

Poems written between June - August 2026

Until Tomorrow

Each morning she set out for the day,
placing her palm against the brick that made her home, secure.
She looked up to the sky curious to see the colors cast;
eager to know how they would shift at every hour.

She smiled to the sun that held her face with warmth,
and thanked the wind that came as gentle relief.

Often as she walked, she turned to face the trees in all their character:
some young and held up by poles, others old and tall, creating an entire tapestry of shade upon the street.
She reveled in their beauty and resinous smells.
She shrunk joyfully against their mystery and stature.

She'd venture later into conversation sparked by curiosity,
and even when agitated or uncomfortable, she was safe.
She could affirm this a thousand times;
she was well.

But each day, in a few or many pockets of solitude,
when her mind was no longer attentive,
when her thoughts were free to conjure up a flowing, reckless sea,
two figures, Despair and Sorrow, would present themselves to her.

Their eyes so downcast and their posture so slumped
they appeared as though they were shaped by pain.
Though they were silent, they asked to be acknowledged.
You mustn't be here, she would say. *Can't you see? I am fine.*
Go on, she'd demand, the closer they came to her.

I'd like you to leave, she'd assert as she stood in the corners of her room.
But they would remain, following her slowly, only driving her mad.
It was this until she succumbed to their persistent presence;
fatigued, she sat with them in silence.

Other times they came speaking of memories,
telling her of harm to flesh and fear she ought to wear.
They'd bring her images, and though she'd want to look away,
she'd find herself transfixed and unable to reject them.

Then they would walk together, their downcast eyes fixed on very same streets she had walked that morning;
their hearts becoming heavier than the very stones they stood upon.

She did not look at the smiling faces around her.

She could no longer smell the sun-baked earth.
She felt the wind as some testament to melancholy.
This pattern of visitation continued for weeks, until one day,
she remembered.
She did not have to meet them warily.

She bowed her head and asked for strength.
She spoke directly to her maker.

She prayed for mercy.
She prayed to greet them kindly.
She prayed to know them.
She prayed to help them go.

Prepared then for their arrival, she stood to face them.
She took their hands once they approached, and gently brought them to the floor.
She asked to listen their stories.
She expressed gratitude for the opportunity to understand.

And in some time, after sitting in the speaking silence
they dropped her hands and rose to their feet; looking at her with the most sincere of smiles.
She was surprised, but that soon melted into a most familiar knowing.

She watched them then, remembering, as they continued on their way.
She was sure they would return tomorrow, but today they had left, lighter.
She smiled at the sky and whispered *thank you* in the wind.

For the sake of time

I know the eye has taken some.
Our house still shakes
and wears the cracks of days,
when our neighbors doors were ripped clean off.

I watched their windows shatter,
their walls break open;
leaving a trail of home on the street.

I heard alarms so I went running
toward the sound;
but they out from every direction.
There were many of us running.
We scattered; most stopped.

I hear some say the eye is coming.
Time to impact: one year, three months, two decades, two days.
Others are calling it wind.

I've heard some are celebrating;
they say it's great when it tears.

Sitting behind steel frames in cement bunkers,
I imagine them at an altar to rapture,
praying the storm will shred brick;
burying entire families.`

I used to refuse to believe this were true,
then I saw their communion.
They broke molded Wonder Bread still wrapped plastic
and swallowed the pieces whole.

They threw whole grain on the ground
and said it was a gift;
prophecy.

Others are saying it is already here,
simply growing from its center;
like a star before its death.

As for myself,
I don't know when,
how far.

I live in the periphery
and most days I can only hear the thunder.
though I feel it in my bones.
I picture what is coming and
remember what has been.

I watch as we go on raising our children in cardboard houses;
taping alarm systems to every last street corner,
atop every last camera,
and complaining to temper our fear.

We know it is not enough.
I know this is not God.

The storm sounds like history
and spins like time,
but I refuse to mistake it for creation.

Mostly I go on writing about it,
taking pictures of the sky.

Documenting the days before
and wondering
what comes after?
what after is there?

If I were braver
I would walk straight towards the eye.
Greeting stormgoers along the way;
honest friends.

Those who feel the ways
it is already churning us.

Instead I wonder if and when
I might move beyond;
when I might be willing
to tentatively say
goodbye.

Some day soon, I tell myself,
I'll step off the porch,
forward,
if only to see
who and what remains.

I wish I had no fear of being taken to the sky.

At a "Global" conference on "Smart" farming

Great to finally be here,
in the room
"Where Decisions Are Made"
among all these
"change makers."

Here we are,
sitting in a large, leather chairs,
checking our phones,
taking notes,
at this "global" conference
for change.

Just imagine what this room
might have looked like
forty years ago!

Just look at the banner
with every continent:
Uplift the smallholder!
Build climate resilience!
Foster gender equity!

All of this diversity:
economists and entrepreneurs
from every continent.
So many more women
in dress pants.

What a relief!

Our mission
Our ethos
Our words
Yes, all of this
for *our* partners!

Our partners,
farmers,
they are valued!
We have all the
“digital tools”
to help them
farm more smart.

They may not be in the room
per se,
at our “global” conference,
per se,
but this is only because
it is not so feasible,
not so practical
for our transformative change.

Sustainable !
Inclusive !
Development !

Anyway,
it’s great to be
in this room

listening to
Smart speeches;
looking at
Smart-made powerpoints.

Where else could I learn:
the train has left the station,
along with all
Our data!

And well, yes,
their data.
Surely we need more of it,
their data,
to have an impact
...one day!

Just listen to
our keynote speakers;
we have got to
get smart, fast!

Good thing we know the science,
our social science,
our models
and assumptions.

We know what is necessary
to manufacture
freedom.
Our liberated markets.

All these questions:
for what purpose and
for whom and
within what limits,
that's fine
in theory
(silly socioanthropopoliticaecologists).

And yes, of course,
we love other freedoms too,
but let's not get
too political.

There's always
two sides
to every story,
and remember we already have
a diverse audience.

Anyways–
it's so good to be here,
fostering dialogue
bringing together
stakeholders.

There's really so much
change making to do
given the collapse of it all!

Relieved to be in the room
naming some of it,
securing the
necessary
investment!

Indeed we are ensuring
our choices are
Green and Diverse!TM

We must ensure
our practical work of
transcending limits
is certified
Responsible.

Trust us,
we know how to repeat
our framework for
transformative
change!

We wear our circles,
thinking past boundaries,
working towards
infinite growth.

All this circular, degrowth
communist nonsense

really just makes things
so complicated;
really doesn't understand
Development.

And, I mean,
look who's in the room...
Our Partners!

Surely, we must adhere to
our values,
our mandate:
Diplomacy!
Cooperation!

It's really great to be
learning together;
here, at our summit
where we speak
of our "field work"
far from summits and fields.

Trust us,
many of us have studied
for five, six, eight, ten
years (!?)
to harvest insights.

Ready to feed the world
with these insights.

Us Smart!

And, I mean,
we all worked so hard
behind screens,
reading with such ferocity,
refining our capacity
to regurgitate;
activating our nervous systems
for years, getting by on caffeine,
for *this* opportunity!

Surely, we have shown our commitment.

We have logged so many hours
on our Oracle time cards!
Never taking our sick days.

We have had so many Teams Meetings
to gather here today!
It takes a lot of energy,
Smart energy,
to make change happen.

It's clear so many of us want more
than a circular rainbow pin
after all this time;
giving ourselves to the work
without soil and sweat.

Yes, it's great to finally be here
at the thousandth conference
of the last decade
speaking of "solutions."

Decades in the making!
Decades!

Perhaps this year
we will finally overcome
all these "*barriers to scale*."

I hope by 2030-50-70
We can fix all these crises
at Scale!

You know what they say,
"Small is beautiful,
BUT big is necessary...."

Just look at *our* Partners!

If you have doubts,
please review
our annual impact report.

We spent a great deal of time
and money
putting it together.

June's song

I didn't will the swaying of my hips, the fluid motion of my arms;
the wind simply took my hand and spun me with the leaves;
as though this form was designed to dance to tap and twirl,
among the winged or walking, each wilting neighbor.

Listening to the plucked strings of the trees and wood sounds of open sky
I cannot help but harmonize. I revel in the soreness of pinched cheeks,
feet worn from steps that try to sync with the rhythm of the earth.

Oh, I was made to wear my best dressed smile and feel the percussive breath.
I refuse not to dance to the music of the day, played by the unseen
hands that hold; crafting every instrument, alive.

I run away with a thousand stories
I am neither here, nor there,
found among the inevitable;
far from a dream, vast as air.

Out on the horizon
where beginnings are made and endings perceived
I steal away with past and present,
heeding the universal language.

A life, fleeting and fragile, is real.
yet without a word or page,
a memory cast to pigment
is whose illusion;
is barely felt.

The soul without body may grow for ages.

I love the land of the living
stacked upon their portal shelves
They grow in every direction;
emerging without a center.

The Return

yes, I have known pain.

I have been blindfolded and numbed;
my ribs taken from me, used as logs
while I have been forced to give my breath
to cast a flame.

yes, I have watched from above,
as my ache and anguish were surrendered to smoke.
my smile has chipped away
till every last piece
became ash.

yes, I have been hollowed out;
my words taken deep from my belly
with jagged-edge knife and dull ladle,
leaving me with a vast
nothing to say.

and yes, I have danced on pins and needles
that I alone scattered across the floor.
I hoped to stand atop each and every point,
poised.

I believed that a hundred wounds left barely bleeding,
could one day feel tender.

yes, pain has come,
bending my body this way,
and that way,
leaving my head and heart
raw and splintered...

but my spirit has been left to soar.

yes, I have yet to see her,
She who is not mine,
who knows her Mother,
who loves her Mother and melts into her skin—
infinite sky
and immeasurable ocean.

She carries my body's memories
and bathes them in evening light.

yes, I am the flesh
born of her flight,
singing the song of crashing waves,
made of the sand rushing back to sea.

yes, I have known pain,
but the She beyond herself,
who turns tethers into honey and tears into morning dew,
She has returned it to me.

Older

Take all I have of memory,
each frail trimmings of self I hold
and weave them into other girl,
with whirling hair and softer skin.

I'll give her all my time and hear
the echoing of mother's words. I'll let her
paint my chipping walls and feed her fresh;
she's had before. She'll grip my ankles
and reach for sky, and fall asleep within
my arms. And only after several days,
with wary eyes she'll turn to ask
who's brought her here, where's kin and home.

I'll take her then to waters' edge
to name the stream a hundred times.
We'll watch the ants or wrap the weeds
between our toes and sing the songs I
used to hum. She'll gaze at me with
asking eyes. I'll find her then a textured
stone, and trace the lines that made it so.
She'll take it gently from my palm and
rub its creases with her thumb. I'll leave her
then with watchful eye and head for night,
where morning comes.

How are you?

This morning I watched a video of a young girl with her leg severed off.
It looked as though her leg had become fabric, her flesh so tattered from the dust and the shrapnel it appeared the color of bruised soot more than flesh.

Her body was slung over a man desperately running into a crumbling hospital, and she was so limp that as quick as I said a prayer she would be okay, I imagined her waking up and grew nauseous.
I wonder about that man, how many times has he carried our children like splitting sacks of rice.

Over 20,000 have been stolen from us in this way.
Some bombed into toxic ash and so many more torn apart like their limbs are expendable pieces.
I don't even know how to visualize 20,000 of anything, and for fucks sake I damn well refuse to picture of thousands of men and women as specs of data— their eternity confined into some numeric point to add to the scorecard of inhumanity.

So yeah, my heart has been pulverized and my lungs are shrunken version of what they were some years before, but I have gotten very good at filling my body up like a helium balloon.
I mean, how else are we to live through this ongoing murder, slow and fast and deliberate, pulsing through the nervous system of millions? This murder we are all participating in and naming a catastrophe-calamity-tragedy if we're naming it at all as it poisonous the whole of the earth?

It is not the only thing, of course, but it is also everything.
If we look, we see their nightmares are our own, their dreams, ours,
our kin of past and present.

And it's not like we're not all seeing it, right?
They light flames across the world, imprison our people and poison the water. It is all the same and it is cutting right through where that little girl was eviscerated.
Every time we deny her, we deny it all.
again, to answer your question,
So, because of this I did think, *why the fuck would I come to work today to sit at a desk and pretend—*
but here I am.
I've gotten quite good at the betrayal of the conscience for the sake of keeping on.
I have trained myself when to speak.
I am fairly decent at avoiding the silence it begets by constructing a silence because everyone gets so uncomfortable just thinking about it. Better not get too fucking real. Better to be “polite.”
Better to type out our grievances than discuss them out loud.

I guess my bubble is peachy keen.
Besides all the grotesque horror and disparaging of life, besides all the vileness slicing and dicing up the world, slicing language right open— I am pretty good.

Look, I'll soften up, I promise. Later I plan to touch grass and meditate.
Trust me, I know I'm speaking from the heart that feels and the mind that knows.
I will purify my mind by returning to that one sacred, untouchable space.

And I have not forgotten our kin go on living. I know many are faithful, even when they are denied a thousand times, even when they are murdered by the blade slicing across the fucking Atlantic. Even when they have filmed their cries and the crimes a million times. I can manage swallowing my self-righteousness and self-pity. What fucking right do I have to wallow?

But yeah, if you're asking,
how am I doing? As in how am i feeling?

The same as you. Right?

Jeans

She holds the knotted necklace
 with fixed eyes
and pinched fingers,
nails too nubbed to prick,
searching for a space along the tangled chain
where she can
loosen
 one chain link
to make space
 for another,
 just enough
 to widen
 the loop.

Slowly,
she tries to pull the silver thread
through,
 though her fingers quiver,
and at the sight of
 their shake
her neck begins to tighten.

 Air is pulled inward,
she has
a rubber throat
folding in on itself,
collapsing from
 its center.

A feeling she has known
 each and
 every
 time,
she has tried to
 speak of it.

She shoves the necklace back in the pocket,
where it has lived for days,

knotted and disheveled.

She has just finished scrubbing it
with dish soap and
scalding water.

This gift from her mother
she has worn through every night.
She has worn in every shower,
bearing the Saint of Protection.

Now shoved in the crease of
those jeans.

Perhaps it worked?
Protected
as it was pressed
into her skin
slight enough
not to leave a holy mark but
firm enough
to be coated in
his sweat.

That sour fluid,
she thought the
remnants
might have soiled the metal.

Perhaps she ought to wear it now?

Drape it over the sickening bruises,
a color of molding blue.

These skin stains,
no longer fresh like

 clammy palms,
 and damp underarms
and flush cheeks;
presenting themselves

in the bathroom mirror

at work.

Never enough
bb cream,
concealer,
foundation.

She does not know how-when
they were made

 unlike the images

 hanging or hovering

 at the back of her skull,

unlike the words

bashing against her teeth.

Staring at the jeans hung over the wicker chair,
she wonders,

will this necklace become a relic?

To What Has Not Been Said Aloud.

To What She Will Not Speak.

Each time she retches
word vomit

rising up like
an uncontrollable child
an incessantly flat tantrum—

*I am okay, really
Really,
I don't even know why I am crying—*

her mind presents a glass shard of the memory
smelling of stale beer.

Each fragment tastes of the bitter liquor she had enough sense not to swallow.

That realization, stung,
stings,

her lips sipping from a cup

she did not ask for

“kind of like sherry.”

This.

Then her night

belongs to narroweyes,

long limbs

in a palebluecollaredshirt.

She can picture the navy couch.

It was

SO

low,

SO

deep

and

worn

it looked like someone had

beaten it to the floor.

She can almost feel pressing against the polyester-corduroy

and the dirt

dusting her skin;

uncomfortable from the start.

She is pushing away the parts on its surface.

Sinking
into the cushion,

any prior portion
where she might have thought,
charming.

Beautiful, suits you.

He asked about her necklace.

What was the sound?

She'd know if she heard it.

Like his hands,

calloused,
dry,
and cold.

Even when she was dragged into the
in-between

space,
a semi-numb feeling,
he was still
cold.

And who was watching

when he was
up her shirt

he was so **heavy**

on top of her
chest

all over ?

Her head was

in some dark basement

s w I r l I n G

Outdoors?

in the very dim, back of the garden
the one with the sign: "*See something, say something,*"
and the art and flag
she had smiled at.

Then, there is a dark alley.

Rows of trash cans
at 3am? 4am?
A wake
she found her body was

Burning!

A disgusting puppet.

She had enough sense to shove and
fall
to the ground
the grime
and
look up
blankly stare
those
hours-seconds;
rush up that alley-street
stumbling over crevices and
cracks
~~grasping for buttons~~
~~pulling at fabric.~~

Was he surprised?

"See you, darling"

Humored?

Clearly, she can remember the feeling of,
rush-trip-walking
tears streaming,
entire face
along the main road,
putting her
under a nearby fountain.

She must have looked sweaty when she finally found a taxi.

Her necklace stuck to her wet fountain-skin.

She remembers how it felt
when she could not see
the clasp of the chain
through the throbbing
She just
needed
it
O F F!

She thought she might **rip it**,
leave it,
shove
it
in one of the cushions.

Instead,
into her pocket.

She cannot forget
the driver's eyes in the rear view mirror,
they were louder than light pressing into her own.

Darling.

she kept hearing

Darling.

Still, in her bedroom,
 again,
 in her bedroom.

She picks up the jeans and places them in a plastic bag.

She places that bag in
 another bag
 already full of trash
and walks
directly
out of her apartment
down to
the large
neighborhood dumpster
rotting in the heat.

This, only after,
 she removes her necklace
and places it in the front cover of a used journal;
 a months before journal.

She places
all of it,
cover
not fully closed

in the very back

of an unused drawer.

She laughs at the garbage.

If only.