





Bad days, good days

That morning I found you  
sitting on the floor of our bedroom  
cutting holes in my shirts:  
“You’ve always said how much you like fresh air.”  
I thanked you,  
asked if I could borrow the scissors, please.  
“Sure,” you said—  
at least you were talking that day.

Yesterday you sat in the bathroom  
rocking and moaning,  
and when I brought your pills  
you snatched them, flung them  
across the floor, “I hate you!”  
A paycheck’s worth of meds gone.

But how pretty you look  
in your light blue dress,  
how charming you are  
with my boss at the party,  
smiling, nodding,  
and later he tells me,  
“You have a good one there, John.  
Hang onto her.”

I do, I do,  
but I can’t stop you shaking

The Demon Race

Chugging along the weather-beaten tracks,  
The sun blinking through the gaps in the trees,  
Sewing together all the old, nasty cracks,  
As I weave through the warm evening breeze.

Right back to the beginning, they lead,  
Behind me, vines streaming in the air,  
Giving the evil exactly what it needs,  
The winding tendrils mend, fix and repair.

Monsters creep up these battered train wheels,  
Grumbling silhouettes, dancing in the dark.  
Scratchy, rasping voices offer sinister deals,  
Plotting ways to thwart me, should I disembark.

Within the remains, at the crumbling station,  
Amongst the shadows, lay jagged shards of past.  
Speeding down the line, escaping mental damnation;  
It’s a race against the demons and I hope I won’t come last.

Crosshairs

The thought drives her crazy.  
Other people are so much better. Not lazy.  
I'm feeling best more hazy  
Hunny, you've barely touched your food  
She doesn't want to cause a fuss  
But she must, calm down  
She feels like royalty, a crown It's like a showdown.  
Between you and anxiety and fears, you're caught in between the crosshairs.  
They say it's not in your brain  
It's running straight through your veins.  
Resist the pain  
The shame  
Please don't go insane  
They take you to therapist.  
They go through frame by frame  
Of your hardship and think  
You're at your brink,  
Of extinction.  
Get out the stage-light, Makes your heart beat run right  
They don't understand, They're so much better, They're so nice  
And overpriced,  
“You don't deserve it!” they say  
I know you listen to what I say, but Hey. You do you boo.  
It makes her feel like all the things I go through are true.  
I finish with an empty plate, maybe now I have a clean slate.  
Your gag reflexes kick in, Once again, Heavy breathing.  
You're in a bad place. Keep it at your pace, They see it in your face  
The lack of taste.  
They see it. Tears and fears., Tears of hairs.  
Caught between the crosshairs.

CLIMB IN

Clocks are useless here.  
Battalions of the dead march double time  
a bone bright sergeant tells an unborn baby  
to stay away from this planet where everyone believes  
in God but cannot reach him.  
No one can feel another person's life.  
Cities dry as dust.  
Judas-like we take the bread and wine  
and exit before the resurrection,  
missing the message of how to live, faithless, loved,  
asked to be good, if not good, then good and sorry. Repent or else  
the sun molts mirrors,  
birds don't fly and trees burn.  
Sock. Sock. Sock. Eternal bullets  
kiss skin and bone. Boiling rivers eat us alive.  
in front of the cameras, shadows burn  
truth as generals, politicians, billions of ordinary mouths state:  
I don't expect I'll see you again.  
Bodies advance, one by one, alone, across a flimsy bridge, apocalypse  
On all sides until they reach the hell of my skin,  
and climb in.

The Contradictions of Hope  
as Flowers Growing in a Sugar Bowl

Given that I’ve seen forget-me-nots  
growing from the road  
I should think no dish too shallow.  
& once I have accepted my portion  
and the helping succour of sucralose  
has made me sweet, halving my head  
from grief and growing honeysuckles  
from my feet, my body shall become a dog rose  
shaking the rosehips of my fingers  
into a sugar bowl.  
Depthless, deathless, flat – small dish –  
roots may yet reciprocate  
and round what’s sharp with bitterness  
to better things; kingcups and wildflowers  
waking from clay hardened with haem,  
gathering up the glucose  
& forgetting what has been.

Nausea

i feel your arms around me,  
yet we have never met.  
your strong embrace holds me tight.  
i am nauseous.

i have lied about your ways,  
yet imagined what i'd be like with you,  
happy yet scared.  
hypocritical nausea.

this is not reality.  
fake, made up, simply not real.  
that thought alone makes me feel sick,  
to the bone,  
nauseous.

i have allowed myself to become plagued,  
by the thought of yourself  
and i together,  
yet we are both nauseous.

i have almost rid myself of your disease.  
now i am healthy,  
as i can be in this position.  
you're gone, finally

the end to my sickness has arrived.  
and i shall welcome it with open arms.  
i am no longer nauseous

Blur the Words

Like you’re choking on your breath  
Demon’s hands around your throat  
Another accidental victim  
Of another person’s anecdote  
Written on a piece of paper  
Blur the words with rushed fingers  
In hope that it will disappear  
But still the darkness lingers  
In the tears tearing skin from your face  
Until you can’t bleed anymore  
A mind more fragile than a chandelier  
That breaks upon the floor  
It’s trapped in your lungs tied  
By a ribbon laced with nightshade  
In the deep red drips from hair tips  
The cuts made by an imaginary blade  
It sits behind your eyelids  
While you lay wide awake  
Then creeps into your voiceless mind  
Sending waves like an earthquake  
When the chills are setting in  
The terror begins to grow  
You don’t want to feel the fear  
You don’t want to be alone.

Don’t ever believe

Don't ever believe  
that if he doesn't hit  
it isn't abuse.  
  
A body shakes for hours with shock  
from monstrous assault.  
  
Days later, a chest and heart still hurt,  
as if his fists slammed in  
with violent malice.  
  
He aims to dehumanise,  
humiliate, deny, negate.  
  
He hones such skill in the same twisted  
way he uses prayer to wound,  
control; to try to own.  
  
Would that it would stop one day.  
But the screaming thoughts still return  
DON'T LET HIM NEAR CHILDREN.  
  
A body wants to vomit  
forever and forevermore.

SEED STUNTING

Is there still soil underneath your fingernails from when you swaddled me in the earth?  
Casket-less, bare-skinned; a natural burial  
I am gifted Autolysis, by the locusts in my membranes  
I tell them drink, and they drink deeply.

I tell you listen, listen deeply  
Because I used to sip a glass of herbicide every morning instead of breakfast,  
After you said that I was too much  
I used to hack at myself the way you hack at creepers  
Close to the root but never close enough  
So do you wonder now  
Of what you buried here in this shallow grave?  
Of What could grow here now that I have stopped?

A seed dropped into its own muddy garden  
Perhaps I will become more than just food for the birds

Perhaps my bones will crack  
And leak tree sap  
And my limbs will erupt as roots into the ground

Breathe me

4am

Thoughts tinkle  
like broken glass in my head.  
  
Pieces of me were separated and grew up without  
each other:  
estranged brothers and sisters,  
longing to find meaning in their lives.  
  
I am a breeze in a room.  
Other weather is more important.  
  
Once I was a tangled ball of wool.  
Now I am a straight piece of string.  
Those knots held me together.

Broken

You are alone  
in a forest full of ancient trees  
walking along a path you have taken before.  
You are in no rush and have plenty of time  
and as you walk along slowly  
you feel safe and at peace.  
Eventually you reach a pond,  
its waters are clear and blue  
and you are drawn to it.  
You lie by the water's edge and close your eyes  
and you feel at peace.

Meditation

I am never alone  
how can I be sure I am alone?  
Which path?  
where are the children? Who has them?  
why can't I relax?  
What if someone is watching?  
will I get fish for dinner?  
do I have time to go to the shop?  
I must draw myself back. Concentrate!  
what if someone is watching?  
I feel exposed.