



*THE  
DARK  
NESS  
ELIJAH  
KAMPSEN*

Cover by Elijah Kampsen

# **The Darkness**

Sophomore Sonnets and Stories

by Elijah Kampsen,

featuring photography by Jordan Thompson

and ink sketches by Raegan Koepsel

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First eBook Edition: August 2013

*For M. – repent or revenge.*

*“Every line is about who I don't want to write  
about anymore.”*

– Jesse Lacey

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*Author’s note: the comments and opinions expressed in this collection are mine and mine alone. Therefore, the views expressed do not necessarily represent those of other contributing artists.*

## Prologue

Hello.

I'm glad this work has found its way into your hands. I think for some time I've just wanted someone to hear me out, though I'm not particularly the kind of person to enjoy "grumbling," so don't feel like you've failed me as a friend in some way, by having missed some sort of signs. I haven't asked.

Maybe now you're reading in an effort to understand me – even if sometimes I can't understand myself. And maybe you can help to explain it to me, this unrelenting need to be pitied, while at the same time despising pity. I need to be loved, I need to be cared for. I don't believe I'm asking much, but I have been told otherwise.

You see, it's been some 8 months since I was shoved into loneliness. And I can't take back what I've done as the choice was not mine to make. I don't feel guilty; I'm smart enough to recognize the things I can't change,

but oftentimes too weak to change the things I can.

I believe in God, I truly do. But in doing so, I must ask myself if I should be waiting and asphyxiating, or if I can move on and learn to breathe on my own again. I'm waiting for a sign, I guess. I'd ask for help, but I still don't believe my problems are so pressing. I guess it's something of my giving nature. I think others need His help much more than me, and I'm willing to give up my fair share if it means that someone else might be better off.

I must've been raised to be this selfless. I'm guessing some therapist could help pinpoint the exact moment in my life when I became this way, but I don't believe it's so important to know where it came from, as is just to know that I am.

I'm well on my way to simply embracing the darkness within at this point, and I don't know that that's right. Should I instead be fighting to light the way? Or should I simply take what is given to me and wait until the sun

rises itself? And who's to say it ever will?

I've always been attracted to the darkness I think, so maybe she was just a fluke. Maybe it was never meant to be, and maybe she was just given to me as a gift for trying to be selfless. But why then was she taken away? Have I begun to become selfish? Was she always? Is selfishness the way of the light? And if so, where am I now on this imperceptible spectrum?

I feel like I've awoken in a deep fog, which I suppose would make some sense. Fog is just bright darkness, right? I'm left to try and coerce the fog away, or wait until the sun finally sets on me. It can't be much longer I don't think. I don't know that I could take it much longer if it is.

But I guess what is there to do but wait? Waste away my time, never knowing which way to go. I'd like to make some progress at least, in one direction or another, darkness or light, rather than just standing still as I feel I am now. It would ease my thoughts



significantly to know I was traveling in *any* direction.

So I guess this is me, trying desperately to find my way.

*Thanks: To the bands that wrote the records that have kept me sane (by my standards): Senses Fail, Bring Me The Horizon, Passion Pit, Periphery, and Thursday.*

[The Darkness \(mix\)](#) (link opens in Spotify)

1. “Jabberwocky” by Fear Before
2. “From 24C” by The Matches
3. “Time’s Arrow” by Thursday
4. “You Were The Cancer” by Thursday
5. “Slaughterhouse-Five” by Bury Your Dead
6. “Crooked Young” by Bring Me The Horizon
7. “Blacklist” by Bring Me The Horizon
8. “Antivist” by Bring Me The Horizon
9. “Not Getting Any Better (Designer Drugs Main Mix)” by Innerpartysystem
10. “Between The Mountains And The Sea” by Senses Fail
11. “Love Has Led Us Astray” by Thursday
12. “Blackout” by Senses Fail
13. “The Sharpest Lives” by My Chemical Romance
14. “Bite My Tongue (feat. Oli Sykes)” by You Me At Six
15. “The Truth About Heaven” by Armor For Sleep
16. “These Four Words” by The Maine

*“Courage is to walk through the valley of our  
thought, and in the desert that you fear, sit down  
with open ears.”*

– James “Buddy” Nielsen



Photo by Jordan Thompson

Faded



*R. Gabriel*

Faded

For weeks you've recited your I love you's.  
I'd like to think you thought I couldn't tell.  
I know now that you were just paying your  
dues.

I know that loving me was truly hell.  
"We accept the love we think we deserve,"  
you're in denial you deserve me, true.  
But you must've graded me on a curve,  
and discounted all the blood that I drew.  
In my eyes, you were the one to settle –  
unsettling that I believed you knew:  
the precious ring, wrapped tightly in metal  
keeping me on Earth, grounding us, was you.  
"We're not meant to be" – a coward's way out.  
Just say you don't love me. Without a doubt.



Photo by Jordan Thompson

# The Darkness Mounting





## The Darkness Mounting

Why does it seem you're at peace with  
leaving?

Only you, my dearest, can inform me.

Am I missing the trick to your calming?

Colon, bracket – control+C, control+V.

Unsought lessons in absolute darkness,  
my eyes are straining to see the blackboard.

Chalk outline circling love now lifeless.

Doctors detailing cures I can't afford.

I tell myself I want what's best for you.

You *should* be selfish, and you *can* be free.

I want to be selfless, I really do.

But no one taught me how I could just *be*.

Following your divine script toward the  
“light,”

the stage directions read Exit Stage “Right.”

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