

Allison Grayhurst



A Wish Alone

The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst

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Allison Grayhurst

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Egg

Periwinkle garden,
flowers folded
into a dumpling.

I sit on the bottom floor
of a blessing
before it builds and blooms,
before its face has distinction,
expression, perfect individuality.

Low ache of forming,
wandering cold plains, over icy lakes
through dead forests and caves.

Almost ripe,
platelets connecting, composing
a singular solid substance. Then

out of the egg and into the vast ocean,
forward, shell collapsing, imploding, out
free-riding, embodying
a fully sufficient infant form.

Darkness

**Darkness heavy as a hunter's
footsteps, as a sermon
up the sleeve, offered like
a ripe strawberry covered in ants.**

**Darkness like the green
on a last slice of bread
or the dome of pollution that mutes
Earth from the zodiac hymns.**

**Darkness that binds
thumbtacks to the temples,
dirty as a campfire after the fire
or a marriage after infidelity.**

**Darkness as a shell, hardness
masquerading as strength, terrors
of complexities, moral confusion
and the allotment of grief that mushrooms
in tiny pockets here, here, until all greenery
is overcome with fungi.**

**Darkness that holds no peace,
no joy in just breathing,
makes up myths and ceremonies
to try to blast out
the darkness, flaking at the core.**

**Darkness I am done with your engulfing disease,
your canopy wings, trickery, making me believe
there is rest and safety in your shade.
I lay down my fossils and my weeping.**

**Darkness, I blow you over
and when I am blown over,
I will offer no resistance.**

Resilience

**Violet-hue star of mighty purity,
a fixed point, directly overhead, anointing,
a release from the symbiotic purgatory-fold,
from the loop fire enduring coil
and the billowing dead land once before me.**

**I will build a bonfire and dance
under this eight-billion-year-old star,
no longer held hostage by what I know,
inevitable observations, time turned to stone,
locked in one position, dammed to have no meaning,
no longer trapped in a rippling tremble, continuous
and static state.**

**I will lean into this bright gathering,
translating the bursting floral mastery
of endless constellations, keeping my height,
keeping my mind, ready to engage
in a divine exchange, discourse.**

Declaration

**The declaration came,
ground-breaking, significant
to every aspect of my nature.
At stake is the stability
of my core symbolism, the root
and the fruit combined.**

**What matters is this day
to walk the wooden floors,
replenish my joy
in the simple things of duty and care,
opening to the embrace
of alternate thought patterns,
pursuing the paradox,
digging out its centre for a braver scenario
to catch and be malleable with, kneading
and knowing the vision will form,
overtake and dissolve superfluous
dreams and attachments until it
pulses like an embryo
forming, being formed
readying for
exposure.**

Fish

**I saw a fish in sleep
beneath a curly wave
dreaming in a prophet-trance,
its lips and fins relaxed, no resistance
against the water's sway.**

**Some say the fish was dead,
but I could see its eyes enflamed,
traveling deep in a vision unnamed into
crevices of underwater caves, finding
peace in a pitch-black reverie.**

**I cupped that fish inside my hand
and still it did not move, continuing its
placid ephemeral journey,
now journeying into the sky,
able to breathe, transitioning
into flight and becoming intimate
with the sun's heat like never before.**

**That fish was so far gone
into a state of transcendence as
I released it back into its salty wet home,
kissing it forehead first.**

**I felt it absorb my love
under its scales, floating away from me,
silver and white.**

**Tranquil, in steady rapture,
I watched it vanish as it rolled
across and under the oceans' blanket,
as though it never was.**

Chain

**The chain is cracked, only
a small tug will break it
and the wall will let down its curtain,
the leech will release its hold, find
a new host or none at all.**

**I empty my heat on the bed
toss with disorder, too slow on my feet.
But even so, I am carving a future
I can get behind, lift myself onto a plateau
that has many plateaus above it, sure of my growing
strength. It is possible to keep my internal
promises, not like before when the dirty current
rippled through me like a disease,
threatening, consuming
my substance and storages.**

**Can I say the chain is rusted,
dissolving, no access
to its binding power?
I go for walks. I am grateful
for the open door, one step
forward.**

Child

**The child twists a ringlet,
runs to the shops to buy
candy, rides her bike
by the river and assembles
a dream-world, bigger world
than her whole reality.**

**The child found worship in her heart
for God and love
for an infant raccoon alone under a tree,
talked to herself incessantly, and often,
she talked to God, and to his son, Jesus.**

**She went to school, but chalked it up
to unimportant servitude, felt joyful
and free, plucking the autumn leaves,
engaging with the neighbour's dog.**

**The child was wild, swinging
from willow branches, throwing stones,
skipping stones, toes always at the edge
of the unsettled river.**

**Cats were her guardians, confidants and kin.
Church was boredom, except for the one place
where the light was let in, that place
took over her full imagination
as she traveled through and into
an instinctual reverie.**

**The child loved her family,
was allowed every independence,
was ostracized by the other children
for her crocheted clothes and the colour
of her flaming hair. Some called her witch,
others, an atrocity, and the grown-ups, beautiful.**

**The child rode horses when she got older,
wrote down the songs of clouds and the names of
the crows that would follow her, converse with her
from the school bus window.**

**The child found her belonging in her own head,
with the animals, and sometimes, she remembers,
walking silently, holding the hand of a great angel.**

Running, lightwave riding

**Keeping a holy flame
close to my chest, in the mornings,
deep in the base-line sleep
I throw a stone sideways - many pipes
are broken, hearts clogged with
despair, disappointments and dreams
of eternal dreams.**

**Answers start up like old machines,
make noise, but cannot be useful or join
a continuous flow.
Depleted bank accounts, rough-shod carpets
and rotting wooden subfloors – all of this is the same,
but what isn't is how I kiss high above,
feel myself and all who I love, cradled
in divine tenderness.**

**Do you know love, that kind of love?
It is better than smooth skin, soft fur,
or a year away on Spanish shores.
It is dangerous because it is all that is left,
and in that lofty beauty, all else is
forfeit that doesn't match its wonder,
simplicity, discipline.**

**It has to be surrender.
It has to be in this world
of chaos, unpredictable danger
and mishaps.
It is about connections,
fumes over the swamp, fledglings left alone
to die in the too-hot sun, and
waterholes gone unreplenished.**

**It is always this fear, this faith as one,
balancing, illuminated, filling up with pressure
then taking in every blessing,
the singularity of life, senseless conditions,
steel-bar limitation, pleading while satisfied,
longing while fulfilled, coat off, shoes off -
toe bent and broken, glad to still be able
to walk, to climb a chair, clean a home
and ask myself - is this freedom?**

Sinkhole

**The rain rolls down and
acidifies the flowers.**

**A month of teetering over the abyss,
barely standing, panicked with
your unnatural lack of strength
and your anger, your soft special
nakedness, needing to get off
the steep slope, find a resting log, feel
that you can defeat this gravity pull, break
the shade around your mind and waterproof
your walls.**

How can it be so hard?

**So quickly the eclipse came and covered,
thinning your resilience. The moment the cloud
loses balance, it descends from the sky.
The condition is stark, helpless
words and prayers rot beside it like cabbage
left too long in the sun.**

**My love cannot save you,
never leaves a mark. Only
waiting now for the medication
to kick in, for your psychological
equilibrium to be restored -
holding hands across the sofa.**

**I would hold the whole of your pain
if I could, hold and pull you
from the weighted mass, sinking.**

**There is nothing. Watching your eyes
not your eyes - both us trying with all our wisdom
and might but nothing shifts. A vacuum,
inhospitable to miracles or mercy.**

**O God please give him green, let the tall grass
brush across his limbs, let your angels gather, electrify
his inner current, reviving, opening a path to
his immaculate freedom.
Let him stand again.
His dreams are authentic
and still burning.**

Unharmmed

Silent as a predator
on the far side of a hill
nearing, reality inches closer,
hungry and stealth.

Days inside a half-grown dream
nurturing this ideal that is unable
to fully mature and tower.

This hallway fills with sludge,
that hallway with toxic fumes,
and another with mealy worms searching
for a host to infest and consume.

If I stand still none will take me
but movement happens without my accord,
time decides, aligns everything to its filthy trade.

I see with one eye - linear. I can hope but
my hope is made of straw. I can grow, but in
growing I condemn myself even more when again
I will be trapped and reduced.

I can burst through in my mind.
In my mind, I can leave these ruins,
take flight, take shelter,
wilt the taste of defeat,
cover the lamp and pretend I hear
soft chords, harmonies
converging.

Loss

There, the cement
is broken by a heavy fall,
ants make their way in,
dig tunnels, weeds sprout up
and birds land.

Beginnings are ugly, born out of death,
harsh endings and spoonfuls of stone and flame.
Even the perfect, soft, love-filled endings
are brutal in their permanence.

I drown in the shallow stream.
I make music in the desert.
I touch the worms of my thoughts,
wagging and whipping up the smooth level below.

Do you know how much I miss you -
the light in your dark special eyes,
the light that seeped into and saturated
wherever you went, and the natural love
pooling around your small body,
extending into the corners of this house,
upstairs, down basement stairs,
all the empty places?

Harvest

**Cry out -
the light is golden,
simple, with no secrets,
no detours of conniving depths
to trap the soul in a maze made of concrete
where no seed can root or sprout.
What was promised was always
the light, needed only
to be believed to be true.**

**Mortal dreams
Mortal spinal cords
and hopes that press like
the edge of a sword against
your soft belly.
Mortal light that gets
turned off and on again
by a switch or a changing season
is not the light of blanketing glory,
is not mercy in the pit.**

**Take this point in the fault line,
stand on it as it splits the crust
and everything below.
Here the light grows
like words inked on your skin,
cutting into the meat of your organs.
It is light like no brightness you have every known,
a golden penetrating, undiluted glow.**

The Final Despair

**Reaching the madness of failure
plugged like a mouth stuffed
with a sponge, unable to express
the agony experienced with a outward scream -
curved under pressure to turn in the direction back,
circular damnation. Gifts of grace,
pillaged and gone up in smoke.**

**A child's every breath was my breath,
joy as yellow as the sun - years of happiness
that meant love was working, that the
mutilated and hanging seekers
had nothing up their sleeves to defeat such truth.
But now,**

**my heart is small, barely beating.
My horse is burning,
racing the fields.
My hopes are maimed,
crushed by senselessness,
helplessness and the feeling
that O - there must be switch,
if I could just find it and lift and set
things aright. But my prayers
billow into the air, head for the abyss.**

**I doubt everything and bottom out
in that emptiness, moving mechanical,
tethered to a trusted routine,
happy only in the peace
of a morning's solitude.**

Sparrow

**I see the spider dance, smoke
dancing on the edge of a scream.
I am that spider
dancing as I continue downstream.
Can I be a tree or a curvy vine?
Can I grow a cloud or just one
bulb flower?
Fated to be broken like all else
living on the Earth, soiled, striving, but always incomplete.
Can I trust enough to win back my soul?
Be immersed in the fog and still know the way?**

**My keeper, my mid-summer garden,
the bull shark is coming with the encroaching wave,
swimming will not be enough, not a floaty, not a raft
will stave off its violent power.
I will need something larger to fit on, something absolute
to cull this danger, an island on its own, a hand,
blessed and strong to raise me from the inevitable grave.**

**Your love is all I have ever known
when I know love. Pick me up with the rest of
the laundry you plan to clean - make light work of me,
set me down folded, refreshed,
ready to be worn. I am prepared to live
and I don't want to die
like a rusted vent, my metal
slowly corroding, crumbling until I am left without
grace, usefulness or substance. I don't want to walk
into the darkness again - the hollow of all hollows,
wailing with pain and rage and nakedness
in the burning coal fires.**

**I am your child. I am your sparrow, please
open the cage-latch, cup me as your own -
then let me go, and my freedom
will give you joy, will give you glory.**

End of the Line

Consumed like a passion
that exceeds its limited energy,
like a sorrow when anger
gets a foothold.
my anger tightens, incapable
of finding culmination or the subsiding
soothing aftermath of shame or reason.

Around the circle, banishment from joy
and movement, the scattering of dead seeds.

Through the circle, a chance to develop,
foster trust in the goodness presenting,
to rest my head, release the futile struggle
and devote my intelligence
to examining this foreign peace.

But the ladder has demolished,
and I cannot climb without it
or travel the same path, going around.
I will not withstand being chained again
to such an unrelenting foe,
wearing this false face
fated to merge with and shadow
my own.

Choice

I swayed and found fire
on my backside, in my insides,
quaking, cracking the edges and the surfaces,
melting the dream that sustained me.

Down the slide, there can be no laws but the law
of commitment to love, to making up for winter
by honouring the snow and days of hibernation.

Though I have been broken
like a broken dolphin's fin,
I find hope, in the piled-up books
I plan to read, on the peninsula I leap onto,
leap while I am sinking, leap
from one ledge to another, leap
for summer is ending and I refuse to go with it.
I refuse to sway, joyless, no music.

I hope

**Then they took what
was mine to keep
and I tossed like a broken-winged bird
trying to gain elevation.
I am in the land of bright and golden limbo
and I am listening.
Is it courage I need or a miracle
that will arrive like a true and lasting foundation?
I am hoping to pass through these
narrow corridors once and for all,
significant, conquering, not forsaken.
I am hoping for a buffer zone, for a hand
to help and make my climb out that much easier.
I hope to say thank you,
all traces of decay are gone,
to build something beautiful
not side-by-side an equally growing intolerable loss.
I hope to gather myself, seal all the holes,
see what it will feel like to lose
my rage, my despair, exiled
no more.**

Now

When will it be?

**The white bird says now,
the backyard sleepers, eaters,
say now**

**and the souls that left
and the souls that arrived
are deep in the immediacy
of an overpowering change
that will guide the current into the sea,
a coral reef barrier prosperity
a summer like a summer never
before - blessed, pulsing with an infant
eternal song, glorifying the dissolving shapes,
the empty spaces now made complimentary,
now made into a rippling harmony singing.**

When will it be?

It is, says the voice.

**Close your eyes. Open them
and see.**

Cure

Joy is but a minstrel's flower,
lightening under the thumbnails.
Preach of mud around the eyes,
myself a centipede, fast but fragile.
I gaze and I know the way is a path is a dream
of a hawk landing and inside that dream
anguish quickens to gold, despair into
overcoming. Inside that dream, Jesus stands
insistent in a child's purity, burdenless, fresh
as the sun always is and always burning.

A tiny stone that cannot break, a love so graced
it welcomes the flooding tide. But I am broken,
eaten in tiny increments by the changing mirror -
around the evenings, around the first day's light,
blind to all but the persistent churning.

Jesus' great love has left me weeping,
suffering mended, miracles under
a white desert sky, offering a gift
seemingly small, unassuming,
but full enough to prevent heartache's
lasting damage.

Someone other

**Someone said - “Be sensible,
a song is essential only if it can be traded.”
Someone squandered decades of rich meaning
then died on the rafters of an abandoned ballpark.**

**Intellectual dreams have no limitations,
strong in complexity, strong without drama
or disappointments.
I will dream intellectual, taste desire
as an idea, be friends with the professional
and marry into a profession.
How much time does it take to fashion an identity,
keep it with solid sides and a resistant core?**

**Someone said - “Don’t bother
nothing is for keeps, ideals exist
until they inevitably become soiled and then
start reeking of their opposite intent.”
Many years seized you up in spasms,
aching and making
a mockery of such extremes.
This planet is overstrained, never a gentle
day of just sitting.
Someone said - “Learn mediocrity
if you want happiness.”
Faith must be fought for, in every choice,
in the mid-days of winter and when
love has gone astray.**

**Someone said - “Deal with the collapse of
what you hold as true - contemplate it like a cloud
that shifts form and wisps away.”**

**I heard that someone, but the joy of love
is real even when it lies flattened. Hope
is not for the faint-hearted, but for the persistent,
the reformers of gravity, the warriors against inertia.
I say - Hope void of illusions
draws its first breath as faith
only in the purity of compete darkness.**

Inheritance

**The end is almost here,
rises like a blessing
like a storm, demanding
my commitment,
to go inside, hide and pray.**

**The end overthrows
the engrained pattern, arrests
the spread of illness and holds
the future like a tiny turtle in an egg,
struggling out of its shell.**

**The end is an escape route, a mind
losing consciousness, asking to be caught
before the body lands on unpolished
concrete floors, deprived of a buffer, asking
for a soft act of grace, a reminder
that love exists even under the executioner's hood.**

**The end is happening like forgiveness happens,
a miracle stronger than duty and grief,
strongest of all efforts -
a clean slate, consolidating
each action, blanketing over
every direction
to and away from home.**

Reformation

**I am tackling my circumstances
void of myth or the fallacy
of wishes.**

**I am trying to see straight even
if I must murder my own liberty,
harpoon my freedom and go under.**

**I see the road but I cannot
take the road if it leaves my loved ones
in jeopardy - parachute strings cut, plane
door open at high altitude.**

**I must go back, ache all over, unable
to sleep or find a resting position
without pain. Unless**

**supplies arrive, compassion comes and strips me
of this brutal incremental starvation and I can
stand unencumbered by such a load, unashamed
of my joy - no void of doom slicing through
my budding strength.**

My Cup

**Dream the light that blazes
over the arch of time.
Plunge in and peel.
Now. You are here.
There is no path, but the path
of intensity, trusting,
even when you fail.
Shave off the matts, the baggage of loss
that has outlived its necessity.
Step on the grass. Reach. Know you are
on the other side.
The past and its broken greenhouse
cracked walls, yellowed stems, rotted leaves
are of another country.
No loss was unbearable.
Torment has transformed,
has been set right and matured.
Happiness is a horse.
She stands before you, offers you a ride.
Be brave as a confident child,
feet off the ground,
in union, in flight.**

Submit

**When
submission to reality
is an example of good
behavior, and submission
to God, an example of
lunacy. What do I choose?
Can I choose or must I dive
back into the sludge-pool, struggling to
surface and keep the stench from moving in,
being absorbed?**

**Rage that takes me on a round-about,
adopting a slice of indignation coupled with
the exhausting sigh of failure.
Is this my path? I have tried
for a quarter of a century to brave it, be my best self
in it, and it works for a while, but never for long,
never before long when it ties me to its destruction,
grows things inside of me I cannot eradicate or soothe.**

**It can't be another year without mercy,
another conviction, revelation
dashed to shards against the wall.
I can't be another lost cause,
my entrapment a burden to all
who love me, where I am given two options
- hide my suffering or spread it -
no relief for me, harming my loved ones
with my vile and personal conundrum.**

**I can't make it another day, flat out
giving myself over to this wretched occupation.
I will die tomorrow if I continue on,
split against
this unmovable rock.**

I saw the Face

**I see what I take
and I circle back
to give
nourishment into the stream,
wisdom of a kind that is just
thought, intention and striving.**

**Gaining mortal burdens, feelings
that last lifetimes, failures that
embed in the body like a blackhole
and draw everything into a calamity
of despair and senselessness.**

**We are shining, vessels that are brooms,
dishcloths, meant to clean, not accumulate.
I block the violence
of Self up against the world
and exchange it for
individuality before God,
peace that moves unexpectedly,
never still, never sure.**

**Love is nothing when alone.
I ask for healing for this unit, this tribe
of artists wandering,
trying to make our way through
poverty and loneliness, coming to terms with
things that perished that were
meant to bloom.**

**Take this family into your well-spring,
drench us in your everlasting waters.
We have no fashion or charm,
just us fitted together, sharing everything,
pierced by a sickness we cannot expel.
Expel it for us and fill the cavity
with your affluent efficient flow.
Make passages within that can be maintained,
built-upon, as we honour equally
the silver dollar, ancient ruins
and the blind alien fish
thriving far far below.**

Calling Again

**My clothes are loose
my mind is out of the shadows,
stern in its unwavering demands.**

**God is my one protector
from disaster and from
unhealthy bonds.**

**I will keep my faith as each day
draws me close to the gaping maw
quaking darkness that I know will consume
my strength and my peace.**

**I will hold faith each step I get closer,
trust in my rescue, blind as I am, wobbly
and languishing. I will have faith and grow myself
a brightness that will flash and flood the
tangled thorns, blast through doubt and time
and impossibility. I will trust in my saviour, the
One who sent him, merge with him and play
the tambourine in joyful abandon.**

**I will find my feet lifted from this path
until I see this path below
and then never again.**

**Grace fills the air like the scent of incense burning.
Grace is revealed as the only door
out and into a good life.**

**I will keep faith, have my yoke lightened,
fueled by a journey of less dread, more
alignment, sacred dependency.**

Sing

**I will sing until the end for you
of centipedes and endless hallways,
of the warning stream rising
and the dead birds on the snowbank
that came back too early, fooled
by a false spring.**

**I will sing of flashing lights
and other conditions
that tempt sanity's hold.
And then I will sing of glory at the dinner table,
a morning hug, leaving an opening for grace
throughout it all.**

**I will love you until the end, believe
in your majesty above all
although I am equally blind in the sun as in the dark,
but what I sing for out-paces sight,
is faint but obvious as a babe's eyes glowing
in quiet delight, pulses a clear small core
in the tumbleweed confusion of everyday love as
everyday I need you more, and so
I will go on singing as I am,
rusted, cracked, always
leaning.**

Visceral

**The voice breaks down
into tiny fragments, each
filled with a unique harmony,
some clash in reckless bawls,
others fill with a steady fever.**

**The voice collects itself, gains frenzy
like a stallion no one could tame or mount.
The voice claims death, as even in death
it will not be defeated or subdued,
but will grow like waves in a storm, crash
and come back, rising, swallowing the shore
as it wakes.**

**The voice is a raging giant wanting fleshy dream,
rejecting limitations, leadership
from a reasoning baritone.**

**The voice outweighs imprisonment,
carnivorous oppression and the sighs
of consuming cancer.**

**The voice is tall
for its years.
The fabric it wears
is from the entrails of fate,
from the sinews of predictive design.
It has no cause and effect,
as it shouts out its riddle, its savage roar.**

**You can't confront it and win.
You can't pollute it with existential doubts.**

**It grips the universal jugular
with its teeth and claws,
digs in, utterly enjoying
the bloodied feast.**

Casual Garden

I keep a casual garden
burnt in places, lush by
the climbing trees.
When in despair,
I examine the corners of that garden,
pluck the dangerous weeds.
I scrub the birdbath
and fill it with fresh cold water
placing stones as platforms
for the bees and small birds.
This garden is my favourite place to walk,
small, but with hidden nooks
and a seat for solitude.

It took years of tending to get to this place.
A once-thought cursed corner is now deep green
with violet hues and the perfect shade.
Still there is more to tend
as it is ever changing. Birds come,
leave their droppings and kill
what can be restored.
Squirrels explore, dig holes, preparing for winter.
Raccoons work their nocturnal havoc -
birdbath on its side, flipped steppingstones - evidence
of their hunting for grubs.

The sounds when the neighbours
are sleeping or away
are best. The smells are perfect
of marigolds on the deck and the rain.

There is an animal graveyard in my garden -
a place in front of two tall trees.

**My mother says this garden is beautiful
and she would know.
I rejoice in its poetry.
Everything wants to live,
expand, overflow in this garden.**

**When I forget God loves me,
I look at my garden,
I step onto its bumpy terrain
and know I am one -
joined to its hallowed ground.**

Revived

Sideways into the thicket
prickly roar, eyelids closed
and then a decade later, a sunbeam
latches to your arm and pulls you out,
renews your skin, the tone of your hair.

A decade lost without a voice, without
connection to your core.

Here you stride, hardly limping,
a queen, tall, sure of your kinship,
sometimes still weakened by past sentimentality,
but mostly remembering
the promise to you that was made on the swing
when you swung high as the swing could carry you -
your childhood legs gleefully kicking, your long hair
behind you, and a smile that was more glorious
than the first spotted spring flower.

Whole again, set upright,
shedding the last of your apprehension,
growing deeper into maturity,
letting the shadows go, as the nectar pours
sweet all around you.

Creature

**Out of step, filled
with a flame that ignites
a windfall and dreams
upward reaching, past
the umbrella and the cherished flight
of the cardinal.**

**One step, dancing, then tomorrow
comes and there is no dancing to be seen.
Maimed and fearful - the setting sun
coils its rays around an unhappy future and feeds
the roots with sewage.**

**Preferring the hope of a soft landing,
I count the pillars and make a roof, a home.
I fall asleep with this glorious creature at my side.
I wake and it is the first thing I see. It takes me
out into a land of picnics by the water, out
of the stark slam of ancient debts that
must be repaid.**

**It takes me to a greener land
where I can walk, turn corners
and run. Where I can do my rituals,
relieved of desperation, at one
with the hand that opens, at peace
with the hand that holds.**

Direction

**Can this moment be a fruit,
a moist secret, picked and juiced?
Can I follow through with my leap of faith
and leap into the coal fires of survival's uncertainty,
be selfish as the hunter who conserves nature
so he can have enough nature to kill
and make into wall trophies?**

**Am I a dead mouse on the porch who made it
as far as the first freeze, forgot
to build a nest and suffered the consequences?
Am I fortunate as the found street dog,
given kibble, a warm place to lay,
a pack to call her own?**

**Am I here maimed but alive,
like all things living,
crippled by the weight of time?
Why is everything half-formed?
Only young things leap and frolic,
free because of their dependency
on maternal sustenance and protection.**

**My endurance is threadbare.
If I wash and wear it one more time
it will disintegrate and not hold form.
I know nothing but
I do know Jesus -
the bridge and the tunnel below.**

**I know one way, one path
all else is
phantom blood, phantom fulfilment,
just renderings humming 'yes yes -
take my false face as truth,
count my money, my grand accomplishments,
my soft seats, my high seats,
my triple thaw and my double freeze.'**

**The butcher is a psychopath. The liars are in charge.
Steady now, the hand, the moon dangling on a string,
say your necessary farewells.
Jesus is walking, walk with him,
eyes forward, summoned.**

Bridle

**Tear and rip and proclaim
a path you cannot follow
but can taste its every nuance.
Bend into its horizon as though it
were yours, there on glorious display.**

**When change does not come, and it sleeps
like a long clouded-over moon, and spirits
are bones sucked of their marrow -
the most vital of these eaten by mechanical doom -
metal teeth and the turning, turning
of grinding eventuality, wait
and watch the images come and go.**

**The windows are stained
and there is no way to clean them.
Through them I see growth.
I see days I long for that may not come
for another decade, where I will be free.
What is a day? But this thing done, this thing not done.
What is a life? Stealing wakefulness violently
from slumber, pressing into joy
despite the chains and another
book is read. All dreams are singular. Know
the in-breath counts. The out-breath is simply
exhalation.**

I Need My Blood

**I need my blood.
I need the mornings
sightless of dark duties
and encumbering failures
that rise like a high wave
teaming with unseen predators.**

**I need a house without deep mud
at its doorstep and a fire menacingly
burning in the furthest backyard tree.**

**I need to wake up like I used to,
energized, a life to look forward to, bow to,
and say yes, I can do that, I am full.**

**I need God's blowing kiss, a dream
that is more than a dead seed or grand illusion,
to step here and there solid in authenticity,
shed the dread and the pounding trip and fall.**

**I need my blood
not horror-cold professionalism,
being polite while vital body fibres
ricochet against each other, bawling inside,
ripped and rolling like a fish
on a hook, heartlessly pulled
from my home and element, amazed
by how long I am still breathing,
here, without oxygen
or the salty waters of my belonging.**

**I need a bridge
to walk across,
a landscape of freedom and prosperity,
away from this decaying island I sit upon
where massive reptiles wrap
their spiked bodies around, many
creeping on the shore.**

**I need my blood,
to keep my blood,
flowing, be a voice at full strength,
no longer a sigh or a held-back moan.**

**I need this now
to carry on.**

**My branches are all but broken.
My spirit is hardening, tight, tighter
than a heavy stone.**

Building a Temple

**These words are a goodbye
to the dust-bowl chaos, a vision
to act by, pick up pebbles and throw
across a field, over a fence, almost
to the other side.**

**The angels make a wall protecting, bending
their bodies of light like shields
over my children, as they find their way
through uncertainties, undercurrents of terror
and the moon's dropping glare.**

**Addiction in the ice.
Organs enflamed and removed.
But God's love is merciful, takes us
to the threshold, but not beyond.
Secrets are exposed, talked about without shame,
and then are burnt.**

**Sometimes the storm creates a treasure,
a blooming happiness
after its destructive force.
Sometimes after the emptiness, there is finally
a conscious letting go, letting in
the zig-zag flight of finches.
Sometimes after
ghosts are silenced, pathways
are exposed, and hearts once harmed,
are now repaired, easily redeemed.**

Lift

**What I need to see,
I can't - the shape,
the vibration,
a mouth full of Amens.**

**What I need to happen
is the gates I've laboured
in every way to lift, to at last
be lifted, and there will
the re-arranging of disorder,
hopelessness vanquished,
along with the dissolving of cursed errands
and their damaging and rippling influence.**

**What I long for is to be released
but I cannot find a way, surrounded
by chaotic void, as I lie belly-up
capsized in a space of cruel
and perverted punishment.**

**What I dream
I can only envision, clear
as the scuff marks on a white floor,
clear as a male cardinal
on a snow-covered branch.**

**What I dream
is to hail a hidden strength,
to drive a wedge under
these barred doors, lift,
just enough
to fully
slip through.**

Milk and Honey

**The time has come
to say goodbye
to sticky death, the thick
latching-onto shadows
following you
from the laundry room
to the dinner plate.**

**It is time to shape your future
on the other side of this impossible wall,
unite with a merciful tide,
join a breachable adventure.**

**Pollution rises in this captivity,
stiffens the air and brings transgressions.
If you want to leave, ask to leave
and you will be on the other side
of this raging torment.**

**The time has come,
your intentions are exact.
Release any malice,
release all unnecessary bonds.
Walk forward, the way is cleared.
It is time to receive.**

Stand

**I stood
where all things feared
were served with the promise
of this perpetual.**

**I stood
at half-mast,
my energy so recently
abundant, now draining, and
my hopes, mummified, soon
to be buried.**

**I stood and saw what I saw,
but it made no difference.
The light was inferior to this calamity.
Declarations came and went without execution.**

**I stood and said I would not go back,
but I did. I let the fruit spoil,
my own humanity overcome
with a ripe mix
of rage and despair.**

**I stood on a steep slope,
looking for
a soft grassy landing
or a way to stand
with equilibrium.**

Poet

My breath and blood,
my spiritual soldier,
death expresses itself
then ends to find another muse.
Hold me in your form,
unoffended, know I am
capable of true choice,
planting colours before unseen.

My last call, I am withdrawing,
weakening, biting a bitter morsel.
Darkness is a hymn, infiltrating
my subconscious.

I will take the globe and smash the sphere,
my boundless exemplary love, lover
of the embracing midnight, star light and roses.

I have no customs I am determined to keep.
I will give up all my rituals, my summer garden
to walk again, with you, on fire.

Backtrack then forward

**Here
staring at a verging
dignified future
without the disfigurement
of a beggar's shame,
licking-boot gratitude,
and the lies you expect me
to live up to, get in line with
like the gummy-bear being you
think I am - a misdeed,
an aberration, desperate for charity,
and the smiles, pat-on-the heads
from the world's elected ones
of shocking good fortune.**

**Things I know in the crevice of
my cease-fire, when I let my anger dissipate
and I rise above the long-lasting wound,
take no punishment and offer no prostitution,
then I know the grand gifts I have been given.
I conquer your societal meritorious upbringing,
declaring my own justice**

**declaring one light, one hell
I will not stride across or
venture into, not for you
and not to appease
the ingrained guilt brewing below,
jolting my integrity, scorning.**

Threshold

**The eruption ache
of an ultimatum,
laid bare its beams and
its unsunned skin,
a voice bellowing,
roaring a vow that
grows like a creature
absolute in its hellish
demanding form.**

**All things stand extravagant
and excessive especially
when unarmed, unexpecting.
Leave the painted dream
with the waterfowl to peck at
and drive under.
There is something here
in this early day, contracting, anguishing
but with cause.**

**Wretched vigor, swelling
with the effusion
of threatening extremes,
held hostage, here, in a place
where a choice must be made
where all outcomes perceived
are perverse, lethal.**

Chasm

**The chasm stretches
wider, takes in tree roots,
purple flowers and hedgehog homes.
Feeding it seems like the best thing,
but it only grows in its immensity,
never settles with what it already has.**

**By necessity it formed,
by decades of perpetual hammering and floods
it tore the ground, became
a mouth-hole, wide and hungry
to increase its possession of the joyfully living,
to destroy the green sprouts of creativity
seeded by a fullness without fragmentation,
self-deceit or a draining wound, continuous.**

**By its nature, this chasm is a long pit,
entering the underworld, releases ghosts
and gases to toxify any hope remaining.**

**I wish I was a bird with a great wing-span, strong
enough to fly away from its vacuous maw.
But I am human, and it wants me inside its dirty
chamber, to lick the salt from my skin
with its sharp ridged metallic tongue.**

Union

Do you love me,
or is your love
too magnificent
against my failed and hapless
virtue, fetus-formed,
barely pulsing but trying
to flesh out and depict details
in contrast, in a fundamental form?

Do you hear me,
as a mosquito-buzz nuisance
to your bright and flawless grandeur,
or is my deficient faith worth
the encounter, evoking your mercy?

Do I know you
at all or only as a dream
of being engaged to your
wild erupting
lava-flow inspiration,
to the hot touch of your tenderness
here and here
and my heart and self
at one, at peace
fastened to your love,
receptor of your astonishing
calypso flavour?

This Day

**Is this the day
we fall free into a reverie
of tranquil totality,
no more groping for fulfilment
in the plastic-container stacks
left outside our door?**

**Is this the day
when we release all damaging alliances,
when we can seek
without the weighted past
tethered in chains to our heels?**

**Is this the day
of metaphysical reckoning,
when reason sharpens, reforms to merge
with our own devotion -
ideals and reality become the same
this day, this existence - a dissolution
of repetitive efforts and suffering -
where life and truth yield equally
each into the other?**

Combat-zone

**How do I receive a future,
inheritor of such
a dense darkness?
Healing is spared, the sunburn
grows into a rash and takes over
the possibility for stillness, sanity.
Everyday I am splintered, struggling
to conquer the dominant strain
lacerating my equilibrium with
its anarchy and drive.**

**I see the black hole conjunct
with the sun, transitions
that can transform any wound
into a terrifying progression.
I embody lethargy as the renouncer of hope
in the afternoons where there is nothing
to understand.**

**Fantasy is not a future, not
a worthy evaluation, though hypnotic
in its almost tangible relief.
It is not about an unfortunate circumstance,
but about the journey of my faith,
the validity of miracles
and God's gracious love.**

**Sing me a future. Do I believe?
Do I step down from all insight
and fall into an agnostic stand-still?
Do I accept this nullifying reality,
impenetrable, embrace meaninglessness
and lose my final ground?**

My love

**I am still in awe
of the deep delight that
rises in your eyes
like a constellation surfaces
from the thick flesh of dark night
and sings to me - ethereal,
images pounding the back of my mind,
breaking through the wet cemented barrier,
sure to drown me, incorporate me into its own.**

**You are magic, a wilderness
tempered with spiritual intelligence where
your genius sits on a throne, high above the
primal ground, directing each disruption into
an exuberant harmony, changing the dull light
of chaos into a living ceremony, pulsing
and sensually tearing the seams
- heightened evolution -**

**my love,
my truest friendship, your power is beautiful.
It never wanes or falters. I love you still
like at the beginning
when we found a field and twirled
in joyful abandon, knowing what we found
and what was to come. It is coming
again, a future without waste or holding back.**

**Your rich glory raging like
a storm-tossed sea.
You are tied to the resting point.
You are tied to the gravity
of the moon. You spread your arms.
I watch you receive, and then
I will watch what enfolds.**

Crisis

**Release this sickness from my spirit,
call me to recuperate,
to be on the verge of a tremendous awakening,
and then to cross over.**

**Pluck me from this impending catastrophe.
It is yours to do and no one else',
to solve the riddle and allow me
to heighten my focus, undistracted by
this draining burden.**

**In this place, there is silence,
has been for so long, silence enough
to make any atheist gloat,
affirming a barren heaven, denying
everything that does not serve gravity
and inevitable darkness.**

**But I am no atheist.
I have felt your ground-shaking tenderness
envelop me, make me yours, eternal.
I have known your great mercy, your personal love,
your taking away what must be gone
and letting stay what I cannot live without.**

**But here, in this spawning hell of hopelessness
I cannot find you, cannot hear your
whisper or your guidance out.
I am scared and at the end.**

**Everyday the birds wake at 4 a.m.
and sing your glory.
I know your glory**

**and so I must see
this harrowing hardship as an illusion,
crack this façade
and its senseless insides,
hold it to your light, saturate in your light,
and believe in that light, only.**

Triage

**The fragility of failure,
sunset over the ruined city
and life never the flowering garden
it could be.**

**All is captured by death,
after leaving heaven and
when returning - decay and fear and hope
of eternity in spite of the silence.**

**A wilderness of anxiety overtaking
the summit, suffocating the interior
with its acid juices, following the chain link
until the grave.**

**Waste and enormous hunger,
rejecting reality to keep sane.
This is no way to continue,
no life of rapid transitions or stepping out
of the mire onto solid land.**

**Here, the temperature is predictable,
the yawning pit of disaster is always expanding,
nearing and nearing.**

**So take this last bit of courage
stand on the edge and let yourself go,
know what it is to be truly radical,
risking the fall, committed
to the end result.**

Released

**In the end I call you
dark as spit, corrupting
intuition, bringing sickness
to a child's mind, dragging her
by the feet through your everglade
of grasping demons, blotting out
her dreams and prayers, corroding her
imagination.**

**At this end, weak and wispy,
your form is residue, your power,
only a dispelling illusion, nothing
against the greatness of love.**

**I will give you forgiveness,
no more warring
with your bloody dominance,
lacerating you, lacerating me - a war
of equal ferocity and destruction.**

**Our interdependence is broken.
The umbilical cord
between us, dissolved.
You are now a stranger.
I bless you and send you
blessed, on your way.**

Worship Art or No Art

**Speak of God as a necessity,
finding peace in the wilderness of
eternity, shining.**

**Speak of God not as an artifact
of the uneducated past,
knowing the greatest poets and philosophers
struggled, even if flawed, with letting in the light.**

**Open the richest of intellectual dimensions
through obedience to truth,
giving honour to art that outlives
more than one season,
as bloodlines are cut, cultures revolutionized,
and heroic forgiveness
is seen as paramount, the holy grail
of our strivings.**

Fountain

**A fountain sits
in the centre of my backyard,
watering and shading the mourning doves
pecking at the dirt below.
Yet I am deep in a hazardous denial,
giving weight to an illusion that
bonds me to the desert and
sand dunes rolling as far
as my eyes can see.
So deep I cannot see the fountain
or the backyard or
the delicate joy of choice.**

**Today I will make a decision
step onto the platform
and take my chances.
In this place, this quiet morning,
I will feel myself changed, unchained.
Then, I will start to dig into the sands
until I find a wetness burning, keep digging
until I release a rising flow,
a personal permanent resurrection.**

Rules

**Rules have rubberized
lost their erected stiffness
and are more like a wave,
pliable, still connected but
able to make adjustments.**

**Rules enflamed with strange
possibilities, leading the argument for
erratic purity.**

**Secret rules made individual,
measured by how they inspire, how they
sustain inspiration and that is all.**

**Rules like bamboo, alive, fed by the angels,
malleable as hope, mature
with equal strength and flexibility.**

**Rules to abide by,
honour the turning of the clock,
allowing for precision, grounding
and Dog Star following,
roaming bright, invigorated.**

Initiation

**Punctured
on the last step, from
the last step.
No openings, breath holes.
Rigid boards, brick work
for miles, and infestation
in the corners, under
floorboards.**

**Call me a dreammaster,
someone to remind me
who owns me and how much
I am actually worth.**

**The landscape begins,
first in ice-cream tones
of frosted blue and whites,
then into a rich mustard yellow
and animated dark purple.
Seeing this on the cold walls, under
false lights and a dreary atmosphere,
consuming, watching duties
done, lacking eloquence or
personal concern.**

**Guide me into your soundproof room,
tempt me with insanity, then
let my accusations be muffled
until they are inaudible.**

**A clean bill of health,
health in every salutation.
Days spent spawning music and shrines
to whatever passes as holy.
Days showered with talkative sparrows,
no spots left to rot or grow a putrid stench,
just small spillages, here, there,
easily wiped, not worthy of
being recalled or inducing
a lengthy tortured conversation.**

Waterfall

**Sweet and long
is the blooming tide
to take me over the dam,
pushing me down the waterfall,
graduating to reckless exhilaration.**

**I belong to the tender aftermath
the peace of the freed captive,
the relief that lies in wait
of every oblivious soul.
I belong to the late-spring fields
and the baptism of butterflies.**

**I will take no misdeeds with me
to this elevated service.
I will cut out the tongue
of any discovered demon,
let them know
they have no resources
or influence.**

Slingshot

Itself, lips
high off the ground.
Answer twice and then
no more.
Retreat, understand
all the world is a grave
and still, sprouting.
This journey, this climb
collecting the many shades
of intertwining foliage.
Half-moon is enough moon
to see. Dump yard turns
into a mouse's home, a place
to raise her offspring, find food,
with many secure hiding holes.
Flesh is a revelation,
is the end result of pure spirit
sparkling.
Tomorrow we will know why
today we feel lacking
when we find our watering-hole,
a reservoir garden, glorious labour,
cascading.

Monarchs

**The monarchs begin their migration.
The souls of the deceased start to visit.
Temperance comes
with discipline, conviction
to not evade the truth or promises.**

**The last time I looked into your eyes
you were dying, trusting my love for you
and all the love that shielded around
your frail and fading body.
One year and I still miss you in my gut,
an emptiness that cannot be quelled.
This is the bird song, the emphasis
of individual brightness. The gift of you
and others too of gentle and lost natures.**

**The monarchs come to my back garden.
I greet them. I know each one -
their wing patterns, their flight patterns.
One day I will be a monarch,
a whiff of my soul, darting
from flower to flower, offering
a mild comfort to soothe
the pangs of vanished intimacies.**

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About the Author



Allison Grayhurst is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Four of her poems were nominated for “Best of the Net” in 2015/2018, and one eight-part story-poem was nominated for “Best of the Net” in 2017. She has over 1,375 poems published in more than 525 international journals and anthologies.

Her book *Somewhere Falling* was published by Beach Holme Publishers, a Porcepic Book, in Vancouver in 1995. Since then she has published eighteen other books of poetry and five collections with Edge Unlimited Publishing. Prior to the publication of *Somewhere Falling* she had a poetry book published, *Common Dream*, and four chapbooks published by The Plowman. Her poetry chapbook *The River is Blind* was published by Ottawa publisher above/ground press December 2012. In 2014 her chapbook *Surrogate Dharma* was published by Kind of a Hurricane Press, Barometric Pressures Author Series. In 2015, her book *No Raft – No Ocean* was published by Scars Publications.

Her book *Make the Wind* was published in 2016 by Scars Publications.

As well, her book *Trial and Witness – selected poems*, was published in 2016 by Creative Talents Unleashed (CTU Publishing Group).

More recently, her book *Tadpoles Find the Sun* was published by Cyberwit, August 2020.

In 2020, her work was translated into Chinese and published in "Rendition of International Poetry Quarterly" and in "Poetry Hall".

In 2018, her book *Sight at Zero*, was listed #34 on CBC's "Your Ultimate Canadian Poetry List".

Collaborating with Allison Grayhurst on the lyrics, Vancouver-based singer/songwriter/musician Diane Barbarash has transformed eight of Allison Grayhurst's poems into songs, creating a full album. "River – Songs from the poetry of Allison Grayhurst" released October 2017.

Allison Grayhurst is a vegan for the animals. She lives in Toronto with her family. She also sculpts, working with clay.

Some of the places her work has appeared in include Parabola (Alone & Together print issue summer 2012); SUFI Journal (Featured Poet in Issue #95, Sacred Space); Elephant Journal; Literary Orphans; Blue Fifth Review; The American Aesthetic; The Brooklyn Voice; Five2One; Agave Magazine; JuxtaProse Literary Magazine, Drunk Monkeys; Now Then Manchester; South Florida Arts Journal; Gris-Gris; The Muse – An International Journal of Poetry, Storm Cellar, morphrog (sister publication of Frogmore Papers); New Binary Press Anthology; Straylight Literary Magazine (print); Chicago Record Magazine, The Milo Review; Foliate Oak Literary Magazine; The Antigonish Review; Dalhousie Review; The New Quarterly; Wascana Review; Poetry Nottingham International; The Cape Rock; Ayris; Journal of Contemporary Anglo-Scandinavian Poetry (now called The Journal); The Toronto Quarterly; Fogged Clarity, Existere; Boston Poetry Magazine; Decanto; White Wall Review.

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Quotes

“Allison Grayhurst’s poetry combines the depth and dark intensity of Sylvia Plath, the layered complex imagery of Dylan Thomas and the philosophical insights of Soren Kierkegaard, taking the reader on a fearless journey through the human condition, delving with honesty into death, grief, loss, faith, commitment, motherhood, and erotic love. Grayhurst intertwines a potent spirituality throughout her work so that each poem is not simply a statement or observation, but a revelation that demands the reader’s personal involvement. Grayhurst’s poetic genius is profound and evident. Her voice is uniquely authentic, undeniable in its dignified vulnerability as it is in its significance,” *Kyp Harness*, legendary singer/songwriter, cartoonist, author of ‘Wigford Rememberies’ and ‘The Abandoned’, Nightwood Editions; www.kypharness.net

“Allison Grayhurst is the Queen of Catharsis. Her poems are like cathedrals witnessing and articulating in unflinching graphic detail the gritty angst and grief of life, while taking it to rare clarity, calm and comfort in an otherwise confusing world of deception, mediocrity and degradation. Allison Grayhurst takes the sludge of life, and with fearless sharpness of eye and heart she spins it free of maggots with the depth of honour and passion. Allison Grayhurst's work is haunting, majestic and cleansing, often leaving one breathless in the wake of its intelligence, hope, faith and love amidst the muck of life. Many of Allison Grayhurst's poems are simply masterpieces booming with thunderous insight begging to be in Bartlett's Quotations, lines such as "I drink necessity’s authority." Nothing is wishy-washy in the realm of Allison Grayhurst. Allison Grayhurst's work is sustaining, enriching, and deepening for the soul to read... a light of sanity in the world. As a poet, Allison Grayhurst

is a lighthouse of intelligent honour... indeed, intelligence rips through her work like white water," *Taylor Jane Green*, BA, RIHR, CHT, Registered Spiritual Psychotherapist and author of *Swan Wheeler: A North American Mythology and The Rise of Eros*.

"Grayhurst's rapturous outpouring of imagery makes her poems easily enjoyable ... Like a sear the poet seeks to fathom sensual and spiritual experience through the images of a dream," *Canadian Literature*.

"Her poems read like the journal entries of a mystic – perhaps that what they are. They are abstract and vivid, like a dreamy manifestation of soul. This is the best way, in prose, one can describe the music which is ... the poetry of Allison Grayhurst," *Blaise Wigglesworth*, *Oh! Magazine: Ryerson's Arts and Culture Voice*.

"Grayhurst's poetry is a translucent, ethereal dream in which words push through the fog, always searching, struggling, and reaching for the powerful soul at its heart. Her work is vibrant and shockingly original," *Beach Holme Publishers*.

"Allison Grayhurst's poetry appears visceral, not for the faint of heart, and moves forward with a dynamism, with a frenetic pulse. If you seek the truth, the physical blood and bones, then, by all means, open the world into which we were all born," *Anne Burke*, poet, regional representative for Alberta on the League of Canadian Poets' Council, and chair of the Feminist Caucus.

"Read at your peril. You will never look at this world in quite the same way again. Your eye will instinctively search the sky for eagles and scan the dark earth for the slightest movement of smallest ant, your heart will reach for tall mountains, bathe in the most intimate of passions and in the grain and grit of our

earth. Such is Allison Grayhurst. Such is her poetry," *Eric M. Vogt*, poet and author.

"Grayhurst is a great Canadian poet. All of Allison Grayhurst's poetry is original, sometimes startling, and more often than not, powerful. Anyone who loves modern poetry that does not follow the common path will find Grayhurst complex, insightful, and as good a poet as anyone writing in the world today. Grayhurst's poetry volumes are highly, highly recommended," *Tom Davis*, poet, novelist and educator.

"Biting into the clouds and bones of desire and devotion, love and grief, Allison Grayhurst basks the reader, with breathtaking eloquence, in an elixir of words. Like lace, the elegance is revealed by what isn't said. This is stunning poetry," *Angela Hryniuk*, author of 'no visual scars'.

"Allison Grayhurst is a poet whose work is characterized by startling imagery and uncompromising emotion, whose pieces have appeared in prestigious magazines. Lights, darks, colors, and passions intertwine throughout the pages of her work," *Louise E. Allin*, *Literature and Language*.

"When I read Allison Grayhurst's poetry, I am compelled by the intensity and strength of her spirituality. Her personal experience of God drives her poetry. With honesty and vulnerability, she fleshes out the profound mystery of knowing at once both the beauty and terror of God's love, both freedom and obedience, deep joy and sorrow, both being deeply rooted in but also apart from the world, and lastly, both life and death. Her poems undulate through these paradoxes with much feeling and often leave me breathless, shaken. Allison Grayhurst's poems are both beautiful and difficult to behold," *Anna Mark*, poet and teacher.

“The breath of roles covered in Allison Grayhurst’s poetry is exceptional. Even poems covering similar perspectives express subtle distinctions, distinctions which add depth to the poet’s larger themes. The cohesive psychology of the poet is clear, allowing for long reads and re-reads.” says author *Patrick Linsenmeyer*.

“Allison Grayhurst’s poetry has a tribal and timeless feeling, reminiscent of the Biblical commentary in Ecclesiastes,” *Cristina Deptula*, editor of Synchronized Chaos.

Books by Allison Grayhurst

Paperbacks with Edge Unlimited Publishing:

Book 1: Journey of the Awakening, 1997, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CH6WO5Y; ISBN-10: 1478189339; ISBN-13: 978-1478189336

Book 2: The Longing to Be, 1998, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CH94ZNK; ISBN-10: 1478197684; ISBN-13: 978-1478197683

Book 3: Death and Other Possibilities, 2000, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHB8M0K; ISBN-10: 1478208163; ISBN-13: 978-1478208167

Book 4: Outliving the Inevitable, 2002, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHBYD1W; ISBN-10: 1478220295; ISBN-13: 978-1478220299

Book 5: Into My Mortal, 2004, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHFGOB0; ISBN-10: 147822858X; ISBN-13: 978-1478228585

Book 6: Red thread - Black thread, 2006, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHQOJFW; ISBN-10: 1478244186; ISBN-13: 978-1478244189

Book 7: The Many Lights of Eden, 2008, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHTR6IQ; ISBN-10: 1478249153; ISBN-13: 978-1478249153

Book 8: Pushing Through The Jelly Fire, 2010, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CHXZYOA; ISBN-10: 1478256567; ISBN-13: 978-1478256564

Book 9: The River is Blind, 2012, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CICVQ6K; ISBN-10: 1478280131; ISBN-13: 978-1478280132

Book 10: Seamless – A Collection of Love Poems, 2012, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CIFTU0G; ISBN-10: 1479304816; ISBN-13: 978-1479304813

Book 11: If I Get There – Poems of Faith and Doubt, a collection, 2012, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00CIZQGI0; ISBN-10: 1479348740; ISBN-13: 978-1479348749

Book 12: Wallpaper Stars, 2013, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00DQBDZAW; ISBN-10: 1490499172; ISBN-13: 978-1490499178

Book 13: For Every Rain - a collection of early poems, 2013, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00E6Y47OQ; ISBN-10: 1491065656; ISBN-13: 978-1491065655

Book 14: Jumana and Perfect Love - two poetic prose pieces, 2013, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00E74B45A; ISBN-10: 1491081465; ISBN-13: 978-1491081464

Book 15: Walkways, 2014, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00OR1VVH4; ISBN-10: 1502792133; ISBN-13: 978-1502792136

Book 16: As My Blindness Burns - three long poems, 2014, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00OS7HFZY; ISBN-10: 1502838265; ISBN-13: 978-1502838261

Book 17: Our Children Are Orchards – collected poems about animals, children and pregnancy, 2015, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B00TZDDP5K; ISBN-10: 1508582920 ISBN-13: 978-1508582922

Book 18: Fire and more, 2016, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B01BO7P7DM; ISBN-13: 978-1517327279; ISBN-10: 151732727X

Book 19: Currents- pastlife poems, 2016, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B01FV5EYTQ; ISBN-13: 978-1533311269; ISBN-10: 1533311269

Book 20: The Fault of Sages, 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B075JT6X6B; ISBN-13: 978-1544785646; ISBN-10: 154478564X

Book 21: Sight at Zero – selected poems (1988 to 2017), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B075Q7TDJK; ISBN-13: 978-1975894016; ISBN-10: 1975894014

Book 22: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 1 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZTQNX5; ISBN-13: 978-1978078833; ISBN-10: 1978078838

Book 23: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 2 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZSMPMB; ISBN-13: 978-1978106642; ISBN-10: 1978106645

Book 24: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 3 of 5), Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZYQNHP; ISBN-13: 978-1978341272; ISBN-10: 197834127X

Book 25: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 4 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZYG3HV; ISBN-13: 978-1978378766; ISBN-10: 1978378769

Book 26: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - completed works from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 5 of 5), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B076ZYBVLB; ISBN-13: 978-1978476127; ISBN-10: 1978476124

Book 27: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst - Collections from 1988 to 2017 (Volume 6), 2017, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07713CLWC; ISBN-13: 978-1979275750; ISBN-10: 1979275750

Book 28: The Sculptures of Allison Grayhurst, 2018, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B078TJTY37; ISBN-13: 978-1983534270; ISBN-10: 1983534277

Book 29: Animal Culture (rules of commitment), 2018, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07H1WRD5K; ISBN-13: 978-1719094962; ISBN-10: 1719094969

Book 30: If I Knew This Haunting, 2019, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ASIN: B07VQWS6PZ; ISBN-13: 9781082365133; ISBN-10: 1082365130

Book 31: Snapshots (excerpts of poems on images), 2019, Edge Unlimited Publishing: ASIN: B07PQZV4P4; ISBN-13: 978-1090605115; ISBN-10: 1090605110

Book 32: Ways of Mercy, 2021, Edge Unlimited Publishing: ASIN: B08YQR3ZQC; ASIN: B08YTRYMWW; ISBN-13: 9798720154585

Book 33: The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst – completed works for 2018 to 2021 (Volume 7), 2021, Edge Unlimited Publishing: ISBN: 9798740225913; ASIN: B0932GSD5C; ASIN: B093FW56NQ; ISBN: 9798773718482

Book 34: A Wish Alone, 2022, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798803463450 ASIN: B0B7GNMLW4; ISBN: 9798842289424

Paperbacks by other publishers:

**Tadpoles Find the Sun, 2020, Cyberwit; ISBN-10: 9390202558;
ISBN-13: 978-9390202553**

**Trial and Witness, selected poems, 2016, Creative Talents
Unleashed or CTU Publishing; ISBN-13: 978-0692702529;
ISBN-10: 0692702520; ASIN: B01II9O63G**

**Make the Wind, 2016, Scars Publications; ISBN-
10: 1530924995; ISBN-13: 978-1530924998**

**No Raft- No Ocean, 2015, Scars Publications; ISBN-
10: 1518842046; ISBN-13: 978-1518842047**

**Common Dream, 1991, Edge Unlimited; ISBN-10: 0969542313
ISBN-13: 978-0969542315**

**Somewhere Falling, 1995, Beach Holme Publishers, a Porcepic
Book; ISBN-10: 0888783655; ISBN-13: 978-0888783653**

Chapbooks:

**Surrogate Dharma, 2014, Barometric Pressures Author Series,
Kind of a Hurricane Press**

**The River is Blind, 2012, above/ground press; ISBN-10:
1-897224-99-0; ISBN-13: 978-1-897224-99-1**

**Four chapbooks published under the pseudonym of Jocelyn
Kain:**

Jumana, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 0-929002-36-9

Perfect Love, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 0-929002-66-0

Before the Dawn, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 0-929002-11-3

Joshua's Shoulder, 1989, The Plowman; ISBN: 1-55072-025-2

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Allison Grayhurst is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Five times nominated for "Best of the Net", she has over 1300 poems published in over 500 international journals. She has 25 published books of poetry, 12 collections and 6 chapbooks. She lives in Toronto with her family. She also sculpts, working with clay; www.allisongrayhurst.com