

***Kairos***  
by  
Jason Sturner

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## Poetaster

I feel like a stranger  
to myself. Passionate for answers—  
ones I may never know:

The bee gathers nectar, he knows!  
The bird flies south, he knows!  
The poet documents his soul, he knows!  
that he knows nothing.

## Before the Storm Wet the Earth

A ladybug landed on my knee  
as I sat alone in a meadow  
awaiting the rain.

With its tiny head cocked  
and a trust in my silence  
it seemed to ask,

“Do you think I am beautiful?”

But all I could do  
was look away  
and wonder what stories  
my face was telling.

## Twelve and 12

Becoming twilight softens another midsummer day:  
stars spark up, the moon pulsates, oceans flinch,  
day aborts, night reclaims dignity;  
everything sleeps and everything awakens—  
the sun has pulled away my shadow.

Blushing dawn ascends the misty green hillside:  
stars flicker out, the moon hides away,  
night departs, day reclaims strategy;  
everything awakens and everything sleeps—  
the sun has tossed back my shadow.

## The Existence of You

Morning—delicate  
thirsty  
the sky yawns  
earth stretches...  
You near the ending of a peaceful, romantic dream.  
The silence of night subsides, you open your eyes—  
two emeralds shine beneath the sun.

Another day is born,  
another morning blessed.  
Such simple truths are easily told  
by the existence of you.

Night—romantic  
alive  
the stars shine  
earth sighs...  
You smile and all things are curious—  
a shooting star passes over your essence.

Another twilight has come,  
another night takes the stage.  
Standing ovations are easily understood  
by the existence of you.

I hear them...  
I hear them whenever I'm around you—  
the subtle, graceful heartbeats of angels.  
They surround you like butterflies gone mad.

And all my love for this world,  
all my love for beauty, for nature;  
all my love for life was awakened  
by the existence of you.

## About Love

We do not need thoroughfares  
when love seeks the heart

Such is the way of love—  
always destined, never sought

We do not need gold coins

when love comes without cost

Such is the value of love—  
always priceless, never bought

We do not need a wise man  
when love speaks through art

Such is the beauty of love—  
always instilled, never taught

And we do not need a ruse  
when love surrenders to us all

Such is the enigma of love—  
always mysterious, never caught

### When I am Loved by You

A silky aura  
surrounds me  
when I...

Lavender dreams  
visit me sleeping  
when I...

Golden extravagance  
fills my every moment  
when I am loved by you.

My nerves  
come to ease

My tensions  
are of no attention

My heart beats  
with subtle integrity

when I am loved by you.

### I Love You

I see more than you know

about all you are,  
and through my observations  
and from my analysis  
I've concluded that  
I love you.

Not a theory  
quite simply a fact—  
I love you,  
and that's that.

### Fresh Morning

Talk to me in the comfort of fresh morning  
when a bird's song I may enjoy  
as the cold of night surrenders to the warmth of dawn  
and there comes no sound from the telephone or door.

Hold me close as the sun plays with shadows  
when the curtains of our room blow wide  
as our hearts beat ever so quietly to the pulse of day  
and seagulls scavenge across the falling tide.

Know me when the day is newly born, my love  
when the spirit within this aging body is content  
as I steal gentle kisses from your soft lips  
and inhale the subtle fragrance of this moment.

### My Love, My Dream

It was surreal, now that I think back,  
as if a dream had wandered over the boundaries  
to deliver forth the shimmering light  
that was you.

And for a time, time was lost.  
A halcyon river became our guide.  
Its tranquil flow, a symbol of perfection,  
its reflection  
casting wildly off our eyes.

Love sprang to life, life became love.  
Every hue within this plane began to lighten.  
Our hearts chased, our meaning held no lies;

our souls tingled with gentle electricity  
beneath harlequin skies.

But we awoke one morning, heartsick to find,  
pink mist off the river had turned gray.  
Suddenly our angels were selectively blind—  
Was divinity so busy that it left us behind?

I screamed into a shower of diamonds.  
I'd lost you inside this sudden despair.  
Through the downpour I heard no reply,  
and soon discovered myself alone there.

No one ever told us  
that the weather changes in paradise  
or that the flowers can cry.  
The voice in the clouds never confessed  
that true love could die.

And so troubled waters made their way down the river;  
somewhere far off the ocean tide had raged.  
The dream cracked, then fell to pieces—  
leaving us broken  
and forever changed.

## Words are All I Have

Words I'm frightened to say  
dangle off deep breaths  
and gentle voice.

I listen to every syllable I speak to you,  
making sure no bad judgment in word  
or accent escapes.

And they fumble from my thoughts  
as the thoughts rumble:

*I want you back  
I can be different  
better  
this time*

Why I think my carefully selected  
phrases might persuade you I don't know.

But if to get you back were possible  
with my arrangement of speech,

Then I wish to be king of words,  
or poet of my time.

### Since You Went Away

Since you went away,  
I've been exploding  
all through my body.  
I'm a catastrophe.

Since you went away,  
I've only got the world to blame.  
Isn't it a shame?  
It's such a shame.

Since you went away,  
life is dizzy and earth is spinning.  
Electricity fills my alcohol,  
but it never jolts me happy.

Since you went away,  
I've been bitter and complex.  
A mind drifting through space  
unable to face its artistry.

Since you went away,  
I have lost me.

### Below Zero

A dimness has poured over the bright of her day,  
where dirty light tightens around the body, squeezing  
bitter truth from lemon-flavored karma.

An infant's voice bounces and plays inside her head,  
where love is a pale, frozen rainbow; shining  
just faintly above an empty playground.

The choice came with the crystal air of a cruel winter.  
The day was cold – unforgivably cold – but heat danced through it.  
No one would come close to understanding this.



Now, she is rigid; severely pensive beneath falling white.  
Acrobatic thoughts dissolve within her stillness  
as winter coils around her, ready to strike:

And in the icy wind, a baby cries.  
Tiny footprints in the snow fade away.  
Where once was a life is now empty space—  
empty space with a fading lullaby.

## Imperfection

Tonight, wanton moonlight.  
Stars cold and listless.  
Angels take human form  
to vent their sorrows—  
Imperfection.

Stillness, bowed head of a goddess.  
Gold sobriety stained with sour wine.  
Sugar-coated flawlessness now  
full of cavities—  
Imperfection.

Fervent dreams trapped in a subconscious box.  
Shiny green lizards dancing  
on clouds full of rain:  
Imperfection rears its beautiful, exotic head—  
and we are all sublime again.

## Spring

When storms unleash a thunderous might  
across the urban scenes of busy life  
and our neighbor cleans his grill;  
when warblers pass  
and the air smells like grass  
I know it is spring again.

When leaves shine healthy green  
across woodlands where robins sing  
and the flowers return to glory;  
when the sun warms our cheeks  
and the chipmunk peeks  
I know it is spring again.

When lovers create sparks  
across blooming city parks  
and we run through fields simply to run;  
when bitter cold has gone away  
and warm days resume our play  
I know it is spring again:

And all of nature rubs its eyes,  
stretching an eager frame.

## Kiss Me Hello

*Send me up, to the clouds;  
bring me there, hold me there,  
tell me not to go. Keep me,  
if you love me—kiss me hello.*

If, upon her wandering,  
she befell upon such a sight  
as the burning of pale blue stars  
over the soft skin of twilight;

And fancied sleep, at meadow's edge,  
of proud and myriad flower,  
where quetzals dazzled forth  
in displays of regal, enchanted power—

Would she...

If, within her dreaming,  
she inhaled magic and exhaled strife,  
where a celestial voice whispered hope  
of a loving, happy life;

And saw many wonders  
cascading softly in ballet,  
while stardust and moonbeams  
entered her soul to play—

Would she...

And if, upon her awakening,  
standing near her grassy cheek,  
was a fawn drinking quietly  
from a silver-pebbled creek;

With sonnets coming ashore  
as fish bubbled the words,  
while a new life walked towards her  
from beneath a rainbow of birds—

Would she still want to die?

Would she weep and send away  
those painful days into the earth,  
and walk down new paths of sunlight  
holding the jewel of her worth?

*Send me back, to the world;  
bring me there, hold me there,  
keep me from the sky. Leave me,  
if you love me—and kiss me goodbye!*

## Her Day

She knelt down by the creek  
cupped her hands and began to drink  
the fish gave her a wink  
and she began to think:

Oh lover, off running from the sun  
let me be your reason again  
your reason to hold a hand  
let me show you the strength of a friend.

And she stayed for many hours of the day  
collecting flowers and giving tears away  
all the while mother nature would say  
*Your heart needs soothing, my dear  
This is the only way!*

So she pulled away those burrs of denial  
tossed them aside, rank and file  
inhaled the breath of life all the while  
and soon her heart began to smile.

Then with rejoice she thanked the fish  
danced around butterflies, blew them a kiss  
felt her heart had gotten its wish  
and picked a mushroom to make a dish.

Sunset came and soon it was twilight

so she hurried on home like a wren in flight  
thinking to find her lover that night  
hoping that he just might...

And whether it was feather or song  
flower or fragrance  
the earth or its sky  
she doesn't know  
she can't decide.

But during that day  
more had become clear:  
*Your heart is soothed, my dear.*

## A Tree

A tree  
is a treasure burst forth into the sky;  
a fissured relic covered in emeralds  
that change with the voice of equinox.

A tree  
is a benevolent caretaker for the wild;  
a framework of weathered arms  
holding nests, refuge, and insect treats.

A tree  
is a teacher of patience and endurance;  
a primeval soul bearing the fruit and labor  
of the illusion we call Time.

A tree  
is our third parent of unconditional love;  
a haven of cool shade and wonderment  
beneath a sentry of leaves.

## Dryad Weeping on a Fallen Tree

Sitting under the spell of living oaks,  
dryad sits on a tree fallen and dead.  
Through the canopy falls the sun's gold;  
empathetic warmth and just so bright.

She is dressed in a splendid mourning gown,

sewn with chlorophyll and splendors' fingers.  
Her large green eyes are crystal-like;  
scenes of a tree's life play within.

Mist rises like fairy soldiers' ghosts  
beneath her dainty and barefooted feet.  
Tears merge into silent waterfalls  
and her heart beats low like owl wings.

A rustling puts a crack in the silence  
and dryad looks down at the petite sound:  
Leaves covered a seed, covered a growing tree;  
nature is cycles, is fairy spuds to winter snow.

And young tree sprouts where mother spring  
and father sun foster new life.  
Such lessons come to each dryad in youth;  
they have come to her in this ephemeral light.

A nearby butterfly takes to air,  
its dazzle and frailty the wink of beauty's eye.  
With compassion it alights upon dryad's shoulder;  
a gesture of fresh happiness to a broken heart.

Dryad slides from the lifeless oak,  
aglow in the hue of newest wisdom.  
She dances off to darker wood, and butterfly ascends;  
reverie folds up and fades from her brightest eyes.

## Swimming Towards the Surface

Falling-away darkness—a curtain  
screaming with silence, pulled  
off a globe where thoughts are  
blind fish swimming inside light.

Across the finish line: a revelation:  
rain is creek, is river, is ocean, is rain.  
Gone is the concrete mask, chipped  
away with keys that would fit:

The hurricane's eye sees the sun.  
The window of tomorrow is open.

These invisible gifts are wrapped in experience.  
Denial like dust kicked up

and blown away by integrity—and finally, too:  
in these stone eyes is a beating heart.

I could swim out of that subterranean light.  
I could walk on land.

## Somewhere

Somewhere,  
hooks and chains  
hang amid  
peeling  
olive wallpaper  
on  
rusty nails  
once hanging  
pictures  
of  
other times—  
(before  
the walls  
shrank  
and took  
all the  
air away).

Somewhere,  
the  
gentle  
tapping  
of fingers  
on the  
sharp  
edge  
of a  
machete

leads  
  
up to the  
shadowed body  
of a man  
whose  
head  
is a

broken  
light bulb.

## the End

Charcoal spines burning,  
men dethroned of valor,  
a raven-dropping thunderstorm.

Mold on fruit,  
decay on bones—  
lifeless life.

Pale sunlight,  
tired universe,  
hope stuck in quicksand.

Humanity scorned by God:  
disappointed Father.

Now, as we prepare to be forgotten,  
dressing formal for the End  
will be  
unnecessary.

## The Bleak Hour

The  
bleak hour  
when uninvited  
shadows  
gather  
over one  
to pick up the  
fallen hand  
that lay  
still.

Two worlds  
touching—

One ends,  
another is begun.  
Too late if anything left

un-  
done.

The  
bleak hour:  
When  
will it be  
that the  
shadows,  
cast off the  
divine light,  
gather  
over  
me?

Me?

Am I a soul eternally sad?  
God of tears, maker of blue?  
Did the universe rain and flood with disdain?  
Leave me stained, water-colored in shame?  
Do my tears cascade into the desert part of my heart,  
only to lose their vision and dry up?  
Am I the weakest branch of a lifeless tree?  
An ungrown seed, a mud-stuck leaf?  
Is the mirror truthful, is this what I see?  
Is the sullen man staring back really me?

Beer Can Hands

You could put down that beer can.  
You could even dump out what's left.  
C'mon, pick up that baseball,  
it's not even lunchtime yet.

Did we do something wrong?  
Please don't yell when we're trying to sleep.  
Can't you just calm down?  
Your favorite show is on TV.

O man with the beer can hands,  
you're drunk inside your soul.

Did mom put you down, or do you



frown out the window for fun?  
Those trees aren't going to lift you  
where you need to go.

Look around, we're swarming under you  
like children at the ice cream truck,  
hoping for just one morsel of attention.  
Waiting for our frozen hero.

O man with the beer can hands,  
you're drunk inside our souls.

What would it cost you, anyway?  
Who'd see anything but a loving father?  
And for once, for once you could feel  
welcome in your own damned skin.

## Glass Hope

Curled up, asleep, twitching:  
dreams of worms, dreams of monkeys,  
dreams of a woman's hidden heart.

Trapped inside the shelter of a shell, shell-  
shocked and peering around corners.  
Never pushing either foot against the wind.

*Walk away  
from the phantasmagoric.  
Walk towards  
something real.*

Head hits the floor of this life;  
breaking, spilling, and losing light—  
black goo oozes from the inside.

Consumed is that *conscious hope*,  
made of gold light and glass.  
The shattered remains lost  
or engulfed by tar.

## The Impatient

Dress me in medical green, stick me down with pins.

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