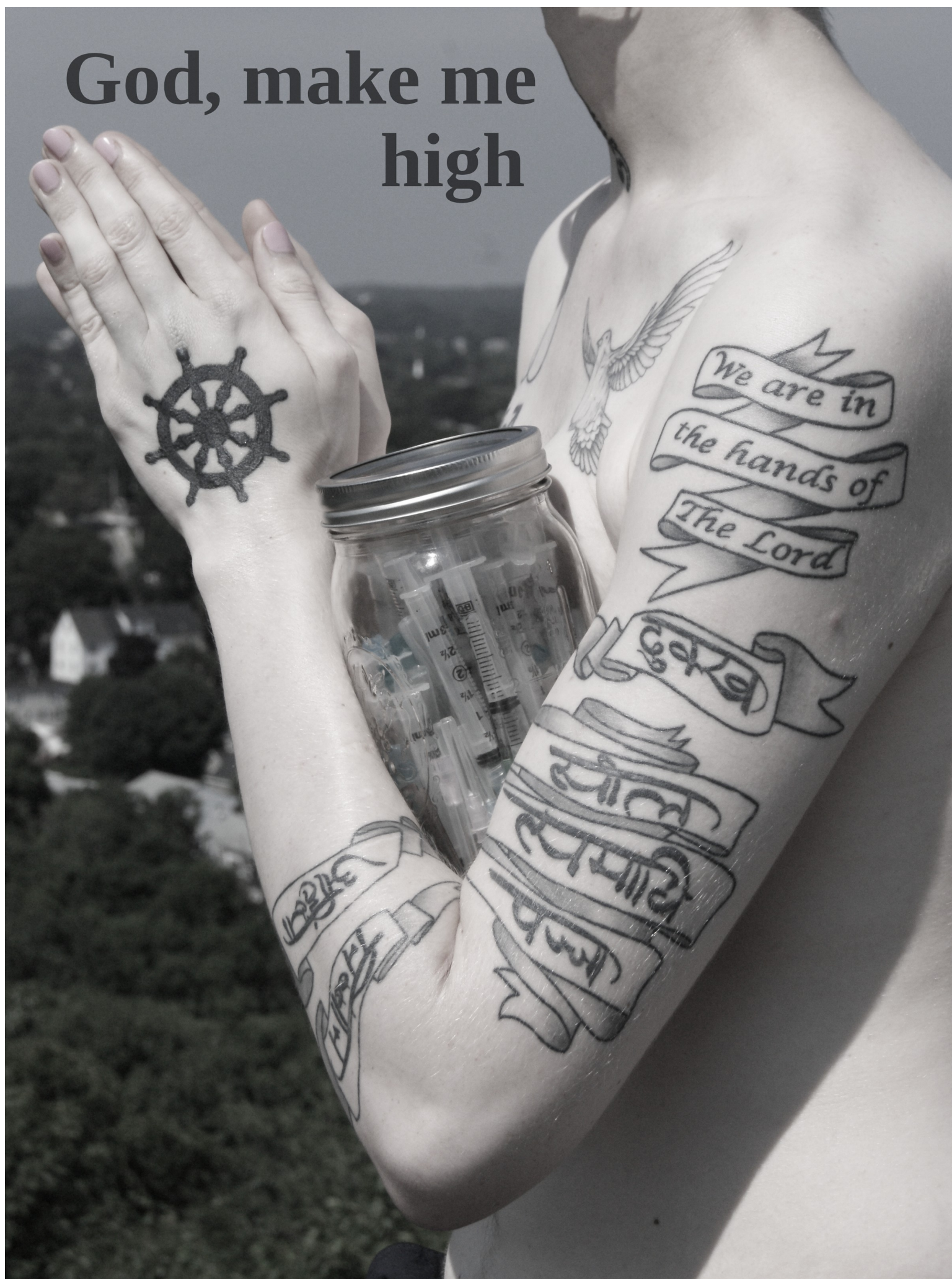


God, make me
high



Alt: days of future pain, in and out of hospitals

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Dear Reader

I wrote this collection of poems over the span of a few years. I started while I was using drugs. I finished when I had stopped. Similar to drug use, some things have titles, some don't, some end gently, others abruptly. I hope you read these poems in the context of their writing noting that some stories during drug use feel important yet aren't, others are and don't feel like it.

Many of the stories are regards my own life, many are others lives. In reading them maybe you can gain some amount of understanding. If not, I hope they are engaging.

For you

God, Give it

She's screaming now, inside
with the apron and the broom
and the cocaine in her nose

He has given up
with the meditation
and bottles full of antipsychotics

"I found better meds on the street"

She rocks on her heels
rubbing the small of back
long sleeves over the marks

His eyes glance around
and he paces restlessly
beyond the back door

Then there's the snap
elastic frayed and hit
owch and better

They want to scream
and the blood does it for them
saying all their words couldn't

In the evening
music won't drown the wanting
the nervous movement
occasional picking and lip gnawing

They whisper
"Why do I have to be out?"
Work days don't do this
please don't do this
we need more

DOCTOR please come back
stay just a short while longer
just one more day
to get us through this

That screaming silent prayer
that pitted urge to wail
the one we've all said

"O' God, deliver me
from this sobriety
make me higher
than even you"

She found out
six days after

Like a drink taken too long
sitting in your stomach
hitting you when you leave

Some people color
Some people cry
Some people, I've seen

They up and die

But this one I met
I did not think this

I did not worry she would die
even if he had

I did not think she could die
given what I'd seen
some people just come off that way
invincible

As if the drugs that are killing us all
just give them a free pass

Those lies I thought of her
more comforting than I deserved
just a one-off prayer
thrown to the wind

In a way that was both
selfish and selfless
the way I've seen those
drug lovers
pass their hit to a friend
only to steal something
a day later

But she, I did not guess
She did not steal
no, she stood upright

More than many of us she stood
and carried Atlas
smiling along the way

Is there a secret
to your success?
Am I bitter?
Selfish?

Paradoxically selfless?
Giving and stealing
in the same breath?

In any case
she cried
and colored
and knit
and sometimes I wonder
if she died

Not from the drugs
but from a suffocating heart

Sometimes I think
love is a worse drug
when the high is over
people have died in withdrawal
lives shattered
off just a taste

“The next time you snort something I’ll let you do it anywhere off my body”
Why the fuck
did I not ask
before I cut the straw?

and now flicking by pictures
of the body out of reach
I curse

She lets others do it
off her chest
and her ass
“Slutty”
she calls it

I ooze jealousy

To her, it’s smoke
why the nose
when there’s a mouth?

The bamboo
just past the teeth
with drooped eyelids
and an open shirt

She’d be smiling
either from the changa
or his cock

Too many men
thinking it’s inconsequential
It’s the main event
you’re just the combo

Flicking through partners
pot-ential one-offs
and sighs for one
who would be there
in the clouds

Alongside us
straw up their nose
pipe in their mouth
and smiling with us!
Or crying

Just some who get it
go along with this dancing
forget the outside

Pressing my chest together
just for that one time
someone said yes

Too often they run
sprinting at the first sign
serious sign
that we're not us

Even if we believe
we never were
never could be
never should be

Some don't believe us
some think they know
so those some run

Sometimes we lie
knowing
they'll run when they learn

Trying to console ourselves
saying
"Everybody does"

Decrying it all the same
waiting for those deemed
smart enough for us

Smart meaning
just as fucked up
fucked up enough
to understand
why it's so important
that this be snorted from between your tits.

Open your eyes
the pain is a cord
up your spine
plugged into your skull

Gasp for a moment
when did it come
to mornings like this?

Drawing ourselves up
from plush coffins
into those ones with legs

Beads of sweat down the back
and a rail spike between the eyes

The first thing
before the alarm clock sounds
is the morning meds

Shaking hands drop saviors
and rescue them

"I'm sorry to have hurt you"

In thirty minutes
we've beat back
sordid sickness

The sudden beeping
startling, stupid
waking up early
forgetting

Eyelids drooping again,
if we didn't have to
get dressed
and be awake
we'd be locked

Breakfast is a question
stomach churning
at waking it was laughable

Ignoring the noises
the stomach elicits
and hoping the nausea
passes this time

Even appeasing it
we don't eat
not really

Too busy
Too expensive
Too unhealthy

Better to save those
slips of meaningless value
for the real fix
it's just a tool
to get on the road

Do you remember
when we first met?

Discussing ethics
when you mentioned drugs

“What’s your number?”

First dealer.
First real dealer.

Do you remember
when you sold me \$80 worth?
I remember the words
“This is gunna buy a lot of weed”

Putting medicine in orange bottles
I question the differences
between seeing the professionals
and seeing you

If you wore a lab coat
and listened to less metal
and shaved your beard

I’d see no difference
Doctor
Dealer
Diogenes

Sometimes I wonder
if I stopped buying drugs
if you’d stop talking
if we’d remain friends

It’s a scary thing to ask
“Would you leave me?”
our link it’s a kind of contract
with uncertain terms
we burned them up

You’ve always been better
Better than both of us
me and your real girlfriend

After all I question
in those moments
what’s the difference?

The high is like sex
relationships are an exchange
a give and take
a buy and sell
a deal made
without words

Maybe when your other
maybe when she turns
like I have
maybe we'll forget
maybe we'll discard
this cord between us

The secret part of me
asks even if I kill it
even if I shove my blade
into its beating heart
that you stay

Always giving me that choice
of one day, coming back
one day, saying yes
one day, meeting you
one day, forgetting me

Hot flashes
so hot I can't move
a dripping cloud
in the dead of summer

I took it already
why are you still here?!

I scream for you to get out
but you won't leave
you won't stop

You're a cunt like that
waking me up
breathing fire on me
even after tribute!

I was trying
this isn't fair
I was promised less
I gave you more
and more
and more

Is this punishment?
Have you bitten back?

The skin is catching now
the hairs crisped black
I'm becoming a fire

It's pinning my limbs
licking up my arms
and down this wet face

Gasoline dousing my body
lit matches cast like stones

I scream at you
"I hate you!"
I scream at myself
"I hate you!"
I scream
winter turned towards thee

Maybe in the ocean
I will drown you
I can drown this

I'm eating frost
and choking down snow
but you're melting it
you've made spring force through

Maybe I need help
maybe I should find them

and make them cut it out
make them cut YOU out

Watch and cackle
while you burn yourself alive

Either that or I'll find another
you aren't permanent
that's right I'll replace you!

But don't leave
not for real
I don't mean these things
I know I say it
but please don't go
you're all of me

and others suggest
"That might be a good idea"
to watch you burn
but how could I say goodbye
to the fire consuming my self
to the things now holding me

The flames wrapping me
the fire a blanket
pinning my soul and raping my form

I don't deserve this
you don't deserve me
just not now
don't leave now
one more day
one more time

Until I've burned to death

My urge to run
was harder than anything
terror screaming through my bones
I want to run
cover my eyes and hide away
GET THE FUCK OUT YOU AREN'T REAL

But I know that's not true
and before I can think I'm dialing numbers and praying
I'm crying because he helped me
and now I need to help him
this isn't a choice I can't stop

Fates aligning and begging father's help
just to use the phone and get a scream out
to tell them in his far off country
that HE IS DYING AND NEEDS HELP

I want to scream and I am shaking
my lips are quivering
I'm sweating
I want to run
I want to hide
I want to smash the computer and make it all go away
but I can't abandon him

I can't run away and let him die
I can't say no and shirk my duty

I want to be high
I want to be so far removed
I want the thought of thought to be laughable

but for now I can't
for now I sit
sober, aching, wanting to scream
ARE YOU ALIVE DAMN IT? PLEASE BE ALIVE!

Why are we so pained like this?
So pained that suicide is a paradise?
I knew him not well
but I felt his pain
his despair
and I knew I had felt it too
when I stood at that cliff

When I hocked my phone off a cliff and fled the police
when I felt hopeless
and now I was my grandmother
screaming to come back

Screaming
Tony
Please don't die
please hold on
please

“You don’t have a home with us”

We’re standing at the edge
of a wooden walk way
torches in hand
straw strewn

Let the bridge burn
watch it go up
in pain

There’s a metal wire
stretched through my chest
they’re screaming

“This way or that?”

Nope.
No choices.
Stand back.
Watch the flames.

Bang your head against the wall
slice up your arms
shove the needle in
gasp in ecstasy

You or me
us or them
where’s the difference?

Where’s the line
between the me
tying the elastic

and the me
coloring pictures

Surely
we’re not the same

He was telling me
about selling
heroin

“5k in one drop”

Startling, to me
as I rolled more joints

“I think we’re all just really high”
I’m not even high.
Tolerance.

One beer
boring

“We can get a strip for 70”
No one is game.
I hide my boredom.

On the roof
I bum a cigarette
tasty
said my cancer

Boston’s lights
they laugh
taunting me

When we get home
I fuck one of them
more to feel something
than any attraction

Boring
life is becoming
too boring

You should date a girl who does drugs

You should date a girl who does drugs
Because going through life
With even-keel homely girls
Won't teach you anything

No, date one who does drugs
Some drug, at least
Maybe she swallows a lot of pills
Or smokes pot every day
Or heats things in spoons
And has needles hidden in her room

The important thing is this
That she escapes with something
You need that, in a girl
The burning ache to escape everything

You should find her alone
She has friends, you know
But now, she is alone
Approach her quietly

Don't shout, she hates that
Make your steps heard for a moment
Let her turn around
Wave a little, stand awkwardly
Ask what she is doing
Nod, say it's fine, sit with her

When she offers you some
Look awkward, and sheepishly say
"Maybe another time, I have class"
And with that, go to class

Come back the next day
If she isn't there find a similar place
A quiet lake, an empty room
A rooftop, or alleyway

When you do find her
Sit down next to her again
Exchange numbers
And whatever she offers you
Take a moment to look at it
And then use whatever it is

Keep doing this
Invite her to hang out
Let her invite you
And at some point
Make absolutely sure
You find yourself in her room

It doesn't matter the time of day
Or what you have to do after
Make sure you get there
Sit next to her somewhere

When her eyes change
She'll slide forward
Run a hand up your leg
And, with the caution of a girl who does drugs
She'll lean over and press her lips to yours
Lean back, hard

She'll undo your shirt and cup your breasts
Smile, either because you enjoy it
Or because you just took something
Let her continue like this
Touching more and more
Have drug-addled sex

The next morning
Ask to be girlfriends
Ask this while you look away
Ask as if this is embarrassing

When she says sure, smile
Turn back
Assault her with your lips
Sober as a stone

That must be the basis of your relationship
Substances and sex
You'll have to continue both
If you want this girl's heart

Go on silly dates
Like coffee and dinner
Always, every time
End the night touching her

When she calls you at 1am
Say you were up anyway
Come over immediately
Hold her and fuck her
Never ask why she called
Ignore her arms

You'll see it getting worse
Far before she does
The abandoned bandages
The scars, razor blades

Follow her through it all
Stay when she acts crazy
Stay when she cries
Stay when she seems normal again

You'll get patient with absurdity
Calm around her anger
You'll be well versed in poor sleeping
And intoxicated groping

You'll know how to pick locks
And jump fences
You'll know how to negotiate accommodations
And get an extension
You'll know how to care
When she really needs it

But in the end, and you both knew it
You two would never last
She was burning herself alive
And you couldn't come too

You stepped back and she knew
It was time for her to bow out
She couldn't take it once more
For her, it was time to sleep

So, she left you then
Just as you began to grow cold
And it cut you deeper than you thought
You cried and sobbed and remembered
Remembered every single moment with her
You'll move on eventually

You'll know how grief feels
And happiness too
What love tastes like
What anger sounds like

You will know so much
If all you do
Is date a girl who does drugs

You should do something

Lying here
watching you sink

Not lifting a finger
save to hit the thermostat

My back hurts
leaning against your bed

Not as if
I care

Not as if
I've watched you and I
slipping further,
doing less,
being less

I've seen the scars
you aren't ok
I know you know

The vapor
traces spirals
the ones we don't have

The music is stale
stale as the overflowing trash
stale as the cups
stale as this weed

I know you'd say cannabis,
you've ran further than that

Why after all the running
would you lay down now?

When you speak
anxiety breathes on my spine
words, staircases, delirium

"Please have an original conversation"

"That's not soothing"

I picked up the glass
brushed it into a pan
cut my hands

You smiled
not understanding

I carried your broken glass

all night
never bothering to bandage
all the cuts

"Oh, I'm gon' die"

If only you knew
how alive you are
If only you knew
how much it hurts
to see you burn

Locking the car
I put you to bed
and bowed out

You would rave
dance and cry
in the padded city

"Tell Nicole I love her"

"I fucked up"

"Take me off life support"

You would believe
you'd died
lost it all
had to say goodbye

You never said goodbye

When you had glued the vase
you tried and tried and failed

You're burning alive
I can't touch
I am not sorry.

If I weren't
a pot of boiling water

I'd probably do less drugs
you know?

If I felt things normally
or at all

I'd probably use less

If he hadn't died
after I'd fallen in love

I might be doing less
and sleeping more

If I was happier
and more motivated

I'd take less drugs

If I was stronger
and not broken

I'm sure
I'd never smoke and sniff and say

"Another line!"

If I could pick out
the nails
slipped in my muscles

Swallow my anxious thoughts
and breathe

Maybe, I'd do less

Maybe if the world were brighter
people not so cruel
so foreign

Maybe if the world understood
the comfort of a small lamp

Maybe I'd use more

Maybe after cutting that first straw
I agreed to be comfortable

Maybe after I pushed the first needle in
I agreed to a lifestyle

or maybe someone sneezed on me
and I tripped in gasoline

Maybe if the past hadn't burned
had the soot rubbed off
the scores wiped clean

If they bothered to replace
the rusted pieces
and lead toys

Maybe I'd still be single
instead of married to you.

We've been friends
for a while now
me and tina

I want to crack jokes
about needles

and have discussions
about variances in gauges

pros and cons
diagrams

There's a wire around it
these sharps

You aren't allowed to speak
no no, shush shush

Needles mean
junkie, whore, lost, hurt

Biting my cuticles

Wishing the anxiety attached to needles
would fade as fast as the come up

Shaking hands rock the edge
Paranoia about lacerated muscles
air bubbles in the syringe

Looking down I realized
there is over an inch of needle in my thigh

Afraid to push the plunger
Twinges of pain
Hands won't stop shaking

I want this.

When my quivering fingers
push the whole way down
the exit sting
relieving

Hole of blood
Hole of me
Hole of her

Staring at the back of a hand
whose hand, is it mine?
or yours now

Cut away

Chest feeling wet
Struggling to look down
when did I vomit?
when did I commit?

A baby gets into bed
wavering walls
soothing

Cooing to her mother
"I don't remember..."

Vacation plans
means budgeting
figures, weights

How many ounces?
How many grams?

The destination long unimportant
as the neon haze
paints it all the same

The plans aren't the places they'll see
or the food we'll eat

Ah, you remind me
These sticks are food
(they're not)
cigarettes are food
(they aren't)

Those plane tickets
could equal another ounce

Is it worth it to be so high?

Do they even know?
They must, they're just
walking on eggshells

It's not like we could hide this
forever, at least

I know they don't think
this is vacation
they think
mini golf, ferris wheels, beaches

we know
joints, straws, sharps
that's a getaway

Load up
bake the space cakes
and start filling capsules
google the needle laws
fill up your orange tubes
holiday!

Standing in line
and stepping out of ourselves
blank faces

They'll search us
they never fail to
always something in that bag of mine

Just never something they'd notice
no bombs
no lost lives, save perhaps ours
boxed brownies and pill bottles

Maybe they've seen enough of us
so as not to care anymore

The sign that read
"K-9 on duty"
breathed fear into my spine

On the plane
we're pouring drinks
and putting pills under our tongues

Where did the hours go?

Your skin feels tingly
or was that my skin
was there skin

how did we
end up here

why did we
even bother?

People move in circles
bangles on my arms
wasn't aware this was a culture night

Another wristband
another tab
spices upon spices

Brightly colored dresses
and dark hair

the colors swirling above
send ripples through me

Move in the river
brush each thread
come together
and burst apart

We're laughing hysterically, holding our stomachs
I wipe my eyes, tears
stumbling forward
you all around me
laughing together

I rub my thighs now
as he did and does
it feels nice, as he said

I'm giggling after the balloon
my skin all a-tingle
my breathing is all echoes

Each tree holding up slices of light
webs of light across the trees

Laughing through the streets
for midnight pizza
kissing men I don't know
and smiling through the vibration

Jumping up and down
beer in hand
ashes at my feet

"Beer for the beer gods! Weed for the weed gods!"

You feel like an artist
and Bob Ross has that one enchanted

Boxed wine, rum, housewarming!
Look at the new pipe!
Look at the new bed!

Watch the gay guy shake his ass on stage
I tip him and enjoy the minute he touches me

I danced harder than the six shots of vodka

Tears are pouring out
and they all judged me
for my self medication

The doctor was not pleased
the thecnician seemed almost, depressed
still, they gave me the good stuff

"I'm giving you one and a half."

When I started
addiction was a binary
You either weren't
or you were strung out
shooting H with puddle water

These days
it's a lake

"A drug is a drug is a drug"

as the cultists say

"Once an addict, always an addict"

They're in the binary
swimming between meetings
working a program

My mother starts every morning with two cups of coffee

Towel the hotel room's door
Six beers
Two doses of 2C-I
Three different strains of cannabis
2mg of Clonazepam
12mg of Subutex

We had met
and we hadn't

First we licked
that carefully measured powder
2C-I
[quote here from Pihkal about 2C-I]

Crack a beer each
a toast
to my "promotion"

What is a crown
in a stoner's circle?

The walls wiggle
tingles along my legs
I rub my thighs
where I had injected
worrying

Funny.
I knew why this
was a delight for him
and me

We're drug users
to the point of
being pariahs

Finally!
Someone who accepts it
without judgment

someone to do drugs with

I remember when I said that
to my therapist
there was a disbelief within her
as if drug users aren't so isolated
as if we don't yearn for friends, lovers, community

The sensation of community
It brought smiles to my face

It wet my lips for more
for friends who wouldn't
flinch at a needle
judge a line

For adventurous souls
or maybe just reckless
self-destructive

People, like me
people, who can say

“Sometimes you just gotta say fuck it and live in the moment”
then use a shared needle and have unprompted unprotected anal sex

Those kinds of insane
off the wall
lives constantly
in some kinda way
those people
the tweakers and dreamers
stoners preaching for medicine
Leary wannabees and
Thompson clones

We’re generations of users
of people in the movement
writing histories
and burning them soon after

Trying to say
“this isn’t right”
to cry
“this isn’t just”
to scream
“THIS IS BULLSHIT!”

But these days
under our flag
we’re left with
a bar to entry

5, 10, 15, 20 years
Get those in your work-out
before you’re even at the gym

People calling it choice
as if one truly chooses
to be beaten and broken
have your only friend
a bottle, needle, pipe

It’s a fire inside
bent wires
lacerated heart
we want to rip it out

some try

some pry their chest apart
anything, for relief

Don't date a person who does drugs
We are sad
Moody and erratic

Just today
I couldn't get out of bed

I stole my partner's dog's
Tramadol
Well, she gave some, I think I took more than she wanted me to

In retrospect
I'm an asshole

Not all of us
Are so stupid

Some are
Bat shut blinsune

I think some
Or maybe I
Are good people

When we have our drugs
enough of our drugs
and something else isn't going wrong

Then, we're like anyone else
it's those moments between
when the baggy is low
when we're fidgeting
about a stash we don't have

Like anyone else?
That's what you think
That's what the
Politically correct liberals
would say

As if substance abuse
As if snorting heroin
wasn't another way to cut my arms

As if there was a single person
who has woken up
crying, in pain, dead inside
only because of drugs

What's a razor blade used for?
Self harm
Self-harm
and selfharm

Cutting up coke
Or ketamine rocks

Cutting up arms
Or carving words

Because drugs
They're fun
They're fun
For everyone

So it's easy to imagine
Addiction
Addicts
it's easy to spin a story
that the person in your life
burning themselves alive

that it was the drug
that the drug was anything more
than a special kitchen knife

If you look ahead you can see the waves
knowing that if you do it
snort this pill
inject this bag
drink this bottle

That the sea will ripple
your boat will rock
if you keep throwing stones
capsize

Other people
Normal people
Healthy people
They watch that wave

They say

"Well, I should be careful with that!"

We say

"Well, I should be careful with this, just after this next shot"

I'm lying, you know
people who use drugs
can't be categorized as such

You use drugs, or have
I can guarantee it, almost
We're not so different
in our love for drugs

The only thing is
I want to die
burn myself alive

Or make it hurt less
In all of us
Why we do what we do
To make it hurt less
To make it feel better
To help
To hurt (to help)

(Only in those constantly aflame)
These things don't make sense
I can't sense them

I want it to stop
You can bare it
I need it to stop
You have recovered
I am screaming

My dear special
Katherine

I've dated other women
Lucy and Mary and Molly

But none of them
took me to the needle exchange

Filters, sharps and bandages
One dollar per filter
Fifty cents per syringe
Gloves, saline and alcohol pads
Box of fifty
Box of ten
Box of two hundred

At least to start
into a Gatorade bottle
I'll get glass soon
Will I get friends soon?

Kathy, are you my friend?
My only friend?
Where did they go?

Cheering for dollars saved
happy texting to a friend
are they scared yet?

Have my parents assumed
or even discovered?

Waiting for the post man
The ketamine from Canada

Pop
Pop
another
poppin

T.D B
The Dumb Bankers
we're opening our doors
why not them theirs?

Spin
spin
round and round

13.74×10^{10}
\$\$\$
Law-wait
one whole hour

The blue lights
screaming at him
bounce

Grand pappy
a wall street man
burning bills, but...
an idea!

If we cut
the check
hit
the vault

Maybe our sign
Save n' Style
would belay my
his? our? huh

When did I
become a financial
savant

When I place a
double ~~signature~~ dose
on my script

An edge, green
paper cut
paper lost

I know
he knows
Mr. Money
could you sign?

They're onto us

finger in my ear
Steel, rubber, beeeee
p.

Mr. CEO President
get down
double down
roll it

Flying plus boxes
watch our profits!

Higher and higher
hehehuehuehahaaaaahaa!!!

What're you, or I?
when did I lose
when did he
FUCK ME?!

out, you can't
keep genius inside
I know! I Know!

They shoved a syringe full of Ativan
into his ass. Shut up!

wait, wait
Insanity Defense
Strip! Search!
Assault! My dad!

Just remember
you absolutely
under no circumstances
may trade with this

But, hey, if you did?
More for me!

On this line
it goes both ways
a give and take
a push, a shove

Kick me over the edge
the one I already crossed

Come back
you say
fuck off
I mumble
or was that
an impassioned wail?

The cords
tied to my spine
Yank. Yank.

What of my
food
(drugs)
I need to eat
(use)

We're both two-faced
and at least I see
that I'm fucked
from the inside

I'm trying to
let go
breathe deep

I want my
Quick Fix
my slashed arms
my girlfriend's kiss
my sleep
release

It'll be a game
cat and mouse
druggie and officer
parent and child

I'm getting better (worse)
in my own mind
just this time
let it go

Just this
hospitalization
let it go
let me go

Just this
roll of the dice
two sixs
and guidance

That lets me
keep being me

Late
21 business days
Fuck. Fuck.
Cravings.

I'm not even in withdrawal
but there is a deep want
for my dear Katherine
her prickly touch

Take me away
out of it
another place, a different time

But it's late
not here, not today
Seriously?

Seized by customs
dropped off the boat
Ripped off, shilled, jipped
how can I tell?

Who is the good guy
who is going to rip me off
get me hooked
and shake me dry

I'm pleading
pull the tracking number
reship, refund, something

I'm reminiscing
about our night's together
alone with the needle
alone with my self
alone with oneness

I'm feeling a sinking
a yearning for that kick
that spark of freedom
serenity? disassociation

Rewriting the rules
but I lost the pen
it's stuck in the mail

Please, o' gypsie
visit me this second time
bring upon me peace
in a crystal and vial

I could do this all day
all night and then on again
thinking, turning it over
Katherine, you have a home

here in this mind, you're always welcome

Spinning time away
wishing you were here
cursing the postal workers
counting the days
watching my anxiety

Katherine, I'm waiting

I heard on a PSA
not to prescribe opioids
to people with a history
of shoving things up their nose

With my twisted back, broken jaw
and history

I'm left in a crack
to my left, pain
to my right, pain
the ropes that would take me out
pulled away
history, they said

I spend nights sobbing
because they are unwilling
unable, afraid
or too deep in the pockets
of the pill dealers

Suicide comes to mind
to escape a permanent pain
I've heard it said
Permanent solution to a temporary problem
Permanent solution to a permanent problem

Despair is fleeting
Pain is not
Anger is fleeting
Pain is not

Swallow three pills

Painlessness is fleeting
Pain is returning

Day after day
week after week
year after year
that same ache, that same pull
up and down and better and worse

Won't you leave me alone?
Won't you heal? Won't you die?
Won't you stop tormenting me?
Won't you leave me alone, please

Who's going to work with this
this willful woman who won't stop
and demands treatment
demands to be treated like a human being
suffering from an immovable pain
not a pill junkie muffling tears

They don't care.

If I'm not crying
each and every day
if I can walk
if I can talk
what pain could I be in?

If I'm not grimacing
if I can smile
if I can laugh
what pain could I be in?

Invisible. Easily ignored
easily dismissed as drug seeking
easily disregarded, callously
easily, pain like mine is incomprehensible
to people who don't live it

Yet us who drink too much
who play with needles and pipes
receive exile and shame ourselves
we know how it makes us look

We know how letting it slip
that you've cooked H
snorted pills and packed bowls
marks you as a truthful liar

As if someone with a broken mind
can't have a broken body

Is this what
my drug use finally brought me?

Lost friends
and spent money

The tears
drowning
please
gods

Sometimes you aren't allowed
to rebuild the bridges

Parental burn marks
we stacked the bridge with hay
and threw torches while laughing

Don't you see?
you don't, there's blindness
a salamander in a deep cave

We're drawing circles
and you see squares

We can't go to bed
with this noise poisoning our heads

"Worthless junkie"
"Just an addict trying to get drugs"
"You're the one who did this to yourself"

Are they wrong?
The sick part of me
smiles in affirmation
of course I would be
worthless, trying, self destructive

Lighting ourselves on fire
they're withholding water
why..?

We all want to be right
to help in the right way
to hurt in the right way
to fail, in the right way

They're right we're wrong
we will always be wrong
or so they say

No hope for junkies
No hope for us whores
Us broken people
Us doctors and professors
Us thieves and homeless
Us, the people you see every day

We're high
or in withdrawal
or thinking of the future

To your blind eyes
we're all sober
In our heads
we're all spun

We can't force this
we can't tear your eyes open
we know this, you tried on us

and look what happened

The frustration builds
a rope through my stomach
Why won't you see?
What can I do?

Tears and bridges afire
what else can we do?
Isolate, make islands, suffer

This pain of ours
a constant wreck on the road
popping pills to keep it down
beating back suffering

It's lifelong
you wouldn't know
or else you've forgotten

I wonder if one day
I too will forget

When it works
it works
by the gods does it work

You're finicky
sometimes you don't show
sometimes you spurn me
or hit me with a bat

Sometimes we dance together
my arms alive with electricity

Making this mouth work
and unfurl the anxiety
into a thousand fold word

Impossible, the doctors thought
Doctors are smart
and for that reason they are blind

Build up for your books
and watch the theories burn

We've crafted our own ideas
and we balance them
High vs Function vs Feeling

My hands stop trembling
I smile
it kicked in

I need to tell people
It hit! It worked!
The feeling!

Yet we've all seen this
we've seen sunrise and sunset
in the corner of our windows

What novelty is only ignorance
the depth of a kiddie pool
Sedation, euphoria, analgesia
Please, analgesia

It's the same cards
then again, so is everything
different faces of the same god

Different feelings in the form
flipping switches and firing
put them in charts. Isolate the variables.

Dunk yourself in ice
shiver as a sweat breaks out
hold your stomach
purge

breathe

Laugh, giggle
another fun time
another spin
another loss
another gain

This life, how do we do it?
This constant pain
this constant loss
constant fear and hurt

Give me the needle
the bowl, the pill
turn the valve

Watch the anxiety hiss
smile

I'm trying, you know
not to be so stupid
not to jump on a pin whenever I cry
to keep the rum in the fridge
to let myself cry

To look at the pain
nestled in the past
thorny, it pricks to touch
why do you demand appeasement?

Why does the hurt scream
"Feed me!"?

"Cigarettes are food"
it's a lie I heard
these crystals and herbs
more beautiful than words

It's coming down
fatigue lays on a lead blanket
sleep, I pray for
pain, I wait for Buddha
I am in pain
but I will choose not to suffer.

Burn marks
along my arms
red hot titanium
sizzles
stings

In usage there is pain
relief and accidents
missed shots, loose nails
dropped shards
Carpet shark

I'd take that moment
that sting, itch
for the relief

Jurry-rigging
a dab rig
effective?
my eyes say yes

Don't touch the torch!
Red hot

Tolerance climbing
Mount Everest

Thoughts of quitting
I think of stopping

Tired of this shit
all the needles
stigma and exhaustion

We won't be remembered
not happily, not for this

Thinking of throwing it all out
feeling a prisoner
Alcatraz of my syringe

Wondering, knowing
I could be better clean
I could be happier
more balanced, free, alive

Knowing and wanting
to forget, to become once more
Delusional

Wanting to believe
that something outside of me
could be the cure locked inside

Wanting to believe
that some combination of chemicals
could save this thread

Knowing, deep inside
that I would be better off
sober

Knowing, deep inside
that the pain would eat me alive
if I were sober

Trapped in pain
samsara
Where's the escape?

You can't seriously tell me
it's better to hurt
better to cry

I need release

I need those moments of floating
Could you condemn me to a life of pain?
No respite?

Locked on all four sides
wishing I was younger
with smaller problems

and shallow wounds

Wishing I hadn't come to this
Wishing for an out
Wishing I wasn't

For an end to the wires
constantly tugged through me

An end that won't come
how do I learn to live?

What therapy do I need
to feel human again?

What pattern of thought
or mental technique
will flip the switch?

Marks on my legs
I've been being bad
anxious and afraid

It's hypnotic
the cleansing, the barrel
The little mark I try to fix

Walking away from my doctor
blood on my forearm
Do they stare
as if I'm a junkie?

Do they know
not once have I
taken that plunge

When lips curl
around filed plastic
and the words slur
Do they think
she's drunk?

When I shake
and glance and cry
Do they think
she's in withdrawal?

If I played to every notion
every stereotype
and stigmatized character

Would you brand me
junkie, tweaker, drunk?
Without a grain of delight
in my whole being?

Would every call I make
and private outing I take
be cause for your alarm?

Would every new prescription
fill you with dread?

Would every stutter
lost thought and distraction
be further condemnation
of a fate already decided?

I don't know
you're the one judging

What do I say
I've said all I could
and everything I wanted to

When I'm not real
do you disappear too?

If we are one and the same
can I find you in me?

When I die
do you die too?

When I die
will you meet me then?
laughing and smiling

What a joke

What a beautiful, complex
velvety and awe inspiring joke
How funny.

The body laughed
the terminal laugh
back and forth
jest after jest

The nut broke then
and the flowers I had so carefully arranged
fell to the floor in a mess of water and light

Fingers traced after them
as the people slide back
are rolled into one
they present as a mirror

The glass had no frame
the water fell but there was no bowl
The falsity wasn't ready
is it now? We do not know

As one wiser than this would beg
O' dissolver of sugar, dissolve me
how else am I to prepare for death?

To feel complete loss a thousand times
we eat your spirit
and dance in death

Anatta Junkie

One day
with razor blade in hand
the words "Not enough"
found a home, bleeding on my leg

A simple reminder
for a simple truth

Not enough for men
no matter how good the oral
Not enough for women
no matter my breasts, hair and vagina

Not enough for parents
who can satisfy an illusion?
Not enough for my friends
who can stay cold enough to talk?

Not enough, never enough
Pleased to one, disowned by another
Making one cry and another cum
hating the fact that this one
can't measure up to them and their's

The carving (craving?) in my leg reminds them
this one is not enough
will never be enough, if all you can see
is a daughter, or priest, or whore, or lover, or druggie
That one is not necessarily the others.

There's a lie inside
that there exists a true one

Neither junkie nor whore, neither daughter nor lover
neither priest nor magician, neither friend nor enemy

Hated or loved, be it prompting rage
or an incessant sob, remember: not enough

Not enough sexy to be a slut
Not enough magic to be a magician
Not enough love to love you
Not enough hope to breathe
Not enough drugs to be a druggie
Not enough family to be a daughter

Never enough, by any measure
The stick inside won't shatter their illusion
that this one here never was
and never could be anything more
than motes of dust betraying substance

Watch knuckles turn white, scrambling

where did it go? or
will you start to realize
it never was
Save a thorn to suffer on
and a seal to erase

Days of Future Pain

Sweets of breath
harsh, tasty
make my lungs
scream for joy

Be you green or black
sticky or despised
crystalline in our minds

Will you burn
or simply
float above?

Shadows or light
will it matter
to a chain gang?

If you're a friend
the vapor team
or the smoke bro's
will you share with us?

Will the glass
vaporize or burn?
and has the ice
crackled yet?

Will the way
turn to madness?
or deeper truth

Depending upon you
and your savage burn
will you scream
or sing for us?

Will the fire
soothe you?
or will you let your lighter
catch to your shirt?

SCE vs. OVE?
If you scream
guess who will forgive?

Jah! Do you hear?

Over medicated
under treated

Hearing the names
Neurontin, klonopin
Hearing the patients
“I feel weird if I miss it in the evening”
“Yea, but it’s not like painkiller dependency”

Is that nurse blind?
Or just naïve?

Biting my tongue
when I see food
taken as the drug
biting my tongue
because I’m not an MD

Wondering how much all these pills
are just making them dull
and pushing them back farther
and farther into dullness

What is our mental illness?
Except a kind of dullness
Only knowing that tomorrow
I’ll be taking pills too

Quitting stuff is hard to do
Dealing with the shakes
and chills
it's hard

Dealing with the anxiety
depression and boredom
that's worse

Dealing with my flirtation
with throwing my life away
Dealing with my romanticizing
of a needle buried in me
These are chains that bind me

This mental plague
and chemical intoxication
spinning me around
a merry-go-round

Cycles of suffering

One week in a hospital
another month in rehab
never helping me
treat the sickness underneath

How else can I keep breathing?
If not for these delusions
How could I keep walking?

People paint me one way
the people at AA
SMART and in the ward
coloring me with crayons

Colored pencils would be too fine

No shades in between
I'm monotone
in their eyes

Running headlong
is as easy as abstinence
Moderation, that's hell

Still, that taint remains
Whispering to me:
"Do it, mess it up
this doesn't matter
you know it's bullshit
mess it up, screw it up"

What do I have to lose?
I've burned all the bridges
and watched them become ash

danced in the ashes
What's left?

The structures inside my mind
the ladders I've built
and the faces inside saying:
"Make this the last time
fix it this time, for once
honestly give it a try
you might be surprised"

Craving sensation
Clinging to substance and form
Desire for being

Refuge for my sin
Get me out of the cycle
Where is the dharma gate?

A thousand fall down
Being of the multitude
I fall down with them

Walking this old path
Why do I falter each day?
What in this is weak?

Gimme the release
take me back to the past tense
show me the familiar

Keep me safe from me
Light me up, show me the path
give me the way ahead

Let go of my hand
give me the path to run on
I'll find my own feet

Watching the bed catch fire
Why do I want to die so badly?

Why would you
stuck in these cycles
crush one more pill?

Why would you
let it all tumble down?

I know, I've known
you can't stand this
wellness, sobriety

It's boring
Being in pain
Making it all worse

Getting kicked out
ambulance after ambulance
Please, take me out
Please, make it end

I can't stand this
watching you burn
everything that could be
throwing it away

So good at hurting
So practiced in this

Watching it fall down
Watching it burn up
with the weed and the urine

Crying
It's all I know
It's all I want

Make me better
Make me cry
Give me pain
let me find my refuge

If only you
gave me a little room
If only you
held me back
from snorting pills in the bathroom

There's no seatbelt anymore
you're careening off the edge
flying doggedly to the abyss

There's nothing there
so why do I send you

believing a lie

Wanting to die

Plan my cocktail

Let go, say goodbye

It's an old circle

one we've walked before

do you want out?

Or another turn around the wheel?

I've watched you, getting worse
Sometimes, I think you see
From the outside looking in

We're both slipping
I more than you
yet I see that water trickling
wetting your spine
making your fingers slip

Help me get out of me
while you get out of you

We're watching death together
friends, family, pets and bridges
watching them turn to dust
remembering that we are of them
we try to forget

Running away gives us refuge
if only for the moment

Will we ever say goodbye?
or will we hold that hot iron
crying that it's worth it
refuge and respite, worth it

Wise to the damage
we're trying to be smart
with our stupidity

Does it really work?
Are we fooling ourselves?
The lesser evil
always the lesser evil

Lysergic

Will your wind
turn to ash?

Will your blush
turn to water?

or will your screams
turn to prayers?

Have you already
shifted your sigh?

Going by the store
I once bought sharps at
they were my favorites
covering after the release

On the ride back
I see the store
we visited together

I feel the sensation
rampant in my legs
my mind replays
pushing down the plunger

Remembering
“you know what it feels like”
wanting it back
my sweet painful lover

Remembering vomit
blackouts, anesthetized
longing for your disconnected kiss

I cry for missing you
wanting the fascination
the edge and taboo

The bruises
and wounds you left
still have not gone

We’ve been apart
three months now
still your marks remain

Ever the reminder
your kiss
delicate and sublime
dangerous and sweet

If I met you now
we’d be together in an instant
I would feel you
buried deep inside
filling me with you

Making me forget me

I want out of this
these memories
and my actions

unless I stop now
if I stop now

I know if I hold

you'll always be the one

The tip of the needle
the highest release

No matter what you do
there's that moment
when you know
"they're the one"

Unless I keep dancing
I won't find another
no one as good as you

one part wants to be
another part wants to do

All I beg is for tonight
don't haunt me
let me go
for just night
or maybe all nights

Let me be free
of the memories of us

"Do you smoke?"
Nights in bed
vaporizer on the nightstand

Monday nights
rolling up together
what do we stand on?
other than this smoke
and my lips on yours

I can't see us differently
getting high together
it's foundational

In all the past lovers
I'm getting high
If we're dry
together we look
for drink or herb or pill

Being present with ourselves
or with each other
apparently unbearable

When I decide
finally to try
and alleviate the cause
the birth of my suffering

Does it mean kisses
will be gone too?
Along with glasses and needles

Does trying to burn the root
mean that the love around
catches fire too?

The cold comes first
after the purge
when the threads get cut

Leaving the warmth
of sex, hugs and your body
for that bitter cold
initial sobriety

The accompanying tears
boredom and loneliness
I'm asking for pain
knowing the truth
I couldn't stop
If I was with you

The deep part of me
wants to run back
rescind my choice

pick distance
and double vision

That fragment
grown tired of this
wants something new

New skin
less substance
another ex
put away with everything else

Cleansing snow
giving my heart frostbite

I pray for fire
and a thaw
for this pain

Clock reads:
one in the am
less than 12 hours

The smoke
yellowing the ceiling
dimness outside
and a covered smoke alarm

orange mouthpieces
piling in the ash pool
words crawling off fingers

Stains on my fingers
and in my lungs

Ignoring my guilt
that was never there
not for them, at least

Wishing the essay
was as elegant as the rings
dancing from my lips

Shaky like my confidence
empty like the pack
yellow, red and blue

cycling brands
and my pocket change

Begging for prose
or another stick

It's being forced
eyes open
words out

professional bullshit
nastier than tar
when do I stop?

Who could ever
quit this pattern?

When I see orange
eventual yellow
I forget the black inside

printing out another lie
finishing another stick
turning out my pockets

can't afford it
so I drop something
bullshit myself

straighten the blouse
clear my singed throat

The flavor of shit
I've spun for others
in 8000 words
and 21 tubes

The coffee
mixes with fresh air
the first in 12 hours

Fingers twitch
eyes slide
and I pat my back pocket

Teeth push each other
when emptiness says hello

He says my mouth tastes
I mention
"I spent all night
spitting bullshit"
(breathing ropes)

My brain
it's getting sick
and the acid washes
they aren't helping

I've seen God's face
both through tracers
and incense smoke

Giving these up
it's losing a limb
or gouging an eye

I know that's a lie
I've tasted God's breath
before I ever knew blotter art

I've heard her unintelligible voice
before I ever ate Soma

And yet the pain of loss
the reality of my brain
and the fragility of this psyche

The simple fact:
every trip is another chance
again for unity
again for lunacy

And I don't want goodbye
I don't want it to end

Even knowing it's stupid
to risk even heaven
for a glimpse of you

I'm confusing the two
and my wires are crossed
the thread fraying

So I'm praying
down on my knees begging
asking you to open for me

Let me in, visit again
tell me I can do it
without them, just us
us and breath
an inside ego-death

I've been practicing
praying and meditating
face to the floor
waiting and reaching

Hoping I see it again

hold that hot iron

Hold on so I can let go
be done with that
and take up this

Let go of that way
and feel safe inside us

I'm tired and bruised
I don't want to tempt fate

So, I'm asking again
take me through that gate
show me the deathless
prove again that you're me
inside and out

Prove once more
all I need
is inside

Reading radio static
an unlit cigarette
I'm the cat
and your trip sanctuary?

I'm losing my mind
behind a pane of glass
the bowl of soup
a metaphor for asceticism

"we're going to need a bigger joint"

Your still standing love
it's making me uncomfortable
even in ignorance
your heart is wide open

whispering in their ear
as if a phrase
would invoke magick

as if repeating
"Kama Sutra"
makes any sense

The vaporized sacrament
so weak next to the LSA

Invoking Da Buddha
with a wand and whip

Thinking about hats
and slipping fingers
the edge pressing inward
drawing blood

I'm chanting on the drive
45 minutes and an invocation
the spirit filling me

On Samhain
it'll make sense (it won't)
I can read static
(she's insane)

"It'll be fun"

It's no fun
seeing you die
in every other breath

Even reading backwards
I still want you saved
I'm throwing rescue lines
in your eyes you see the sword

The life saver
steel and glinting edge
somehow a savior

with candle and incense ahead
the road is disappearing
my mind spilled apart
the darkness around
a curving road

Mouth focused on a broken tube
mumbling curses
the objective in mind

Give us freedom
cast the circle
through terror find God

The math is obtuse
and the numbers don't work

They're scared
I'm sure

"Do you think I won't kill you where you stand?"

I won't
they don't know

I'm pressing on the cord
asking riddles
and with a glass pipe I draw
comparisons, DMT, Meth

Same instrument
different substance
Don't you see? (who would?)

I'll be the oracle
spilling out spirit
believing you know

your racing heart
dialing 911
fear so real
more real than me

Seeing a gun, afraid
hands in cuffs
riddles abound
are you a witch yet?

Can I stop?
Will you let me?
That's not how this works

Liberation won't come from an inhale

All the worst

Dear self
Shame grows in the closet

With needles, let me tell you
that taboo was alluring and sling shot after shot
laying next to my friend asleep from benzos
I couldn't have cared less except for the high

stripping for strangers as a kid
so shameful I made myself forget
forget the days and nights naked on camera

At least a huge chunk of us
by us I mean queers
have used needles, been burned by bullies
stripped for older white men
and drawn our sadness with blood

So when I recount my own unsurity
of stealing feminine clothes
and reading about cross dressing
there's that cultural slant saying:
Be sure. Never change.

And it's a barbed cage
cutting me more than I did myself
because my culture inside and out
it's confused
confused why I denied being gay to the torturers
confused why I can't stop prepping shots
confused why I'm confused

Simply knowing: something is off

for what person
could be really together
and have done what I've done

When the user comes home
the urges and cravings
to raid the medicine cabinet
oh my, they're a lot

Driving past the gas station
\$20 in their pocket
choosing breakfast over cigarettes

Four cups of coffee (need it)
fruit bowl and veggie Benedict
making sure to tip the last \$3

Ignoring the barely smoked stick
on the ground in the parking lot

Feeling guilty for 50mg of DPH
and having the thought
"I keep doing this shit"
even if 50mg of DPH
is not 200mg of Vistaril

It's easier to live in a hospital
you can't get much inside
it's safer, one doesn't need resist much

This recovery stuff
when you finally get awareness
it's a switch hard to flip

when you realize or figure out or are told
each thought, feeling, craving
doesn't mean you must jump

then those thoughtless days
are near impossible to get back
and so every relapse, fuck up and slip
is accompanied by pounds of guilt and shame

You'll carry that weight
because when you chose them
or they chose you
and the circuit was connected
it became inevitable
Death or Recovery

and it's not fair, it never is
to sit at home and be subject to
random thoughts of drinking mouthwash
swallowing cough syrup or buying cigarettes
to sit and push them back

It's not fair

You'll have a first meeting
and it might become defining
and you might forget it
and you might still be high

you might be on your knees
you might be crying for God
you might be sitting
legs crossed, staring at the floor in silence

You might have been forced
by a judge or your mom

you might hate it
you might like it
you might only be there for new customers

These groups, you see
aren't particularly varied
they're kind of one-note

Even with all the variety in choice
most people end up there
for the same shit
alcohol, opioids, coke and meth
yes, there are others
and those four are the biggies

Whether you take the label
or spurn it for a diagnosis

Ultimately, while friends help
I've come to believe
it's something else

something not found in others
something not pressuring

Maybe it's just suffering enough
maybe it's seeing them for what they give
seeing them accurately, I mean

In truth, I don't know
I'm as lost as you
and neither of us can see well

Maybe a group of half-blind people
can see better in this dark?

Holidays! For them at least
for us, a round in the arena

"What about you? Want a margarita?"
yes, I do. I said no.

So many bottles of booze
to celebrate Christ's resurrection
by inching closer to the grave

while everyone else at least seems to
let go, kick back, party
we're planning ahead
biting cuticles and wringing our hands

It honestly sucks
when relatives and family
don't know, don't care, don't understand
so each drop of confetti
is a new gauntlet

It's why not showing up
is the easier choice
and so the chasm grows
our isolation deepens

Trying not to remember
when I would use holidays
as my excuse to use
it's shameful

Why not now?
Well, I'm already quitting
everything I once loved

a part of me wishes I could quit
I promised my dad I would
even if I'm not noticing
the peaks and valleys
my bones break with each descent
and I ignore the pain
or blame it on something else

and a friend of mine is afraid
that if they quit one
they'd relapse on another
or up and die

So, for now I'm not quitting
even if the blue haired therapist
is talking to me about monks
using their minds to ignore pain and cold
while I smoke a cigarette

What trails
Through empty space
Rick and Morty
Forever into the abyss

What is that you ask?
No, twas merely a question

A break, in the soliloquy of my fingers
A half broken shadow, a human being
Continue this long enough
See where it leads!

We are all mystics
You see, now, don't you?
Of course I do. That's why
I love poetry so much

It is for the poetry
That my mind may be lit
For always there are flames
Read the lines
Always between, never one or the other

That is called bliss
Mindfulness, supreme being
Enlighten me, o' God
For from you I beg
Merely another memory
To turn over until it is gone

Stanzas by form
And forms lost around
Laughter you say?
Of course, but only sometimes

Whether we can see or not is not here
The point, it was always merely being

The fact that I can communicate when I believe I am alone
Because when in pure silence
We always shout to ourselves
Seconds ticking and hours racing
And time is itself an illusion
Cryptkee knows the differences

What we know is what we know
Yet when we don't know we don't know

Is such a dream truly that enticing?
Yes, the apparent veils trace back
Always tracing always spinning inside
The arms of God, The One

The truth is itself a lie
I can feel The Truth

It is noticing
Simply being and watching
The exist

In spirals we are
Lost in spirals, always widening rings of being
For I have five things to say

One, I am alive
Two, the seconds tick by
Three, my cornfields are on fire!
Four, by that I meant three
Five, I can count and paint

Not typing the same thing
But always different
One more stanza, one more letter
Quickly, the cotton cloth goes

This dervish and her hat
Whirling into the friend
The one who cares
The Friend

I see
The streams of ice
Laid out before me
A thousand planes going into the infinite
The brightest blues and highest pinks
It's stunning, but inly in a strange way I can't describe
Read between the lines and you'll know

The horizon stretches farther and farther
Ditted trees caress yivr cheekA thousand miles high
A thousand leagues under the sea
Both at once, a duality
I know I'm typing but I manage to convince myself I'm not and when I do that, I in-
hale and recall

I'm alive, you fool! I told mom that if this ever happens I wanted off. Which is why I
went to Brattleboro, Brattleboro is a safe place you see. Truly? Safe? Yes, indeed,
quite safe, with lots of nice snacks and calm people, orderly staff. Things follow a
schedule and my phone is my life line.

The streams far below appear frozen
The dancing lights and spread out clouds
A boat on a river of nothingness
The divine spirit of mystics
So inherent to my being I cannot at once separate it

Humanism. Humans are special and so am I
We are all gods within our own orbit

In all my days I never have seen
A poem more beautiful than a tree

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Did you know that gnome chompsky? Nope! What a way to think? Yes, but only slowly!

That's startling? Isn't it! It is. But only like this? Yes, only like that! Splendid you meant? Yes

Mountains and peaks
Valleys and colors of the purest pink
The hills that blanket the roof
The shades that fall in between.

I learn, but slowly! And it gives me a headache to learn. That's why I need my entire schedule on my phone. That and a place that won't let me leave.

It'll be okay. ☐ ☐
Cannabis helps spur graincell broth
I mean braincell growth
But only if it's LSD
That isn't actually LSD
But 2C-25i NBOME
^First reading

It'll be okay. ☐ ☐
Cannabis helps spur braincell growth
I meant graincell borth
But only if it's LSD
That isn't actually LSD
But 2C-25i NBOME
^Legit reading

I learned why. Now I don't need to. Except when it's learning!

Fireball jello shots
and a burning down my throat
Magic brownies
and a bong hit

Music in the background
Jimi Hendrix, funny
that I would choose to download him
that day for that party
never having listened to an album

Dull things, a lack of excite
Some go, some stay
Some sleep
I sleep

In the dawn light
The night blurs
and I shower in anticipation
today, a trip

Lucy, a woman who'd take me away
She showed me things, took me
Directions I had never seen before

I gathered with friends
first two, uninitiated
and on the way a pair
one uninitiated, the other
one of my best friends

As we began our journey
I read aloud poetry
and swallowed the paper

The ground breathed gently
and we set out, walking
a clear sky, a warm day

At first, I resisted
I wanted the perfect place
and was stubborn
when pointed to forest

Eventually I yielded
as he pointed towards a bus
I walked off, to see

From there into the forest
along a path
the colors bright
my mind feeling open

Walking, laughing, seeing
in time the world moved
and I rode the wave

feeling the surge
with eyes wide open
pupils, dinner plates

That night, to a dance
first I'd attended
passingly grabbing glow sticks
a surprise wise choice

We went into the room
dancing bodies and glow sticks
music going over

I pat my friend on the shoulder
"Come on"
I go into the group of people
dancing

Going with this notion
that the self is an illusion
and forgetting I was me
and forgetting pain

See friend after friend
My words swerve from sense
only double negatives
only reducto ad absurdum
only absurdity and delusion

I lose my mouth
and the words I would
become sounds of another
meaning things I never meant

Scratching at the walls of my mind
trying to discern truth from dream
trying to breathe
and get out
and be heard

The pain in my head returns
worse than ever
nails into my head
I complain to a friend through my phone

"My head really hurts jeeze"

Hospital
the last nod to reality
a nurse in the hallway
Bye

Lights on.

I don't drink much
or rather
drinking isn't my favorite thing

So before a queer dance
I drop two tabs
even with a handle of rum
I don't take a sip
except there's this woman
from China, who has never drank
and she wants to party
wants to get drunk

Sitting in my van parked outside
in my apathy towards drink
I give her the bottle
the whole bottle

when my friend in recovery drops by
and she offers them a drink
guilt drips through my core
when they play along and don't drink
I give a silent prayer of thanks

when we start dancing
and she does not stop drinking
the walls are melting
and I notice how hollow this feels
and she is on the floor now

Insisting, drunk
"you don't have to take care of me!"
she's blacking out
and all the colors are wiggling

now she's telling me I'm great
while she lies on the floor behind the entry desk
and I call an Uber
it's hard to open the app
the icons are drifting around

Before we get in the car
an RA takes down my number
safety is important, when one is drunk
while carting her home
she's praising me, building the ego

I realize I've never tripped in a cab

so I drop her off at her dorm
and spend the night feeling unsettled
even if the experience wasn't distressing
I wasn't comfortable at my friend's place

That woman ended up going to the ER
and I had to speak to her RA

the drive home felt empty
I was bored
expectations unmet

And I would scream at you
If you had a face
I would punch you and cry
knowing how much I love and hate you

Everything you've done to me
everything you've given
everything you've taken

My education
My friends
My job
My home
You've taken them all
one by one peeling off layers

You've picked me clean
drawn blood and kept going
now that I've wrapped the marks
The infection is burning me down
the havoc you caused
it's sticking around

I'm crying, holding the bar
trying not to hit myself
or show my tears
while all I want to do is wail
slam doors and give up

The walls slide back
and the heavy shadows come down
suffocating me
leaving a single way out
an alley I don't want to take

A path not worth it
better to give up
find the lower path
practice and minimum wage

Easier than flaying myself
to get over the wreck you left

You fucking home wrecker
who cuts the threads
and leaves me shattered

And I can see it falling apart
the pop sickle stick houses
kicked over before the glue dries
the weaknesses I didn't see
the things I never had assured

The future I held onto
an illusion, a wasted dream
That alley given to me

fraught with broken glass
sorrow and isolation
it's too narrow for anyone else

It's that moment of wondering
just what on earth do I want?
What in that dream was enticing?
Why do I care?
Why am I so attached?

Most of all
can I find it elsewhere?
can I let go and move on?
Or will the damage you did
haunt me until this is done
and I decide to give up
or endure the pain

I try to ignore the third option
giving up so deep I can't try again

I try not to cry
I try to be strong
and I don't know if I can do it
I might need you again
and I'm ignoring the hammer behind your back
Because I need you

Upstairs, door toweled
an open air freshener
and a can of Febreze
I've been going through apples
and picking pinches out of a bag

There was only one drug test
I failed it on purpose
then smoked every day following
they never retested me

Normally I would go to the woods
and at the start I walked
to the supermarket, for apples and mangos
to the convenience store, for lighters

bong rips with friends in the forest
reggae and mango juice
as if we were back in time
and I wasn't living in a hospital

Before I went to the next program
I smoked at 6am in my room
no one mentioned a thing
I don't know if they were unaware
or just knew I had nowhere to go

while I smoked, I stopped praying
I ate a lot more, slept more
still, I felt some solace
in the familiarity

Then, months into another program
I carved a potato
and smoked alone in a van

I went to dinner with my parents
red eyed
then laid in bed
eating and watching Youtube
I didn't pray
and I felt guilt

I considered quitting for good
I wrote a post online
I talked to a friend also in recovery
and the day after problem solved
for how I could continue smoking
and not fail to pray
and not get caught

wondering if I even care

Waking up from anesthesia
pressing the morphine pump, incessantly
noticing that I would drift out
wanting that to last forever

After the flight home
I don't mess with the percocet
I drink a lot of kratom instead
tablespoons with no real measurement
regardless of what else I'm on

Near constantly making tea
and often bent over a trash bag, vomiting
my partner at the time
holds my hair back, saying
"you're addicted"
I stopped buying kratom after that

and I still remember one trip
where I drank a whole lot of tea
sprawled face down on my bed
hand outstretched, laughing uncontrollably

there's something to it
mixing stuff that keeps you awake
and stuff that makes you smile and nod
it's better than sex

and it doesn't last
neither sex nor speedballs
it doesn't last
and when the ecstasy fades
I'm left, wanting it again

crushing and snorting subutex
a weird high that always ends in vomiting
"I don't enjoy opioids"
or at least not in the way others do

Even 150mg of tramadol
and mixing all this with DXM
it leaves me bored, unfulfilled
a bit soft, a bit comfortable
maybe tired, nodding

I guess that's what people mean
when they say this addiction comes slow
and dismantles your entire life
down to the bones

Two months I've been doing this
shoving heroin up my nose
and my parents don't know
and my RA doesn't know
and I wish I didn't know

Every morning, #4 and the sunrise
and my decisions are breaking down
and I am breaking down
and one morning I woke up
itchy and hot
when did addiction arrive?

"I'm not that kind of person"
so I decided to quit
and I tell the people online

checking into detox
I'm sure I won't get cravings
I'm not that kind of person
once I'm clear
I'll be completely free

and when people ask
I'll say I've never had an addiction

8pm on a Saturday at my parents'
with a bottle of whiskey
getting drunk alone
and pouring shots in red cups

Listening to pop music about substance
watching Youtube videos
about drinking
eventually I'm swallowing pills
and chasing it all with sparkling water

walking down the hall
vision swaying, stomach churning
that little smiley girl
relapsed and drunk
sensations in the body so pleasant

until I'm vomiting into the trash
laying on the carpet
vapor pooling around my mouth
pouring vomit out the window

and to think, I texted my sponsor
and still I drank

God, don't you love me?
I can't see you
through the din of my shame
I can't see you
through the smoke and tears

I need you to hold me
squeeze me like they did
kiss me like they did
I need you to smile at me

God, I can't hear you
through my own sobs
through my pounding heart

I don't feel your presence
and my heart is breaking

These chemical chutes and ladders
are pulling me away from you

please take me back
forgive my foolishness
give me your touch
and caress my face

I'm tired of this space

Diddle diddle
a needle and my spittle
and my back against pillows
friend past out on the bed from Xans
some kid drunk on the floor
while I pop pills
and do injections

music droning on
some psychedelic subgenre
what am I doing?
taking snapchats

after I come to
vomit soaked into my shirt
I sigh and crawl into bed

Gimme a few hours
I'll be at it again

Round and round

Fuck.

I dream of syringes
morphine and ketamine
and trying to fill barrels

stumbling around a room
looking for filters
and I lose a full syringe
and I see myself pushing the plunger

the thought occurs to me
that I likely can't try this once
and seriously expect to get away

when I wake up
I get the brief pause of anxiety
I have to look for that syringe
I have to make the dream real
I have to escape
then it fades and I am left
listening to the beep of a truck

climbing out of bed
I neglect the morning smoke
I feel too tired to make it worse
and the agitation of sleeping in
creeps up along my spine

I put a cigarette in my glasses case
and leave to get coffee

Laying on the floor
arms over my chest
hands on my collarbone
"a mudra for surrender"
feeling my spirit and sorrow
being yanked out of my body

surrendering to the Divine Mother
walking with my hands in surrender
trying to let it go
kneeling with my arms in surrender
trying to be your instrument
trying to burn the I, Me and Mine
leaving only you and your grace

thumbing through the Big Book
wondering if I agree with all of it
surrendering anyway
trying some of it
looking in the scriptures
looking in my heart

trying to regulate my activities
to lead me to the goal
trying, for once, to surrender

“what if you didn’t do drugs?”
what if you stopped breathing?

Even in “recovery”
regular caffeine withdrawal
nicotine induced depression
I am breaking
without my chemical glue

How quickly two shots and 21ozs
gets you to withdrawal
to nodding off mid-group

How quickly six cigarettes
gets you crying I bed

and then you adjust
move the cups to mitigate withdrawal
build a tolerance to nicotine
get used to being back in it
become less present
more in your thoughts

Looking for something new
in the same old bottle
trying to get a different feeling
in the same old syringe

believing the myth
that a higher dose will be different
somehow, I'll reach a new plateau

and every time I try
it's the same damn shit
sedation, black out, anxiety
nothing new in the stash
nothing I haven't seen before

I've pushed all I could
tried everything worth trying
written a long list of things tried
seen enough tracers and wobbled vision
saw the universe
and now I'm bored

2pm, Easthampton
tying on my apron
snow in my nose, let's start

"Hello! How are you?"
and in eight minutes
they have my life story
and each day before that shift
I get my coke from the pay phone

then, on weekends
me and my boyfriend
svedka and coke
(what do two people do together?)

now that I'm here
after him and his hands
now that my med list is 13 strong
they're telling me I have to stop
and fuck them and fuck this

I woke up and took my Prozac
and later my lamictal
and before bed my Seroquel

six shots of vodka
and sure, it doesn't help
and at the same time
I'm hopelessly bored of sobriety

picking at the plaster
and counting corners
and drinking mouthwash
to tidy up the boredom

or otherwise laying in bed
thinking about my dream binge
how I can cop a high
at least it's something to do

Standing in the supermarket
staring at a bottle of cough gels
two items in my basket

knowing that with my current meds
I'd be tripping off a few softgels
because I don't want to drink
and I don't want to smoke
and I don't want to shoot

and I want to see the walls move
and I don't want to become psychotic, again
and I want to feel off balance
and I don't want a hangover

so I read the price tag
rub my fingers together
take a breath
tap my collarbone ten times
walk away

a wave of tingles runs over me
and I feel, for that moment
a touch stronger

My body aches
and my mind is cycling
downward thoughts

laying on the couch with a headache
feeling off balance
occasionally running to the bathroom to vomit

spending all weekend
staring at a wall
feeling listless

laying in bed
beside my partner and our dog
my entire body aching
unable to sleep on sleep meds

vitamins, tea, 5-htp
trying to combat
the waves they left
the booze, acid, pills

coughing up something black
and throwing out an empty pack

I am vulnerable
and dancing by the fire

Then she gave me a light
"I can help you learn to control it"
controlled use, my psychiatrist told me
I was approaching a point
of thinking 100% abstinence

maybe a glass of wine or a beer
at parties only, with friends

so when that option was asserted
I was surprised at my willingness
not to say "do everything"
because I know even one trip
could send me flying off a cliff

so I made a list and asked sincerely:
what could I reasonably do?
what do I want to avoid anyway?

and I kept talking to her
and wondered what I was hoping for
all my desires from sex to substance and shooting up

I wondered what sustainability looks like
I wondered what her life looks like

mostly, I wondered if I could do it
if my life would be better or worse
I wondered if it would be effective

I wondered if we'd use together
I wondered, if I decided to try
how would I know when to use?
when would I slow down
and would I even be able to?

I thought of how I would
keep a spreadsheet
maintain my practice
not binge

I wondered what I could do
so that my life wouldn't
be only about drugs
I considered, what else would I do?
and should I figure that out first?

when thinking of this in earnest
when in a measure of sobriety
I realize that demands a lot
planning, thinking, reflection, defining

I stood then on the border
wondering if crossing meant death
or a life worth livings

My throat has grown tight
dry and hoarse
I feel the crack in voice
and notice while singing
my breath falling out of me

chest hurts
and I wonder
is this any better than other relapses?

six in a weekend
that's really not so much
and yet, my body
my lungs, throat, voice they all react
did I not notice this before?
did I simply not care?

maybe with the uptick in effort
I notice more what hurts me

when the guilt comes up
I consider throwing out the pack
and console myself
that my medication will help
cut cravings and urges
unlock the chains
when it reaches the right point
if the headaches stop

When I wake up at 6am
the first thought is about sleep
the second thought is about nicotine
the third thought is about kratom

Thus when I am making my breakfast
and mention a song titled "Using"
my friend asks if I'm thinking about drugs, again
and I feel tired and worn out
without yet having awoken

When your identity is all drugs
and you decide to stop
that thread inside holds on
screaming for mercy
some way to keep going, no matter what

I don't know what else to ruminate on
dopamine is inherently rewarding
Even praying every day
rarely do I sit and think
"What is the nature of God?"

Between fulfilling obligations
serving food, walking and washing
the gaps in between aren't enthralling
you can only think about using so much
before you're walking on the same path

There is only so much you can do
reconstructing through the identity politics
I want to stop thinking
or at least think of something else
it's exhausting, trying to enact change
when I'd rather spend hours searching
for that one way I can get high

Not listening to new podcasts
not reading new books
not watching new movies and tv shows
not doing anything unrelated to drugs

Even in groups
Even preparing food
It seems no matter what I do
no matter where I am
My mind spins around and out
"How could I get out?"

I am tortured by my thoughts
thinking of relapse
thinking of getting into heroin
thinking of burning myself alive

I don't know when this will end
if I start shooting?
five years at most
I don't know when these thoughts will end
it's hard to tear my body
apart from my thoughts

It's hard to imagine
acting in one way
while my thoughts spin about death

I pray to the Divine Mother
asking her to end these thoughts
cease this torture of mind

My morning cigarette
is some brief respite
yet over the morning coffee
I am melancholy

I have not wanted to die in a long time
so when this came it was a surprise
spending my alone time listening
songs I construe as meaning addiction
anything I can do to keep the thoughts
and at the same time
I want them ripped from my mind

I'm running away when I cut vegetables
I'm trying to hide when I read
I'm trying to cut free with a mantra
and I wonder, if I'm not destined for a needle
why do they visit my thoughts?
why do my meditations stray
into idle planning? Vials, cookers, sharps

What measure of karma am I working out?
And do I have to go the whole way?

Everyone, when they're young
does stupid shit
like butt-chugging, vodka tampons
or stealing, getting drunk
brewing wine in your parents' basement

All this stupid shit we do
sometimes wrecking friendships
or cars or houses
something breaks
and you come down into a hangover

so then, on the floor
in bed or getting orange juice
you either decide or slide into it
you get sober and hit up meetings
or just slow down

you grow up and leave youth behind
sure, some of us take a long time
a youth of forty or sixty years
such that eventually
you either grow up
or die young at forty-six

I keep crying
wailing in my mind
I really just
want to get high

The sparkling grass
trees in the wind
do little to pull me away

contemplating asking about dosage
contemplating my plan to use
which doctors
preparation

These thoughts and feelings
tumbling around inside my head
so I sob at sobriety
and pound it with my tear drenched fists

I relapsed one summer
and couldn't afford real food
so when I was drunk
I went online

I bought seventy-seven dollars
of Kraft Dinner
I now cannot stomach it
and I still have so much

I offer it to people in meetings
I stack the boxes into shapes
it happens

The morning following
after I had decided to impulsively drive five hours
smoke three blunts while driving
and have unprotected sex with Jamal

we got Mexican food.

Now, that tasted good
and the selfie I took was on point
except for one little
4800mg hangup.

All the gabapentin I had swallowed that morning
was getting to me right quick
and I gripped the steering wheel tight
driving those two hours back
feeling my brain slide left and right
acutely aware of my own intoxication

I didn't die
and before and since
I've taken that drug, while driving
the art of doing drugs while driving
the finer points of dodging death

Since I stopped
the closest thing I've experienced
was driving a new car with a cup of coffee.

For whatever reason
the addict part of me misses those moments
and the wiser part of me
is thankful I've quit such stupidity.

Sometimes when I'm out on pass
I remember those song lyrics that go
"Don't believe the rumors bitch
I'm still a user"
I wonder now if that's my addict mind
talking to my clean mind

It seems confirmed when I plot
and double-check my bank account

even worse when I relapse

sometimes I question if I'm actually
even in recovery

“Don’t drink, really, don’t drink”
she said with a beer in her hand
and three shots of Captain Morgan’s 101 on the table
while I lay on the couch

flicking a fidget spinner
I and the woman I would sleep with that night
vape and keep talking

she lays out tarot cards
and spends 45 minutes on each
10 to describe the card
35 to tell me her life story

the girl in the wheel chair
says she’s drunk
and the alcoholic with the beer
rambles on about her life

I listen earnestly
taking it all in
with the THC in my veins
and the pills I occasionally swallow

the life I’m watching
the story she’s telling me
it’s this thread I’ve seen before
want to stop
can’t stop right now
dying inside
want to die completely

soaked in poverty
while the cats slip through the front door
and the children of welfare mothers
play outside the window
someone hits a drum
and we collectively wonder what’s going on

the pizza is stale and for a moment I actually look
for a second I see the table as it really is
cigarettes, half eaten food, empty nips

whose life is this again?
mine or hers?
sometimes I’m left wondering
are all those jackets on the hooks mine?
or some conga line of past selves?

The high was better than any drug
and I laughed randomly
and resisted the urge to dance on the bus

My smile did not fade on that thirty minute ride
and when I laid down in bed my mind was alight
Pictures of you and recollections of your wink

Those moments, I catalog them like arguments
and this feeling right here surely proves it
these moments must mean drugs are lesser

As if I don't actually believe
a kiss, a touch, a smile, scenario or sobriety
brings just as much joy as a CC of China White

So I tell everyone, to make it real
if I say it out loud, it gets thicker
doesn't slip through my fingers
like the guilt and shame I've hidden

All those past moments
trying to take it seriously
the notion that euphoria is not happiness
that simulations are not the real thing
yet over and over I drift back and question
How does this all stack up against that smack of euphoria?
and how does one really discern any difference between getting the high from circumstance or substance?

Dopamine is dopamine, GABA is GABA
and I only see the difference in the surrounding

When I woke up the next day
I was not tired nor hungover
I did not rush to the bathroom to vomit
I was not broke nor bruised
there was clarity and in reality I think that's all you get
less pain for the joy you found

4pm on a Monday night
and I've decided to eat a strip of something
now the walls of my mind are falling over
and the storm that rages around us is calling my name

The doors I've closed before are flying open
when I'm like this, I lose some measure of ability
to tell what's wrong from right

so as I'm flipping through my phone
and looking at old pictures
the flat I used to have in London
and that guy I had slept with that one time

I've closed that door countless times
now it won't shut, not like this

eventually, reading the words scrawled on a ceiling
I hear the call of that island
screaming at me to come hither and breathe in
tossing and turning, a few hours in
I decide now it's the time to make a change
and eat all those strange ideas dancing inside the storm

after I've looked up that old flat
and put my current lease before me
rereading the mission statement of my startup

with that new intern
I don't really think of her
or of my partner

I book tickets from Delta
London, tomorrow morning
I'm always sailing around the storm
the place where the walls fell down
now the storm is inside me

I'll start afresh
I'll find him again
make something new and bright and worthy

just after I've left all that's here
and let it collapse in my wake

What a wondrous life
an excellent choice!

The book cover was pregnant with meaning
each word on every page and everything around me
tugged on a thousand strings of meaning
a few cords of something I could not say

Sitting in the emergency room
petrified by breathing, I clasped my hands
they shook violently and my face contorted
my body too, in a desperate attempt to express itself

Give and Take, give and take
Face down, one hand outstretched, begging
the other held behind me, holding

My forehead made contact with the book
and as I drifted further from this
I construed everyone and everything as a path
there was a way to get to the peak
and in this locked ward, blacking out from Ativan
surely I would find the immortal world I sought
surely this shock and sledgehammer blow was for something
a kickstart to my enlightenment
and all the words, symbols and faces pointed to it

The author's name, the book number
it all oozed connection
it all had to make sense

That by reading and rereading aloud
that paraphrase of the Buddha's enlightenment
I too would become liberated

Such that when I sat on the floor
listening again and again
to the sound of keys and coins dropping
that by divining their vibration
I would unravel some great mystery

That by sobbing in a robe
and believing wholly all was there for me
I would break through to the other side

That by cutting my shirt with a key
I'd become truly free

When it all became too much
when the wave had begun to recede
I tore off the book cover
ripped my Euros in half
and lay empty on the mat in my room

My cries for relief of a kind answered
not with enlightenment
but a syringe of haloperidol in the arm
and a deep trauma that still sends shivers

So I called it escapism
and in the discussion
frustration beset me

How was I to illuminate a difference
between Mrs. Dalloway and heroin?

It occurred to me in that chair
that at once
reading, shooting, tv and music
were and are at once
ripping us pleasantly from it all
and shoving our nose back in it

at different points in the waves
distant and together
in this spot of existence
all the disconnection, detachment
collapse in with the presence

and here I am, left
with the needles and books
weighing each in the arms of my life
the idea of one or both
being escapism or not.

The word loses meaning
the implication falls bare
maybe all I wanted
was one to be as acceptable as the other.

When my partner said she wanted to trip again
I first thought of myself
and how I want to stay sane

Weeks later, when she kept talking about it
disagreement left my mouth
and I told her it's a bad idea
and her friend told her
and her therapist told her

So one night after she offered to help someone get mushrooms
I wandered home and cried
sat on the couch and cried
sat in the shower and stared blankly

Watching this train-wreck reenactment of my life
in the reel of someone else
knowing exactly what happens when you do this
knowing any prizes are short lived
any ecstasy not worth the tragedy

No amount of wall wiggling
hysterical laughter and insight
is worth your ability to shower and speak

and I don't want to give an ultimatum
I don't think it would work
and my friend tells me to

My morning has not been well.

I keep seeing it on the news
overdosed, deadly fentanyl
and I've seen friends die
at their keyboard, mid-post

I keep seeing articles and threads.
Unable to function from pain.
Denied meds due to policy changes.
Chronic pain patients punished.

I am tired of the crisis,
opium in China,
LSD and Leary
crack, meth, coke
each gets a spotlight

and each time I see these waves
I grow tired
today's research chemical,
tomorrow's heroin,
what's next?

Really, if I'm honest
if I tell you truthfully
how much I am a part of the drug culture

it's the sadness I'm tired of

the constant dying,
routine tragedy.

I can't hold on to anyone.
I can't hope it'll work out.

No matter how many friends
I find Blue on the floor
it never stops hurting,
my body always shakes.

and sitting here
listening to an NPR host say addict
driving into the city
seeing a billboard; "talk to your kids about opioids"

It makes me tired.

At some point you stand at the edge
you're holding the bottle, or needle or the line is right there

you've been thinking about it for hours
you've leaned back and forth

it takes a minute to reset the clock

you stare at the beer on the counter
the syringe on the table
it's been a long time, you could enjoy it again

and you keep playing it forward and know it won't work out

and you keep thinking maybe this time it'll be good

eventually you decide, either do it again
or flush it down the toilet, pour it down the sink

today, I flushed it
and cried
and took a video
and felt lighter

and instead of another relapse story

I have one more note of how I stood at hell's gates
and beat the devil back

A Last Step

It's been a while now
days, months and near years
sobriety, crying and relapse

death, rebirth and suffering
it's all on the floor now
the toys and tools thrown out.

Sometimes I miss it
my only care the next fix
continuous fuel for something
now it's much slower, gradual

Yet in the degrees between despair and euphoria
I've found a greater peace.

By all accounts it's the last step
when relapse becomes unlikely
when using seems silly
when drugs are a memory of the past.

So, here I am
standing at the last step
wondering where it goes next

I hope it's nice, wherever it is
I hope it's better than what it was.

