

School

Ducking the bleach drenched girls
Of years crimson smeared:
Wishbone snapped dreams
Of hitched waistband silence,
Cold glares and defiance.
Where class spun lust
Conjured the curve of a dumb white breast.

You were not of them. Different.
Timorous, inquisitive, diffident.
A mouse to my elephant.
Hands, eyes, words, darting from burrows,
On constant, restless forays into uncharted territories.
Yet with a flame in you
That blazed from the shadows where you hid yourself
And threatened to burn down the world

Tenacious, fierce and fearful. You were raw.
Burned by the fires of your own creation.
Daring me to notice you
And suddenly I painted you, into my picture.
But your Dad had already done for me.

Post Romantic

To the accusers who are gods of this world
To whom words classify and clarify
Commodify and conquer
To them I reduce and splinter
fizzing flares from the bristling dance
Of your totality. Eclipsed and occluded
perhaps, by the adolescent cliché that disturbs me
To words, to wonder
At the world and you and conflate the two
To write about your beauty, surely then the biggest sin
I could cast in my naivety into the bear pit
Of the circum-polar spin and pomp and circumstance
Circumspect at my stance to inspect me
For inflection and deflection
To deconstruct my structure and nail it to the post
Of a bourgeois gaze, dejected,
That surveys you from the standpoint of history
A potential empire of sexual mystery
Glorified and deified by youthful lust frustrated
Defied by your tired, tongue-tied sighs as I contrive
My floating hair and flashing eye
Until drowning in the burden of words,
Heavy as sea sand and sorrow,
Which taught me to soar
I am wafted far on apathy's wing

But despite if not in spite I sing to use the ring
Of poetic untruth, licensed and loaned
For two months wages
Diamond girdled like the sun in mourning
When sweet moon paints him black
Obsessively dressed in teenage rebellion
Blacks him up as Oedipus, blinded
with disapproving glares and blocks everything
But the cold burning fires of limelight
Blazing in the stalls, drawing the colour
From the cheeks of Endymion,
Dreams are true while they last,
Yet not to they to whom cold philosophy
Holds more charm than the flying
Bitter-sweet melodramas of love done to death,
To whom no value can be exhumed
Once cast after the mask of grief assumed
Upon the body of work,
The body of love, well loved
To cast flowers upon the dust I love
Reluctantly buried to be dug up another's poison
A worm in the flesh of a golden apple
Serpentine with winding whispers that burrow
Through the ear and into the brain
A sick rose, rising from the depths
To berate all effort in pursuit of that
Which ill fits the glass slippers of prison guards
To them those words are as nothing
Or worse than nothing for to speak
Of what I hold true and heartfelt
That appears unaware of its own ridiculousness
Aware, painfully self-aware and yet to care
Enough to not care and bare the crosses
Where ticks once stroked to stoke an arrogance
That seeks no favour save to re-utter what others
have staked their claim upon long before

My small part was played out as that nightingale
Sitting in darkness and singing
To cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds
And if it be an unwelcome noise,
Clamouring attention on the mosquito buzz airwaves
Of irrelevance of little consequence
To them, still to me it divests the breast
Of the best and worst with which I'm cursed
To feel and fall and fool upon on this
My allotted path, drawn like lips
Zipped into silence in the face of things better unsaid
And this, my twisted, echo-harboured shell,
A chamber of echoes, like my disingenuous life
Lived in the glare of stars filming us for no one
A psycho drama with an audience of one
My life but a Prelude to waking stability
And economic productivity
This hollow shell is my comforter
Rewording in melodious guile
or mal-odious bile
These fretful words a little while
To give me follies to unlearn
And youthful mistakes to expiate.
When the flowers and fruits of love are gone,
And the worm; the canker and the grief,
In the triumph of time.
And yet I hold it worth a tear,
Worth an hour
To think of things that are well outworn
Outdone by words well said
Repeated like a prayer from mouths that are dead

Re:Visionist

Valedictory constantly,
Visceral yet intellectual
And unreal as perfection
Injecting overdoses
Of highly emotional ideal
To restart a heart
Cardiac arrested surreal
By a moment of touch,
Or speech or sighting
Kissing and alighting,
A stuttered butterfly,
Moonlighting
As a goddess
In a state of undress,
Exciting,
Drunk and regressed
To the love
You could never
Forget

Party Martyr

Light licks at our limbs like flames
From swirling lists of names
And whirling music wound up
Around an evening and squeezed into corridors
Cramped with delight and swinging
From the stairwell to heaven
In the smiling bright like fire crackers
Cracking a smile at the yellow of bulbs
Springing uncoiled from weeks
Of repetition to blow the stardust
Off the shelf at last in a cacophony
Of rock and instantaneous reality
Where your yesterday is an alliteration to today
And not a prison but dancing, light ricocheting
Off bouncing chords that string the singing house
Like trip wires of desire, lines to hook a fish
Line and sinker, under the sink a bowl awaits
Dreaming of its soon to be use
Swinging and tilting at space, agape
To catch the diving sick that swills
From cider sharp mouths
Behind closed doors
Or so we thought, we boasted the brash
Conquests of new sex and graphic
Myopic scripts for the long anticipated
Scene of the unmade biopic
That nobody watches as swaying bodies
Cling and sweat and mash at bodies
Pulping in the crush of teenquake sliding
And gliding through the test of our knowledge
With flying colours that were all black
To you listening at the door in shock
Or in awe or sorrow at a love moment lost to you
That you would not feel yet or felt
A regret to know me so
Intricately if not intimately
And so from behind those closed doors
You poured me water, a martyr to the hour
And our unborn love turned sour in piles of cider
As I span and fell from the bathroom floor
And left you to fend for yourself amongst the wolves
That gnawed down your walls
Gorging and gouging at the houses you had built
Way up in your head, in the clouds
And I, saved by the belle,
Awoke at the alarm clarion call of dawn
Stained and broken.

Visitation

You came to visit, more than any of them
You came. To dream of a future love lost
At sea in an ocean of sky,
As you fly amongst staves of light
That split the moon's frosty breath
And challenge death with strings of a silver harp
And I sink like a stone from the bottom of my heart
From stars that sit on the swordtips and elbows of heroes
Heroes that I would be
If I had the courage to write our story
Without blotting out the sun
For none sing of those who fail
Afraid to run in in case I can't stop running
In a dream come too far come true
Far too dreamlike by far
You running parallel
In handwritten lines
To play your part all written out
Why can't they just weld and nail and screw us
Back together
Instead of letting us drift, adrift, apart
All this time wasted as your heart
Beats, every time mine beats
Yours is somewhere else
In another room, with another
Beating out another tune from you
I strain my muffled ears to listen
But all I hear is the wind moaning
With pleasures promised and unfulfilled
Like the cup half empty
And young the sun shines on the hillside
Promising picnics and potential
That will never be
Beauty goes to waste
But the stars don't shine as bright
In the empty night without
The hope that sits like dreams in the tip
Landfill moulders under empty skies
And the winds murmured sighs
That I swear sound like you
Strange the vigour despair gives you
Until too much takes it all away
Aching for something old and something new
When out of the blue you lent me your life
One Lenten night to borrow you
For as long as a memory
All the days are seconds now
Like the present as it shoots past
Into memory sailing, falling down the salt water
Spheres that spin to smash as tears
From eyes that look no longer
no longer to linger on the one that they longed for
and lost, like the glorious past.
And these days will carry on going to waste
Until they are all gone
Then it will all be in the past
And all be beautiful.

Where the Moss Grows Thick

The stage set out for our drama
An Amphitheatre cupped from deep rock
Crescent cast by dead quarrymen
With hands all worn out for us,
Not knowing our names,
But knowing our faces,
Their foremost children,
Owing them our seat and owing it to them
And their fellow lonely dead
To seize the night
On our mountain, as it stood up for us
On the uppermost night of our young lives
Frosted in the bathroom mirror
And smoked out from houses, way up to here
Above them all to inhale the world
In a single blue breath, phosphorescent.

Sky balanced dusty opal and screaming gold
Over-brimming each over-reaching cloud
In gilded tinsel strips of flame and fuzz,
Far hills flooded with milky shadows spilt
Smudging them with softness
For us,
Star grass soda bubbles kissing a tongue tip
Tipping the balance of a fine powder brush
Blushing and breathing on that tapestry.
Where all the lights of the land shone
For us,
We were dazzled in the headlights of a new moon
And the first star split upon the rocks
Like an icicle come loose from heaven
Before us
The lamps uncurled their fanfares
In sparks and liquid pinpricks
And the ultra violet heather burning at our feet
For us,
A carpet of puce bled like thumb twist bilberries
From a summer pudding sky
Heavy blue and bruising, burning
For us.
The hills, the towns, the light and air
The world that rose for us, from the edge of life for us
We stood together king and queen of the universe
You and I, seeing eye to eye
With the all-seeing gods that still had patience
For us.

And as you walked towards the sky
You reached out your hand
Until it lay, from back where I sat,
Upon the very face of infinity
And suddenly you sprang
Back, a child
Into a buoyant bed of heather
That cradled you ship-like on the breast of sea
And caught you upon nothing but good grace
Tumbling balletic through the motions
Of a smoky tunnelled teenager,
As if you were about to take off
And leap out into that kingdom of air
Angel winged in your head and in mine
The million non-existent reasons chimed

And sang and wished
Themselves up to their fullest height
Why we should not be the lovers in the flesh
That we already were in our hearts
That night.

And night fell down and passed
Like the empty beers bottles and broken lighters
As a reminder of things
That were once and are no more
And we walked slowly down into the darkness
To join the quarrymen in their heather beds
The world was ours for the taking that night
But we let it lie for another day
Thinking that time was ours too,
Waiting for us on the corner,
But we were wrong

And ten years later I sit alone at that spot,
Stoned with rocks so thick with moss
That I can no longer feel them fall
Recalling with a sigh the young girl
Leaping with faith and without a care
Into the lucky heather arms of life
And landing on her feet
And running off down the road
Without looking back.

Overlooking the Sea

Eyes dampen with dew
Where sightless you forbear footprints
Late one night
Years from you
Tearful Pleiades swimming in the bleary west
Where the blur of dusk lingers
Like the dragging of dusty fingers
Over pastel bridal silk
Seven sisters weeping into the waters
Broken like mourning stars
Daughters of ocean
Standing, trysting
On a shore that is rusting
under russet lamp light
Corroded by salt stains that streak
Time's drear clock face
and ere the cock crows thrice
I will betray your memory
With a skrike and a shriek
For another night
As I keep you in mind
Foraging for a forgery
To force you back out of sight
Into the sea chest of letters
Where my heart still beats
Under the bed,
Under cover, and under the waves
That breathe your name against my window
Pane in the unseen watches of the night
With their incessant ticking
Ceaselessly nagging at the hole
That you blew in me
When you blew me away on the west wind