

## Lost in the madness

Spirits are made to be broken.  
Most times barely a token.

Happy or sadness.  
Lost in the maze a state of undress.

Toing and froing I see but not knowing.  
Any which way that I could be going.

Right up front.  
Got what I want.

A simple life high but don't jump

## A Cycle

The moon is out of place,  
For it does not comfort me  
Nor delivers tranquility  
When it has so promised to protect.  
I am left alone, reflecting a shattered soul.

I turn to stars who glare and snicker,  
Outshine my reality and I drown in fire.  
False hopes and lies radiate at the surface.  
The path for me has been drawn  
It tempts my own core.  
At that same place, boiling away  
All my peace and loves,  
I take my steps, I count the breaths  
I will be a threat if I hesitate now.  
This will keep me in check.  
The path continues

On

And on.

## The Mad Sea.

Below my cottage a mad sea beats a rhythm.  
The cliff face plays drum to every breaker.  
Now the line of the evening horizon where  
Grey-green meets blue-jade is melting  
In a clash of color.  
And on the salty brine comes a memory  
Of a song sung by sailors, of mermen from  
Far out West who sound out their song from the foamy crest!  
You were perched on the sea wall like a mermaid,  
A picture of red lips and smiling blue eyes that laughed in mine!  
But now the silence cries out your loss  
And lately I have been so low!  
Where did you go that morning?  
And does loss feel to you like it does to me?!  
Did you go with the thieving tide o my beautiful one?  
Are you wasted with nature's offscourings?!  
Because I combed the heaping drifts in groynes for you,  
And through it's raging arms the magnetic sea  
But barely whispers your fate.  
But early white horses ride high with hope every morning  
In this hour of power, where now in reverse blue-jade meets  
Grey-green, and though lovers be lost love shall endure  
And one day God will return you to me and love will remain true  
In the gritty twilight hour.

## When and why...

**Why is there sadness, when they should wear a grin? The expression says hopeless and unable to win.**  
**When all around is bright, happy and breezy, but every task is an ordeal, and nothing comes easy.**  
**Beautiful memories wait patiently to be made, but everything is viewed through their lens of shade.**  
**When nothing exists outside of their tortured head and their personal Everest is simply getting out of bed.**  
**When a time for sleep becomes their time to walk, the conversation dries up and they don't want to talk.**  
**Like an unwanted foetus lying on the floor. They do not acknowledge their friends at the door.**  
**When your greatest wish is to see them smile again, but you know they're enduring an invisible pain.**  
**How can you help the person who won't acknowledge they're unwell? When a smiling child cannot penetrate their hell.**  
**When they're destroying themselves in front of your eyes. Experiencing the past through a sequence of lies.**  
**When the truth is buried deep by hallucinations, and relationships crumble under unfounded accusations.**  
**When the person you know begins to disappear, consumed by self-loathing and unrelenting fear.**  
**When the early morning phone call brings the inevitable news, this is more serious than a case of the blues.**  
**When they've made the decision that their life is no more. When the family of four is a family no more.**  
**When the help that was needed came too late, the horse has bolted, now they're shutting the gate.**  
**When those left behind wonder if they could have done more, but writing this down makes no difference at all...**

## Dark

Dark shadows fall on the battle.  
The debris left from the cold,  
Lonely night.

No one is around  
Not in the battle of one vs none  
They don't care, they never did

I wish to find those who care  
Those who understand  
To find someone who will listen

But I know,  
This well not come to pass  
Never to be true

My heart.  
Is never meant to shine  
With happiness a fingertip away

Keep it there  
At arm's length  
Save them

Dark blood falls  
Staining the clean battle field  
The mark of pain left behind

With each drip  
The dark takes my heart.  
With each drip  
I slowly become nothing.

## Promises

I promise.....

I promise to allow myself the space to struggle. I promise to accept the pain of being unwell.  
I promise to distance myself from societies pressures- I promise to just be myself.  
I promise to forget what it is to be normal, for normality is unique in itself.  
I promise to get up every morning and fight my hardest- even if my hardest seems weak to everyone else.

I promise not to love myself when that seems impossible, but to work with my mind to find a way through.  
I promise to accept that the world is irregular, and that my edges do not have to be smooth.  
I promise to never be ashamed of my illness- because to be ashamed is to give stereotypes proof.  
I promise to battle my demons in private, because I have nothing to prove.  
I promise to never be hurt when hope leaves me, because I have people who can help me to move.  
I promise to love everyone that sticks by me, because there is always someone you lose.

I promise to wake up every morning even if I'm in darkness, and to wade onwards and upwards in waves  
- to hold onto the belief that things will improve, and that there was a reason I was here and was made.  
And I promise to keep all these promises, but to not be angry if that promise is frayed.  
I promise to accept that I may be quite broken, but I promise that that's all in how I'm portrayed.

## CHANGE OF MIND

Awash were my thoughts  
I nearly drowned  
Battling lies, jeers, whispers  
Reeling in midnight gloom  
Heavy limbs clenched in tension  
Gulping, Swallowing as my body trembled

Who was I?  
Before daylight dawned  
A stiff neck holding up stiff mind  
Together a stiff body of lies  
Anger, frustration held me down  
Unable to breath  
Living to die

So Who was?  
Flooded in this sea of lies  
With thoughts in which I nearly drowned  
Then Loving myself saved my life  
**Pulled me ashore**  
**No longer living to die**

**I deserve to live**  
**This is my Change of Mind**

## Spanish Harlem Poem

He's gonna pluck that rose, cutting his fingers on bloodied thorns  
Whilst ripping through the weeds that stifle all good intentions,  
He will rearrange her petals and tear off the artificial splendour,  
Allowing her natural beauty to illuminate itself,  
Radiant over concrete where others may grow, all in colours,  
Yet they fall as leaves and so change with the harshness of each season,  
Rain and Warmth, merely lead them to their finale,  
Whilst she blossoms in true splendour, Each day anew,  
And though each layer succumbs to the petals of time,  
Reality will blossom fresh as the day,  
And so finally will she when all is completed.

## Hope

be kind

I slipped and fell

and broke my mind

I went astray

for certain disconcerting

for those I hurt when I was hurting

It's icy underfoot at the edge of the world

it's an unrelenting slope it's a tightrope unfurled

too many threads tangle

and heartstrings are frayed

there

far too many tread

alone and afraid

but no lacerations cuts or scars

no deep incisions

imprison stars in their own darkness

yet still they shine

and they inspire

and they align

and so sparkles hope

colliding inside a kaleidoscope

colours that bleed and patterns that play

and designs that form

from our disarray

## Continue On

Like the fading of a flower,  
the falling of a leaf;  
an autumn spring of summer,  
or, blackbird's warble of hope.

Like the talking tune of water  
in tumbling times of change;  
the shaking start of trouble;  
a wavering of green growth.

Like a late rose bud protesting  
at the flaming, dipping, star;  
this thorny question asks us  
to struggle past a bleakness.

Like the rising sap of old oaks,  
that sigh, but fight once more.  
Adorn new green leaf foliage;  
to whisper it still knows Spring.

## Sharing

Give me the sadness in your soul,

Hand me pain for me to hold.

Share that burden dark and heavy,

Place it on these shoulders steady.

Pass me the sorrow from those eyes,

Let me bear those anguished cries.

Wrap your heartache, gift to me,

Gathered with your agony.

I'll carry them so you can rest,

Hand them back a little less.

Sit with me my precious child,

Let me comfort you a while.



## An uphill Road

I'll take an uphill road, I'll take the path towards the stars that light the way to freedom.

If need be, I'll leave my brother, my sister, my mother, my father.  
I'll leave everyone and everything.

I'll leave anger, hatred, my enemies, my fears and head to the valleys beyond and the mountains. I'll leave bitterness and bitter people, I'll leave the darkness and the cruel world, and head to a land of humility and kindness.

Searching for happiness I'll have as company the glowing sun and moist dew on rock and leaf. I'll await the bird call and the aroma of fresh air.

Even if it was a bitter Winter now, the Summer will come bringing happiness to all cities and every village.

I'll take an uphill road, I'll take the path towards the stars that light the way to freedom.

I'll climb to the stars, I'll enter a kingdom, I know it will not be an illusion, I know it will be mysterious, yet real. Here in time I will find peace and strength.

Like the prodigal, I'll return, to my brother, my sister, my mother, my father.  
With happiness in my mind and freedom in my heart

## Distortion (Villanelle)

Mirror, mirror on the wall

You affirm the thoughts that arise

Who is the fairest of them all?

The models, the athletes, lean and tall

Not me, this version I despise

Mirror, mirror on the wall

This feeling, it makes my skin crawl

The voice within, it spits and cries

Who is the fairest of them all?

The me within, prepares to brawl

To fight against the taunts and lies

Mirror, mirror on the wall

Help me to rise from this fall

To break free from these distorted eyes

Who is the fairest of them all?

Guide and counsel me to recall

My former self and to cut all ties

Mirror, mirror on the wall

Who is the fairest of them all?

### Abuse

The first time I hesitated  
but not for long  
I was hungry.  
I paused for seconds looked at the bin  
the food was there.  
I gulped it.  
The second time  
I knew how it was because of the first.  
The space in between didn't help me to  
reflect or hesitate.  
I was hungry again quick.  
A year later I keep saying  
I will fill my stomach one more time then stop.  
Instead I am sucked into it.  
I don't mind people saying things  
my need is what matters.  
My dog is my best friend.

### ward 3

having melted away  
with the virgin snow, my blood, like scalding metal,  
filling in the pipes of my makeshift home,  
wants rebirth.  
this morning –  
march –  
i pull up the curtains –  
let them see me.  
i press my body  
against the mirror,  
falling into yet another state of disarray –  
delirium –  
letting its ravenousness swallow my rationality.  
i indulge in the mania, violent behind my eyelids, before i fall  
onto my knees,  
onto the hospital floor.

### “PSYCH!”

Around me it gets colder, I jump, look around my shoulder  
Surrounded by an army of demons  
Some gruesome, some beastly, do my eyes deceive me?

Fire! Fire! They growl, flame blowing, an inferno quickly growing  
Run! Chased by monsters and the yells of imposters  
Looking each and every way I try to escape, stumbling, trembling, running like an ape!  
In the distance, a fire exit, away from the raging tempest “What luck!”, I exclaimed

Fake! A brick door, just a drawing, nothing more  
A deceitful illusion but wait... “What’s this protrusion?”  
A cancer forming in my brain and my throat throttled by an invisible chain  
I struggle, drowning, froth oozing, blood gargling  
My body freezes from my head to my toes but I mustn't let my eyes... close...

Sh.. Hush.. Pitch black and no longer under attack  
But I hear nearby murmurs, perhaps in my brain, in the corners?  
I try to eavesdrop on what they are saying, are they spying or innocently playing?  
Collecting intelligence, a suspicious act and their theories and concepts seem awfully abstract  
Sh! Be quiet! They're on to me... “Open your eyes, my friend, and you shall be set free”

I take their advice and find myself in a foreign land with demolished buildings kept secret under the sand  
A war zone by the looks of it, a place that has been hard hit  
Suddenly, the earth starts to shake, double vision, everything quakes  
Soldiers appeared, they came running with sharp-tipped rifles pointing,  
I find shelter protecting me from the spitfire but hidden under all the chains and barbed wire

A single extremely excruciating spike, scars across my brain: “PSYCH!”

### My Garden

Nettles grow in this garden -  
I didn't notice at first  
They laid down their roots  
Clutching at soil forever.  
It didn't take much  
You see;  
To plant the seed  
That let them grow  
Let them strangle the petunias  
Tower over daisies.  
Their stems wrap around  
The bluebells.  
This garden is infested.  
These nettles choke the snowdrops  
And i can hack and cut and burn  
But there's no quick-fix  
No way to  
Get.  
It.  
Out.  
  
And so the nettles spread,  
They spread decay  
Rotting everything in its path  
Every blade of grass  
Every petal on every flower  
  
Is dead.  
  
And soon all I have  
Is a garden of nettles.

### Shadows

these moth-colored butterflies  
incessantly fly in my head  
unending. Unyielding.  
Trauma.Pain.Chills.Memories.Shadows.

I prefer the fireflies  
who sing a new song at dawn  
harbingers of change.  
Thrills.Cackles.Laughter.Joy.Sunshine.

caught in the quagmire of illusions  
I can only wonder  
Amazed!  
at this kaleidoscope.  
Now a valley  
Tomorrow a hill  
On and on and on and on  
I eagerly await  
Tunnels.  
With light endings!

### POSITIVE PROGRESS

Years of depression and uncertainty  
as been part parcelled of my life.  
The experience was totally scary, unsettling  
and unforgettable.  
I ventured with it's heaviness and weight  
as tranquillizers plagued my mind.  
I did not know were to turn too, a individual  
who had to bring himself up from the age  
of 10, no parental support.  
Then all of a sudden, a change of  
environment from West Bromwich to  
London in 1985.  
This proved to be very encouraging as  
My health took a turn for the better.  
Several years of rehabilitation, study  
and arduous work, my well being was  
evident.  
The good Lord, had his eyes on me.I  
made remarkable achievements and  
won the "Heather Spaulding Award in 2001  
community Education Lewisham, for  
achievement and development. 50  
pounds and my Art work exhibited  
It had been a long journey going through  
a desperate tunnel. Thank goodness

### Murmurations

I don't know how it got inside  
- the mad little starling.  
A fury of battered feathers  
flying headstrong into the window pane;  
thrashing, smashing, over and over.

In-between the bursts of panic that rendered it inert,  
I looked into its eye and recognised it.  
I opened up the windows, tried to guide  
the fragile creature out, to no avail;  
it refused all help,  
made one last poignant shriek,  
then clattered up and away,  
back towards the light.

Later, as day faded  
thousands of mad little starlings took to effortless flight.  
Small flocks joined together into one hypnotic surge  
of feather and wing, a vast swirling thing  
that whipped and wheeled above the valley;  
a black cloud that grew in force,  
ebbing,  
flowing,  
this way,  
that way,  
never veering off the unwritten course.

What would it feel like  
if the trapped, quivering things  
that hurtle at me on the inside  
could break free,  
find their kin, and soar up and away  
in murmurations?

### The Silent Criers

The silent criers are the ones  
you don't hear.  
They're ones you don't suspect  
because you can't see underneath  
They pretend to be a new leaf,  
So you can't see the emotions seep.  
They can't find a place,  
it feels like you are just  
floating  
in space.  
But at night you alone  
and your feelings become known  
under the safe cover of darkness.  
So now you can let your tears flow,  
and let yourself sink low  
into the dreams you know.