Winter 2023

Writing through becoming, becoming through writing: The evolution of poems through 2022 and early 2023

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Writing through becoming, becoming through writing:
The evolution of poems through 2022 and early 2023

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All poems are working products. Later ‘finalized’ versions of similar poems may appear in future publications
Hive

Early spring 2022

These days are bizarre and
I navigate a maze of outstretched arms with closed eyes
I orient by strange laughter and water hitting water
and the hands of people who knew me before I was curated
I am so obviously full of flies
unlike you
who can string your violin and
talk about your feelings at the same time

Middle spring 2022

I make do
Building little Hollywood in war country,
Hiding art in a desperate facade and
Love slipping sleight of hand into back pockets and
Train horn harmonizing
Glory grows green under blacklight but this,
My pencil-scratch songs

I make do
Building little Hollywood in war country,
Harmonizing with the bus breaks, and
Love slipping sleight of hand into back pockets
Glory frowns lines begging
Botox but these,
My pencil-scratch songs,
Age like honey
Working product, late winter 2023

1.
These days are bizarre and I navigate
a maze of outstretched arms with closed eyes.
I orient by strange laughter and water hitting water
and the hands of people who knew me before I curated
me, so obviously full of bees,
unlike you,
who can play your violin and sing at the same time.

2.
I make do
building little Hollywood in war country,
harmonizing with the bus breaks, and love,
slipping sleight of hand into back pockets.
Glory frowns lines begging Botox but these,
my pencil-scratch songs,
age like honey.
Impact Statement

Middle spring 2022

The last time I was crying out for help in my head, I met []. He didn’t sniff me out. I stumbled into his world. Foot in a gopher hole… A lesson. Be careful what you wish for. No one can save you… I can’t tell if I’m being too hard on myself or not hard enough.

Early summer 2022

I learn the hard way
Fairy tale bloody moral of magic beans and mixed blessings
Discerning sidewalks like a mother, new
Awareness of the playground metal, new eyes
On old mythology and
Words collateral damage
Found picking through the gentle wreck
In a way I’m glad I was
Apart already when you found me but
The smell of friendly fire drew you in
Lesson although necessary I’ll be damned if I’m grateful
(Outrage although sexy feels contrived)
Trust in man’s hands lost to handle
I am older now, as I ought to be
Working product, late winter 2023

I learn the hard way:
bloody fairy tale moral. Magic beans and mixed blessings.
Discerning sidewalks like a mother, new
awareness of the playground metal, new eyes
on old mythology and holy words
collateral damage found
picking through the gentle wreck.
In a way: I’m glad I was
apart already when you found me,
but the smell of friendly fire drew you in.
Lesson if necessary, I’ll be damned before grateful.
(Outrage, if sexy, feels contrived.)
Trust in man’s hands lost to handle. I am older
now. I ought to be.
Early spring 2022

People rush past me like a dirty river.
I carry a tangled necklace,
a pack of Marbs,
a wet brain above a dry throat,
and a slim knife strapped somewhere soft.
There are no children playing marbles in this square.
There are no old men sweating over chess or
coins in the fountain.
There is a clover flower pushing through a crack between bricks
I try to avoid

~

People rush past me like a dirty river.
I carry a tangled necklace,
a pack of smokes,
a wet brain above a dry throat,
and a slim knife strapped somewhere soft.
There are no children playing marbles in this square.
There are no old men sweating over chess or
coins in the fountain.
There is only eyeshine
and electric fences.

A clover flower pushes through a crack between bricks
I avoid the gaze of it
People rush past me like a dirty river.
I carry a tangled necklace,
a pack of smokes,
a wet brain above a dry throat,
and a slim knife strapped somewhere soft.
There are no children playing marbles in this square.
There are no old men sweating over chess or coins in the fountain.
There is only eyeshine
and electric fences.

A clover flower pushes through a crack between bricks.
I avoid the gaze of it
Loving

Middle spring 2022

I climb back into the body
The grass feels different this time,
This time around me
Like a shawl or a harness
The different grass, this time
I am the body

Working product, late spring 2022

I climb back into the body.
The grass feels different this time.
This time around me,
like a shawl or a harness,
the different grass. This time
I am the body, I am
a mask and a motorcycle mind,
and a heart that leaks blood onto my clothes,
and too many arms, far
too many arms for my own good
or the good of others,
their arms
a tangle
with mine.
Cap Hansen’s Karaoke Sunday

Middle Spring 2022

I come armed with a seam ripper and
The dramas of a Steller’s jay
Peeling paint back from the face of twenty-one Aprils,
Listening like a toddler while
White women talk shit at the farmer’s market
Their smoking secrets
Push my glasses up my nose,
Skin strains against pink inside
Ballooning hot with suburban gossip

I fold myself in between
A parking garage and a restaurant’s bare behind,
Shivering against the screaming bars a block removed

Until stairwell ghosts shatter my
Dumpster reverie

Late spring 2022

1.
I come armed with a seam ripper and
The dramas of a Steller’s jay
Peeling paint back from the face of twenty-one April,
Listening like a toddler while
White women talk shit at the farmer’s market
Their smoking secrets
Push my glasses up my nose,
Skin strains against pink inside
Ballooning hot with suburban gossip

2.
I take refuge in between
A parking garage and a restaurant’s bare behind
Breathing body doubled over seagull shit and
Stacks of cardboard,
The teeth of spiteful spring threaten snow
I stand shaking in the arms of solo mercy
Until stairwell ghosts shatter my
Dumpster reverie/prayer, send me sprinting back
Into the shriek of a bar-lined road

~

1.
I come armed with a seam ripper and
The dramas of a Steller’s jay
Peeling paint back from the face of twenty-one Aprils,
Listening like a toddler while
White women talk shit at the farmer’s market
Their smoking secrets
Push my glasses up my nose,
Skin strains against pink inside
Ballooning hot with suburban gossip

2.
I take refuge in between
A parking garage and a restaurant’s bare behind
Breathing body doubled over seagull shit and
Stacks of cardboard,
The teeth of spiteful spring threaten snow
I stand shaking in the arms of solo mercy
Until stairwell ghosts shatter my
Dumpster reverie, send me sprinting back
Into the shriek of a midnight road

3.
Sammy Davis Jr. is pointing at me from
A wall in a bar on a street once haunted
The phone number of my first love
Hangs forgotten round my neck and
Time winks it’s wink from the counter
Eyes in my head and ice unmelting,
I inhale the confession of strangers
They spill out around me like
Ribbons from a maypole
~
3.
Sammy Davis Jr. is pointing at me from
A wall in a bar on a street once haunted
The phone number of my first love
Hangs forgotten round my neck and
Time winks it’s wink from the counter
I breathe in strangers, they
Spill out around me like a toppled rice bag,
Like ribbons from a maypole
Working product, late winter 2023

1.
I come armed with a seam ripper
and the dramas of a Steller’s jay.
Peeling paint back from the face of April,
listening like a toddler
while white women talk shit over tequila.
Their smoking secrets push the glasses up my nose,
skin strains against pink inside ballooning
hot with suburban gossip.

2.
I take refuge in between
a parking garage and a restaurant’s bare behind.
Breathing body doubled over seagull shit and stacks of cardboard,
the teeth of spiteful spring threaten snow.
I stand shaking in the arms of solo mercy
until stairwell ghosts shatter my dumpster prayer,
send me sprinting back
into the shriek of a neon road.

3.
Sammy Davis Jr. is pointing at me
from a wall in a bar on a street once-haunted.
The phone number of my first love hangs
forgotten around my neck, and time
winks it’s wink from the counter.
I drink in strangers. They spill out around me
like a toppled rice bag,
like ribbons from a maypole.
Letters

Working product, early winter 2022

It’s your name wrapped across the envelope and many waters inside.
The rivers of my youth rolled like ribbons,
stamped with oversized postage, and
never mailed.
(By never I mean not yet.
By wrapped I mean curling around the lust of my handwriting,
letter after careful letter).
I buy you gifts too feared to gift you.
I write you sightless words.
I touch you touchless.
You scatter at the sound of my footsteps down the hall.
This dance for months now.
I would do it for a bit longer, I fear
longer than the water will run.
The Dog

Middle winter 2023

There are no bad dogs just
Long chains in wet yards and
When the metal rusts to breaking, who can blame him
For sinking once-proud teeth into flesh worth biting?
What happens to a bad dog put down?
Not cremated, not
Buried in dog-sized casket
Like the good dogs, with their good dog balls
What happens to the sorry body of the backyard dog?
Skin tented over tendon,
Mouth clamped around the hand of God
What happens to an empty yard
Full of languid dog?

~

There are no bad dogs just
Long chains in wet yards and
When the metal rusts to breaking, who can blame him
For sinking once-proud teeth into flesh worth biting?
What happens to a bad dog put down?
Not cremated, not
Buried in dog-sized casket
Like the good dogs, with their good dog balls
What happens to the sorry body of the backyard dog?
Skin tented over tendon,
Mouth clamped around the hand of God
What happens to an empty yard once
Full/once full of languor/once full of one forgot?
There are no bad dogs
just long chains in wet yards,
and when the metal rusts to breaking,
who can blame him
for sinking once-proud teeth into flesh worth biting?
What happens to a bad dog put down?
not cremated, not
buried in dog-sized casket
like the good dogs, with their good dog balls
What happens to the sorry body of the backyard dog?
skin tented over tendon,
mouth clamped around the hand of God
What happens to an empty yard
once full?
Lover, come

Late summer 2022

Devil worship, puppet strings, heart strings
Cards and psychics and holiness and profiting churches, tithes
Reaching out in the dark and grabbing the wrong hands
Wanting support but not wanting to be taken advantage of
Fearing people and the universe and the dark

Early fall 2022

Devil dancing
In the meat of sticky summer
Like flies circling an open wound
The stink of lust sticking to my clothing
How I feel when I’m with you
Stranger, stranger,
Would you like to see inside me?
My breath unabiding,
My secrets untrue.
Take my hand, lover come
devil dancing in the meat of sticky summer.
We, like flies, circling a wound.
Lover, come.
The speed of aging seasons,
the withering of many
leaves. It must end,
some day,
for the waltz of us.
Seek me, that I may
not so much seek, that
Satan tempt me not,
lover, that
I may not so much seek
than to burn.
Once buoyed by February, now

Middle winter 2023

Once buoyed by February, perseverating on a comma well-placed
Twice buoyant
Wanting body
Afford the recourse, divorce, horse
The morning of my birth month dies within days
False spring dipping under horizon
Hunting for crumbs,
Your communications run through me like grease
March seems like it might never come
What is it with young couples? Have they no heartbreak?
Left wanting for a softer blow
For the life of me
Familial guilt, winter’s daughter
Unkind wind

Late winter 2023

Once buoyed by February, now
perseverating on
a comma well-placed.
Hunting for crumbs,
your communications
run through me like grease.
The morning of the month dies
within days, false spring
diving under horizon.
The wind howling
unkindness, March might
never come.
Me, born of winter.
Hours short of Pisces,
bearing water’s burden.
Me, winter’s daughter,
bearing guilt of mother
season’s wrath.
Me, child of February, fighting
out of her.
This long, long labor.
Once buoyed by February, now
pondering
a comma well-placed.
Hunting for crumbs,
your communications
run through me like grease.
The morning of the month dies
within days, false spring
diving under horizon.
The wind howling
unkindness, March might
never come.
Me, born of winter.
Hours short of Pisces,
bearing water’s burden.
Me, winter’s daughter,
bearing guilt of mother
season’s wrath.
Me, child of February, fighting
out of her.
This long, long labor.
The cutting room floor (discarded threads)

Late spring 2022

An egg in a saucepan
Fried egg over ramen
Dark living room new
old movie white
blanket empty apartment

Fried egg over ramen
dark living room new
old movie and alone
heart in a teacup
blank walls save one mirror
chocolates
Tums

Fried egg over ramen
dark living room new old
movie and alone heart
in a teacup blank walls
save one mirror and a
loveseat

alone in a love seat

Late spring 2022

Caffeine hands and
Clotted blood
These days I am all
Caffeine hands and
Clotted blood,
Burning through bottles of Ibuprofen,
These days I’m all
Caffeine hands and clotted blood,