

Leeds 1980

i.m. Jackie Hill

4 am. And breathe. Old nightmares fade
to questions. Why her? Not me?

Bottled in a phone-box, ringing Dad,
inside the cold, inside a dark future.

The morning after. We students should
have been translating Beowulf.

No smiling eyes. No orange anorak
We all hid ourselves in books.

July '81. Finals.'Out vile jelly!'
A twitching pen. Vacant lines.

Handset hung up. Dad's fading smile
Breathe. Murdered sleep. And.

The Inner Turmoil

People look at me but do not see what is happening inside my head.

There is a complete empty hole inside my soul where my ambitions used to be.

Nobody is listening to my utter misery - I want people to understand me.

Everything is pointless - there is no meaning in doing anything.

I feel like everyone around me detests the fact that I exist.

This pain inside me will never go away - is this my fault?

Nobody cares about me at all.

Everyone would be better off without me.

I am pathetic and stupid - everything I do, I mess up. I hate myself so much.

I feel like a failure all the time. I need help.

My nightmares are so bad - these images are a consequence of past - experience.

I am never going to achieve my dreams or anything in fact.

I am never good enough for anyone.

I feel like these days of hopelessness will never end.

Some people are not meant for this world and I am one of them.

I am trapped in this prison and the walls are closing in around me.

Everything I see is black as there is no light left. I am so lost.

I am so useless- I can't do anything right - all I do is cry and let people down.

I can't get out of bed - everything is so hard to do now compared to before.

I am so sorry for everything I have done. This is the end - goodbye.

Frozen still

Frozen still,

In a room with family or friends

Frozen still,

Like the words on the tip of my tonge have made a noose around my neck,

Tighter they pull as I sit in silence,

Surrounded by the nothingness I feel within myself,

Feeling nothing,

Myself as an empty vessel, useless,

Skin, flesh, bones teeth, eyes, a heart?

Yet I can feel it beating?

I am bound to a perception of myself that I hath created alike my creation before

I smile, I laugh, I am 'normal',

Meaningless meaningful talks after meaningful meaningless talks,

Everyone does that,

But this emptiness, this nothingness, this complete and utter hollowness,

Like a womb lined with cement there is no life,

For me,

Frozen still,

In a room full of family and friends.

Black Dog Night

Black Dog bites

deepest in the

dead of night

when mirth is blindsided

by misery's might

dreams are no escape

with twisted cruel japes

mind-crushing self-malice

trapped in Pandora's palace

by lonely vengeful shadows.

A Sweet Smelling Swor

I smell dumplings made with coconut fatire boiling on a wood
fire just like God burning out the chaff in our heart.

I think about a silent breeze fanning my face like the wind
moving thru* the leaves of a tall tree.

I feel the pebbles on the beach between my toes massing my feet as the
Spirit like a dove landing on Jesus as He came out of the water when he
was baptised by John

I taste the gunko peas and rice as ^{the Holy Spirit} ~~it~~ chews away the ugliness from our
souls.

I hear the sound of drums beating like tam-tams beating my heart beat
as the sound of the Spirit bathing me like the Trefalgar Falls flowing
over me.

* thru- a shorten form of the word through

Into the darkness, Out into the light

I was just getting ready for my
first day of school.

Worried whether the children would
be nice or cruel.

I reached into my pocket to find the
key.

I was worried to think what was waiting
for me.

I strutted through the avenue, down
past the lane.

I was begging to doubt my hopes,
was I normal or insane.

I began to cry, started to sob.
Pictures in my mind of the cruel kids
mob.

I carefully wiped away my tears.
Trying to think of nice things, to hide
away from my fears.

I looked at a window, a man stood
there.

Stood at me for a while then rose
from his chair.

He said to me, "Don't worry child."

"Your fears are not serious, only mild,"

"There's no need to be crying down there
on your own."

"No need to be frightened or alone."

"There is no need to hide your sorrow."

"I'm sure ~~it~~ It'll be alright tomorrow!"

I looked at him, a smile on my
face.

"You've changed my feelings, it now seems
a happy place!"

I headed back towards the school, without
a care.

Pushing the wheels on my wheelchair.

After Birth (PTSD)

Panic coils, bares her fangs,
suspects an intruder.

I tiptoe past, but a branch
cracks.

She throws her head back,
gapes the cotton mouth:
a blinding diamond

light.

I stare at the innards
of a terrible lily,
cleaved by thumbs,

petals

peeled back to the yawning
chasm of throat.
I am fixed. She finally

clamps

her jaws in rest
but I remain rigid, alert
to the sweep of her cloudy

head.

Walls

Head board rested. Your eyes wide, lined, holding self -
an antique on a weak shelf edge, waiting to be smashed.

You tell of struggles with sleep,
how the sheep you count combust around fifty,
woollen wisps floating round charcoaled carcasses.

I bring tea that colds in your hands,
you stare into the porcelain mouth
knuckles sallow from the holding.
You think you are "going crazy"
but unsure, as you are aware of it

repeat yourself minutes ago, recount memoires unshared.
Say how the shadows of walls close,
shapes permeate the duvet,
how the years play cyclical slide shows
on the black of your closed eyelids.

Other Worlds

Sometimes within my head

There exist other worlds...

Worlds of other stars

And rose coloured shores

By purple seas

Worlds of adventure

Through desert sands

And mountain keeps

Worlds of song

And music

Poetry and light

Worlds filled with joy

And laughter and love

With you

Sometimes I wish I lived

Inside the worlds inside

And sometimes I do

Wounded

this aching sore

gaping and filled with maggots of the past
disappointment coursing through deep veins
clogged up
turning blood thick black with shame

fingers on face bone ridges
moisture building underneath with no outlet
the constant grey drizzle of metaphor
soaking every facet of what's gone before

how to cleanse?

perhaps turpentine, fresh air
suture threading skin to skin
close, forgive and mend
time

loyal advocate of dissolution descends

— Wounded

Tide Times v5

Your chair, turned towards the river flow,
awaits the tidal changes every day.
Herring gulls, their choking calls,
circle the river.
One beats on the window
at its vulturine reflection.
I know this unsettles you.

I bring you a bowl of hot water and the mirror
and hold it to your face while you shave.
The oxygen machine sighs in and out
you hold the mask between each razor stroke,
wanting the breath.

Each morning I help you to get dressed,
and none of us will ever know
how many tides
are left.

Relapse

relapse – i'm just having a quick relapse
going back to the old days, old ways
just having a quick relapse

relax – this is just a quick relapse
i'll be better, fitter, stronger, i can't go any longer without giving in to thin
i wanna be a better me, why can't you see i'm happier when i'm empty

not all of us are meant to lead fulfilling lives – i can't keep living with these lies of
'we're all perfect in our own way'
some of us were born broken with cracks so big that the world will never have enough
super glue to keep us together
and i can only hold myself up for so long but then i need a break to break
myself back to being me with all my holes and inconsistencies and through the cracks, you
can see who i'm meant to be
i will never keep it together.
sometimes you need to go backwards, let yourself get some new chips on your shoulder
or your head or your heart
or wherever is starting to look a bit too unbruised

sometimes i need to step back – for just a quick relapse
i'll pull myself together tomorrow i'll be strong enough tomorrow i can do it tomorrow
i just need the strength to pretend to be whole
but i can't always keep it together
so i'll relapse – it's just a quick relapse
if you say it real fast, it sounds like relax
i suppose that's what it does
i'm just having a quick relapse

Rose

A rose is still a rose even if it grows through the cracks and through the dirt. Its roots creeping
deep down
Pushing through and persevering.
Up top, its flowers such bright beauty coil into a bulbous shape.
It's hard to be a rose in darkness
It's hard to be bright when so many try to dim your light
But a rose is still a rose even through its suffering
The ants and pesticides dig deep, aulacapsis and weevils on its leaves. Chemicals in the air
A rose can bloom in sun and shine
Smelling so sweet
This rose is still alive, still thriving, still here
A rose is still a rose even when nobody's here
Its presence attracts these bees around flashing its wings at it, staying to sip then flying away.
A rose is still a rose because it has meaning, despite its troubles and what anyone else says
It's still beautiful.

The Darkest Days

Imagine waking up and feeling completely disturbed
Like you have to keep yourself to yourself completely preserved
Imagine waking up and feeling completely nuts
Like you have to keep control the only way with cuts

Imagine being alone and completely confused
Like your mind has been battered and freely left bruised
Imagine feeling irrational and completely psycho
Like your sugar levels have hit and you're now on a hypo

Imagine waking up and feeling completely crazy
Like you have to get out bed but the only option is lazy
Imagine waking up and being diagnosed with depression
The only way to numb the feeling is with a weekend session

Imagine everything you do has got you mad
Like the blood that flows through you is completely bad
Imagine feeling low and completely unpredictable
Like everyone around you is saying you should be biblical

Imagine waking up you need to be absolutely isolated
Like your names been through the mud and is always slated
Imagine waking up feeling like you are the freak
Like this is out the blue you've felt good ail week

Imagine living in a world were everyone understood
Like you don't have to buy a coat everyone with a hood
Imagine a day where there is a light at the end
Like you know it will happen one day you'll be on the mend

Relapse

I don't understand what you're saying,
the music has already started playing.
I remember to come in at the start,
by now I know the words off by heart.
I am utterly lost to the sound,
of feet walking familiar ground.

Long since forgotten stone cold meals,
a breath away is all it feels.
My mind and I stuck in unhelpful ways,
can't go back to those desolate days.
Don't ask me to believe the facts are true,
I wish I could think like you.

Old hands who've been there too,
say it's the hardest thing you'll ever do.
Recover some of what you were before,
a little less or a little more.
This time you will emerge,
With enough energy for a final surge.

Where there is hope

Tragic existence this life forced upon me
Insanity beckons through what they have done
Misery, loneliness, pain, horror all I can see
Eternally banished a life full of fun

The agonies of life is all that came my way
Hope, love, understanding all that I wanted
Exhaustion, fear, loneliness, abuse my pay
Reality warped from the day I was born
A boy, not a girl that was wanted made me a stray
Pitiful accident I was, damaged and haunted
Yearning every night for death to take me I pray

Along came an angel to save me from hell
Needed, the horrors, I started to tell
Dealing with my demons made me feel swell

Truth and honesty, baring my soul
Re-living the madness, sadness shedding tears
Understanding, the why's and getting answers
Started my healing, no judging from peers
Talking, being heard, understanding made me whole

Healthy me is now where I'm headed
Each day I get better, stronger, hope anew
Achieving a smile, my life never seen
Lifts my heart and gives my life meaning
Sadness, replaced with the answer embedded

Little Prayers

He scatters drawings wherever he goes.
Pencil grey, or ink black, or neon lucent highlights;
his take on life left on the stairs – little prayers.
See me, see me, they say.

They cushion the couch, drip over edges
of a coffee table, rustle welcome from the doormat,
call in felt-tipped voices to those who pass.
See me, see my shapes, my lines.

My truth, they say in hisses slit by paper cuts,
is here to find. Angry-eye faces, broken stick people,
pages crayoned purple-bruise. See me,
see me, they say.

THE DVD FOR DR WALLFLOWER "DARKEST DAYS" CLINICAL DIRECTOR, ST CHARLES HOSPITAL
Written on Wed 5/9/19 at midnight.
So, Dr Wallflower, Scavenger of the mad,
Who gave you the Power that you wield? (Copyright 2019 Justin Evans)
Who made you Lord of all you Survey? Not to be repainted in anyway shape or form without my express written consent.
Not even a Professor, & so much power
Sadist who enjoys humiliating w,
Any of Wandsworth Jail's Bullies
"So Many" mad "like me" & Helen
Sent straight from jail, and handcuffs too
No jail hearing, not even a meal
Only a cup of water in 13 hours
from the Ent, Sadistic Night Shift in Wandsworth Jail
Onto a Jail panel - No Professor here -
Only a Health Assistant, Freelance Dupe
and a four-too-busy on-call - Psychiatrist
How Many times has this happened?
"So Many", you said on Monday 2 Sept
With the Collusion of My Crap Ex Husband
Shame on him, Damnation on You
and may Juggy (Angels) Sidhu save our souls
Because God sure don't seem to care
& few in this so Crap Hospital -
At least we inmates look after Each Other
Please, Juggy Sidhu, Save us All.
Amen.

The Rain

look at the way
the sun swallows the sky
the subtle glow
of an absent mind;
comfortable familiarity,
as we watch the clouds float on
and on

fading, as the rain drizzles on
and on, and on

and as the rain does drizzle on,
i think of tears
suppressed emotion
flooding forth as
would a wound bleed.
i wonder beside the sea,
i think of its sadness;
all of its depth
and all of its madness.
and i hear happiness.
muffled. far.
like listening to music,
whilst drowning in the bath

like listening to a lover,
through the wall with a glass.

Beneath me

It's funny sitting up here,
6 months after the storm.
Desperate for a little light,
My emotions to feel more warm.

In my car on the hilltop,
The world passing by below.
The twinkling of the street lights,
That soft and orange glow.

Thousands of people are down there,
Living their every day life.
On the way to start a night shift,
In the hospital bringing new life.

Up here I sat all on my own,
Not wanting to be apart,
Of the happenings beneath me,
It was no place for my heart.

Yet tonight I sit at my escape,
With a smile upon my face,
Once again looking beneath me,
Knowing I'm now happy in that human race.