

excerpts from

“a year of living foolishly”

April 2, 2014 through April 1, 2015

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Tharbis

as Moses took his first wife

I will take a second

there will be two scars

one to remember

one to forget

two scars

one for love

one for the winter cherry

beautiful but poisonous

each to remind me

both arms outstretched

the heart lies between

the path ahead

Equinox

I do not understand her but I have never been angry or have anger towards her as she is wise beyond my knowledge she is the sound of sunrise across the desert the early morning rooster cooing dove from purple to red then pink then blue the day beginning its journey mulberry the palm trembling slightly before stillness the wind betrays its existence contrails begin end cross cross and dissipate mountains emerge from shadows details revealed sun cresting on the first day of spring

A Year of Foolish Living

a year of foolish living of living foolishly is over you can do what needs to be done there is no return what was forged in the fires crucible of cruelty unmet expectations of perceived dishonesty it is your turn you weld the sword you do not submit the dragon will be slain by your hand then and only then will the sword be put down do not beg for this opportunity it will not be easy it is not desired it will require courage and strength to stand in the face of your dreams stand astride them call for your coyote friends to feast upon them to finally put to rest you will be left with tears again but they are nothing new you will fill the empty pool and learn to swim

Empty Pool

the pool closed empty abandoned hidden forgotten south side dirt road entrance discovered dog walking walls cracked bottom creosote bushes poking through trash cans paper strewn lie about no graffiti as there is no point as no one will see that you have announced yourself and your prescience marked your territory this is no man's land no one cares the sun rising over the mountain morongo valley early yellow ochre earth boulders dirt framed pipe rail railing rattling some whole some broken parallel matching edges rust coarse coursing on the edge feet dangling daring to touch not water strolling in the deep end not drowning breathing air remembering letting go there is no water to hurt to struggle against none to calm a rectangle sloping toward shallow end seven steps up peering over the edge who swam here who swims here now imagination the eye will see the the camera will remember for another you will peruse and find something new each time you open the page and look at the memory

Winter Cherry

dockside at estuary
forgotten mercenary
once an eastside visionary
then westside's fading luminary
now sunset's missionary
why so contrary
no berry ordinary
sparkling winter cherry
you I'll marry
I will not tarry
wearing side cocked glengarry
we drink make merry
on night wing flies January
no cold nights of February
gone too mine's canary
down from eagle's eyrie
no journey for the wary
walking to sleeping prairie
in sight the restful ferry
there is no more to carry
there will be naught to bury
lost beneath the waves

Sunburst Blues

violet hues
sunburst blues
lunchtime news
I've gotten use to it
use to it
felt it happen every time
slow motion parable
park avenue one way story
have the scars to prove it
inside and out always ride alone
it's the timing sleeping got me all up tight
my head hurts heart sings never turn to the right
creaky wheels spinning speeding on the left
want to feel the pain smell the heat
see the car coming straight through
feel me test me
passed out against the streetlight
watch her run away escape me play me
shame me in defeat
riding bright on the light
cracked windshield bent broken door
slapped me trapped me hit me pin me to my shirt
drove away smiling crying
laying under the sheet
middle crumbling asphalt
yellow lines upset
losing track of the time

sun rise moonrise star shine cloud nine
dreaming scheming fall awake fast
knee deep can't sleep
ship shape new plates ride the wave
waking shaking morning break up
tell me where is it from here
distance unknown
if I gnaw off my arm will the pain go away
if I poke out my eyes will I see you again
if I tear out my dreams will I die today
no
I've gotten use to it
falling down inside
I've gotten use to it
use to it
sunburst blues
violet hues
everyday news

Light

there is a light in the window it is winter now on streets driven by chance by choice the incandescent glow is seen but else not as the curtains are drawn not parted not glimpsed hidden only memory of the spring and summer absence of light revealed nothing as all was over far too late or far too soon struggling daily to let go even though what is missing is known love dread fantasy fear infatuation youth die hard in old men to be sorry and sorrowful if only there was something that could convey maybe it has been maybe it is only to be willfully neglectfully ignorant the answer is a slow burning fuse failing to ignite what can no longer be recalled a place that will exist forever until it does not what can be said what could be heard is not known the coyote licks at my face gently nudges me forward there is no better self to prevail when the best of us can not be revealed we curse the gods to no avail we meditate and imagine the future of becoming there is not reason but movement

the heart wants what it desires it is not rational one can decide with firmness and swiftness but it does not change what the heart wants only patience time perspective can heal the heart if ever one must learn to live with the cracks and the messiness and the pain even if it could never be or never was makes little or no difference you get use to it there is only today the coyote savors the tears of the foolish comfort is hidden

the light departed absent lamented gone it is morning another different light six thirty morning desert light if you could do it over would you have preferred never to have seen that light seen only darkness never known the window from inside and out the curtains pale pink green faded never known that one moment to never to be able to forget to have it revealed who you are the worst and the best of you would you do it again the answer is yes not a second chance but a second act different but still yes to always remember you cannot hide from yourself you must always express the best of you share it with others without fear without guile the consequences can be painful demonstrate strength character conviction struggle fight to transform yourself you can be the best of you your better self is you if you persevere it will become you

The Right to Be Forgotten

thought I was done crying over you guess not

everyone is fine but me taking it on the chin sleeping not enough stop drinking gin again maybe I can get better sleep don't weep I need to get out of here too late can't wait save yourselves let me be not three there's a story somewhere a story in me a story outside of me something to write about bury my heart in a glass jar take it off the shelf place it in the back yard in the desert water it drown it it will grow what will you find midst the blood and the flowers the shards of broken glass the offering laid bare the blade at your feet unsheathed you may break it blessed are the peacemakers or you may pierce what is left my heart and hold my head aloft as trophy I will rise and survive either there is power in resignation power in on going power in completion

have I earned the right to be forgotten

we are such dangerous children

do I wish to be forgotten

do I have the will to be forgotten

questions in need of resolution

stories in need of being written

in the distance I hear the coyote the tracks of which I see

they will find me

Schrödinger's Cat

Mutually exclusive outcomes silhouetted in red

Or black

Emotions measured unseen and unheard

Unaware of each other though entangled

Comforting scale on the chart of the un-obvious

I knew once what I thought it all could mean

I have ceased to wonder

Possibilities are lessened

Histories confound us

Still we find a home in tiny boxes

Containing a truth that will allow us to continue

I met a woman who assessed there were no absolutes

Should I have been troubled

Should I have agreed

Temperaments and time intervened

No space

Sand shifts earth moves houses fall

I was swallowed whole

On the other side riding my bike to work

A stray feline imparts an answer

Unimpressed with my quandary

Speaks then saunters away

That I can exist in multiple states simultaneously does not mean there are no absolutes

Only that the world is subjective

How we choose to see it determines our reality

Chimera

Camera

The landscape begs for one

Pleading

Images to be remembered captured

Enchantments

Expansive horizon horizontal fields of empty

Unmade beds futons blankets framed

No covers

Exposed apertures wide open

Photographic illusions

Peering into the mind's closets

A photo pointing

Destroyed in haste sadness

So unnecessary so necessary

Washing feet porcelain basin

Shower with broken handle

Toe nails polished violet

Gown lifted thigh high mid

Paleness matched by beauty

Trying to forget

A scene only receding not to be displaced

Chimera

Something that is impossible to achieve

Way station on the road

River crossed

Mythical goat lion serpent

Can it be photographed

Only from the winged horse
Above the desert in the summer sky
Gift of the goddess of wisdom
Steed of poetic imagination
High spirited on the pathway to heaven
Not the choice of the mount as it was born there
Lives among the stars
It's the rider's hubris that's cause for fall
Adulation wealth insufficient for the vain
To live as a god in our world is not possible
We can only be when we are transformed
Returned to the void
Aspire to be as the chimera
Lose the rider's arrogance
Fiery breath will warm your heart
If you do not kill sagacity awaits
You will be among the stars
Work strength are not fulfilled as of yet
To never stop wanting
Desire
Agility determination virility
Acuity nimble feet fast across the rocks
Climbing to a vantage point
Wait for her
Lilith has been my only wish
To be my only wife
I do not wish for someone who has been drawn from me
Rather one who is herself
I do not wish for submission

To ask to be equal does not make a demon
To give up control
To not fear loss
To be cut to the quick is deeply bliss
While it may be painful it is not death but life
Ecstasy pain coexist joined at the hip and head
No child is born without pain
No love can exist without rapture
Do not retreat
Lust comes first
Love will follow if you give yourself to it
Let the enchantress seduce you
Release yourself to her spells
She will fill the void return you to the garden
Where you will find peace and oneness together
Equally

Knew

The black wildebeest has a white tail

An antelope by another name assumes fraternity with the heron

A blue gnu roams the landscape

Unhurried unmarked and undiscovered

On the woodlands grasslands shrubs mountainous undulations

Migration place a pace replacing

Dunes defaced

We move we run we lope we find

A calendar yellow slash highlights diagonal days passing

Years side by side two of many too many

The watering hole is close

Dangers are inexhaustible if you are lost

We will shelter the weak protect the young

We will take interest in our common futures

We will fall not prey to the crocodile

Grinning with teeth as large as the August moon on a clear night over the Transvaal

We stay awake

Sleepers reside on flattened grasses

Our turn will come soon

Rest will be our reward

The One You Do Not Know

Do not mock me
With your sly turn of phrase
Faint praise for the damned
Pale delicate soft
Cutting edge honed none the less
If you think you know me
Because I have opened myself to you
Cried in your arms
Begged for your forgiveness
Moved the sun the moon
In desperate attempts to restore balance
Written tomes missives
To sway you of things that could be
If risks were taken willingly openly
You do not
Where you see weakness
There is steel
Re-found courage of conviction
Recognition that in every blow struck by you
Every smirk every condescension
There is justice rightly rendered
Chipping slashing burning away
Years of acquiescence and complacency
Layers
Sediment
Debris

To at last there is nothing
Except the poet the passionate the deluded
Who have risen together
A flower grown from their still beating hearts
Watered by their blood
Nurtured by tears held back far too long
Petals made of obsidian polished
Edges sharper more dangerous than any metal
Glistening in the promise of sunrise
Placed on the ground as offering
To spill blood no more
To have found a path that requires none
To begin to find myself again
The one you do not know

River

I am as deluded as the next
I have waited for things that may never come
It has been my choice
As I have traveled here once more
It is time to move on
I do not know if it has been a mirage
Nor will I ever
I have tried to ascertain to no avail
It has never been spoken
The wheel does not stop
It has turned
I follow the path steep dusty unbroken

Fall became winter
The way across becomes clear
I traversed the ice
I stopped listened was enthralled
Recognizing the power of the river underneath
I brushed aside a small circle of snow
Squinted waited watched
Wondrous creatures below distinguished by their element
Plumped against the crystalline surface
Where I could not survive
I gave thanks for the bounty
Serene sweet delightful
Pleasures for a young fox

Winter became spring
I sat frozen contemplating
First flowers appeared not distant
The river spirit whispers ice melting cracking
It rebuked me
You do not belong here
You may stay if you choose
My song is virtue but it is not for you
You will drown
Go search instead for the land of your father and mother

The shore beckoned
I sat exhausted trembling relieved
The ghosts of those before me spoke
You have chosen well
For a time you will walk alone
Do not despair
Others will join when you have shown that you are worthy
Develop the strength that you have found in the crossing
Master yourself
We will be there to guide
We have many forms but we are one
You will hear us as brush scrapping against the sand
A turtle's progress over the desert nights
A windmill spinning against the moon
Your dreams ascending

Spring has given way to summer

Journey

What is the journey

Fulfillment

Artist

Person father lover

The voyage will find me if I am correct

Correctness requires correct behavior

The craftsman corrects the cup before it is fired and glazed

The cup before me is correct in its usage

I have held it for twenty eight years

It has not lost its ability to hold water

I will transcend the dangerous waters of my emotional immaturity

To prepare for the sirens who will come

Roil the water of my soul

The beauty of life will be heard

Temptation

Life offers many choices

I will desire

I will be vexed

I will decline

I will be corrected

I will listen

I will embrace

The path that will forward me on my journey

Navigate me safely

Home

A destiny of my own choosing

The Terrace

Late summers light illuminating

A red chair that has been graced by your presence

I stand in a doorway admiring your breasts

Contrasting azulejos framing dress flowing across your body

Intricate folds highlight legs arms knees neck shoulder

I see you on this terrace

Drawn

I bring an offering of wine

Your hand touches mine

We share what days we have together

A blessing to the universe

The Muses

When I was young and capricious
I went searching for a girl who was not there
Glimpses
Skirts of sea grass billowing
Sea foam whipped ice cream peaks
Dolloped on beach sand
Grit inhaled
Tasted
Nostrils flared burned
Tiny footprints expunged by breeze
Before waves return to erase what was already gone
Moist ocean air evaporates
Leaving salty sheen on skin

I've had many muses
Smoky gritty and soft
I will not tire of them
I will be with them until they will no longer have me
When I am old and shriveled
When it is the moment
When it is the future
When I am drawn towards the light
Crucible of life
Creator of every atom that is me
And every thought that is the interaction of those atoms
Created in the furnace of the universe
Our fevered hearts and mind

Torn between three halves
Where you will find salvation
To give all and risk failure
Isolation
Where there is no gain
To fall without hope of recovery
To fall and trust
That someone will catch you
Or if there is no one
That you will be able to stand again

He did what he thought he needed to do
He raised me as best he knew how
But I never knew who he was
He had dreams that he has never shared
Expectations for his sons that he never shared with them
Only the disappointment that we were not who he wished us to be

I do not wish to control the outcomes that you choose
I wish that you in some small part
You would know who I am
That is gift of the stories
The thoughts of a young man
We all have our secrets
When mine are revealed
I do not wish for you to think more or less of me
I only wish that you would be able to understand
I need your promise that you will take care of you

Labor of Love

She waits patiently by the harbor
She has seen me here before
She knows of my uncle who traversed the seas
Asia to Europe and back until
He stopped and never sailed again
Although he spoke of it often
When I was a child
He would send me stamps from exotic places
Thailand, Vietnam, Norway, Spain
Places I dreamed that I would visit
She knows of this uncle
Knows that he is in me
Knows that I would not be who I am if not for the camera he gave my mother
Post cards and letters that he wrote
Soaps from Spain
Knows that I must continue for him and me
She waits
She will not be made new again
Newness is not the measuring stick
Rather returned to the status she richly deserves
To her place as siren
Not of the rocks
But of charity and hope
Years of barnacle and rust removed gently
Together lovingly
To see the sublime patina of her soul
To sail away on a vessel such as this

To mine the splendors of the sea
I turn wishing I could wake you
Tell you the story
Feel your luscious skin
The warmth of your body
Caress your lips with mine
Bring you the new day with a savory kiss
You are not here
But in some other room
I do not know if you will ever come again
I wait patiently

Memory

The faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information

Arising from the deep.

Subjugating all that is in its path.

It is contained then returned.

You were enchanted

A memory

I was captured

A different memory

That I have not been loyal

Does not mean that I do not wish to be

I have not learned yet how to be

In protecting my heart I have shortchanged myself

I have not been courageous

Sleeping with women who I know do not love me

No matter the pretense

What is memory?

Did anything that I remember ever happen in the way that I thought it did.

I'm standing on the crossroads trying to remember how I got here.

It is familiar.

I believe that I have been here before or have I?

It is a dark city of imagination.

A howl against a cold Minnesota wind.

I'm trying to remember.

It is a slow psychic torture.

I feel the lash of every false expectation

Every lost dream playing staccato verses tuned to no key

Harmonizing with my despair.

Knowing that I am cowardly but it will not save me.

Recognizing that I am not everything and failing on your own terms is the worst kind of failure

What is love?

It is an idea

What is the cost of an idea?

Everything and nothing

The Gift

If I could give you anything

I would give you all that I have

I would share with you all that I am

If there is one thing

I wish I could give to you

I would give you back to you

Isobel not by Bjork

I had forgotten the softness of a new kiss

Until your lips brushed mine

With the gentleness of your touch

Time passes

I await your call

An email

Any word

That you will see me again

I hope that you are well

I do not know you

Nor do I know where you are

What you are going through

Or where you may have been

In pain or sorry

Fantasy or forgetfulness

I will remember and rejoice

Before I go

Place your arm on my chest

Let our scars caress

If just for one moment

One minute

One hour

One day

One week

One year

Let our hearts heal