flipping it heavy
onto fantasy

the wind once was enough
the sun and its setting
imagining me
funny

so for Individualism
keep reading
see

our eyes may as well be
broken

we'll never only feel
the wind on our skin again

never know the suitor
as the self in the same
fresh wave

as thinking of our love
for another

Sewing Room

painful girl, to me,
is a bubble letter
with flesh inside

this sight
cannot be described
by careful word choice
but rather
by the repetition
of simple words

spoken at once
with focus
and distraction
like letting an eye
get bleary
and inhabiting
the blur fully

write another poem like a mirror

to see the trees at night
out the window
stars, shooting

to be alive
with a view of night

I bet I'll get dementia

so fakakta
to predict one's own
decline

and I thought I'd take flight
from the cliff
thinking of
what I've
learned

Princess Wendy

shadow turns positive
at the edge
of the pond
where more
lace grows
it's sad
was mowed
to debris
she said she
was gonna
press those flowers
into her binder
for the display case
in my mind

that's inside out
when shadows are
more meaty
when shadows
move alone,
become chatty
are you really
princess Wendy?

it's just always an edge

the ghost again
pressed their palm

on the side
of my neck
made me turn
back
on the hot afternoon walk

Water, Nature's Gatorade

my friend once said
that nature can be so beautiful
it's not even worth making art
when you're in it because
god's art is better, it trumps?
maybe I added god to it

getting stumped
by a beautiful song

where's the bridge to the
other end of the spectrum?
where every voice has
its own arena

or the other end which
is just the reality that
humans make a lot of trash

which leads me to
the crumbly bridge of Not
wanting to be human
anymore

I know that sounds like
I wanna die but

I'd rather make trash
you can fight it,
chasing waterfalls
'til your neck explodes

and your tiny ant body
dries, and then maybe
you'll be remembered
for being anti-
trash

Hilarious Layers

art is endless as the damn
endless any thing
words are trapping?
what should I do
use them to describe being
trapped?
how...sad?
no, how...
difficult...
or
how...impossible?
the possibility in the word
impossible is enough
to make me jump
off a plane!
(no chute)

Sewing Room 2

the rapport
with my best friend
like
the warm interior
of a cinnamon roll

The Dollmaker

art so wild as
dying one's hair
while it's blowing in
the wind
the possibility in the word
impossible is enough
to make me jump

August 2nd

I love the idea that
I don't have to make
everything because
someone else might
that's what other artists are for
so it's good to be friends
with them and all become
a big octopus
she can film the pond
and I can sit in my room
and think of
death

Summer Comes at Night

feels better to think of
what I'm doing as
having a rich center,
not big cardboard boxes
broken down but
a mosquito bite with
a bloody center and
a pink halo

Messy/Room Manifesto

*it's like what I am trying to say
is coating the archway to this room,
coating the ceiling and the tops of the walls,
what I want to say to you,
coats that archway*

reconstituting the rhyme
to be like
good colors that end up together,
a red apple resting on blush book,
a neon spray beneath melting snow
the richness in mundane pairs
and try not to take a picture
or take one, but promise the apple, the book
the spray and the snow
that it's for your viewing pleasure only
because fuck posting, honestly
let that richness nourish you and move you
without anticipating validation
stuff that color combination in your socks
and take a walk

have we lost sight of what binds us?

which omen is it when, in the storage
of somebody else's mind
lives a warped tag of sensibility?
and for art's sake, I'm sorry
it's the omen of accumulation
up to this here year

here's a throwback
to when a rhyme can be severe
in terms of matching, like
all the first day of school outfits past
like Soulja Boy,
try writing a rhyming song about matching!

another way to rhyme is with two short lines,
like my favorite Zen master

I have the urge to search a document for rhymes
the urge to search in ways they didn't make
like needing to pee on an empty bladder,
enough of a rhyme to follow Zen master

this collection of couplets is a crow
with no mouth

"mirror facing mirror
nowhere else"

he must be the best phantom urger of all time
his nature and nature synonymous
in two lines

this archway is obviously wobbly
and won't ever not be because
who wants words to be bricks?
and we are only still in the entryway
only ever entering something else
so why build ourselves inside?

when you walk in
feminist architectures everywhere
a radiant hostess, a tour guide
mostly empty space and extra space
one must be weary of
taking up too much space
particularly in the entry way
where bad omens slip in
fronting as prophets
like which omen is it when
there is a dead bird on the
trying to find my way
or, hell, a dead bird on
the welcome mat in the mountains
or which omen is it when
I am the last person in line
at the open casket?
and then which omen is it
to recycle that omen
exactly one year
from the day of the open casket,
which omen is that?
and which omen is it to say
"hell" two lines before "open casket"?

politics surround me like
an overgrown plant
my empty space flooding with the
too much space of others'
leaving me a microscopic zone
to do my zooming in

newspapers mache-ed to
the walls to remind me
I want my poems to be
in a world
inside of the
big world
but beside my head
outside my brain
in the center of
comprehension

but they say don't share your goals
cuz it satisfies the same part
of your brain as actually doing them

and so many of us just wanna get watched
acting like a boss
and that's where we're at
swallow an urge to be witnessed

"I'm alive! right? don't we say that?
we don't see the bones we walk on"

try to walk free of anticipation for
validation, without hunger or
headphones

"nobody told the flowers to come up nobody
will ask them to leave when spring's gone"

if a stanza is a room then
I'm living out my childhood
dream to be an interior designer,
the career I promised
to my 5th grade yearbook
except now I get to be alone
and don't have to talk to
homeowners on the phone

if a stanza is a room then
maybe I'm a nerd but
I wanna give a radiant tour
no painters or closet organizers
to reckon with, no mess
you can just write "a closed door"
into a stopping place
separated from
the next guy's by
page space
if a stanza is a room then
I'll be the freelance temple designer
for all the kids with custom religions
written out on sheets of
notebook paper

I hope dying is like
becoming a monk and
forgetting which omen it is

I hope dying feels like rhyming
shout out to Falling Up

getting dizzy
throwing down
staying high
shout out to Shel for
going there, to the edge
of a kid's head

I hope dying is like
when your life gets
better in a dream as opposed to
when your life gets worse in a dream
or even worse when your life gets
boring in a dream

"long life
the wild pines want it too"

"why is it all so beautiful this fake dream
this craziness why?"

I hope dying forgets social media
frees me from the term
which feels like a fat stop sign
on what would otherwise be
a long dusty road in so many movies

have we lost sight of what binds us?
is it not tasting the dust?
licking the windows, eyes shut with trust?
can we plant a fucking garden?

"nobody told the flowers to come up nobody

will ask them to leave when spring's gone"

any fool can have a theory,
any living, feeling, wine-doser
so which omen is it to
summon Soulja Boy,
Shel Silverstein,
and Ikkyu the Zen master

"up all night in the fisherman's hut drinking talking
his wife hates me bangs her spoon on the kettle"

so much for do not disturb
and no boys allowed
"clouds high in the sky look
not one word helped them get up there"

"TFW" is a theory, an archway for sure
that feeling when I hope dying is like
my love for unwinding
I love unwinding so much
I look for beer everywhere

that feeling when something truly
exists on its own plane
fully in its own wash, sheen, and life
magic might just be
this satellite plane
like a diving board
over the rest of the world

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