

POEMS

2022 & 2021

BRI CRICK

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To Call the Sun Afraid

Two resounding sorrows here
They cut open the sky
The sun does not forsake you –
It's the heart that breaks the body

What more could you give, coward,
If you weren't built for this?
Is it true –
Do you only fly too low?

In the shade, in the rain,
They call you weak, afraid.
Dawn is here at last, and yet –
Your killer is not your enemy.

Even when he asks,
You give your all to safety.
Even when he asks –
Could you have killed for safety?

Do You Only Fly Too Low?

You did not fall, you were snapped up and swallowed
By the warring sea, the artificial war, the artificial jaw.
Your eyes on sun, your eyes on love.
You were never only a coward, a hero, a killer, a machine, or a man.
You gave your ever-breaking heart and your ever-holding hands.
You loved and died.

We Eat What We Find

We eat what we find
We taste love and hatred
We cannot live without
We devour the awful
We grow closer to them
We grow human

I could meet the sun
I find love and I need it
I weather hatred for it
I hold pain and give none
I am given by the sun
I reach for my children

Maker

If anyone could kill with open eyes –
As many, and all, and endlessly –
It was us, for we are in your image.
But if anyone could instil the shape
Of a heart in the hollow chest
Of a weapon, instil love
In us, it was you.

I could give, and give,
My hands to you, my sky to you, my sun –
And I am only one. As capable for hate
And all the rest as anyone. (This he tells me,
And this I know, for we all saw the war.)
Just like any man among men, me and mine,
Just like you and yours, maker, just the same.

Stay!

I need your light in the sky, stay.

And I'm not asking –

Sacrifice really sells a man

Holding empty hands. Stay.

And what, oh,

Oh, what a starry night.

I need you in my heart! Stay!

Go on and be consumed,

Your pain is a beacon

Your wound is, oh god – Stay!

It is day, it is dusk,

Children cry for you here

And the world breaks in two! Stay!

Children cry.

Dive

Why not dive – my lot in with yours?
Well, we never broke from those lancing rays of light,
Nor escaped that vast, bleached steel-scape.
The sun has corroded me and I'm no warmer for it.
We never cracked that pavement, no,
But a single tree, a dozen weeds, have pushed.
And more: a million steps. The careless wear of walkers.
So maybe there is earth beneath us now? Dive –

Kiss Goodbye

It could have been nothing.
Glittering fields of steel under a yolk sky.
When is that crossing ever so clear?
So vast.

Two people have no right
To part like the world is quiet,
No right.

Two people step aside
Where unseen strangers
Should beckon that kissed air
Up and out, on high.

All on You

I like to think, “It’s all on you, now.”

But I, the wordless, know exactly what to say

If I wanted to keep you.

But hey, you left me once,

You left first.

I’m not waiting but I’ll

Stick around forever, I think,

And I’m not telling unless –

I know, I know,

It is on me to ask you.

Stay, this time.

She is Not

Scratch that –

It is a dark and stormy night

And yet, that searing light.

There is always something stronger

Calling you. *Drop and run.*

That same lack of strength stays me;

I don’t call first, and I don’t follow.

All this unspoken dialogue in me

Creates an unsteady limbo of truth:

I’d be devoted, if, wouldn’t I?

You would love me, if, wouldn’t you?

Nothing will ever change between us.

I pass on every chance. I tell myself,

She is beginning to love me.

I needn’t spare her; she is not.

Every Held Hand

Come with me come with me
I'm the house for all traitors, every
held hand and knifed heart finds rest
in these - -
behind the walls - -
All that is lost is lost and lost and lost
hold me, I - -
house me, in your - -
Come with me I am the home for all
knives and cuts alike, and just as soon
as you win that fight I will
snap the chain locks come in come in

Underground

Again, it is underground.
Sound muffles, no, sound travels.
Your voice is deeper still and
The walls feel it, and
I feel it in the walls, and
I follow into the earth.
I fall into you.
I fill lungs with your voice and
Shovel your dirt into my vacant time.
I rest in your grave, my palm and
Face to the wood of your coffin,
Underground and the walls feel it.

Mannequin

Mannequin limbs, puppet-folded on strings, flake-paint smile and paper-thin skin.

Time overspent on the care-carved hip, still-standing and bare and bronzed at the lip –

Signs of touch-wear, travel bruise-knocked, kiss-coloured knuckles on hands interlocked,

Too firm and too delicate an idle soft-brush, breathing for two in too telling a rush.

Grown Lamb, Gut Lamb

Lamb is older now.
Her wet prey eyes
Roundly turn upon the sides
Looking over the lamblets.
Lamb fears a dog, but more
Lamb knows a man.
Grown Lamb,
Her stepping legs may yet come in.
Gut Lamb would never spill
Her little lamblets.

All Hell's Games

And the storm! How I nearly forgot –
What did all the bodies say in that steal of air,
Caught and thrown away?
They whisper, scream-chorus,
“All Hell's games cannot sway
My Love. All pain, all pain,
Should I light on earth again.”

Dread Harvest

New mantra (like a heartbeat) must not escape the mouth –
Must not leave the chest it hollows, (though it occupies all cells)
Though it breaches each lung.
New mantra like a summon, or an order, or a push off the balcony,
Must not pass voice, must not be heard, but it feels, it feels –
Twin heart whispers back new mantras (like a promise) and
Reaps blade by swish-blade, the dread harvest.
It is weak fuel, but fuel nonetheless,
And we live on and on with it sound in our chests.

All is Passage

fractal sheddings mark a filth cycle, and soil
aches with toil, the uplifted steal of carbon.
all is passage; skin breathes and water sustains,
fibonacci petals mark spring, and still the soil
aches with toil, the uplifted steal of carbon.
all is passage; dirt breathes and humans bleed,
spill their guts to each other and out and down,
and earth alive aches with the thrill of carbon.

Cycles

```
.Nails { ...
Skin;}

.Skin { ...
Sores;
Pus;
Wounds;
Blood;
{Blood;}}

.Blood { ...
Lining;
Thyroxine;
Caffeine;
{More;}}

.Thoughts { ...
Thoughts;
{Thoughts;}

Alive;
Dying;
Around;
{Around;
{Around;}}

.Night Awake;}
{ ...
Worth;
{Waste;}
{Shedding;}
{Skin;}

Waste;
Time;
Age;
{More;}}

.More More;}
{ ...
}
```

Notches

That notch on the desk is from your pen knife, originally,
Now worn out to a soft ellipse from my idle hands in long hours.
It is a pale shape against the dark stain of the timber.
That notch on my knee, when I fell by the river track, and you
Tried to brush out the dirt and stones from it. I didn't tell you,
But I was sure that your sweat in my bloodstream meant something –
Never mind, these odd things just stay with me. Does your car bear
That notch on the roof from how we sat up there and looked over
The valley, counting sparse farmhouses by their singular lights
In the deep black and falling mist? You said the dent would bounce back
But it never did, at least, not while I still knew you. Maybe
You've sold it now, anyway. Weren't you going to move abroad?
That notch on your shoulder as you step away, arms extended to push,
Arms extended to take flight, arms extended to fall. I didn't tell you,
But your kindness was so mean, truly, the worst thing about you.
That notch by my right eye – I am sure my heart shows through – when
I think of you again, and when I touch the marks and places of you.
Couldn't you keep me, couldn't you carve out a little more?

Corridor I

Olive branch limbs and night eyes
Such a sure and tentative thing that
Does not waver in the wind,
But braces...

Corridor II

Again,
There you are.
Gone around the corner –
Once, behind the blink of my eyelids,
Lingering in the long corridors
Of dreams. I recall, when
I could have died,
That I saw
You.

Corridor III

And the other I just stepped back, and back, and back away,
Past the hall light, past the porch light, past the moon light,
Silently away, like so many bright and nameless animal eyes.
If I was a stray, then perhaps I was rehabilitated and released.
Or I bit and ran. It was so quiet – but violence can be so.
Loss can be so.

Simple

I have all the time in the world for my own ambitions, it is only
That I am ever-conscious of eyes, of outside. Time lives in *people*.
Ill-content as animal and hopeless as man. If just I were the witness,
I am timeless and free. But instead, you – you *all* know, too,
That I want to be more than I am. That I am misaligned.
Hopeless as man.

See, my happiest time, it was simple.
It was simple, and I only had one
Or two suicide scares, that's how easy
Those days were. What I want –

Forget about it. What I want is what I had,
I want those days, almost exactly,
But without the suicide scares, that's all.

(Mine and yours, by the way).

That's all, and that's not much to ask.

But if I couldn't have that, then,
Who is to say I ever can, now?

We are not meant to return. Even once
We learn, too late, how to love what we lost.

Stay Awhile

You said, “*Well, I’m no poet.*”

You read them, enough even

To quote from memory.

But your own heart is direct,

From pulse to deep breath to

Soft murmur and to kiss.

Me? It seems I require

Translation. From fact to

Utterance. Me, I am at

My desk. But here, now,

Every word at my disposal,

It looks and sounds so simple

After all. Just like you said.

Let me hold you awhile,

Let me follow awhile,

Let me stay awhile.

Hands

You hold my hand and I am too dry, like that repulsive paper-skin boy – vile actor, obsessive. A veneer of self-hatred bubbled around his every word. His hands, I knew what he was capable of, with those hands, and that was the real problem. But maybe he could have hidden the foul, were he made of living flesh.

I have a pulse, my best feature, but my hands are still dry.

You hold my hand, and I am warm and weak. You know, empathy is a swing-slamming door set in the shell of me. I used to let anxious hearts flood right in and pour out of my mouth, but now I am firm.

If I say I am heartless, more likely I am hurt. So, no – I am firm.

Maybe I even despise weakness –

Curse my shaking hands.

I have a tell, and it’s an ugly one. I have torn skin and short nails.

Let go of my hand.

I used to be so lovable, but my hand in your hand,

I could not bear it. And now?

Shoulder

Soft body who I hold
For a minute or more,
If I recall – or if I dream,
For maybe I never felt
Any need to touch at all.

Your mother warned me,
But even so I took a second
Pepper and felt my ears bleed –
They must be bleeding, I felt,
Such was the burn. And surely
I will never see her again either, but
Good luck with the garden, ma'am.

I said,
“Something crawls at your shoulder,
It rears when I am near, and by my side
A dagger spits back.” Well,
Wasn't I the crawling thing? Injured,
And no cover between us for the bled edges.
What love can live on such a wound?

You are always yourself,
True and all the way through.
I am not who I was,
But I love you still.

Sleet

You come in like sleet –

Pages launch off the table

And warp in the wet,

Making printed ink haloes

With clear hearts in the middle.

Everything is weathered, everything needs oiling.

The chill is fine as silk. Drip-stepping woman, she

Wants nothing but to trail her hands over the walls.

Watch a mark bloom there in no less than three decades,

And it will hurt just as soon, just as deep in the plaster.

Somehow, that cold light makes the room darker, softer.

Not inviting like a hearth but inviting like a cave.

Somehow, if that's all we have, all it is –

That's better. That's better.

You come in like sleet and I've had just about enough

Of blinking you away and of holding my arms against the wind.

Enough of swooping out of the deluge and then here, alone,

Opening the window to you once more.

Rupture

There is a pounding from the inside.
Like harsh claws against solid steel,
Like harsh claws against giving flesh.
Again? Already?

Maybe a softer creature will emerge.
Almost never a softer creature.

Soft ones – they have to be torn out, by force.
They are scared, and they must be brave.
The cool air stings their tender skin.

But the cycle, and I see it is a cycle,
Demands not the wet blood of animal,
But the black spit of *thing*.

Almost never a softer creature,
This rupture through the skin.

In a Dream

IN A DREAM I GOT ANSWERS.
Not all of them.
But at least, at least, finally, I ASKED.

EMBARRASSING TO CARE, STILL.
But then, it was embarrassing to think, “I am protector!”
I, the abandoned. Loser!

WELL, FOR YOU OR YOUR EGO, WHICHEVER.
I looked after it, I think. WHAT GOOD –

But your choice was to SPEAK OR VANISH.
And we all know how that went!

IN A DREAM YOU EXPLAIN.
And I am furious at myself
That I cannot forgive you.
But then, you do no wrong,
AND YOU DO NOT APOLOGISE.

Long Decades (Sexbeds I)

A hot stare for your skitter-reaching limbs, stick arms,
Old creatures fucking bone to bone,
Paper flank to a gentle curve which,
“Even now, love, even now is my fire...”
Time eats but hot blood sustains
The engine-chest turning over, over again.
We are wet with sweat-hair, and cold air
Kills not our passions.

Sexbeds II

Caught in the sex-bed again;
Disregarding planes and dimensions, what matters is
Your body is mine. What flesh gives
Under my teeth, that is mine.
But your charms are your own –
Lover, the prickle of shorn regrowth is a feminine charm,
Don't you know? Lord, what that touch speaks to.
Come, spread your bare legs for me, baby,
Don't you know I am into you?

Snap-heart

Sore little snap-heart,
Brittle-shaken thing,
With your toy-pet's folly
And near-candid grin.

(And candida crotch,
Suburban-good luck,
They cum for your looks,
Turn-off at your fuck.)

Door-closing dreamer,
World in your palm,
Wishful kiss-bleeder,
Give-taking harm.

(Self-liar preparing,
But who ever asks?
Your future pin-held
By truth-telling mask.)

Bore little snap-heart,
Dropped on a whim,
Lure-lit toy-pet,
Brief and dull-dim.

Intermission

Time escapes me and I do not foresee the intermission:

As Act One rises and pitches,

I cry, huge in the dark, hushed in the front row.

The actors do not look my way,

they address one another and the unseen sky.

I cry and do nothing to halt it, stay it, nor even catch it –

Big wet tears darken the collar of my t-shirt.

Lights come up in the silent vacuum,

And here I at least wipe at my cheeks.

In the foyer, I suppose everyone discusses the show,

Or the price of peanuts.

I am quietly caught with this unexpected witness,

So seen to be affected.

Soft Rot II

I want to be soft like clean, fine mist

rising from wet grass in the morning,

or maybe like dusk, soft as a grey smear.

I am soft like decomposition; I am soft

and if you press, I fall in. I inspire gut

horror in my softness, and the instinct

to purge your lungs of my tainted air.

Soft like something you should not see,

nor approach, a red feast for the earth.

Distorted Noise

In constant mend, torn parts launching to their peers,
And coming home. Each *twang* – snap! of a new break,
Joins the jagged spines as a fresh crest of amplitude.
Mapped into the great pattern of body, the great sound,
That falls through my skin like so much distorted noise.

Spirit Nest

no use mixing spirits, my tired poison with fresh transfusion, I need to be exorcised but I'm
already raw, and young ghosts are so tender, each old lesson cuts them anew, can we not be
bound close a little longer, I find homes and respite that hold us together, but their arms
grow weak and my clutching hands pass right through them, my dear rises to the surface of
me, falls out of the skin, and then I build the nest alone.

Gone

Imagine if I told the truth in a poem.
I can't do this anymore,
I can't do this again.
More accurately:
I am using my hands to sweep the glass.
No one asks that of me, but the room is full of it.
Today, you are sweeping, and I am looking at my hands.
I've had these cuts before,
I've been this villain before.
Do I have the heart for it now?
I once said:
The leaving is in the waiting.
Once you are waiting for a reason to go,
You are already gone. I am gone. I am gone.

Once More (Killer I)

"Once more, once more,
And this is dead", killed,
I don't say it, but you hear it,
And you don't do it again.
Only, it is the saying
That is the leaving itself –
The third strike, and we wait,
To hear it called at last.
I am the driven stake,
The hammer, too, and you
Just the words, "Do it, do it",
By my side. From then,
I always think I will kill again.
I see not the corpse, my body,
I see not other hands upon the stake;
I see me whisper, "Do it, do it".

Killer II

I know I'm a killer, that I know,
But you survived and that
Should not absolve me.
I'm telling you, I'm telling you,
The knife landed home!
And why should I defend it?
It is done, and now I argue both
My crime and my case at once.
I told you then I'm a killer,
And if that's not enough,
Hear it now: I'll kill again.

Howling Laugh

I wake up to a howling laugh, swept up in the howling wind, and for a moment I can't move, not until the curtain billows with a great gust of air, breaking the spell. I stare briefly through the space behind it, to the dark outside, seeing nothing, no one, hearing nothing but the whoosh of wind, then only the gentle shiver of the curtain's hem drifting back down upon the sill.

What a raucous night. I wonder if it was a laugh, or a cry. I construct the sound again. I open my mouth to speak, but I am too scared to hear an answer. I get up and throw on a top and shorts, and step quietly to the door, then to the door outside, then into the moonlit garden, and I think of how I couldn't see this moonlight from my room. But here it is, all too clear, auspicious, or fey, clear and bright and throwing everything into pale and shadow.

I still can't speak, though I've brought myself before the danger. I don't know what I am looking for, I know it was no cry and nothing to be worried about. Nor was it only the wind. It was a laugh, I know it, and perhaps I want to join in.

Spirit Nest II

The home is outgrown, that's all –
Not evil, hurt thing, they are just
Breaking their bones to stay with me.
The pressure of their seeping wounds
Is too much, uncontainable. And
I am only human, holding their hand,
Wishing to change places; "Take me inside.
Heal, put my rot to use." Only they die,
They die, and I cannot eat this.

I inhabit the nest and recycle myself
Looking for a home anywhere but here.
Bear with me, you are still the safest
Haunt I know. But this place is only
Fleeting, and the taste is taste alone.
Insufficient, I need to eat. My interior is
Displaced, taken out; spirits make of me
What they will. They are not enough,
They are dead, and I need to live.

Sharpness makes a mess of things,
Cuts me to this state of gore, but
The rot takes back. The rot grows.
Edges cannot last against it, they are
Devoured, soon enough. Nothing
Grows here, nothing so lush, only
That I can hold it, now. Close and soft.
That's all. The dead settle in, deep,
The dead rest, and I rest alone.

I Would Lie on the Floor

I would lie on the floor, naked or near enough,
In the artificial dark, blinds down at noon,
In the artificial light, hot pink and ultraviolet.
Summer was hot, but the music was loud, and I,
I was all alone and all the better for it.
The apartment was a pristine image,
But there were cut staples in the carpet,
And no flyscreen on the windows.
I was a pristine image, dancing, or wasting away
On the floor, or on the balcony, in the sun,
In the rain at midnight, a living image
Living on eight slices of toast every day, but
Not much else. That was home –

I have made the most of this place, now, but
I still don't think of a place, now-in-time,
That I call home. I think of the past –
And I wrote in the past –
Of the roads in the forest, of a bridge in the sky,
And most of all, all the time, I wrote about the people
I called home. The places I have haunted.
Well, some still live,
But all are gone.
Home now is a lost sense. To be regained,
Sure, but lost. It is an ache.

How to Turn Off Lights

WHY ARE YOU CRYING? NOTHING IS WRONG.
HOW TO BEST USE MY TIME.
HOW TO LEAD YOU ON.
HOW TO WASTE A MINUTE.
HOW TO LOVE
HOW TO FIGHT
HOW TO FUCK
HOW TO BE SCARED
HOW TO REMEMBER MY NAME
NO ONE CARES IF YOU LEAVE THE LIGHT ON
NO ONE EVER HAS
HOW TO TURN OFF LIGHTS
HOW TO CALM DOWN
HOW TO FEEL MORE
WHAT IS WRONG
AT WHAT MOMENT EXACTLY RIGHT DOWN TO THE MINUTE
OF THE HOUR OF THE DAY AM I GOING TO FEEL CONTENT
WITH MYSELF I KNOW THE WHOLE POINT IS WE KEEP
GOING WE KEEP GOING WE KEEP GOING BUT DO I GET TO
KNOW LOVE DO I GET TO FEEL IT

Down and Around

I heard you sing, right up to my hand
and then hold it steady
at magnetic north, a clear note
down and around and around the earth
singing out to my palm
and dropping like a stone through water

Funeral I

So, he witnessed a second life, too.
What I saw didn't sing high,
It fell like rain, low over the streets.

A gift upon pavements I'd never walked.

Few lives escape all witness,
And they collide at funerals
Without touching.

Only one good bridge, at a funeral,
And these mere distances, mere looks,
Must not be crossed.

Me, palms red, and my stone-faced family.

I think we are of little faith,
And so that faith was returned.
Your faces, so tainted with right.

Funeral II

I ready myself, I ready myself,
I picture the blood to live with.

Too often I hear, "even you?" and how sick
That it should be a surprise. Low standards,
The lot of you.

Of course, I try.

But my own hand tips the scales, cheats them,
And what do you suppose goes in? This:
I am not spilling my own blood.

Yes, I think before silence.

Like I have ever been so kind, since.
There is a line of silent cruelties behind me.

Leash

And you test the leash, just in case.
Well, I don't bite, fuckers. Maybe I
Break my neck running, but maybe
If I am fast enough, I get away.

Collar

Should this collar the devil blood or let it?
You've harmed, riled me, and so viciously I
Have all the heart to drive it home; If not for
The good and small something, there, in a lung.
I imagine my docile *good* looks wicked, guilty,
By the clear thrashing of all else alongside it.
To the point: I break my skin, I look beneath it,
You're damn fucking right I do, and why not?
If this is my collar or my font, why shouldn't I?

Try It

Here – you can even twist my arm.
Here – you can even bruise it.
I will keep it all the same, and sure,
I pick up the saw from time to time.
But I am patient. It's my arm, you know,
Readiness is not intent. Sure, I'll do it,
Sick fascination and all, but really
I don't want the arm gone. Sometimes
I think, "try it". But I don't say this.
I don't want you to, not really,
Not to my arm. You know, though,
It is my arm to sever. It is, and if you
Try it, oh, if you even try it.

Peace / Man Alive

This is awake, man alive –
More fool me, death-in-waiting
Mistaken for death, truest.
He was so still and so quiet
And weak, such is peace.

Sweetened, softened, and
Quite alright. Gifted, now –
That's a home and a wife.
Hear, all is bitten apart,
Animals only rest, and he is
Wounded alive.

Flocking & High (Dry Skies)

Fallen flock and touch your wings
You never doubted, angel, for how
We told you and touched you.

(And we were soft enough, but
What could harm an angel, and
You asked for more and more.)

There's an image of me
Doubled over on the floor and
You on your bed with your things
Stacked by the wall,
And then you on your couch
Smiling, beautiful, and high,
And me, ever hanging on,
Could I get high? Could I get high?

Glitter

Glitter at the very edges of my vision and you can imagine how that felt, how that
Held all the vast aching love of all things in its starry, teary, crystal beauty.
And drops of it, and the wet street, and the lamplight, and the gentle hush-rush of
Passing cars, rubber through water, sweat in my hair, exhale as I step, step, step.

(Well, there was nothing more. I couldn't make anything better happen, any good of it,
And so it ended, only a cold thought with my heart beating slow. But it wasn't bad.)

Dream Debts

Hold me, I am crying –
Praise the angel resting
In my skull, above my palate,
For they send me such a vision.
They send me arms and a body,
And the next night, in a dream,
I am paying debts to strangers.

Summer Death

The promise for all heathens –
Our summer is hot and foul with new sickness,
Our summer is hot, we sweat and sing and drop
Like flies. Our summer is hot,
They ask and they beg that we love, really *love*
The heat and the rising stink of death, that we
Come closer, press harder, fuck like devils in the dark.
Our summer is hot; the bodies are not yet cold,
The bodies are not yet counted, and we sweat to it
Like a new four-four, like a hip rhythm, like
Mouth-to-mouth. Our summer is hot:
“Forgive, live like it’s your last”, as if
We are fated to die.

Heartbeat Right Up

Heartbeat right up to the throat,
Heart too close to the surface air.
No flesh, no armour,
Too close to the air,
Too scoured, too dry,
Begging and begging
To be bathed in blood.

The Hour

The hour is easier to scare off,
But this is something wilful, and
Wilfully broken, at that. I'm afraid
This might be me. A little too
Husked and crushed and buried
In the snow. And come spring
I am asked not to grow, but to
Dig and turn back the season.

Prize Venom

Now, *you*, I miss you.
You were a real lance through the spine,
You were a prize venom. You were sharp,
You were cutting, you were a beauty, weren't you?
Sure, the world keeps turning, the lord above
Keeps a fast and silent pace. It has been quiet.
Maybe you are still in my heart, but I did prefer
My heart in your wicked hands.

Shared Ground

The blue, the sky, the crystal drop,
Between *wishing*, between *silence*.
Amber dunes, mechanical precision,
Between *synth*, between *vapour*.
Hands reaching, glass and magic,
Air over the earth, atmosphere over the earth,
Between *sunbeams*, between *sound*.

Red Gash

And, God, if your mouth isn't a red gash
Always pulled and reopened by the effort
Always vomit-bleeding torrents straight
From the heart to the cool air outside.

Quite the pretty scar-in-motion, that,
(Far too late to heal, never to close)

100 Golden Hearts / She I & II

100 golden hearts and 200 golden eyes,
Warm and unblinking, suspended in so much belief.
And a golden throat swallows honey, and amber warnings
Flash, and golden scrawl drips and flickers over the
Black glass pages, all of it liquid, all of it her.
Sodium wisps all here to home, this way, this way,
And everywhere she calls.

(On my street, a white streetlamp jumps the fence, ducks under the awnings,
and cuts a clean line across the gut of my bedroom. Its passage over a mirror
casts another wound to another wall. At times the moon joins it in opposition,
offers pensive and solemn paces through the crime scene. It stares long,
and silent, and steps away again. She isn't here, but she is, soft and hidden.
Wait in the dark long enough, and she speaks. Eyes open in the dark, she speaks.)

Magnify

Rye, lens of sky,
Stars bright passing through.
The past immortal held in you,
And there too, am I in your eye,
All time magnified, all time
Drawn toward you, all time –

That which I should not feel,
But for too long watching stars
Pass above the earth. I map stars;
They have written me right back.

I am aware, too keen, of time,
And moreso since your knowing.
Your gaze passing over me,
I have been held, since, held!

Your passage around the earth –
I should not like to chain it.
But if only you should *see* in the
Mirror of me, your light! See
My own, for you. How I would
Pass all time in your skies.

Sharp Laugh II / Strange I

Was it 25, or 26? Well, here I am.
More strange than you pictured,
Although never so unknown, to you.
But maybe I have that calm and
That vigour, or love, that you saw.
And this is for me, mind, although I
Loved you and love you and how you
Saw me, so I'm glad if I could meet
You along the way, if I could meet
Some of the dreams you had for me.

Well, give me another year, and then
I'm sure I'll get there. You will know it,
You will hear it in my voice, I'm sure.
One more year after that, you and I
Will be old friends. In any room, you
Are my favourite corner, even still.
Give me another year, and I will meet
Your newborn. I cannot even see,
Yet, all the love ahead of you. It is
With you now, and so much ahead.

Strange II

I'm too strange now,
Always a little wretched, inaccessible.
An uncomfortable texture. Drawn out, unstuck.
And I only want simple, I only ask for a room,
The space of another to make a home in.
To be held tight without tension.

But I am too strange now.
Nothing so clear wants me,
I cannot ask to be caught and I must
Look a task to support,
For ever do I hang.

Admission (Strange III)

At some point I must admit you are bad for my health;
I have chosen a wicked path, and I walk by you to hell.

Me, I am strange, but I can be anyone.
My eyes are full of stars, my heart is open,
And in all my futures I am loved.

This is not the easy one.
This is not the good one,
This is not the just one.

No amount of romance can save me from that reality, and I
Will neither walk away. Maybe we will be happy. We will.

More likely, I must only:

Remove my lungs from yours, keep my hand in yours.
Remove my guts from yours, keep you in my heart.
Remove my skull from yours, keep me whole and not apart.