



SEAMLESS  
- A Collection of  
Love Poems  
Allison Grayhurst

*Seamless*  
- *A Collection of Love Poems*

*Allison Grayhurst*

*Edge Unlimited Publishing*

**Seamless - A Collection of Love Poems**  
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*For Kyp*

# **PART 1**

## **Crow**

**I followed the herd  
into the abyss. I drank venom  
from the eucalyptus  
trees. I rushed against you:  
My flag was waving.  
The next day I left you,  
abandoned. Shot like a beam  
into the dark cave night. You followed,  
coaxed like a crow  
who beckons, black and beautifully:  
I gave myself up without a word.  
You wore my skin, laughed freely  
at my thirst.  
So easy now . . .  
I am consumed and in  
a dream. Love is falling  
like apples.**

## **Kneel Beside Love**

**If ever you kneel beside love  
strip yourself in the midnight cold  
and your heart expands  
moist  
like ice on heat  
feels the flood  
the zealous delight  
uprooting misery  
in moments too marvelous for words . . .**

**Gardeners, lovers  
you decide  
the wish  
beside each other  
faces are made real  
inadequacies vanish  
leaving no trace of murder  
or time**

**What you feel  
walking  
in this pulsing spring  
daring such joy  
no illness could alter  
What you feel  
briefly  
as you join skin and souls . . .**

**creating refuge  
even death  
cannot violate.**

# Days Without Water

My arms grow weary  
under the wheel  
Skulls in my pockets  
and a mountain up ahead  
with flesh and jaw bone  
extended

I search for his airborne heart  
in the crevices of clouds

I search for his pure  
brave gaze in the way  
birds with wing graze  
the edge of each rainbow, anew

I walk into autumn's  
darkening rays, lonely  
as the architecture of church walls,  
lonely as the light  
in the half-closed eyes  
of children

I think again of his thin fingers  
exhaling tenderness in every blind curve touch

He is milk & wind  
He is nowhere  
to be found

## Seizing Time

Legs, thin  
and curled  
like eyelashes.

Hands, tucked under head,  
supporting the weight of so much  
lonely thought.

Stomach, a flat curve,  
bones and muscles perfectly  
ordered.

Sleeping, no one would know  
his timeless howl, his long  
wait in grief's unrelenting realm,  
his requiem fire, or spirit  
that outdoes the marvel  
of daybreak.

Quiet, he finds  
no peace on the pavement of this town,  
he holds solitude sacred and feels  
each soul's whisper as an unnursable cry.  
He breaks all habit with his horn  
of piercing mercy.

He, so still, even birds  
hold their song to watch  
his placid breathing.

## **Through That Day**

**Through that day of yesterday  
one full sun ago, together, their  
spirits fed, walking as lovers past  
familiar streets.**

**Warm smell of intimacy flowing between two  
like nectar to the thirsting throat. Warm feel  
of smiles like there was the first time they ever met  
and met like a finding of home.**

**Warm grace in their voices, warm fear  
in their laughter, warm  
like a justborn child.**

**There when walking their depths  
merged in an uncompromising blessing -**

**the chaos of confusion  
removed  
from their astonished eyes.**

## **Without Opportunity**

**Because today you descend  
the broken branch and meet  
the soil, be hot against the vaulting  
of your despair. Turn and let die  
your mangled wanting, want for  
tomorrow and that is all.**

**Angry terror troubles your eyes  
and gloves your admirable strength.  
But your fingertips are gentle, stroking  
music out from death's dim head.  
And your pulsing vision crosses city gardens,  
repelling every complacency.**

**Because today your life is in bondage  
to the ill-luck groan, and each obstacle seems  
to make your desires  
both a burden and a disgrace, I who know you  
and know life's tyrannical fault, have only belief  
to effect your numbed hopes,  
have only what I know -  
the greatness of your labour  
and the way you have moved  
my most hardened of vices, to turn  
and face a kinder shore.**

## **In Time**

**The mutual condition  
of our heritage. The thump-thump  
in your thigh. Thin as a warrior  
of Japanese fortune and eyes  
rustling like wool in the wind.**

**At bed time, the cockroaches are my cousins  
and the movement of your housecoat is my water.  
I found a necklace centuries old.  
You told me you were not ready  
to paint the autumn gardens or do cartwheels  
over a cliff. The hope that bled  
from your belly, and the seas  
of men's and women's breasts that  
you floated through, like Adam awakened  
from paradise, hungering for that one, strong connection,  
was like me in the winters of my adolescent youth,  
was the India I never visited or the Russian squares  
I buried my imagination in.**

**I am red as cinnamon candy, hoping you'll have me  
like the first day our hands joined  
and the bells of trinity sang  
a melody to finally, resolutely live for.**

## **Days To Break The Richest Dream**

**Eucharist thin  
and glued to the roof of the mouth,  
hope comes stale, comes  
in farmers' overalls, carrying a snide,  
deceptive charm.**

**Hope is for him a sad mason building  
a phantom hearth. For him, these days  
weigh like unwashed hair on his fixed brow. For him  
these days are tedious as housework.**

**But he does not fade like some do into  
masculine despair which is anger,  
which is not the saddle he mounts,  
but perseveres with a steady pace,  
his long fingers waving in perfect rhythm  
inside a room, where hardships reach living  
but mild.**

## **On Tour**

**Pale as the Eastern gulls sitting on rooftops,**

**he speeds over the wide country.**

**He hurts with uncommon intensity -  
liberation balanced between his two lips.**

**Like the slow hum of rain, I hear him  
treading the snowed-in cities, hear his kiss  
like a prayer of protection, flowering.**

**Freedom stitched to his smile,  
he crosses the sea he's never seen before,  
as he carries his guitar  
like a lover's warm hand.**

## **Bonded**

Notes stream over their bodies  
like spilt wine,  
dizzy with forgetfulness  
and engulfed by devotion's  
desiring arms, they quench  
their love in these realms  
of trembling communion.

They do not lean their heads  
on ground of finite meaning but  
transported to a common passion  
they stare at the wonderful eyes of  
the moon and roll like the sea's emotion,  
bodies gripped by one hawk intent, hearts  
undiluted by distraction, joined forever  
in dance or defeat.

## **With These Things**

**With these things absent of flame, lovers  
deny the vibrant depths of twilight,  
the beauty of a bucking mare in the wet grasses  
of autumn and a gallery of possibilities  
to shower their skins.**

**With these things of surface-hold, these things  
cured by sleep and time that steals the shock  
but never fully heals, lovers  
lose the meaning of their merging, the touch  
of each other's tongue that touches  
like a smooth horn and stings  
with unimaginable tenderness.**

**With these things gone like things go that  
no sorrow can express, lovers  
grow weak from humiliation, grow  
devoted to abstraction, armoured  
by resentment, callous  
as a jewel.**

**But with these things of horror of hatching  
a new self inside a familiar world, lovers  
learn to fly despite the lovers' legends and  
the arsenic.**

# Dancers

He dressed her with forgiveness  
    in the gold shadows  
        of passion  
seeking death, seeking the  
    swelling heart  
of God. Under  
    the weight of his wings, into some  
starless summit they rose, clasping  
    limbs with alien abandon. Each rich  
        with superstition, as in the forest  
    terror  
poured from the tip of each tree,  
    from the tongues of black bears and insects  
        crawling.  
They held, waiting for too bright  
    a birth between them, waiting for the  
        magic to merge  
their pain into one great beginning.  
    Like the thighs of angels in flight,  
        their thighs  
cut the warring air and smashed against the sky  
    into gales of  
colour, into streams  
        of happy endings as they  
dropped like a flood  
    at the feet  
of death, and love  
        began to weave  
under  
    their astounded skins.

## **This Love We Hold**

**This was the endurance sought,  
moving without sorrow away from  
spear and shield, loving again  
chained to the most-impossible-dream  
and yet surviving unveiled,  
with each envy rectified, removed.**

**Happy are the flowers that pierce  
with swift vibrancy the  
down-trodden eye. Happy are the flowers  
that briefly shine then suddenly collapse  
without sacrifice or a moan.**

**Never did I hope to own a stone  
so cold, spread across my flesh  
like a darkened shell. Never did I know  
a void so dull and so insatiable.  
Never ascending like I ascend now in a gathering  
of clouds that eclipse the birds and mirror  
on the lake so grey.**

**I went walking and knelt before the trees.  
Wise days of youth and fresh love that  
made us bare of questions, made us sick  
from such intensity. I held your presence  
in my breath and breathed my spirit  
free. Freed from phantoms awakened,  
freed from the pendulum tide.  
Free to outspoke the wind  
and ride beyond the parasite of time,  
beside you and sustaining  
forevermore.**

## The Foliage of Our Music

Near the shut lives of people  
who love intangible,  
who hide within the spell of seasonal spirituality,  
you are the all that intoxicates my hunger,  
summons my vision beyond  
its threshold, takes my hand amidst  
the tyranny of worldly demands and loves  
me through my weeping - your body happy  
to receive me, to blanket me with touch. Your hair  
and belly and your thin bones  
that carry such a restless warmth that  
only sharpens each day with charm and insight.  
No one desires like you the forgotten passions,  
reads to me the marrow from books and dances  
with mad laughter when seeing the solemn  
horrors of most daily deeds.  
No one grows so weighted with sorrow,  
so beautified by empathy as you when tracing  
the footsteps of the oppressed, visiting  
each broken with a dense compassion  
that embraces all as your equal.

Haggard hope between us  
to avenge the space that splits  
our love with petty differences.

I spend no delight but dread  
the thorny flame of loneliness, of  
loving again a lesser love, looking  
into some appealing eyes that are not  
your eyes nor know the things  
of your kind wisdom.

# **Christened**

**Because of you, my blood is nourished.**

**Just beside one another**

**in laughter or decay, passing looks**

**that bid for nothing.**

**Because of you I am able to blink**

**where others are blinded:**

**I bury heartbreak in our kissing.**

## **My colours would be grey**

**if not for your heart so  
tempered by preserved dreams  
and accepted disappointments,  
dancing in the unknown,  
with a tongue  
unafraid to astonish or offend  
the public swallower . . .**

**if not for every morning, finding  
your eyes closed, sleeping near my  
smiling body, and your lips that unearth  
each tear from my harbouring breast,  
unearth the giant seed of deliverance . . .**

**if not for our partnership,  
our home of unhooded tenderness,  
the doorways within that lead  
to evenings of geranium spring . . .**

**if not for holding you, or  
your touch splitting the shell  
of my skin, flooding my womb  
with fires of indomitable  
peace . . .**

## Together Journeying

We lie in a long neck,  
                  constricting,  
in a roach-ridden cell, in the trunks  
                  of earth-weary trees.

We are like the octopi  
                  stretching all arms available  
but finding only weeds, the droppings  
                  of guppies and a child's broken bracelet.

                  The weird breath of birds lights up the sky as we lie  
                  in the places darkness knows best, as we lie  
in a gesture of chaos, biting our shells,  
our eucharist hope.

                  Wine on our foreheads,  
thick as whale blubber, wine  
like drink to our intelligent kisses. I kiss  
my lover floating homebound on black ice,  
floating past

                  flowershops and hearts of many hues.  
My lover lies where I lie in promises  
                  vague but quenching.

Down the screaming nerve. Through  
outside crowds and social duty.

                  We do not believe in the contagious code  
but in the slug at midnight under the stone,  
curled tight against the predator's paw,  
in flesh-driven grief, in the bed-pan  
                  under the invalid,  
                  and the infant's hanging feet.

We rest in both grey-soiled glue and in sunset haze.  
We rest with appetite, beginning.

## **In His Arms**

**In his arms the blind night sees. I see  
an eagle's nest, and nocturnal  
beasts rejoice. I see a path unbroken  
by doubt and windows where moonlight slides in.**

**With all the weeping of disappointments  
met and overcome, of drinking bitterness  
like sleet and trouble beating vibrant  
in moments of silence in dreams of something new,  
he lies like a legend fossilized, asleep on his back,  
giving worth to the whole of a lifetime's suffering,  
worth to this continent of drizzling skies.  
And I am lucky, more than fulfilled.**

**In his arms I can hear a prayer echoing  
from the branches of trees, I can feel  
my despair forgiven, cradled in the flow  
of his tenderness.**

## Swim

He sinks into the river  
tossing his garments on the muddy shore.  
He takes the river-water into his mouth,  
pressing her sturdy thigh in his mind.  
And in his movements he waits for her,  
smells her in the rocks and in the geese  
passing overhead.  
He lifted her from her burden, promised  
a garden and other two-some things.  
He spoke of stories until she found her heritage.  
He treads the river's current, keeps his eyes open  
underwater to see the weeds and fish beneath  
its greying surface.  
She told him of her duty and how love is  
for another place. She looked straight ahead,  
as if their hands clasping was a weakness  
better to forget.  
He gathers his breath and dives  
into the rapids like one fierce, in flight, one  
who has left his peace forever behind.

## He is

Filled with a something  
that lifts his heavy chin.

Filled with the silence of woods,  
with a perpetual moon in a perpetual  
night, with the bones of small creatures  
and other luckless prey.

Born of strong sorrow, stronger than pride  
or a mouth open for song, he is  
my lover rocking in the shade, he is  
a forward marching on yellow autumn grass,  
he is flying over stones and fog, over  
the sigh of doom, falling into a gracious depth.

He is looking where the light never goes, into  
the eyes of a subliminal cry.

He is a quick moving cat moving across a  
barn's black roof. He is my umbrella,  
my need and my deliverance.

## **New Lovers**

**In rooms of wood  
and desire's breath  
they move like beggars  
in one another's arms,  
lulling their elements together,  
lucky to forget the world outside, to live  
inside passion's timeless dark,  
ebbing in their throats and loins and in  
the touching of hands.**

**Blue like hot fire and like water  
nakedly combined, the signature of love is  
mounted on their foreheads & toenails,  
on dust cloths and in the bathroom sink.  
Fully revived, they are like infants  
awake to all the animals and sounds  
spirits make.**

**It floods them in dangerous peace.  
It is shadowless, apple-pure, a blessing  
to cling to when time drives their hearts  
into realms of pride's separate sleep.**

## **Nights With You**

**After all the marvel has flown  
and the egg is minced inside  
its nest, I feel you in my sleep  
as a babe feels its mother's breast,  
or a tribe its evening song.**

**I feel my skin brushed with gravel,  
feel doubt sealing me inside its zoo,  
feel my hope sink like money into a reeling sea,  
then you with your labyrinth of love,  
discover new ways to restore me, to hold me  
close to your taut belly and drown  
my breathing on your flesh.**

**I cross through the cabin doors. I soar within  
November skies. My secrets are no longer mine.  
And morning finds me strong in my footsteps,  
patient once more.**

## **You Are**

**You are simple  
like death is simple,  
like death is unmistakable,  
containing the most feverish and trying  
of mysteries within  
its boundless domain.**

**You are beautiful  
like a cat is beautiful  
silently sitting,  
galactic in its sensual form,  
giving with its gaze  
substance to voice and blood.**

**You are fire-driven  
like stars and like sex,  
in perpetual combustion,  
with an inner pulse of endless  
dance, dancing  
in savage, mystical tides.**

**You are gentle  
like a raindrop caught  
in a lucky palm, gentle  
like the shelter of a best friend's arms.**

**You are more than sun and bird and fox,  
more than soil to my groundless heart.**

**All I bless and all I need,  
I hold because of you.**

**No meaning nor madness  
could replace the milk and breath  
that you are.**

## **Of Body and Spirit**

**I seek your mouth  
of sensual burning,  
its sponge-soft pressure  
merging perfectly with mine.**

**I seek its subtle textures,  
its waxing and waning, the way  
it condenses my being into  
its single substance, into  
a movement of focused bloom.**

**I seek your hair, your blessed smell,  
your hip bone rocking like  
the whole of the sea over uncharted sands.**

**I seek your voice sweeping the air  
with its rich unconscious moan.**

**I seek the taking of your hand,  
the tension of our bodies balanced  
in mutual, animal awakening.**

## **Wedding**

**Wake the house, the ants and dandelions too!**

**His eyes are bright as candy,  
they warm my earth and sky.**

**His hands deliver comfort  
like a child's, they bud with open hunger  
and reach with the strength of a grail.**

**His arms are sails bounded  
for adventure.**

**His legs dash the firmament  
into many stars.**

**One day, this day he vows his everlasting to me.**

**Wake the music from each lung and finger!  
Wake the oyster from its shell!**

**Time yields to our togetherness.  
Time quenches our blood in Spring.**

## **Show of Light**

**Why is it like this - this untimely shift  
from requiem to rhapsody  
as your voice and manner tilts my heart  
like the wind would direct the ripples in a stream?**

**I hurt alone in bed, resigned  
to the falseness of your mouth, then  
with morning, the lushness of your love  
recites an elegy to my fear and once again,  
adoring, I call you one with my own.**

**Who would guess that neither years nor vows  
take the sour sting and peppermint wing  
out from love's strong bones. But falling  
forever - the darkness, the renewing song,  
hands over bodies, yours & mine, as time  
lies with us, perched as the watchman  
on devotion's elusive bow.**

# **I Dreamt**

**I dreamt that you guided me  
across the barren roads,  
up steep stairways  
and into the rooms of a kind stranger.  
I dreamt I killed the Buddha,  
that I fell headfirst into a blue flame fire  
and felt no features of hopeless defeat.  
I dreamt you were covered by  
half a shroud, waking with a picture  
of God in your hands.  
I dreamt we were thrown together, flailing  
our limbs until we entwined before the grave,  
before the growing old.  
I dreamt we kissed. And praise and guilt  
were devoured by our sensual labour.  
We found a doorway near that natural ocean.  
We were crushed then cured by the heavy tide.  
I dreamt you loved me as you do just now -  
there was no loneliness, no voice withheld  
and no place of shame.**

## **Our Days**

**I place my arms up here  
reaching for you in the morning  
at half-past six and later  
when you are just waking, disheveled  
and wishing to return to dreams.  
In the afternoon when we  
finally talk, the brightness of the day  
absorbs into your face and what is left  
is the movement of our connection  
between coffee mugs and our children's play.  
At dinner, you tell me stories.  
I see the years behind us, and for a moment the  
curtains of heaven draw back before my eyes.  
At night when we hold and the children sleep,  
we talk of the unspeakable things - ourselves for a time,  
fully happy - two together  
in the arena of society's plight,  
two together, beholden  
to only this love.**

## **Vow**

**The noise broke  
by the garden where I loved you  
like I loved the truth,  
where my bones drowned in your darkness  
and my war was unlocked like the need  
for completion that you promised but never  
could attain. This wilderness  
of power, purposelessness and extremes  
I laid down inside of  
to be beside you and the softness of your mouth  
and the elixir of your touch  
became mine, grew like a second body  
merging with my own like death does  
with cold eternity.**

## **Shedding**

**It is the cure for us,  
locked on soft land, our  
music combined and the golden  
ether Earth that so often evades us  
is revealed with tangible ecstasy - us  
stripped of every worldly moor and medal, just  
us lying true to our bold callings, eyes locked  
shameless, raw as the sun, whole as we were before  
we were born, in one another's arms, returning,  
recharging, elemental as dying.**

## By Water

As flesh pours into flesh,  
at once gentle, then convulsing,  
she burdens onto him  
her conscious mouth to let it be  
a mouth of primal need, needing his  
fingers and belly, his lips of perfect  
artistry. She burdens onto him  
her womanhood, to be  
voicelessly living like long ago,  
before shame and analysis was known.

Finding death in such miraculous merging,  
finding immortality in the immediacy  
of loving without symbol, they hold together  
like a long-sung note,  
delivered.

## Heart's Exchange

I look to see  
your naked back  
against the day's light  
and see a language  
translating the flow  
of flesh, into wave and wind and all  
that moves with the bouncing tide.

I am not blind  
to the weeds of whirlwind circumstances.

But together, with eyes locked  
in knowing love, we are like a mother with her child or  
like that child, feeling (on open lips) a noon rainfall.

## **The Hope of Lovers**

**With thin love  
and a heart that pangs  
unnourished, lovers  
meet to undo their  
bitterness and know again  
undiscerning grace.**

**Meeting in passion's excessive  
persuasion, all heavy wounds rise  
to dissolve as though never there at all,  
then reappear as embedded and destructive  
as they really are.**

**They reappear beyond  
any calm abstraction, as lovers lean on  
the blindness of each other  
to find their individual sight.**

**As lovers lean to advance with the strength  
of two made whole, and lean to reach  
the truth of love (forever re-told).**

## Quebec City

On plains of autumn green  
where hardly bird or squirrel roam,  
the dream we find by holding hands  
is like a wave of sunshine  
undulating on our brows.

On streets of winding stone, old  
as Medusa's smile, old as wounded  
pride resting on an enemy's throne,  
we laugh at the struggling day - mouths  
full of kisses and a hunger soothed to sleep  
by so many unforced smiles.

Up stairs once crushed by cannon ball fire  
we lift our limbs to see where the city wall  
extends. We are both thinking  
of the good day behind, both sniffing  
the devouring scent of unforgotten history.

Evening drifts through our hair.  
We are alone, like all babes are and lovers too  
who have perfectly communed  
beneath this Northern sky.

## **Because of Yesterday**

**Through this dark dread I will glide  
like the devil's tail beating  
my mark on every hope and innocence.**

**When the rain falls I will be without humble hands  
to receive, I will have lost my one good gift in life.  
I will clock the years as one who feeds  
on the thinning muscle of memory.**

**And in bed, curled against an indifferent wall,  
my mind will turn toward a new myth  
to encapsulate my joy. I will grow old  
like love does, like children do, like the sparrow will  
who rejoices despite a heavy snow. I will be without  
your hand to hold and forever my heart  
will know no other.**

## Heart-bearing

Here our lover's seed  
speaks secretly from its shoots of giving rays.

Here there is no drug-red hurt,  
no drowning in the juices of jealousy.

Here no lightning permeates our veins,  
no kiss is given for convenience's  
sake, but all is like a wild lily that  
brightens with its orange bud the eye  
that rests and observes.

Gentle is the itch of my restlessness.  
Gentle is the way you hold my hand.  
I am raised, I am the first fulfilled.  
Flood your breath around me  
and together in life we will shape  
our possible world.

## **Of The Same Cloth**

**A perfect balance  
of mystery and understanding  
we contain in our  
fiery hour.**

**Like a gull  
against the sky, we merge under  
the thick thighs of God.**

**You enter me like water  
enters earth and I am within  
you like a fish inside a wave.**

**Wave of your exotic beauty,  
always capturing me, new to me, a taste  
of perfect fulfilment. You bare the teeth  
of a stranger, a hand of delicate,  
tireless motion and I sink in the snows  
of your spell, chilled by your intensity, by  
the beautiful form of a man beside me.**

**You give to me the gallery of your secrets  
as I give to you the skin of my defence.**

**We are the lucky one:**

**marigolds and cathedral stones  
line our weathered pockets.**

## Face

Inside your luscious eyes  
is the burden of depth,  
are the stones and rivers  
of centuries unguarded  
by time.

On your lips  
is the sensual curve of tree-line  
and sea-shell, is a language  
unbroken by bad experience.

On your nose  
of boyish turn are nostrils  
unlocking the breath of endurance,  
is the edge where sunlight rests  
after travel.

On your forehead  
is a heavy mist of  
oscillating pain and grace,  
are the marks of a struggle  
relieved by love.

On your jaw, cheek and chin  
is the strength of the moon  
and night-wooded things,  
is the hoot and howl  
of the sleepless earth, ascending.

# **I Dream This Shelter, This Precipice**

**Your rare and bare natural tongue  
and your unfathomable kisses, distinct  
like the sun, that dwell without limits  
on my lips.**

**The torrents of your quick pulse and your  
slow release, overflow my chasm, brings warmth  
where warmth is no longer felt, only  
the driving nail of locked souls - yours and mine  
and all things sacred, accumulated like this  
in the wild deep.**

## **Every Hope Inhaled**

**Everyday there is no day  
where the fullness of his being  
goes unhatched.  
Not a day when I do not smell  
his smell and hunger  
for the rub of his lips.  
Not a day when he stands so distant  
I forget the kinship we share,  
the mousey tide he sprung me from  
and the gro  
und of faith he thawed in my breast.**

**Here in July with my fishscope-view  
and the shifting of circumstantial thorns,  
when the tombstone tumbles and each handful  
of hope has been hacksawed off,  
he alone helps justify  
and lamps my richest theme.**

## **For a Lifetime**

**He outsizes the mountains  
in his grandeur, and inward  
reaching, his alleluia and amen are  
uncorrupted. He is beside me  
as I ready for sleep, and puts  
his hand on my leg. Light like laughter, he curls  
his fingers around my steady thigh.**

**We kiss and talk as if no tomorrow  
awaited us, as if tomorrow's duty we are  
chained to keep could not rule to condemn  
us empty.**

**Tonight, trusting each other's love,  
he is beside me like a dolphin against a wave.**

**And safe I breathe and safe I dream, safe  
beside his need and  
strengthening kindness.**

## Replenished

Whenever roused with grief  
or shaken by the cynic's cry,  
I feed on your words and warmth  
then wonder why I stood so long  
held by the darkened grip.

For in your subtle bend  
and caressing voice,  
the rain is petty, as are all the  
drunk and desolate things that  
send my spirit heaving.

Whenever lost  
in the crushing swirl  
where sick and mindless crowds  
roam, I draw up your face  
from my memory's well and  
am eased, believing once again  
through fear and disappointment.

## **My Love is Waiting**

**In the bald winter  
where only the cold grows,  
my love is waiting.  
Strands of sorrow like  
straw stream from his fingertips,  
and his clothes are the shade of indigo,  
resurrected by his constant desire.  
Clouds clear at his feet and coffee is poured  
on his behalf whenever his hands need warming.  
He is sheltered in the alleyway garages, takes his cue  
from the pigeons. His legs are long,  
like candlesticks they stretch across January streets.  
My love is waiting for the blanket of my flesh, waiting  
to salt his emptiness with my touch.  
He watches from the balconies.  
He is mad, ruled by the erratic radiance of music.  
He is waiting on the branches of the elm,  
waiting for the night to clear,  
waiting for my heart to open and claim him  
like a birthmark.**

## Without Covers

Because of lips  
perfectly full and pulsing,  
and hair, black and living like  
sea creatures fathoms below that swirl  
their strong bodies through the thick dark,  
I knelt next to your tallness  
and placed my hands in the centre  
of your torso. Like feminine blood  
your muscles moved, shivering with touch.  
Your man's heart rocked, unconscious  
of every thought, and night became for us  
a different thing. Came in the colours  
of coral reef flowers, came like wet moss  
in the hand, came like swallowing  
a falling star, like paint dripping through the hair,  
as our two bodies merged. And as your thin neck  
turned, our closed eyes saw together every  
abstract condition collapse, in the flow  
of undulating flesh, in the broken frame  
of one another's mortal love.

## **Whole**

**Sing, for love is in his astounding  
form and mind that welcomes the intricate unknown.  
In his touch are the things of wings and  
a leopard's elusive step.**

**Sing for his heart is a cavern where  
mysteries are kept, where my lineage begins  
and the mirror is no more.**

**Sing, for the sensual stomach, for the  
timelessness of impassioned blood.**

**Sing, for the connecting limbs, for the  
instinctual rhythm inside that joins us higher,  
together at the deepest core.**

## Things I Must Learn

To speak like I should  
in the wayfaring night, to  
hold your hand when the shelf cracks  
and the books are all read, when the fridge  
carries only last week's fruit.

To lean my head on your heart and  
let you speak your need, instead of curling  
under the blankets like an angry, disturbed thing.

To kiss your lips when nothing is going on, when  
the dried flowers crumble to the floor and  
the guitar strings have snapped, when summer  
is only a month away and the city prepares in the same  
dull way.

To touch your arm when the shower curtain rips  
and a spider's eggs lay behind the bathroom mirror.

To be kinder than I've been,  
to wrap a hand around the back of your cold,  
delicate neck.

To take pictures of you  
in the afternoon, loving you better  
when darkness inevitably descends.

## As One

In the empty spaces I wait  
for you, for my own being to  
bend again towards your beating chest.  
And sorrow like a grey October morn  
stretches between us, leaves us each  
alone watching out the same window.  
We are locked like the shore to the sea,  
perfectly different and merging in natural  
rhythm - each shell and struggling fish  
exposed, until we hide in separate elements,  
bonded to our own. I follow your footsteps  
in my mind, then kiss your shoes for speaking.  
You turn on the tape recorder and commune  
with the clouds. Often I have held in my breath  
and ignored the ache in my throat. I have loved you  
without giving - under blankets, more at ease  
with the coming of private sleep than with trying.  
Often I am bruised by your laughter,  
counting pennies on the table with fierce concentration.  
Though you with your hands,  
hold all the mystery my heart can fathom,  
pressing with gentleness my folded brow,  
or blending your legs with mine, sure and warm  
as the summer earth.

## **Anniversary**

**Thick and frantic rapids  
moved us to believe  
that the natural law is sensual.**

**We walked to islands of  
greeny coverage, placed our  
hands together and eyed the  
circling hawk.**

**We watched the rocks  
with their majestic edges and strange white  
colours as the water cupped them in its  
thin transparent palms, promising to awaken  
a memory of primal wonder.**

**The gulls speckled the cliffs as the  
red-winged bird remembered its song.**

**We stood and stared at the heavy  
waters falling, and in its thunderous  
movement, we joined - contained  
by our true love.**

## **We Walk Again**

**We walk again, becoming  
the watery breath of lovers  
touched by the same vision.**

**We feed our skins again  
on the shifting flame  
that burns all natural affliction.**

**We kiss again on home ground,  
and do the things of togetherness,  
full of letters and sighs and the bones  
of our ancestry.**

**We stand under the umbrella,  
nearing the darkness but staying alive.**

**We release all secrets  
drenched in the soft light  
of a fluid and tender joy.**

## On Valentine's Day

He gives me oxygen,  
the golden lamp in isolating winter.  
He raises me up like Lazarus  
from quicksand. His is the  
cord untied, the touch of tender pleasure,  
a vehicle of lyric and curved flesh.  
Many a day I lived behind the curtain, separated  
from the sun, mad as a birthing mother.  
My vision was void, as was the giving water  
that softened the hard seed. I thought my sound  
was smothered and my beautiful pony enslaved.  
But with his olive eyes and male love  
he unwrapped the dark expanse, nourishing:  
  
I am bound to his appetite and to his comfort.

## **You who saw**

**You who saw the  
morning fall on leaves  
all rotted and brown but  
kissed this darkest turn  
and threw your coins to the clouds.**

**You who loved and always learned  
that love is nothing earned.**

**You who opened your heart to a child  
and let her wed and weave her own.**

**You who felt the wanting grave  
when you felt the skeleton hand of a friend  
unchained.**

**You who beheld your wife like a sunrise  
and gave her everyday a new light to live for.**

**You who are so beautiful and always beginning,  
like a band of circling swallows, like a whale  
first seen in the wild, like the scent of home.**

**You are a thousand good men on a morning walk,  
the chapel bell's waking call, sweet and deep  
as the true belief in miracles.**

## **Let Us Show A Tender Love . . .**

**otherwise the moon would be  
half a shadow and the wasp,  
a sandbox companion . . .  
otherwise a gentle wind would  
scorch the birds and seventy years  
of staying alive would be ineffectual . . .  
otherwise the rain would die and  
I would bear my bed like the torturer's glove . . .  
otherwise, the trees would crouch  
to the dead earth and the eyelid of God  
would remain forever closed . . .  
otherwise the child would plan his days  
by astrology's chart and the broken hearted  
would long no more . . .  
otherwise home would be a filthy cave  
and my bath could never drain,  
but would remain a stagnant  
murky cold . . .**

## As We Walk

I spent an hour listening  
to the grey and cooling sky, and the blackbirds  
that gathered low.

We are but gestures sown  
by particles of love, desire and greed.  
Few are one tapestry, most are a bit of  
all three.

There was a plague in my eyes  
that has thinned my expectations, but  
I am better.

Being in love this long is like a voyage  
underwater, swarming with glorious and  
dangerous beings.

You will always be the one to hatch my breath,  
the catching flint when I am shipwrecked,  
and the good thing I can hold up willingly to the light.  
We have been shown there is no grave,  
only the mourning. We have been shown  
it is the aging in front of each other  
that makes aging wonderful.

I no longer worry about what I am going to say  
because there is you, with the scent of autumn  
strong in your hair.

## Found

While in a century surrendered to  
a howling vision that bridged  
the Earth to God,  
while in the chaos of the self-assured  
and beautiful, with obstacles of half-felt focus  
and rough charm  
dropping like heavy hail along my path,  
I found you. I found a mind  
that could not join the perpetual  
and charred motions of loveless togetherness.  
I found someone who held to truth like a child,  
thick with depth and a rare sort of intensity.  
Someone who hasn't the wherewithal to deceive,  
who is freed by his belief in lasting, evergrowing love,  
who faced the terror and turned  
to serve the implausible, only possible mercy.

I no longer cry from loneliness. The light is in  
his body and all around is the labyrinth of his mystery.  
My eleven-year lover who still haunts me  
with his impassioned creative touch, who loves me like I am,  
mostly bare and broken, though sometimes  
high with gratitude, glittering,  
at peace.

## **By This Love**

**By this love  
we have learned to pluck  
the honest word and place  
it freely.**

**By this love  
we have lived a good thing  
unlike the things of dark regress.**

**We have robbed the stick figures  
of half-made breath in gold  
and the scent of animals.**

**We have touched the minnow fish and the  
primordial whale. The clouds speak to us  
when lack of money hurts the gorgeous morning  
and we are nightmarishly beckoned barefoot across  
white ice. Then you tell me things of wild eternity  
to keep my regrets from overtaking.**

**And how I love you  
even when I am slipping headfirst  
down the brownish stream.**

## **Still**

**You and I are a terracotta river  
encasing the unmanageable rock.  
We drink from the cyclone fire  
and fill our ears with the sounds of harps  
and nocturnal rejoicing.  
When I am touched and my head  
is under the feather then time is  
fossilized and my body is the voice  
that drives me down the curve,  
wide enough for an astounding fulfillment.  
When I touch the core of your bones  
and join the urgency of your kisses  
with my own, then we are lured  
from our daily plots and cast-out dreams,  
until flooded and found by the golden synergy  
of our married tongue.**

## **First and Only**

**The first time I found you  
at the donut shop with the perfect balance  
of youth and torment  
absorbed in every movement, I knew I found  
an eternal friend. The first time you sang, I felt  
a fiery and surprising happiness.  
The first hug we shared on the church steps  
as the music played below was like a wave,  
strong and soothing  
rippling along my back and arms.  
Our first kiss outside the café, when the rain  
was about to fall, told me there would be  
no number to our days, no greater gift but  
to feel this - our lips once apart,  
now vibrant, like a new being.  
Our first laugh together as we drank our coffee told us  
the depths we shared could be lightened by one another,  
gave us more than important conversation, gave us  
a rope to sometimes swing on and to always hold.  
Our two children born were more than bluejays  
on our shoulders,  
more than any joy gone before, bringing us further  
into one another's arms. Blessed by this indelible love,  
I am here, counting on nothing but on what we have,  
strangely at peace, like the peace I found  
the time I first found you.**

## Secret

We share an altered epiphany each night  
we merge below water, never speaking  
but touching satin against soul, tumbling  
in our home-spun ecstasy  
like the pounding of pure birth.  
We rise and fall speechless, buried  
in the radiance of our realm where we journey,  
our skins seeped in sensuality,  
still discovering after nineteen years, building a depth  
unencountered - the two of us,  
bending, refitting the mantra  
of male and female confinement,  
drugged by the surprise, by the thickened lips of our  
controlled urgency, blind to all but each other,  
the muse of our  
naked dancing, breathing, visceral releasing, and  
at the end, laughing as though we were seeing  
our first ever snow fall.

## **I Could Have**

**I could have waited  
in my personal eternity with the yellowed books,  
on the cold other-century floor, night upon night  
reading of murderers and painters and women  
confined to views of freedom, caught in a rebel  
stratosphere. I could have underlined the philosophers,  
changed channels on the radio,  
stayed with my father's typewriter,  
with my buckwheat mish-mash and the ants that collected  
near the sink. I could have taught the rabbit to sing,  
kept my special and comical cat - stayed  
with my angry prayers and my exacta-knife,  
craving equilibrium and knowing only a violent vacancy  
that would find no distraction, nothing  
to ease the pressure of such urgent longing.**

**(how lucky I didn't)**

**It was years after that when I found you  
on the steps of the church,  
embracing me with your black hair,  
boyish charm, thin arms and  
matching intensity. It was the first time since I was a child  
that I could trust God, holding you,  
joining my burden with your own -  
and in doing so, alleviating the weight of its core.  
It was the first time  
I could leave that floor, the books, change direction  
and see something  
of happiness.**

# Alive

**on your wave  
of wet torment, licking  
the moon of your lips,  
cradling your breath in my mouth  
as I held you submerged in my contracting core,  
held you within as you were within  
saturated with my pulse and flow.  
I went under, planted  
in the memories of your soul.  
You swallowed our merging  
with rapid speed. We evolved, stripped of every season,  
you and I with our initials carved on each other's skin,  
undulating  
in our sensual, blessed commune.**

## Greenhouse

Inside this greenhouse on a hill  
there is an arcade, an eagle  
and the fear of scorpions.  
As the vegetables flower  
I can almost hear the traffic on the streets below  
drowning out the crickets. I know we belong here -  
where there is an internal wind, seven bodies  
and so much heaven. Our windows are bullet-proof.  
When it is time to eat, we eat then we play, love and fight.  
At the head, there is music, there is greenery.  
The eagle gives us depth, and the fear forces us to grow.  
The arcade is a machine of imagination.  
When we leave the greenhouse, there is a path  
we take downhill. We greet strangers,  
and sometimes we bring home crude, unnatural influences.  
But sleep heals our home where we hold  
no resentments and keep no secrets,  
and the air is as sensuous and tender as  
our house is green.

## **The taste**

**of someone else's  
memories tracing the lining  
of my throat, merging with  
my own memories, until there  
is no distinction**

**of apple butter  
spread across my tongue  
thickening as it descends**

**of fire  
and of absolute calm  
combining and moving  
like a wave within**

**of hunger eased  
and rapture reached**

**of being fully saturated with  
sexual peace**

**The taste.**

# Redemption

A look of strange purity,  
the type of a true gentleman  
anchoring a violent nature,  
the type of innocence rediscovered out of evil,  
by the unexpectancy of falling in love  
and of being loved  
after so much grief, so much guilt, so much  
time.

A nature - gentle and commanding,  
full of every colour but grey,  
potently sexual, but never crude,  
burdened by a clear code of justice  
that drives that nature to be  
irrevocably lonely  
without being reduced.

## **By This Light**

**By the light,  
you carried me.  
By the dark, you found my hand,  
and together we stood, holding hands,  
barely breathing, never resting, just holding  
like David held his slingshot and the slingshot  
held its aim - synchronized to destiny's rhythm -  
you and I and the drumbeat lingering after the sacrifice,  
and the coming of age that never came,  
and the fire finding  
safe haven on our backs - a deep dive in the shallow end,  
a kiss that never makes it, but somehow is known.  
Swim, you told me. Breaststroke  
through the dark karma. Swim  
before the fast freeze get us, before we lose  
our grip on each other's eyes. Everyday,  
your smile saves me. Nothing changes, not  
the chemical spill reservoir we counted on  
to nourish our crops,  
not the crowded bandwagon that takes any route  
to bypass our cries for mercy.  
But every day we still have each other.  
Everyday we claim our peace -  
still no footing in the world, but still so greatly blessed  
in our love's long-held victory.**

## **Slowly, without reason**

**a breath will come and then  
another until the spell of defeat is  
broken, until the dream stays full and flavourful  
in the mouth.**

**We hold hands in the storm. Love can be very  
difficult, it is a constant rebounding back to the essentials,  
to what really counts and how to fight for it,  
stay close to it, commit to it as one.**

**Love is the shape of his lips, the dance he does in  
the middle of a TV show. The world is hard, but not  
hard enough to break God's wishbone, not hard enough  
that we can't walk through it - him and I,  
leaving futility and gravity behind.**

**The roof is ripped. But it doesn't matter.**

**He makes me happy. Together,  
a pearl is found.**

## Our Love

The salted lips,  
the husky sea and the atonement  
of death, I called you my tale  
of the bull horn and familiar voice.  
Crack through the corn cobs, through  
the years that seem to spell-up without  
answers or digestion. But you and I,  
by heaven's chapel and heaven's cattle  
left to graze, unkilld, we are sparrows  
after a summer rain, blind still, but finding  
shape in our children, and in and by the doorways  
we have and have not conquered. We are  
the mantle where crystals breathe their energy, and  
we are the same as twenty years ago, having only  
each other in this place of senseless oblivion, having  
what others always long for, rich together  
and forever as midnight.

## **My hands,**

**your muscle-toned thighs  
and the ways between us  
that unlock the wonder of  
the thin stones tucked under my pillow.  
You are glorious like the sun and  
a river that curls its breath with  
primal speed. At peace with these  
broken bones, and even with  
things felt, but unimagined.  
You are late October in my arms. Everything  
is ours. I touch you and know the end, all means  
of luscious renewal.**

## **When This Is Over**

**At the end of the day, the pears will be ripe  
and the ones I loved and died will float before me  
in waves of growing beauty.**

**At the end, when all of this leaves, then I will breathe  
an owl breath, still in my tranquil sky.**

**At the end, I will find you, thank you for this sick chaos -  
myself, a garden, hit by a massive storm.**

**I will give life again to the little birds, insects that have no  
use or concept of glory. I will return with you  
to the Buddha waters, happy to know so much love.**

**I will walk out my door and there will be summer,  
early summer, and you and I  
(though bruised and that much more  
world-weary) will walk into the warmth:  
ultimately loved, unequivocally whole.**

## Now I am Two

**It is this way, togetherness:**

**A covenant with tenderness and speaking thoughts  
only glimpsed.**

**The snow falls like rain as the afternoon moves  
without time, our hands pressed as one,  
lips and then, something better. Always  
miraculous, unexpected, awakening. Always  
us, vanishing and then re-emerging with these things  
of harmony and friction engulfing our scent and path.**

**Soon,  
the tiger lilies will bloom and being  
just us will be made difficult  
with the children gathered in our arms.**

**But this 'difficult' is  
whole and adds to our liberation –  
making coffee, laughing  
at things shared and only ours.**

**It is what was prayed for,  
what years and hardship has not  
diluted, but has fused into an unbreakable bond - us -  
the summoning of all our parts - ancient, immediate  
so that even when death comes  
or fate and terrible sobbing,  
neither of us will ever be again  
without the other  
alone.**

## Intimacy

I lay by your twisted completeness - an ocean  
of transformative screams, rolling, lulling,  
the colour of ice  
and sometimes, gold.  
I breathe, though I cannot  
imagine the radiant death inside you that  
maims all warmth, casts out the churning world  
like a house fly. Touched by your beauty and  
the sharp lines of your natural conviction,  
I am final - ripped from darkness into  
something too bright - dunked into the chilled water,  
naked, my heart not even where it belongs, but rising,  
rising not pulsing - pausing and still because  
this is not sorrow, not the past nor even is it heavy.  
Because I touch your hand  
and it is fixed like a star is fixed in the sky or glass  
impaled so deep it touches bone. I touch  
and like you I am contained, blue –  
and I am now and better than,  
bigger than  
a thousand storms.

## **Time like . . .**

**There is time like there is  
a carpet or somebody  
knocking on the door. The battle  
rages in a chaotic frenzy. People  
cave into fears as if that means  
'maturity'. There is no time like there is  
no permanence other than God.  
Stimulation and bleeding gums.  
Sit down, run your hand over your face. I will  
run my fingers along your jaw line, your  
brow line, and trace a constellation. Be my  
instrument, expose the terror I cautiously keep. Call me  
a hypocrite and then forgive me,  
avenge me for my mortality.  
In heaven, the Earth is a vegetable left too long in  
the fridge. In the mornings, I am lonely but want only  
to be alone. Your breath howls, sometimes I can hear it  
when you think you are sleeping. Those times I would rip  
across any void just to clean your blood. Time is  
laughing at us, because we've touched the flesh of freedom  
and everything after that wears on our skin,  
groaning, growing  
as instant madness.**

## **this prevails**

**Footprints you appear in. Fences you break down.  
Your back has become my meadow,  
laced with dandelion seed. Your muscles twitch to the feel  
of grasshoppers' brandishing wings.  
Your shoulder blades combine  
under beetles' scurrying strides -  
flesh becomes grass and grass  
becomes flesh becomes weeds,  
connecting their incompatible sinews, intimately.**

**I plant myself on one side of you,  
searching for a conclusion. Permanence is a chain.  
I take photos while you are sleeping. I brush across  
the stubble in the cleft of your chin with my cheek.**

**Holding is indefinite. Years counted are like ivory  
appropriated, but at what cost?**

**We lift up our shirts, place ears over navels,  
dwarfing any future with instinctual immediacy.**

**With each lip-graze our fears are gradually  
disempowered.**

**They shrink, and then we shrink-wrap them before  
they fully decay, offering them an honoured  
yet secondary place.**

**Events are karma. Our karma is caged, dies  
from the surgical stitch formed between us -  
what was deemed inevitable is void of vibration,  
outcast from its orbit.**

**You are a wall made of sponge, absorbing.  
I will saturate. For you, I will not be hard or polished, but  
exile my conscious desires, give crown  
to a steady delirium. You will be central.  
And this will happen without conditions.**

**The afternoon rises and what stands on either side  
- be it memory or our impending dreams -  
falls subject, subdued by our abiding bond.**

## **Rest**

**Softer than foam  
when the heights are pounding into the body-stream,  
adding resistance to what cannot stop trembling.**

**I make a mould of your footprints,  
hang them over the washing machine.  
I climb the scaffolding  
fearless of my natural fears -  
lifting mortar into a pale, bricklaying  
and laying out bricks  
to seal a song, ready then  
to pull out of the quicksand and feed you  
in your darkness.**

**Pooling flies  
in the jungle of your fragmented emotions.  
What you cut off will never grow on its own  
until you splice a branch of your bones  
and bind it fresh  
in a ritual of rejoining.**

**You were born devouring splinters.  
I cannot change you,  
but I can rest my hands on your shoulders, help you  
to trust the feeling of family. I can stay,  
give you a fork to eat with, make it soft,  
and that soft will intoxicate,  
thread a cushioned contoured protection.  
It will stretch around you, satiate  
with womb-like warmth.**

## **Called**

**Devouring stars and licking the loins  
of expiring galaxies, God is moving.  
In these orgasmic vibrancies, God is singing and  
an incalculable formation occurs.**

**My lover is very brave to be sitting still on the dead grass,  
happily consumed by winter's stretched mouth. He thinks  
he is a catalyst, recording the fallout of those doomed stars,  
but he is more - brimming as he is with manic velocity,  
tied to the tunes that reel through his head.  
Consideration is not his game,  
nor being possessed by maudlin sentiment  
like a drunkard is bound to the heel of his anguish.**

**He wakes up and never eats until evening.  
There is love in his eyes  
for everyone. I'm not saying this because he is mine  
or because of what we have together -  
afternoons of invigorating coalescence, conversing  
like plant growth does with the sun.  
What we have together is proof enough  
that God is and nothing is  
by mistake or smothered with futility.**

## Box

Exploring  
thin hip bones, hills of urgency, the grounding  
of incomprehensible joy. At sea. Socks. Blindfolded  
on the top bunk, looking into blackness, sure  
of the kaleidoscope formations forming that press behind  
eyes - optic nerves more alive than when there is  
sun. Impulses  
propelling new positions - toes touching,  
calves locked, demanding, skin against  
similar refined surfaces.

Clarity climbs the spine.  
Minds are removed from symbols,  
divulged of an audience, resting easy in sounds, validations  
of hidden obsessions and kerosene wanting. Wanting  
outward what is inward - to pick a pearl  
in the tossing waters, to be that pearl  
torn from ligament bondage.

Death sings, switches axles. Inside that box,  
larvae are destroyed, what is wax-paper-winged  
emerges like steam, twisting with a giddy haste, singing  
and shedding the crust of coveted seclusion.  
Like the brushing wind  
of wet breath on an upper thigh, it sings, or  
like the smells of predatory indulgence coupled  
with tender consideration, cheeks are under siege.  
And even what is awkward delivers  
unexpected fulfillment.

**The box is handprints on glass, fingers drawing  
biological notes. Open. Each time  
time has no bearing. Each time venturing, the box  
is a blade, contracting - multiplying an adrenalin spectrum.  
Each time excessive sensitivity expounds, actualizes,  
there, flushing.  
What is given, returns larger -  
corners are lifted, four-sided  
confinement collapses  
as two fibrous silhouettes gain height,  
hum tangible, hold steady and then  
mutually unroll.**

## **Our Light Cannot Always Burn Whole**

**Nests that stay through winter  
are similar to us at times - left abandoned  
on high barren branches,  
valueless until spring - if ever, even then, reclaimed.**

**We jog through bitter uneatable harvests, absorbing  
disappointments as our only viable feast,  
not heeding our self-honouring needs,  
too proud to address imagined or deliberate injuries.**

**Jackets buttoned to the neck,  
we move in these sewer shafts,  
trying to shake the foaming stench off  
of each other's tailored attire.**

**On our bed, we are broken, letting our arms rest  
like a Spanish squid's tentacles would rest,  
pulled from pulsing waters. Our mouths  
primed for confession,  
our eyes scanning features –  
short hair, skin under the eyes,  
familiar necklines.**

**We tell each other these things are worth  
the horror of abominations  
accepted as societal norms, atrocities justified  
as a soldier's directed bullet.**

**Here in a shut-in space, we can lock,  
shed faculties of crusted reason,  
create a colourful spread of sensuality, messaging  
our blood vessels with deep oxygen, curing, learning  
to make saliva and swallow.**

We tell ourselves sometimes we wish  
we could be like those who live  
never knowing an intimate tender beauty,  
like those who get shipwrecked,  
daily hunted by a cancerous loneliness.

At times we wish this love didn't exist,  
then we could give in to what lies beyond  
the cliff, defend our exit, salt the Earth  
with a dramatic departure.

Those times, we hear a desolate chorus rising  
and we vanish completely into its volcanic siren wind.

Other times, we talk.  
We watch squirrels dance across  
our backyard trees, make tea, passing domestic glances,  
gladly sharing the last spoonful  
of bottled honey.

# Yes

I will stay with you,  
acknowledging the four factors  
that create warriors, faces  
of ceramic gods. Taking in these four tides -  
erratic electrical fumes;  
unarguable weight; ripe stiffening;  
charitable maneuvering -  
this potently controlled receiving,  
snapping us into a place  
where we are never betrayed by our mutual craving  
for equal depth and ideals.

The way you look when my eyes are closed.  
I see a visceral chemistry copulating  
in your vascular system,  
changing the consistency of your skin,  
showering you with oil. These pressure points owned,  
wrapped in dark honey -  
a sticky rich worship and weeping - myself,  
dripping against you, inside  
a red whirlwind of our joined imaginations.

We have walked rooftops,  
looked down and felt at home.  
We worked many nights on forgiveness,  
smashing snowglobe sceneries,  
defusing any fantastical expectation just to be honest  
when we finally awoke, to take each other blatantly,  
communing as soulmates should -  
peeled of barriers, wrapped freely  
in fundamental urges and a desperation  
for speed.

**Pliant movement - karma or coincidence?**

**It matters little, for it is  
gathering storm.**

**It reminds me of an unkempt appearance,  
appearing weak, watery, but is really  
like the hollow delicate bone of every bird  
built for flight - an aimed and painted arrow,  
capable of penetrating a crust of sky.**

**This is our alchemy stripped of ethics.**

**This is us as a curry powder-and-turmeric mix, mixed,  
we enhance one another's scent and tone. Yes,**

**I will stay with you, stay with our patterns locked  
in perfect spiraling aberration, stay on side streets,  
on wet park floors,  
under our green roof, stay with you,  
holding with solidarity our sunken joys,  
precarious compulsions, dandelions or maggots, holding  
a constant means of God-given  
restoration.**

# Stay

Fine as a flake of mica  
was the vow we made  
decades ago, when any  
syllable could be forgiven  
and the substance of dull horror  
was just imagination. That vow has grown into  
more than a vegetable - consumed,  
vitamins mashed, tolerated.  
It is much more than an idealized place or perfect pillow.  
It is what we made here, heroes to our own love,  
bypassing blame, slaughtering resentments, screaming  
through headlocks or  
when kneeling on the bathroom floor,  
bonded to the midnight turn and years of heavy lifting.  
My love, remember us again, don't be acid or an orchard  
of terrible ivy, fill yourself with renewed determination.  
You know  
my hands have never been mild, never stroked the molten  
skin of treason. Can't you be my pomegranate,  
my gunpowder? Don't polish your shoes.  
I like them dirty. I like these walls,  
even the crayon marks tracing up and down the stairway.  
I am not lying. I could die here, with you -  
table wine on the shelves,  
children on every floor, and us, searching  
for lilies in our garden,  
making burnt cupcakes, regretting none  
of our history.

## **Linked**

**by a permanence,  
stronger than victory, smelling  
you, the minerals you wear and  
layers of unwashed clothes.  
You are a medical philosopher,  
stuck on practical theory,  
an airplane too dangerous to fly beside  
the birds. I am one of those feathery few  
who long to burn in your backdraft. I smile  
every time you repeat something funny.  
Often, you are the music  
and I am listening, squinting at  
another region where turtles devour minnows  
for sport and vinegar tunnels behind the eyes. Open.  
You keep me open when I want to be a needle,  
nothing more  
than a knife, or a pocket of pins.  
When I want to wear stockings, you pick me a station  
to stop at and tell me to gather burrs -  
burrs, up and down my legs, hot as a ripped fingernail or  
being showered with poison.  
How can I not respect you? Not think you my magnificent  
other-half? How could I stay here without you, withstand  
any small wound or other  
destined occupation?**

## Too Long

**It has been minutes maybe days since I felt  
your warm tongue trace the blades of my back.  
It has been too long in isolation,  
away from your loins, the trembling  
of your barely-believing hands and voice,  
telling me we are larger than any love,  
like druids or those so deep they have no religion.  
It has been like living with a cramp in every toe,  
walking, searching for a fountain to bury my wishes in  
and finding only denial in every eye, alien expression,  
computer distraction and political nuances. It has  
broken me. It feels as if it has broken me, except  
when we are together, when our monastery re-appears  
and your fingers flicker, strumming out a conversation,  
honouring the strength of God - sensual as thunder lacing  
the sky and all that lives under the sky.  
It has been a rapid stirring,  
a slow removal of my self-esteem  
- too long without your orchestrated breath and you  
cutting,  
    cutting through.**

## **Moments Before Merging**

**I wait for you, veiled with fear like eyes are  
when the body's on its way to slaughter.  
I take your focus into my sterile forest  
running through you but never planting beside you.  
I am muddied dead leaves and you are  
more open than a robe of welcoming  
intimacy. My thoughts in the shower - my desires  
spread out and flood rooms, rise against  
the walls - picture frames, memories  
consumed. I call to you. But you are mature and perfect  
like a psalm or an ancient turret I can climb up and into -  
surrounded by your history. I can shut myself in. I can  
wait. And it is you, only, and everything I am  
is so tightly woven into this anticipation.**

## River

I will run my breath across your eyelids,  
go to you, trace the edges of your hands,  
finding infinity inside your torment. I will  
drift into you like wind and you will not mind  
my lips like a concentrated shadow on your skin,  
darkening but leaving no weight. You will let me  
be inside your picture, a background to your lyrics,  
softly at first, I will heal the red in the whites of your eyes.  
I will release my wardrobe for you and you will be the  
mania that I climb through to reach tranquility. I will  
cup your flesh and stretch you through this intimacy  
because I own you as you own me  
and it is not a bad thing, not  
blasphemy or anything  
to fear. It is your hands, mine - these  
poignant burial grounds that have been excavated,  
these days of standing close, depending upon the ease  
of our mutual exposure. I will speak in your ear and you  
will step into my voice  
like stepping into a river.

## Seamless

Raincoats and rainy seasons are behind us now.  
I picked up a feather.  
You took it from me and now it is yours. And just like that,  
rich as the coral reef waters, we were initiated into  
a lower layer.

Intensity is a button. It is concentration - one part,  
one of your parts unrelentingly explored  
while ignoring other  
distracting sensations. It is the thick blood  
raking of thighs against our lesser faith.

Fears of the future put aside  
and left to their weeping.  
Shoulders become secrets receiving  
probing pressure-point intrusions.  
Like a primeval working of strings,  
through this communication, we see  
the courage of our history rise,  
become an advancing truth,  
and our pores  
grow and sparkle like thousands of tiny sun-drenched ants  
pooling together to parallel a single purpose.

We know 'just survival' is tyranny.  
What we seek is not movement  
purely for the sake of employment, but to create canvases  
of vigorous struggles - ones that can only be cemented  
in unison.

**Our bodies have abandoned their blood-lines.  
We are touching every crease  
and tense design with undiluted intention -  
first blotting out words, then delectable conversations.  
We rejoice in the grand dramatics of our compatibility,  
equally committed to corporeal immersion.**

**The past culminates in this single outpouring. It is  
a privileged evolution. It is months of misfortune  
exterminated by the exertion of our mouths:**

**Strange rhythms are risked, foreheads pressed,  
giving way  
to beautiful unadulterated disclosure.**

# **PART 2**

## Sanctum

Cedar wood, dark spaces under wood  
where beetles mate then hide their own. There,  
you smile, your forehead groomed  
of false expression. I study you like  
my one-chance solution,  
or steps to take to shield me from  
this penetrating boredom  
that slips unwanted under my heavy housecoat.  
Narwhales shaped like epigrams,  
like the undecipherable complexities  
in the creases of your folded hands.  
You are taut as a sail in a strong wind, capable of  
unmatched speed, stretched, though not even  
close to ripping.

If you were a tree, 100 years and on, pulling sunlight  
from its throne, shimmering green,  
a stronger brilliance  
than a vault brimming with polished gold,  
still you could not be better than what you are -  
sitting close to the corner, on the couch,  
unwashed hair and an irritated mouth,  
reluctantly waking into the noon-light,  
drinking coffee, salted, sometimes sorrowful,  
mostly spring-time budding -

a supplier of oxygen, maker of songs received  
as storm-sturdy harbours, worlds to land on,  
dig or nest or claim a hole, many branches,  
many escape routes, many life-saving homes.

## **Our children are orchards**

**By the door  
we wait for the end of school,  
for the long day to bloom  
to lay to rest the tricks of superstition  
and our obstinate ache  
to be carried to the next fertile shore.**

**Blocked, but that too must be an answer  
to the polished space that compresses and invades  
our waking hours.**

**Risk that comes out of despair  
as a last ditch effort to not give up  
has been told in chronicles, as surrendering stories  
that rain away dust and  
heal the hunt of weighted hunger,  
nourishing spiritual belonging.**

**Leaves and feathers we collect with our children,  
graveyards we visit to look at lost names,  
where our hands seed deeper into the Earth,  
rise higher than the hawk-bird into  
the stratosphere of grace,**

**grace as wind we depend upon  
to navigate our footsteps,  
to quilt together our four-way love,  
cooling the cut of arduous days and pilgrimage.**

## Lotus

Sleep, into triumphant sleep,  
waking is a tide of abysses and senses  
reflecting illusions. Cursory stresses,  
repairing at the bedside  
where my knees bent in prayer,  
scuffing my skin with cosmic complaining.  
I've thought about this, and I've decided  
not to care if I fail at swimming or trophy-getting,  
or in collecting eggwhites, having more than what I have  
necessary on the table.

Love is the weathervane is the station,  
earning eternity, a teaming ocean worthy of a dive.  
The rest is a stunted fetus that will never coo  
or be baby-dream sufficient.

I've spent too long weight-lifting chaos's hammer,  
flinging myself from wall to stump.

I have eyes that hold me, another's and another's  
I can take pictures of and sing to, and I wish for nothing  
but to retain this fertility of tender revealing.

Children and the final history of desire,  
predestined to return as a speck - own my freewill,  
multiplying with the rhythm of a brighter responsibility.

Sleep, for I've never existed  
but to count this love and to love this way  
personal, a cliché of bloated ignorance,  
with a mouthful of famine  
and an armful of miniscule miracles,  
gestating, spiralling, blending into the soft brown sofa,  
tea in hand, leaning on another, amazed  
by how good this is and how very long  
this cozy reverie has lasted.

## Past obligation

Perched and listening,  
a point of war.  
Several days I lived in a hole,  
shoulder shot by the blast  
of a rubber hammer coming down.  
Clear as pacing, counting  
the clock ties, permits overdue,  
you stayed like a waning moon, unobtrusive  
in a cloud-cloaked sky -  
the only light left to have. Somewhere in  
that shady disaster I bought a dream,  
almost new, with you, carefully walking  
the wet rocks. I fell asleep and you stayed, documenting  
my close-to-death dawn. Fishing me out of the fishtank,  
releasing me into wide open waters.  
Middle age is best, sea-worn but still pursuing.  
You stayed – an island never claimed by reptiles,  
a freight train, moving slow enough to chase and board.  
Thank you for staying, for your fervent destiny  
choke-collar-chain and your eyes  
of tender extremes. I lay it down.  
The lizard with the leaf.  
The primal mysticism I built my struggle on.  
I lay beside you, knowing you climbed many stairs  
to find me, and you stayed.

## **A weighted bliss in the lonely light**

**Love is a mountain inside a stone,  
a lightweight singer finding purpose in a mourning choir.  
Love is broken, mutating into falsetto, breaking,  
then layering a new underbelly. Love is something  
to wish for – moving, movable with just the right  
amount of softness and substance, just the tips of fingers  
coursing over a body. Love is a mind free enough to know  
compassion as a coping method. It is a body unbearable alone,  
but under love's touch, able to mark off  
conclusion after conclusion -**

**constantly budding, lasting ease  
lasting elation.**

## Paired

Hole in the sky we go  
through. Other way  
around, we exit on the peak.  
Oblong mercy is the natural order  
of things. We see an innate  
camera reciting images  
made up of everyone's fluid flames,  
discovering everyone's life is short.

I remember sleeping in a dark summer,  
remember the innards of the cave I strode into,  
making a home out of its  
damp walls and dirt.  
I never meant to leave that home, never thought  
I could find one to hold awareness  
with such intensity, savoring  
the brink-edge depths, even  
expanding the boundaries. Never thought to be coupled,  
completed in an evolving perfection, never thought  
I could find one to give me permission  
to embody my desires,  
discover my desires before I do,  
then honor the reciprocation  
of mutual satisfied longing.

Our bodies become spiritual.  
Ourselves, undivided  
from the fixed-point and from the no-point  
chaos blues. Our gift  
is a box of fresh fruit, full  
whenever opened - mixed  
succulent, surprising pleasures.

**Ours is a wholeness that  
can be experienced without complications  
because we know that death makes God  
necessary, and because  
we are braver, only capable  
when we are where we stood  
before our births, each pore  
mingled, sensitized, our organs submerged  
in the consciousness of this re-joining,  
speaking in tongues, with tongues and touch.  
The time of only light awakened, then  
the time before light  
entered, restored.**

## **If You Wait...**

**When the man comes  
he will be wearing rings of endless  
symbol. He will be like a wave,  
strong, flexible, seeking shore.  
You will know him by his smell  
and the way his voice sounds in the rain.  
He will lie beside you like a childhood friend,  
abandoned to breath and peace  
beyond measure.  
Rich with depth and kindness,  
he will cradle your head on his chest  
and you will bless the wound that almost  
killed, then brought you near  
his familiar blood.**

## Love's Atmosphere

Today I tongue  
your private  
dimension ...

Too much transparency, empty  
breathing.

I feel my body like the moon,  
lined by  
night. The clock  
leaves a shadow on the bald  
wall. You claim your cross & climb  
to my side, barely  
making it across the covers.

I am  
skin  
wet, golden - your prehistoric  
lover.

I whisper my worst terrors, fill your  
ears with my hoodlum  
artillery, and ask  
if nothing else -  
to be saved.

Glittering with the substance  
of sorrow,  
you fold my face in your  
wordless  
hands,  
losing me there.

## Purged

Worn, magnified destruction  
the crime of ancestral imagination,  
crimes in your soup bowl,  
on your forehead, marking like  
a stain across your face.  
Come by home through the labyrinth  
of your self-hatred. It was never yours,  
only yours by default, only your father's organ music,  
only your mother's chained solidarity to a monstrosity,  
and you, lying flat on your single bed in  
your simple room watching the firestacks  
from the chemical factories, past the railroad,  
far from the river where you would bike to  
to claim yourself some peace.  
Beer bottles and ashtrays  
and the harsh unpredictability  
of irrational bitterness coiling  
in his dark eyes, distorting  
his once handsome face - Do you know you are free?  
In this mansion of hard-won truth,  
love as tough as marble,  
blooming always on unexplored shores,  
counting on you to thrive. You are mighty  
and you are needed. Do you know  
you are strong, a masterpiece, a hero?  
It is better this way,  
to have been crushed, eliminated,  
earning yourself such  
raw beauty. You are safe because  
you have been emptied -  
a cherished dream reduced to cinder,

**and you have survived,  
a mighty force of love, my love, my eyes.  
Despair is a weighted ghost,  
a guide who has finished its deed.  
I love you even more with your softened rage  
and your surrender. I love you  
like I have always loved you like  
the first knowing of who I have finally found  
a choir pure, vibrating grace into my bones,  
feeding, formidable -  
endless food, endless rest.**

## **Die Together**

**I close the distance.**

**I know this love like I know  
bird voices, the safety-net of death.**

**Reach, go deep into the skin,  
in aggressive desire, categorizing each intonation,  
a sculptor's scheme. I will make you a mountain,  
a colossal height, forming.**

**I will undertake a breathing soliloquy, a measured  
chemistry for you.**

**Moon making, matching forces, destructive impact,  
then hot surrender - neon blast infusion.**

**Flesh and favoritism**

**blooming tight in the right spot, tight in the pulsing glory -  
no sin, no signed paper,  
no plywood to haul or candy.**

**Lava moulding, speak only of this experience, only  
close the distance and reap.**

## Alchemy completion

Far enough  
to line the bed with  
lavender clouds,  
pull off the covers  
and be entombed.  
Fine sleep and soft  
tenderness warming limbs,  
wetting where it warms,  
soon to cool – breathing like  
singing, lines smeared into  
unified devotion, matching frequencies,  
backward, forward leading toward a tower  
to leap off of, a bed to stretch on, sink into.  
It is holy, mud-caked, drawn curtains torn  
from their rod. It is thinking in intonations  
and shades, a cascading buzz riveting from  
bone to bone - two spliced and joining opposite halves,  
a power equal in its mercy. Far enough,  
just there, drawing breath on the summit, dissolving  
boundaries in sensual elevation, far enough  
continuing, collapsing, swallowed  
into the pitching current.

# Cardinal

We walked beside the wall  
on a grim February afternoon.  
Our lips parted wanting to speak,  
but words grazed the soundwaves like  
ghosts and our hearts sank.  
We walked together, over logs of rotted wood,  
through slush puddles, avoiding snowbanks  
and icicles dangling from high trees, beside the wall.

This is love, you told me, and I knew it to be true.  
I grew tired and you linked our arms.  
You grew despondent and I looked into your eyes  
like looking at a flower.  
The winds turned on us.  
Family dug ditches of judgment  
around us, expecting our downfall.

The cardinal arrived, leading the way, navigating  
us through - stopped on a wire  
while we rested, called at us  
to turn a corner. Around that corner, holding hands,  
the wall disappeared.

Our hair damp with snow, our gloves ripped  
at the fingertips, we sat on a neighbourhood rock,  
in a yard, where nobody was home.  
The cardinal left when a stranger  
appeared. You helped me up and we continue on

houses all around us, children going to school,  
and us together inseparable, strong in love,  
stronger than the hard hard world.

## **Love is our master**

**The tone resonated the red heat  
of a sea of lava burning away the dead cells,  
activating a living substance. We held  
hands, walking in the deserted late-December streets.  
Ours is nobody's but ours - broken train tracks carried,  
dropped, put back together.  
The lapping wind of the spirit  
like a bell in the far distance, calling us here, there  
and always home.**

**Your pockets are full of roots, ones  
you chopped from the ground, left there with no tree  
or shrub to source its life out to.  
But those roots still thirst,  
so you place them in a high jar in our bedroom,  
tend to them, give them the attention  
of your brilliant mind, hurting  
for their inadequacies. I love you  
deep in the hole and in the twilight  
of an open summoning space or when locked  
in desire, the two of us, giants without chains –  
the illusion of isolation shed,  
heroes to each other's loneliness, and the rising  
of our blood that has no ancestry, no pastlives  
or this life before.**

**We are the keepers of this conversation.  
You are the place where all my ships land,  
in the infinity of your eyes, a strong arrow spark  
of awe-striking connection, where  
underground tunnels are excavated.**

We are a perfect rub and flow, and we flow, fingers  
over the tender inner thigh, mouths  
braving more than kisses.  
We built a bridge and we crossed it,  
holding hands, watching each other's back.  
We take off our shoes, a field is before us.

All animals are gorgeous, each  
with a full and necessary soul.  
Animals peer out from behind the curtain of high trees  
lining the field, waiting for us to run. We run  
and twirl and lay down in laughter,  
like we once did long ago.  
We are good just as we are. We are one  
at the knees and at the core.  
Hell and the moaning of withheld mercy is far behind us,  
we have been devoured and we dissolve -  
our shells and our centers, seasoned, spring-woven,  
what is ours, what is God's, combined, surrendered.

## **Joshua's Shoulder**

**The herd was on a hill  
Soldiers were marching  
Young people were below, learning  
how to grow up correctly.  
I touch a cloud with my tongue,  
cried on Joshua's shoulder  
Will they every be resurrected?  
Will the horn blow,  
beat heaven into every heart?  
I had a dream Joshua,  
we were on a clear river  
sailing on a gigantic leaf  
we were more than happy  
never once striving for shore.  
Joshua stretched out an arm  
a finger  
drew a circle encasing us  
My love,  
I would break in a minute  
if not for your soul  
pressed so close to mine  
Choose your smiles well  
not everyone understands laughter  
like we do.  
The rocks dislodged from mountains  
covering graveyards.  
An old woman was reciting her name  
in front of a mirror, a child  
she once knew, remembered  
herself to be  
Dead fish lay on the beach,  
their eyes, like marbles**

glowed, all suffering  
traceless  
as if locked inside  
a wisdom  
no human could unmask.  
I lifted my hands  
to give thanks to the birds,  
leaned on Joshua's shoulder  
and whispered  
Joshua  
The flowers are stones  
and the stones are stars  
Joshua nodded  
took my hand  
and changed direction, tears  
leaving his strong eyes.

## **The Jester and the Monk**

**The jester and the monk went walking  
The winter moon  
hung like a skull above their heads  
Two before midnight  
prayed by the river  
laughed in the apple orchards  
holding hands  
they circled a forest of dreams**

**The jester poked a tongue at the sky  
the monk dripped tears on the earth  
nailed to absurdity  
locked in serious sainthood  
campfire burned  
children linked arms  
close to their love**

**If not for the living thirst  
If not for the agonized fascination  
and the ignited chill  
no blue bird would they have betrayed  
no house would they have entered  
like wings  
flapping in an undecided wind.**

**A thousand hours  
counting many dawns,  
nights of humour and holiness.**

**Anyone could feel the connection  
resting in their smiles  
Anyone would have swam an Artic sea  
to soothe the burn  
blistering the strength of their hold.**

**What they wanted  
neither dared to understand  
only a bridge  
mouthfuls of truth  
handfuls of lies  
drove them together  
inseparable.**

## **Immortal Burn**

**The evening falls  
I crawl on my belly through sewers  
old passions, fatal hopes  
bellow, discharge  
into my mind**

**Your smile is like a sickness  
I can't shake off  
Your body  
a beating obsession  
infesting my pores**

**The last hour  
the last kiss  
burns immortal  
like thunderstorm  
fastened to my existence.**

## **A Great Wind Came Rushing**

**A great wind came rushing  
and I said to the wind  
“Bitter wind, stop before you carry me off.”  
A great wind came rushing  
and pulled me into the sky,  
I travelled past wheat-fields  
sailed under its furious reign.  
I was broken into many pieces,  
hit what the wind could not pass through  
half-crazed with resistance  
I fell to the ground  
into worm-holes and the open mouths of laughing children.  
I sunk into soil and dreamt of sprouting.  
And the wind said to me,  
“Do not perish with fright in these strange places,  
close your eyes and wait for spring.”**

**Spring came,  
I cracked and grew flesh  
then like a vine I crawled out of that dark ground  
and found the sun  
soothed by heat and rain  
I praised the earth with untainted joy  
And I said to the earth,  
“Sweet earth, allow me to walk.”**

**Gradually my limbs found movement  
lips formed, eyes appeared, blue and wide  
and I ran from land to land  
celebrating life with each step.**

**I wore no clothes, carried no yard stick  
found equal peace, equal rapture  
with every new encounter.**

**A great wind came rushing  
and I said to the wind  
“Powerful wind, come carry me off  
for I am still young and can bear the storm.”  
Weightless with excitement  
I joined its intense ride  
gathered at the centre  
halfdead with stillness  
I gave myself up  
lost the beating of my pulse, lost momentum  
sunk low into my depths, immune to singing  
And the voice said to me  
“Do not despair with sorrow in this vacant hollow,  
open your eyes and wait for love.”**

**Love came,  
I expanded and felt communion  
Like a clam I crept out of my isolation  
and shone my pearl**

**Like a clam I closed back my shell  
and hid in the safety of darkness.**

**And I said to my love,  
“I am as incapable of loving as much as  
everyone else is.” And my lover said back to me,  
“So am I.”**

**A great wind came rushing  
And I said to the wind,  
“Great wind, be still  
It is time now to learn.”**

**The great wind ceased.**

**My love and I walk hand in hand  
on an unknown mission, swept away,  
carried by each other, alone.**

## **Into the Fire**

**My egg  
sticks to my womb  
wanting something  
like a thunderbolt**

**My love  
makes havoc in my breast  
like a sinister struggle.  
I am expecting him  
his lost satisfaction  
stretched out to annihilate my own**

**I am expecting him like  
a flickering tongue, a goodnight kiss  
in the twisted cry of his need,  
folding up inside of me  
expecting  
a terrible after effect**

**My love hovers in a madman's purgatory,  
where eternity gets stuck in a single moment,  
no claimed victory, no wingspread  
to express his freedom**

**I continue in silence  
expecting him...**

**I will never sleep again.**

## **When He Rides**

**Unearthly dreams  
illuminate him  
where gardens  
lay their petals to rest.  
They creep now, his eyes,  
into sad and forbidden  
realms  
of insanity's broken weight.**

**Loose threads  
dangling from his mind.  
Loose thoughts  
that have no ending.  
Lost on his lips, something  
unleashed like music, something  
like my love.**

**Find me alone  
inside bedroom walls,  
take these useless hands,  
allow them to touch  
the impossible**

**He makes the bell ring  
He turns the lights off  
He takes the bareback horse  
and gallops  
into the cutting dark.**

**The stars, they say,  
lose all balance  
when he rides.**

## Nocturnal Souls

Those pure, breathable love-notes  
written on Japanese paper.  
Our house, rain-cold  
with dawn dying in every corner.

When you sleep  
I believe I am made of ice. I travel  
in my frozen figure, spiralling,  
drilling up  
into God's domain. While you, flat  
amongst the covers, breathe slow like  
roots, touchable, sacred  
as the shadows of my mortality are born  
then perish in the wind's mute philosophy.  
Loneliness infects us all. You have told me,  
there will never be a simpler tomorrow.

Cut flowers lean their bloom on pale walls.  
I drop my mouth like wine dripped  
on your shoulder.  
You wake and find me,  
hauntingly yours.

# Hawk

Paradise bound  
by doubt's heavy claw.

Our promises were  
fracturing. The hour  
melted into sleep  
then confusion.

In the bed where our stones  
were gathered like oracles  
of deliverance came the touch  
of communion, your hands  
crossing my boundary flesh.

Splitting the atmosphere,  
and your eyes, feverish with love's  
great skill.

You circled me,  
sliding down  
through the stronghold space  
between, entered  
and gave what in tomorrow  
I may never find.

## **As Your Sky Opens**

**I touch your eyelids  
not to keep closed  
nor to help lift,  
just to understand  
how such secrets form.**

**The night's creatures  
rise like needles from the earth,  
into the trees, into the throbbing river's arms.**

**You have so many days ahead,  
so many visions unnamed, ready to be spoken.**

**Your tears drop like swallows.**

**Your smile changes the shape of each cloud.**

## Nomad and Wife

Her dying bones  
which still have the strength  
of moon and fight are held  
up on his altar-hut.

Watching over – a small  
figure with the once milking  
flow of feminine  
curve and charm.

He will not be undone  
by the pain or  
winter's fast approach.  
(He places a carved bird at her feet.)

He has killed for her dignity  
marred and she for the power of his  
wide-set eyes. They touch  
hand to weatherworn hand  
and know the sensation  
singular like the sun  
is singular in its power  
to bless or deprive.

They do not smile, their union  
is too rich for such  
a soft space between.  
(They remember their children)

Watching as her life departs,  
his anguish echoes the high plains  
undefended, heard only  
by the gods. And the trees  
so placid, absorb each cry,  
accepting.

## Waking Up

In the dawn's light clearing, I sweep  
the glacier clouds  
reach  
my arms to your flesh, awakened from dream.

Plunging into ethereal  
substance, head pressurized with fatigue,  
your body pulled close to mine, and legs  
criss-crossed like swords laid down –

I glance up  
through our window, then down  
to watch you roll over:  
naturally revealed.

## Pendulum

Remove the spies  
from my grief.  
I cannot defend myself  
with such pale armour.  
I cannot tell you it will be eternal,  
this day in which I burn for your soft mouth.  
I cannot say the door is there,  
it is always there.  
I drown kisses on your neck.  
I reach that wave of endless choice,  
returning from episode to episode  
of our unforgettable unions. And then  
the stars seem to stumble around  
the globe, tripping for no reason  
into grave oblivion. Like us, they have  
their secrets and sorrows they cannot  
share. Like us, they glow in the night's  
pool-deep eye, unanchored  
despite the gravity.

## **Whenever I touch him**

**Heavy shackle  
around my shell.  
He says no, no,  
to the great descent**

**to hands locked in the wind,  
on pillow or sheets.**

**October sun beating on my covered spine  
So many walls erected in the name of home**

**He talks of black birds glowing  
or running into webs as wide  
as a tree's open arms.**

## Rocking Towers

Tonight, the void creeps  
in, with him, through  
the wood framed doors.

cold

like a heap of ash after  
a day underground.

Hair-splits

the bone, the eager heart, the eyes  
that follow every gesture.

What survives now of the tower dream,  
the stone skipping and the wishing well?

Both hands pressed against the T.V. set,  
trying to block the talk

and hold

the cut and thistle.

Both lovers glancing at the street lights'  
glare, waiting  
for the other to give

the word -

a blue blue touch  
farewell.

## Wedding Band

So much already surprised us,  
the seizure thinning of sanity,  
thickening  
chaotic bile.

The loss, barely bearable,  
the ineffectualness of love,  
all kaleidoscopes shattered,  
every facet of our beings,  
bent to, immersed in, fragility.

It wasn't the stars -  
they are always saying  
hoot! and ahhhh!  
it has never been them nor  
their sway upon our inner equilibrium and  
our outer balancing of gravity.  
It wasn't even how deep and involved  
our prayers were  
or even our feeble masks of courage,  
denting our dignity so we could have  
a new form to try on,  
taste, and learn what taste is, yet again.

What it was and is is chance,  
the dispelling of random energy  
until the whole illusion grows  
transparent - and we, divinely shocked out of  
our complacency, our certainty,  
resemble helpless fledglings, crushed  
by a fall.

**What it is is rising,  
rising from that, still broken,  
incapable of flight, but  
capable of asking God  
to lift us and wait with faith  
for the rising up.**

**What it is is leaving  
our crushed shells while still inhabiting them,  
living for the fountain-spring, the miracle,  
not working within the natural laws, not  
manipulating those laws  
with tailspin good luck charms,  
knowing the miracle is in our leaving,  
accepting our unknowing  
in this bright surrender, this marriage vow,  
river received, inception.**

# **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.**

## **Mark it down**

**Great joys approach  
like weeping harmonies in music,  
relief in the course-correction,  
astonishment in the manifold beauty.  
Decorations placed around the table.  
Declarations for devotion riveting  
through the backyard garden where  
everything overflows with abundance,  
is a tapestry of young blood frolicking.  
Shared surges of strong faith between us,  
because our love is never ending  
because the loudest boom has exploded  
altering the vibration here and forever,  
a higher octave, a mountain sailed over,  
a vision walked into, gallant and kind -  
welcoming, offering  
to fully bathe our bodies, open a fortune box  
so we can step away from restrictions, step into  
a beautiful anticipation.**

## **Intertwined**

**Together like odours  
that merge in a closed room,  
blending indistinguishable,  
we are continual - each the same  
as the other - in plague breath, in worries,  
and in peace-filled joys, hopes that restore  
strength and future paths beautifully unfolding.**

**So we decorate inside, never letting on  
how much care we give to each detail.  
Truth is kind to us as we hold hands across  
the sofa, smiling at each other because  
there is no corruption between us, no hidden  
regrets or festering resentments when we see each other  
we see a gift of eternal faithfulness, a lifetime pact,  
sure-footed, winged and light and rich as honey  
on the tongue, as a friendship that has never betrayed  
or grown stale, and a love in a constant cycle of aching,  
being satiated, counting on satiation and thresholds  
reached and surpassed, sensuously mastered  
together, often weary, but never of each other.**

**Only you are my love, bound  
like the stem to its flower,  
and the hawk to its sharp eye.**

**We will give nothing to the rest  
that does not join our great love,  
tries to defile our green fields flowing  
or make us believe in less than this miracle.**

**For all things of life are ours -  
our veins, our holy light-strings,  
intensely locked, tenderly alive.**

## Against Gravity

He sings because he is song,  
essence-song -  
potent life, potent death forever.  
He dreams salubrious dreams,  
fatter at the core and needle-hard all around.  
He lost the need for enchantment  
and exhibition. The inveterate intensity  
within him is mastered, absorbed into his every cell.  
It is not that he is better, only more genuine  
in his connection, metaphors advancing,  
infiltrating his pulse.

He knows because he is wild, dangerously free.  
Break him with poverty and he will break every rule.  
He will burst into flight, dancing against gravity,  
against a blood-moon.  
Tin-foil wrap him into a put-upon routine  
and he will make music from the crackling -  
laid out flat, pressed down,  
he will transform his form, rising  
whole in an inspired reverie.

*All of these poems have been published and have appeared in:* White Wall Review; The Antigonish Review; Envoi; The Artistic Muse; Out of Our; The Write Room; InnerChildPress Anthology; The Writer's Literary Muse; Taj Mahal Review; Message in a Bottle; vox poetica; Writer's Lifeline; The Foliate Oak Literary Magazine; Psychopoetica; The Poetry Jar; Poems and Poetry; Quantum Poetry Magazine; Whisper; Misfits Miscellany; Decanto; The Plowman: A Journal of International Poetry; Carcinogenic Poetry; The Fat City Review; Junk in July Poetry Zine; Both Sides Now; Triage Monthly; The Blue Hour; Fine Flu Journal; New Hope International Writing; Chicago Record Magazine; Envoi; Nostrovia! Milk and Honey Siren Anthology; Bigger Stones; New Binary Press Anthology; The Miscreant; Novelmasters; Boston Poetry Magazine; Kind of a Hurricane Press; Anchor & Plume: Kindred; Poetryrepairs; Creative Talents Unleashed; Leaves of Ink; TwitchFit Lit Writing Zine; Profiles in Poetry Literary Zine; above/ground press; PoetryMagazine; Venus in Scorpio Poetry E-Zine; Nazar Look; Wizards of Words, Poetrydig; Treehouse Arts; Lunar Lit Poetry Page; Tic Toc Poetry Anthology; Cavalcade of Stars; EskimoPie; Peacock Journal; Temporary Lunatic Literary Zine; Medusa's Kitchen; New Mystics; The Seventh Quarry; Sacred Chickens; Poetry Salzburg Review; Dog Is Wearing Pants Literary Page; A New Ulster; White Liquor; AWS Publishing; The Stare's Nest; Scarlet Leaf Review; The song is...; Setu; Duane's PoeTree; Kritya Poetry Journal; Imaginary Conversations Lit; The Kitchen Poet; The Chaffey Review; The Muse - An International Journal of Poetry; Think Pink, Pink.Girl.Ink. Press; Rasputin: A Poetry Thread; Smashed Cake Review (Sidereal Journal); Sonder Magazine; The Poet By Day; Indiana Voice Journal; Cartagena Journal; The American Aesthetic; Guwahatian; The Bond Street Review; blackmail press; Down in the Dirt anthology; Scars Publication online; Sunlight in the Sanctuary anthology;

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Pamphlet; Synchronized Chaos; Our Poetry Archive; Raven  
Cage; Madness Muse Press; Harvest; Fresh Words; Otherwise  
Engaged Literature and Arts Journal; Winamop; Literary  
Revelations**

# About the Author



**Allison Grayhurst** has been nominated six times for “Best of the Net” for her poems in 2024/2018/2017/2015. She has over 1400 poems published in more than 535 international literary magazines, journals and anthologies in Canada, United States, England, India, Ireland, China, Scotland, Wales, Italy, Bangladesh, Romania, Turkey, Austria, Zambia, Korea, New Zealand, Nepal, Kosovo, Colombia and Australia.

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

In 2024, her work was translated into Italian and published in “Italia News Media – Alessandria Today”, in “Saturno Magazine” and in “Il Vischio e la Rosa” anthology, into Albanian in “Orfeu.AL”, in “Gazeta Destinacioni” and in “Ciceroni”, and also into Korean in “Jeju The Pen Literature”.

In 2023, her work was translated in Korean and published in “Jnuri Magazine”.

In 2020, her work was translated into Chinese and published "Rendition of International Poetry Quarterly Vol 98", and in "Poetry Hall issue 7".

She has been interviewed eleven times in print, as well as a TV interview, with translations of her interviews in Italian and Albanian, published in Italy, England and Kosovo.

Her book *Somewhere Falling* was published by Beach Holme Publishers in 1995. Since then she has published twenty-one other books of poetry and twelve collections with Edge Unlimited Publishing.

Prior to the publication of *Somewhere Falling* she had a poetry book published, *Common Dream* (1991), and four chapbooks, (*Before the Dawn*, *Joshua's Shoulder*, *Perfect Love*, and *Jumana*), published by The Plowman, all in 1989.

Her poetry chapbook *The River is Blind* was published by Ottawa publisher above/ground press in 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. More recently, her book *Make the Wind* was published in 2016 by Scars Publications. As well, her book *Trial and Witness – selected poems*, was published 2016 by Creative Talents Unleashed (CTU Publishing Group). Her book *Tadpoles Find the Sun* was published by Cyberwit, 2020. More recently, her book *Running, lightwave riding* was published by Cyberwit 2023.

Collaborating with Allison Grayhurst on the lyrics, Vancouver-based singer/songwriter/musician Diane Barbarash transformed eight of Allison Grayhurst's poems into songs,

creating a full album. *River – Songs from the poetry of Allison Grayhurst* was released October 2017.

Allison Grayhurst's completed published work to up to and including 2021 is available to read in seven volumes titled *The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst – completed works from 1988 to 2017* and *The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst – completed works from 2018 to 2021*, published in 2017 and 2021 by Edge Unlimited Publishing. Selected poems from the first six volumes are published in *Sight at Zero (selected poems 1988 to 2017)*, Edge Unlimited Publishing, 2017.

Allison Grayhurst also sculpts, working with clay and casting into concrete. Her sculpting body of work can be found in the published book *The Sculptures of Allison Grayhurst*, Edge Unlimited Publishing, 2017.

She lives in Toronto, Canada, with her husband Kyp Harness, their two children and animals. She is an ethical vegan.

**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](http://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; ASIN: B0B6XNQMF5**

**Book 35: Comments on The poetry of Allison Grayhurst (from 2011 to 2023), 2023, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798375947556; ASIN: B0BV49Y5B9**

**Book 36: The Light Given, 2024, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798378690404; ASIN: B0D6L7GTDL; ISBN: 9798328036238**

**Book 37: My Mother’s Sky, 2024, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798329439182; ASIN: B0D81NNRMJ; ISBN: 9798329462050**

**Book 38: Walkways – the poem, 2024, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798329544190; ASIN: B0D85PX45K; ISBN: 9798329630152**

**Book 39: New Wheel – five long poems, 2024, Edge Unlimited Publishing; ISBN: 9798329652871; ASIN: B0D8C2698N; ISBN: 9798329741797**

## **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**

"A river is in Allison Grayhurst's poems. Sometimes it rages over boulders hidden beneath rapids. Sometimes it is as calm and placid as a summer day reflecting skies so blue they are as unusual as a Stellar Jay's wings. The emotions in her poems sear with the power of Sylvia Plath. This is as serious a poet as is writing poetry today. For those adventurous enough to venture into a river wild, deep, calm, beautiful, shadowed, light, filled with moods and emotions of both an inner and the earth's landscape, then this is a journey worth taking. It leads to experiences that have the texture and substance of life,"  
Thomas Davis, poet, educator, playwright, and novelist.

"When I read Allison Grayhurst's poetry, I am compelled by the intensity and strength of her spirituality. Her poems undulate through 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.

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