



NEW WHEEL
- FIVE
LONG
POEMS

THE POETRY OF ALLISON GRAYHURST

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New Wheel

- five long poems

Allison Grayhurst

Edge Unlimited Publishing

**New Wheel – five long poems
The Poetry of Allison Grayhurst
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New Wheel – The Passage of Arnik

(king of a small land)

Part 1

**My skin was stone,
drenched in an accelerant and
lit on fire. And there I burned,
a flaming rock impassable by
every woman and man who
tried to cross my shore. My fire
was final, a never-dying-heat
guarding the dead cold core
beneath its frantic dance.**

**Murder was easy as was laughing,
glaring bold-faced at the sun,
but languishing in waters, still or stormy,
was never my game, only, swift, loveless striking,
blistering and charring, beating with a spike
any imagined challenge to my seat in the center.**

**You covered my face with your hair,
let me sear it, then the skin of your face, to the bone.
And still you would not leave me, give up
on my indomitable obscenity – finely-tuned
to the leftover ash of my tenderside.**

**My madness was your deformed child. Even when
you ended me, taking an axe to break up my hard form –
you were more sorry than I was, heartbroken
to scatter that fire, watch its petering-out-existence
on the cracked concrete fragments of what I once was.**

For me, it was freedom from its burn,
a relief, relieving me from the devil's obligation.
I couldn't sing. I couldn't speak, but
I saw you crying - such strength
embedded in so much softness. I forgot
you had a formidable side. I forgot
that love was a ruthless wielding sword -
for both of us - terrible, unforgiving and
stronger than either of our self-proclaimed mantras,
better than personal devotion, brighter
than the burning or the burnt, tortured,
cloned-for-infinity, layered upon layer, like us,
molecularly as one, irreparably damned.

Part 2

**Tentacles, unfurled, then
curled, suctioning out
the snail from its shell.**

**Through the narrow hold of hell
I built a kingdom, wide and ruthless,
I cut the heads off the keepers of faith,
increased my stature as I did my gluttony -
sensual overload.**

**There was a tree in the courtyard, old and by its own.
Everyday I would chip pieces off its bark, because I could,
because I knew it hurt and I wanted to murder it, slowly,
this old beauty that held its ground longer than me.
I wanted its stillness, if not to own, then to conquer.
I obsessed over its carved-up flesh, kept its pieces**

in a box by my bed, one day planning to collect
the whole of its body in many boxes –
building a shelf for that alone.

But that day never came, for I found death
by the swift hand of my lover, after love-making
after laughter, almost sleeping – showing him the tree pieces,
while gloating at my cruelty, he sucked in my dark wind
and gathered an axe from its exhale.

He watch me fade. I faded,
spilled out over the bedding and the hand-crafted floor.

He cried openly, pressing his
lips against my skin, he sang to me –
laid the bark-pieces tenderly across my chest –
and there I was buried, there, in dying I awoke,
for the first time in that lifetime, trembling with peace,
I began a journey somewhere, home.

Part 3

Inside the white hot soul

that boils with bitter outward

blame, primitive in its inception

like a just-born-star,

born from a black hole sink hole infusion

of pain and power – tight knot force pouring

from an unguarded door, gushing forward like

a colossal flood, lifting homes, babies from parental arms

and the nesting rodents from their burrows, remorseless,

lashing this way and that just for the sake of it,

for the sound and for the consequences

I could unleash.

Whispers in my ear of love

were an implanting-larvae insect bite

to pour vinegar on and be done with.

But they burned, these larvae beneath my skin, traveled north

to latch onto my spinal neck nerve, hatch again,

consuming me with ignored madness.

I kept myself pure of sentiment until the end, until the next life

when those larvae overtook, and cloaked my retreat

with parallel barriers of shame and guilt,

called me to a time out, to be removed,

to learn discipline and control, gentleness

carrying out daily simple tasks, bothering no one –

small, self-sustaining, glimpsing a first taste of a personal

God as I

let the weight bear down, through the darkness, building

a sanctuary where I could chalk-mark the walls

with my crimes,

come to terms with accountability.

Gradually, many lifetimes later, those larvae

grew translucent wings,

thin, but strong enough to lift me off the ledge of confinement,

into the light of a new longing – a vision bursting,

birthed from both

a streamlined-focus responsibility toward a tender eternity

and a well-cave of feeding minerals, feeding,

blunt-axe perpetually hacking, holy despair.

Part 4

I speak of a cloud
fanning north - it went
past barricade ripples,
ended in a thin line above a blanket
fog. Wild disorder,
language I could not steal or make up,
but found the natural disappearance
of all things in its fate.

A creature obscure, placemating perfection
into a one-dimensional genius.

Good riddance to lineage and the shaming
fish-flight up against some sharks.

I touched you and you were naked. It felt

greater than love, but it was not so. It was
wider than a lifetime and swayed all over
the map, cloak-covering the appendages
of tyranny and a tyrant's response to fear.

We rejoiced together, exhilarated by the possibilities
and the perpetual spin weaving macabre plot
that lead to this glimpse of redemption.

It was the end - hoofprint on the grass
made invisible by an onslaught storm.

Even for the weight and starkness that came after,

I am grateful for the chance
you gave to be reborn – to dare myself
into solitude and austere discipline.

**I speak of a cloud
then of a king that was a man
who lost his heavy shape and substance
in a calm sky... know it, know it now,
a law, an equilibrium
dissolved – miraculous
clairvoyant space taker
vanishing through, into
a covenant-keeping once
impenetrable wall.**

(monk in service to a stream)

Part 5

Grace, grounding

in the mist-wrapped shelter

blooming in unison

with perfect stance and form,

killing my individuality to make

a stronger whole.

Orange bright red flare of robes,

sounds of marrow spine resonance,

stillness in speed, visible energy,

rolling, turning, flattening the air

from inner pressure – sealed, smoothed,

kneeling by a stream.

This kind of power accessed, focused

removed from ego and uniqueness.

Finding peace in discipline, saving beauty

in spiritual structure – every moment counted for,

every thought overseen and filtered through

for further simplicity. Clarity enforced

in the great dream of camaraderie,

in the common goal of God-mind, balancing

force with receiving,

honouring with accountability, weaned off

of the still swelling teat of desire, living far off

on an isolated high plane, holding heaven

**in a tea cup, celestial gardens in a rice bowl,
learning to blend mastery with discipleship.**

**daily striving for perfection in the body's movements,
daily failing, giving it back, committed
to this pulsar event - filling up, choosing 'yes',
then willfully deflating, releasing the hold.**

Part 6

This hand

split from the source

but not fully detached,

forking downward into

a vast otherness, depending on,

giving honor to the root, to the means to

keep nourished and whole.

Gently submerging in a stream,

entering an alternate atmosphere where

minnows school and scatter

and micro-organisms build communities,

interactive bio-worlds, unaware of the invading limb,

fingers, looping in erratic rhythm, glorifying in

the soft texture shadow, moving through with
easily overcome resistance,
encapsulated in the water-body,
entering, exploring without destruction.

This hand,
only feeling like it has gone somewhere
when removed, wet, knowing it has been
where oxygen is heavy,
where the rich showering moon gravity
has more say, greater mobility than it does in air.

Crossing dimensions without disruption
or impact, here holding stillness,
inside of, open to a passive discovery, then lifted,
hovering over the surface, dripping back into the stream,
gaining rich skin ridges, enhanced sensitivity, at last,
visible saturation.

Part 7

**Guardian of the small water
flowing - pebbles lining
the edge, shaved head resting
on the ground.**

**Loneliness widened in those few everyday hours,
listening to what went on deep below the surface
of the stream, honing in on frolicking fish,
predatory fish and the cycle voice
groaning, never withholding its display of extremes.**

**I closed my eyes and dreamt I held two shoulders tight
between two arms, wrapped myself naked around another.
That longing lingered well past sleep, as I rose, it rose up in me**

a discontent, birthed a being, a pulse
beneath my calculated fold,
thundering through my well-kept peace,
brought me closer to looking,
looking at those fish, seeing a richer kinship in their company.
As I looked, that loneliness quickened
in its demands, buzzed louder
than concentrated contemplation or a prayer.

There was no apology left to play out, not here
in this place, on this isolated rift on a mountain, not
when other beings moved in a more intimate connection,
tied to the vine and the sun and the fish
gave birth to eggs that were inseminated
and transformed. I could hear
their chattering, bubble blowing and their unquestioned
communion - each tiny one crowned perfect, even when

left half-eaten, perishing on the bank.

I drew back from my commitments but did not leave,
simply waited and held the promise of you in my dreams.

In waiting, I sent a call out to you, finding transportation
through the drumming chant, into distances

beyond my bent knees

and the gleam of my weapons

over cliffs and villages and oceans I told you

to meet me the next timeover, choose

this place, choose that harsh violence of a home

and I would choose mine, not far

but far enough from each other so when we finally met

we would be mostly cultivated and hurting enough

to give credence to each other's importance.

While I waited, I tasted your flesh in each grain of rice,
rolled it down my tongue like solid nectar, digesting it,
I kept up my call, told the stream to take it downwards too.
In silence I kept my secret, broke the machine,
and betrayed my brothers.

I had no choice but to tend to this flame, press my hip bones
against yours in the other space that started small
by the stream,
gained dimension and lengthened on the inside, stretching
to bare-toes, to fleshy ear-lobes, flame
that circled my bones like a hungry bird,
broke them into pieces and swallowed them,
glittering, gleaming hot in this longing, still
a stone on the outside, dutiful while I waited,
letting that flame infiltrate my organs, veins, larynx.

I loved you absolutely, in the wild intake outtake breath.

I ate as always in slow movements, with one hand, eating,

the other, ripening, building in heat,

calling out, preparing for our wedded harvest.

Part 8

Standing on a petal crust, ground
by a stream, sinking into wet earth
where fish corpses lie buried,
surrounded by minerals and mountain stones.

Sinking as the sun arrives
and my heart seizes but is not afraid of
drowning in this damp graveyard,
knows it is a sacred blessing to be called
to dive into the underground
where light and water still reign,
knows it is pulled, plucked and twisted but
will return to form through a flexible core,
elasticity intact, inner elements uncompromised.

Going down further

merging shoulders and neck, readying to breathe in

the divinity ground, harbinger

of worms, death and thin bones, keeper of

the Lazarus resurrection

and the sun seeps into my parted lips

as does the soil. I close my eyes

sinking, unable to hold air or hearing.

Honoured to offer it my flesh and my singing bowl,

I am covered in this stream-infused ground of a shroud,

vessel-body overtaken, vacated and then transmuting,

dissipating, ready to feed the root, be healed,

find you again, and in loving you,

be equal, irretrievably joined, boundless together,

opened, never closing, owned.

A Journey in Four Parts

Part One - Acceptance of Realty

(facing the unmovable block)

This is the branch that holds you

Precision and discipline

are the two things needed to win.

Win what? A war. A deadline. Victory

in a failing dream.

Blend the monotone flame,

build it up to fruition so it consumes

the skin, and then the liver and kidneys within.

Stay the course in spite of the flame,

in spite of feeling divinely betrayed.

Summer is not for you. Nor is fainting,

or fading, devoured by futility.

Bite the salt cube, be a door not a wheel.

Take what is shattered, glue a mosaic garden,

a place the rain can settle, and after it settles, shine.

**Borrow nothing. Depend on only yourself
to be your own ambassador, mentor, fan.
Stand without dripping. Keep your hands
clean of self-pity, unstained and soft
as when you were first born.**

**It is a train ride, stopping at many
dilapidated stations.**

**A long time ago you had medals, owned a crown.
It never brought you peace.**

**If you are fragrant,
if you are foul-
it doesn't matter.**

**Humble yourself to the journey,
let the corpses bloat themselves, feeding
on the putrid elements of greed and anger.**

**Do what you do best: March,
serve and sometimes sing, finding comfort
in a foot-soldier's rudimentary song.**

(held tighter by the tentacles of hell)

Snip the Seams

Snip the cord

Snip the line

Denial is suffering

under the veil of false

understanding.

The wound is the womb,

the low-road and the high shore-line.

Snip all means of flight,

all laws and inhibitions.

Shapes made are never final,

words too, alter meaning.

Look and snip

the draining pipe, the solid memory.

The way you were sure was open

but never was, snip

and be done with it.

Why the painter who cannot paint, hot days

in global-warming winter,

the bird bath with a hole?

**Scissor-queen, wire-cutter machine, bow
to the bitter land before you, make peace
with the locking tide. Snip**

**the pictures from the walls,
the broken limb from the rest of the body.
Try it on. Wear it before a mirror, into a crowd.
Pass over the keys.**

**Take tomorrow, hold tomorrow now
and snip.**

Part Two – Interlude

(maybe Yes)

Smelling the Salted Air

When I fell

I was half-metal, half-mush.

The blood spilled would have killed

another, but I was blessed with

resilience and the head-down-ploughing-through.

When I was down there on the hard oblivion dirt,

I wished my anguish would have devoured me,

that somehow I would stop with dutiful tasks

and allow my mind to reach insanity's pinnacle.

But I kept going, moving my limbs – first fingers,
then forearm, searching for scraps, nourishment
in the garbage heap I fell on.

No one came to carry me home
to their bed of fine linen and clean water. No miracle
lifted me from that impassable barrier, but I moved through,
I don't even know how, alone and broken,
my arteries split, my mind lost in the bardo-realm.

Finally, strong-kneed, healing, a small
cavity within is opening, filling with hope.
I know myself in this fiery affirming pulse,
know that freedom from the fall
and freedom from the shackles
that encumbered me to stumble and fall
is my only chance for grain.

**If I climb back up that ridge, allow myself
to be chained – the next time down
will be my last.**

**Now that I am up, walking and free, I see
behind me soot and murder – impersonal and brutal
just because.**

**Ahead, I can make it, make myself a ship
to weather any wave.**

**Ahead, I can keep myself open, love deeply.
I can be tender, build furniture in the sunlight
or just run with the running water,
up or down stream.**

Part Three – Commitment to the Impossible

(ripping off the rooftop, chipping at the floor)

Wake!

Travel with the donkey

to the place where your

thirst is quenched.

Look into the eyes of a farm cow

and tell her stories of glory.

Leave all your wounds in an unmarked grave.

**Those wounds only put weight on your back,
around your belly.**

**They are not symbols of your grandeur,
but only fed your self-pity, tying you to
a moaning sorrow.**

Walk out the door and wake.

Ring the meditation-bowl bell.

**Don't resist your freedom or sabotage
the foreclosure of the haunted warehouse
where you spent many years alone trying to slay
the undecipherable.**

**It was never a church nor is it even worthy
of a keepsake box of collected hardships like the hardship

when your children moved through serious illness
and you moved with them, holding out to, onto
the angels surrounding.**

**This has no life-pulse. Its pain
never brought you closer to God.
It is waste, decay - don't drag any part of it with you
as you move forward into a complete tomorrow.**

**It formed its own geography within, its own army
of ruthless intent, pitted against your joy.
Dislodge that piece of land from the rest of yourself
like a useless limb to sever.**

The sun is opening. It has opened.

Accept your good health and wake.

Your left hand is now a flower.

(it is a decision, mutually yours and God's)

I Take In

**I take in the fire,
the light of dreams,
take it into my core
to swish around
and build movement, a whirlpool
energy expanding, patching**

**broken roots on the way, manipulating
days of service to grow a tree
that will sustain long after the forest floor sinks
into the sea.**

**I take reality and strip it of its elected principals,
reform its origins to reveal miracles,
downpours of fixed definitions dissolving into
a running stream.**

**I take the pen and make corrections,
here and here until all truths co-related to the truth
within me, until I have no employment but to follow
the dictates of the divine, and know this power
as I know my own gait, my lover's touch,
the smiles of my children.**

**I take the chaos of circumstance and make a string
to guide my way through, hold and follow -
one string, one line, golden, formed,
unbreakable as a covenant bond.**

Part Four – The Light is Found

(everything belongs to God)

Green Patches on Open Ground

**Bow down and accept
the particle blue,
the strength of the beating sun.**

**In the flame you were born,
keep it alive, as pure as
squeezed lemon juice, as precious
as water in the holy grail.**

**Wherever you go, the miracle
is in the listening, in steamrolling
resentments, bitterness and the weight of time.**

**If you must go back, then trust
what binds you to life is stronger and will prevail.
Surrender to the secret. In a second, tumbledown,
join a choir and let your song be layered.**

**Honey drips from the windowsill.
Collect it in jars and feast. God is great
and only what is connected to God
can know greatness.**

**Re-embrace the purity of truth and be delivered.
Renew your sacred vows, let the vowels join the consonants
and form words. Cloud. Peach. Clean.
Be filled with your personal seraphim's blood.**

Get behind the line and follow.

This house is an eagle stretching her wings

over her young. It is holy and it is alive.

Your blessings are not meagre,

but monumental as a babe's first breath,

as yes&no combined.

You have been retrieved from the dumpster,

many are not -

but are left in a crusting-over broken shell, infested

with insects and slowly-devouring disease.

Yourself, once a fallen workhorse,

now unbridled, set free - wild and roaming, racing

neck-to-neck with kin, flooded with pure-power instinct,

at one with the wind, the hills, places to graze.

The Journey Continued in Four Parts

Part One – The Step

*(barren metallic fields,
a harvest ready to haul, infested,
lock-jaw stagnation)*

Never Holy

**You asked for a light
at the end of the tunnel
and was told
there is no light at the end
because you are the light
guiding your escape.**

**You are the living fresh-water fountain
you seek, the high rock in the ocean.**

**Then you were told there is no tunnel,
no distance between the dark and light.
There is pain and loyalty to that pain
and false hopes that claim us
like a deceitful friend plotting betrayal.**

**You were told to be glad at daybreak, when the battle
ensues. Against the rain, don't have any secrets,
even let your own death be revealed.**

**You were told never stop longing for the clarity
of your spirit, give no one up to the slaughter,
eat only what does not scream or thrash.**

If there is a high wall, climb.

**If a steep incline, find a rope, tie a rope
and edge your way gently down.**

**You were told to make bread, give a loaf away
and you might never go hungry.**

**And even if you do go hungry, then hunger
is the season you are called to endure.**

You asked for light at the end of the tunnel

and was told
six more days, then seven - open sail -
eventually the wind will wake, spare you
the cause of your consuming dread.

*(Four Heads of Evil Within and Without –
Resentment; Bitterness; Self-pity; Self-aggrandizement)*

Revival

**Be still, in the hostile landscape, be still,
find provision, refuse the fear.**

**Firmly self-sufficient, valuing your
success measured by fulfilment of God's commands
and the sweet exchange of eternal experiences.**

**Is there anything to regret? No,
there is only what must be given up
- self-pity - the grotesque body
that grew beside your own, grew because
of your suffering, a deformity that**

**grew to help you carry the weight of that suffering,
a deformity that held a place for your secret pride.**

**But now, unbound, you must mercy-kill it,
release and dissolve its surface layers and under-layers.**

It is always in a state of perpetual decay, supporting.

Release the poltergeist apparition,

re-distribute your cells, align

without its sickly features haunting and its whisperings

that lead to madness, whispering

“This suffering is yours. How amazing you are to carry it!”

and “No one will love you if you don’t carry it.”

Be loved in your joy and crazy impulses,

your sinews riveting creative overflow.

Be bouncing, impossible, wrenched from its illusion,

off your leash, off your rocker.

**Discover dignity under the high trees,
by the rapids, skipping stones,
stepping on the slippery rocks,
stepping closer to the thrashing contours,
closer yet to its elemental song.**

(Awaiting Impact)

Calling In

**If you see the daybreak
but cannot walk out of the cave,
if you are still feasting on small beetles and cave-moss
instead of apples and mushrooms, how far really
does your sight go? Far, winning yourself
a legacy but not far enough to be more than
a story told.**

**How do you collect the emptiness and make a stone,
a salvation, carved with a celestial roof and sturdy ground?**

**Beg for movement - ask to drink from the cup today -
to perch on the hillside, walk down
the hillside and greet the blessing
like an open-hearted child, running
full speed into your arms.**

**Take more than symbols, signs, tarot and spells.
Lick the forehead of love, taste the salt
on your tongue, gently covering folds and creases.
Stay in the glory, tangible, building, connecting.**

**The deck is clear. Hatch the egg.
Search the upper rooms,
carry your bed to the second floor, welcome in
the seductive sweetness, invite it to climb your steps.
First, shedding its secrets, single in its carnal commitment.
Then, feeding your body with its gravity and resolve.**

Part Two – Going Back to Let Go

(learning the lesson of Lot's wife)

Their bed, Your body

**Rocking under the blade,
not touching, almost touching but not.
Walking into the savage yard, where
decaying soulless wanderers
crowd the space and drink misery instead of water.**

**Passing through the yard,
closing the gate, never to return.**

**It is a dark enchantment - behind you, bolted,
enclosed. No price high enough could steady
their ravenous hunger, no sacrifice given to save them
was ever even noticed.**

**They will keep wandering
in the dead-zone where no mercy
can reach them.**

**That garden is a place where connection
to God has been willfully severed, where souls
have dissolved into wisps of ghostly fever, ungraspable,
doomed to the storeroom, to the torment tangibly pouring out
of guilt, shame, and outrage born from self pity.**

Pity them, then move on.

**They are full of secrets, unwashed undergarments
and dusty overcoats, cramped with illness.**

**Your hands cannot be a shield,
their shadowy substance will seep through your pores.**

All that can be done is to

**hold hands with Jesus,
commit to run with Jesus. Make this choice,
and watch the swallows circle their nests,
watch the leveling sun
as all good possibilities expand.**

**And you, reborn by this choice,
having shed yourself of their torment,
can rub yourself with lavender,
manifest your eternal potential,
stepping into the wave, becoming the wave**

**at one with such power,
all directions in rhythm, forward.**

(see with both eyes)

When Dust Covers the Sacred

Time is hard on the dream.

**The dream, once sharp bold lines
becomes an untidy room - clothes behind
the bed, food crumbs hidden in corners.
For this exchange there is maturity,
the binding up of existence with the inexplicable,
the terrible and the flaccid.**

**The dangerous duty, the succubus of worry
and then the bitter beast that grows a head beside**

**your own...in youth, it is easy to imagine the
chaos cleaned, ordered like the many houses of heaven,
but after the fruit has long ago been picked
and there is nothing left to eat, your body changes
to find fuel in air like the baleen whales,
sucking in, filtering out, tiny nourishment,
trying to maintain fat stores, energy
for movement and a steadier type of strength
that only needs the air for answers,
breaking down the barriers of the dream,
letting in influences once firmly barred, letting down
the unsolved puzzles, picking up a housecoat and
relaxing.**

**The dream then becomes everything - tasks,
small gestures of love, like hugging your grown children,
feeding hazelnuts to squirrels**

or watching your lover dance, carefree.

**The dream is a small thing,
creeps up behind you like an unexpected neck rub,
cultivates in increments, holds its best power
when unattended, yielding to the unconscious flow,
crushing the big-dream-treasure into an edible form.**

*(the more love given,
the more meaning received)*

Sink the Cup

Ignited, set afloat upon a great ocean.

**And although the life below the surface is foreign
it is drawn from the one source, and not-so-foreign
at the core.**

**Speak up upon that burning boat-pyre, drain your cup,
release your shock and anger into a spoken-aloud prayer.**

**They will come, the angels of the sea -
humpbacks, octopi, porpoises and silver bright fish -
from the dimensional platforms of subcutaneous depths**

they will rise with conviction, intimate
as the heat that encroaches and the flames reaching,
determined to transform your flesh into ash.

Leap into their fins and tentacle arms.

They too are sacred and able to offer deliverance.

Forget the land and land creatures

with air pocket lungs and the need for direct sunlight.

These water creatures will work magic

and make you one with their own, so when the fire arrives

it will have no sovereignty over

your plumped-up water-bearing body.

Go under, down inside a world without fire,

take your cup, where the weight and pressure

of the depths is enough justice to bear.

Get close to the Earth's centre, find a soft place at the bottom.

Remember to love everything that goes by -

the eyeless and the ugly, those that creep and those that glow.

**Here your cup will be unnecessary,
but even so, here, it will remain always full.**

Part Three – Why Not?

(The Poet is not there to save you

The Poet is you)

Why not?

Why not

a sphere,

a monstrous breakthrough

breaking through the sphere

**creating a gale, a flash, uncovering
a raging realm of heaven before
unknown?**

**Why not the mountain
that was both shield and finish line
dissolved into the flossy ocean-sand
particles, sinking, dispersing over the vast
salt-saturated floor?**

**Why not love strong as a flock of geese
blazing a dark pattern over blue, or love
like a cave, deep underground where a ready-made
meal is found?**

**Why not the backbone
that was believed as backbone**

**a chunky armour removed,
and the hand coming in, pliant and warm,
finding skin and muscles rounded, pushing
into true intimacy?**

**Why not the heart a fish
with a coin in its mouth?**

**The warrior, now a mother and still
the same?**

**Why not a steady supply of nourishment,
everything found when needed, everything given
when asked?**

**Why not the gathered yarn, the knitted
sweaters?**

Why not

**the person on the bus sitting
in a suffering madness, just his eyes
looking down, teaching you
the unburnished treasure within
- compassion -
seasoned, for you, the world and all?**

(a miracle witnessed)

Not a Dream

**It will seem like a dream,
blanketing your shackles in light
until they vanish like a passing breath of
wind.**

**You will walk
and the iron gate will be unlocked and open.
At the intersection
you will know it is not a dream,
but a beautiful reckoning, a reconciliation
between reality and ideals.**

**What you value and keep,
and what you hand over
will equal in authority.**

**You will be escorted onto the path
in spite of practical obstacles.**

**In spite of the guarded prison cell,
your freedom will arrive,
gloriously and easefully.**

You will get dressed and follow.

**This is not a dream. There will be no blood spilt
to ensure your release. It will feel like a dream.**

What you commit to will be your lead and your tether.

**The shadow of tormented suffering will
be waved away by the angel's magnificent hand.**

The way will be cleared

and tomorrow

you will be rejoicing, opened,

remaining open.

Part Four – Coming Home

*(kenneled in four sterile walls,
dig until your roots are exposed, weeping)*

Forgiveness is Freedom

**You open the door
knowing that light is mercy
and mercy is light.
Piece-by-piece has shifted**

**to the whole, split off
from attachment to personal sin,
from ego encased around your karma
that holds you pressed to it, believing in it,
living inside its loop like an unquestioned tradition.**

**You open the door and let go
of your individual inheritance
to know a flow between
yourself and heaven, without ritual
as catalyst, only God's love
as completion, only
Jesus's gift of utter anarchy.**

**Letting go of repetitive spiritual duties
that chip away at the rock because the song is sung
"There is no rock!" It has vanished, the burden**

of blood and ancestry removed:

forgiveness in the depths,

freedom at the starting line.

(Interval of agony, elapsed)

The Answer

**We must be a potion
mixed. Alone we have
potency and purpose still,
but combined is the breakthrough
explosion, the cry of light that
will grind heaven into sparkling
dust we can bathe our bodies in.
Let's bathe, hand in hand, limb over limb,
relax in shimmering warm waters.**

The guilt that was yours,

guilt for feeling responsible for choices
that were not yours, exorcise it,
burn that haunted palace down and construct
a new hut where we can live and make
a clean home in, pure from ghosts
and the blood bonds of false ownership.

I see you alive and blazing,
your chained foot unchained
and the sun warming your back.

I see you with two hands working their strength,
kneading this sick world with your voice
so strong it will spawn revelations, shape
spiritual fires, ladders from lightning bolts, splitting
the wheat from the chaff.

Be honoured you were chosen for this task.

**How could you record it if you didn't live it,
if you didn't suck in the last
of its shame and suffering threshold,
choke on its dry and brittle pieces of bone?
So suck it in, take it into your bleeding esophagus,
then watch it dissolve, its frayed and familiar howling
vanished into a new-found brightness.**

We must climb the high wall together.

Us, as one, or not at all.

That is the commitment of our marriage

- spit and gore, glory and bond -

**Eccentric dancers, fierce creators,
our shoulders as swords slicing the pie,
casting off this second mortality,**

**together, breaking the wind in two,
being born in the space between, landed.**

Illusions Burned, Radiant Light Restored

Part 1 - Exiled into a Ruthless Land

Time without becoming

It won't work.

You thought it would work, but it won't.

Clutched jaw, vermin making nests

in your gut, melted silver pouring

over your extremities, hot-plate

your whole hand must rest upon.

And here, you are supposed to find peace,

but you can't. You can't even glance

at that inhospitable land, can't even step
a toe into its puddle of spittle without sinking,
leaves you
like a mad crow cawing aimlessly here, there
across the sky.

Stones here, fish there, people moving,
going where they want to, and you, stuck, perpetually,
feet locked in the mire - misquotes buzzing,
barely a light across the moor.

You hoped it would work. You believed,
and in that belief, you touched happiness
for weeks, woke up thinking this hell
was wrapped and sealed, that your freedom
could be activated and somehow
a great merciful tide would come
and clear a path.

But now you know it won't work.

Now you know who you are,

a broken umbrella that won't work.

Fated to feel the impossible tension

of who you are and who you wish you could be.

The birds are somebodies. Each tiny sparrow,

worth embracing. You wish you held value

like the sparrow or even a cloud

that for a moment

gives relief from a relentless sun.

You wish you could carry this weight

a little longer. But both your arms are broken.

Your heart too.

A greater force or just

this dull aching horror of

no-truth, no-connection

just the pound pound plaster-cast-mould

of what could-be, used-to-be, never-really-was.

Make me a hole big enough to escape from,

to join the flight of burning gods, retreating like they did,

into myth-oblivion. Pull the seasons from my mind,

memories when I thought love would sustain,

maintain its potency in spite of age,

desolation and disappointment.

Every ideal I held sacred has crumbled,

bread crumbs now,

smaller than pebble stones scattered on patio steps,

never existing at all.

**I am a placeholder substitute there to feed,
provide shelter but never home.**

I am blind, unchallenged, beyond the limit for redemption.

**I am fighting the sea and the sea does not panic,
lives within
its own self-directed rhythm.**

**The sea's flesh is stronger than my marrow, than a war-cry,
than the binding-ties of loved ones lost and buried.**

**The sea will receive me, not because I am special,
but because that is what it does.**

**My fight is fire, but only mortal, and the sea
has my body, fills my pores and lungs,
takes me below.**

**This is the voice
that heralds and hardens,**

**sunk, elusive
far from any shore.**

**Colours, saturated with salt,
whose better business is taken up
and bloated, dulled of any identity.**

**This is the rhythm,
once so exact and necessary,
fallen below, muffled, interrupted,
spliced into unrecognizable dead forms.**

**This is the time spent
answering a calling, a duty**

of divine command, slack now
as a pierced jellyfish,
abstract enough to be ignored.

This is the voice
that burst forth from my fire,
moved with violence into the light,
showed wings, a detailed face,
survival's thundering veins.

This is the voice
I thought would crack the sun a little,
crack the mind to let leak in
a delicious deepened dimension.

I risked a destiny but failed to germinate.
Now I take up my luggage and wander the streets

with that voice,

claiming revenge in aggressive madness,

(a quiet vapour only

when children pass by.)

Tid-bits, burnt toast, is that the substance

of intensity or is brave conviction

only recognized in another world

or in heaven?

But heaven will not have me,

no matter how hard I swing it - heaven stays

a meditation mirage, a glimpse taken in,

taking me down,

not worth a fraction of the effort

I put into vaulting for peace.

Failed as a sunrise over a prison cell in dungeon ground.

Failed as condolences to the bereaved, or a sandwich

made, placed in the hands of the dying.

I took a step and crushed a flower.

I covered myself with blankets and lost

the willpower to breathe.

Truck overloaded with debris

driving straight toward me.

I should leap onto safe ground,

but there are high cliffs on either side.

I should lie flat and hope the wheels go between,

not crush my ribs, my femur, my pinky toe.

How can I welcome the spring?

What should I do?

Over and over the cut hand

escaping the hold, briefly,

then back, barred and shackled

by fool's gold.

Part 2 – Defeat Masked as Acceptance

Blossoms That Resist Their Bloom

**Dashed against
the sidewalk curb,
opened up, cracked into
pieces. No sooner
the storm rains came and
washed me down the sewer drain
into pipes I'd rather not go.**

**But who lives here, in the invalid waters?
Creatures thriving on the potent scent and grim.**

**Creatures with their own rapport, societies, and even
love.**

I will be the necklace you wear in the dim corner.

**You keep saying one step one step, and
I will keep afloat in this sewage substance,
to not settle among the other mutations,
subjections – the great bowing down.**

**But remember, once I was a ruler,
doling out punishments and gifts upon
my erratic whims.**

**Once I cramped my mind with violence,
brooded on the sliced-throat of revenge.**

**That is why I am here,
backside floating in watered-down excrement,
barred between metal pipe walls.**

If mercy is available, I will take it.

If not, like you said, one step, one step.

Cherry dreams are Cherry dreams.

Courage when cornered

is more.

Biting the marrow

of obscurity, planting my wisdom

in plastic pots - passages I conquered,

steps I took, cut through the dreamy level

into the ruthless underbelly formations

tainted, untainted complexities,

but only

trite verbiage gets attention and eternity is

sucked into a keyhole darkness.

**Lightweight riders riding,
applauding the trickle made from accidental saliva,
giving credence to feel-good epigrams, lacking in literature
and monumental sway.**

**God said paint, so I painted. God said break, so
I broke – the canvas, my heart and sanity.
Starving in the shadowland, frozen, cast out
in the middle of a dead lake.**

**Fire is a world of two masters. In its light
there is a reunion of acts, a sealed equal pact
between purification and destruction.**

**My roots are strong, no doubt, I have grown
high and thick-trunked, gathering greenery, but
in an empty field, empty of roads and wildlife,**

empty of a steady stream.

The dark part

The lost part

the found-again not-wanted part

has arrived like a package at my door.

Purgatory leaning to pick it up, shake it up

and take scissors to the outline.

Inside is a mask made of fish-skin

containing a nameless vibration,

an unshifting necessity to put on, wear

and fit in.

I want to dispose of it, crush it then

rip it into tiny pieces, drop it down a sewer grate
far far from my home – maybe even take a bus
to another city and leave it there,
deep underground where no trace of it remains.

The tormenting part

The hard-concrete-wet-prison-floor part

The chained-to-the-wall part

is again, at my door.

It is noon hour and I still haven't
put it on, as its stench dulls my appetite,
is really too much to bear, but I must put it on.

When I know the exit sign was just a mirage

how will I hold up now?

Silent in its deathless domain?

Silent in this unending anguish?

**When hope is gone but faith remains,
in this place, miracles dare to bloom.**

**The wrong part
is the right part
because it is playing a part**

**I will wear its acid peel, place its flesh
over my own face, wear the mask
hurting as I do, then
I will hold out my hands,
expecting, to heaven.**

Part 3 - The Wound is the Answer

The Flow of Matter

**Take the light,
Lose the light,
racing across a panicked terrain.
Fear is a sloping hill mudslide.**

**You pierced the earth with your stick,
left it there, left running, thinking
your speed would catch on fire, seed
growth on dead ground, meaning more
than just thoughts impaled in your mind.**

**The stick stayed. It is still there, far from
where your limping dreams have finally arrested.**

Release the burden of trying.

You have lost. This stone wall.

**This patch of yellowed grass and the brutal
whirlwind all around – this is yours.**

Make something of it.

Take the time, because you have that too.

**Dissolve your belief of a mission
up into the rays of the giving sun.**

There is no light different than the darkness.

Feel it flashing, flashing far away, rising,

broad shoulders, furrowed brow

yell it out one last time

then surrender.

**Standing in the dark bend
of a wanderer's insight where
neither solitude nor the life beneath
the great seas will do.**

**Which dead body do you keep? Salting
wounds for the sake of enlightenment,
framed with things you cannot glory in
even for a time.**

**It is nature and it is
a passing motion.**

**You will mourn its starving carcass
for you know nowhere else to rest
your heart and eyes.**

**Stand by the fires of liberation,
join inspiration with accomplishment.**

The word is NO and it is mighty and reasonable.

**None of this is a problem, even the dread
that spreads like maggots above your abdomen
in your leisure time, in your working-in-chains time,
all the time, surprising you with its intensity
and burrowing, burrowing.**

**Hold your lips tight, buckle up, straight away be
God's soldier, holding acceptance as
your sword.**

**You are not impotent, You are just
one reality. Think slowly. Your life is not yours
to keep. Feeling abandoned or belonging is
just a stirring up agitation – water, moon, desert wind.**

Nothing is missing.

**Where you are broken,
the light steps, is captured and glows
the most colourful where it is fractured.**

It is your fingerprint in holy bloom.

**It might be a ritual dance, a memory of walls
and the dew collecting on steel window bars,
but it is also a fossil you have gilded to your soul,
a door keeping you in this room, incarcerated,
white-knuckled and bawling.**

**You think you deserve it, that many lifetimes ago,
before the monastery, you did deeds**

**you would now wither from,
your now vegetarian soul, conscious
when you see slabs of cut-up carcasses
in the grocery store, conscious
of the torture and fear endured.**

**But you deserve only the wind your prayers
are carried on, only the smiles of your grown-up children
and your husband, happy beside you,
his sail full mast.**

**That place where the stagnant prison waters stank
and your feet developed unhealable sores,
is over, not even a rope nor an army
could carry you across
into a sunlit field.**

**Part of you is still there,
living out the punishment daily, toiling

in angry futility, tied to a tombstone with vultures
gathered around.**

Wax yourself unhooked. The animals love you:

**The mother bird feeds her young
right above your head, knowing
you are safe, joined to the psychic link.**

Part 4 – Between Notes, An Interval of Peace

Where The Rays of the Sun Are Blocked

They Rest, Then Warm

**In the summer your wore
your loose clothes.**

**In the winter, your layered yourself
in velvet.**

**It is spring and the ships
are setting out under a spring sky.**

**Take the time to wash your stone wall,
chip out a window, keep chipping and soon
it will be large enough for you to slip through.**

**The dark grammar is deepening, but so
you have made a choice to break neck-to-neck
with the soothsayers of doom, then to surpass them,
turn down an unleveled path and make true headway.**

**The rain will come, the stormy thunder
and the wind, but you have earned yourself
the skill of withstanding.**

**The parameters are bleeding through and your house
for now is happy.**

Take a second to be grateful:

**Immortality is only that –
a moment in full recognition
of the harmony innate in eternity
and the conscious love that begets
such perfection.**

**In the fall, you put away the bird feeders.
It is spring and still the birds are singing.
They survived and their singing
brings you joy.**

**Changing gears in the long-held-note
of the lion's roar,
summoning
a way forward that does not jar**

**against your sacred values
or block the energy up or down, in
a stagnant pool of algae larvae-laid waters.**

**Take a hand and listen - there is still glory
to be found, a tent to build, a tree to climb.**

**Take what is untouched and touch it, craft it
like spores on the moon,
or team-spirit high-five it
in the bleachers.**

**Right now, what is not narrow is too wide
and barren, a place where even a young horse
would get tired racing across.**

**You were supposed to have passed this place by now,
or so you dreamed. You have only rough-cuts on your screen,**

shapes like phantoms, hardly visible.

Inside, you are always tired.

**Are you dying like you did in another lifetime
from a blood disease, alone in a room?**

**Or are you going
somewhere else this time,
coming to your senses, full gear,
a master of your circumstance, finally, ablaze?**

**The order of things was simplified,
silence ensued and questions left you
folded under the Buddha-wing.
Times in the shower when you heard and learned**

the worries of the day were enough,
that there never were graphics or translations,
but only the raw-hewed truth
that flamed forth its music and love
without peculiarity, pure, in charge of
everything living, there

you felt yourself a queen in the lap pool
doing dives, and finding your coronation party
full of only wanted guests.

In this calm, you lost an onslaught of examples,
but held playtime as fair-time, power-of-the-spirit-time
occupying the four corners of the shower
and all the dimensions too.

Windows became houses became homes, places
of enactment, concentrated love and many broken

**unfixable edges where the greatest fault
was always indifference as default to giving up.**

**The order of things was reduced
to a straight and infinite line.**

**Excess was swept away
and a breezy sobering became elemental,
austerity, soft as kindness.**

**Speaking, overlapping
a fighter's field, then a gate to
squeeze through, mark your territory
on the other side.**

A summer on the other side

where you could will all rounds, drop
your shield and summon in the wildlife.

Mornings there to ruminate,
cultivate your calling to reach
an undiscovered octave,
craving the centre of the storm
and knowing it
like your morning shower.

Friends are far or going into surgery wards
to hunt down a destiny.

Family is fractured, engraving
your failures centre-wall.

You see a driver shouting
at a mellow pedestrian

**and a bronze statue tumbling over
in a flood.**

**You run to the gate and it is barred tight, not a crack
to slip a finger through. Above, it is different.**

**Do not miss the chance,
Slaughter your past
and even your accent.**

**Leap up into the tornado wind and spin-sail
out of your mortal sleep, bone-picked, out in the open,
looking at, loving, the first moon ever.**

Part 5 - There Will Be Movement

Commitment In The Unending Desert

**In case you don't turn
but monotony pursues you
like a patient wild cat or
your fondest dream realized
has left you tight with dread - then be
the Buddha-master in the folded
seams, be the highrise apartment
looking down
and eat bread, sip your tea.**

**In case it will always be a matter of
just-getting-through, and stress and guilt
flank either side of your relief, linking arms,**

**then remember Jesus and his words
about the wind, smile at the expectant animals, find love
in the broken and bent, remember angels exist and God is
neither cunning nor withholding, but always available.
Be available too, open as a crumbled dam, open as
the first smells of spring.**

Vivid days waiting to watch the eclipse.

**The hawk has circled, telling you it is coming,
but in case it doesn't, salvation is within, tied
to your own commitment, tied to the upstairs rooms**

each filled with a sleeping loved one, each

closest to your heart.

**The light came like light does
illuminating the clawing hand,
stretching taut the slack conviction.**

**It brought to the surface the groaning ache
of anxiety, making fingertips quiver and
their pulse beat in unnatural speed.**

**The light exposed the tender spot,
the bandaged maul,
merciless in its thorough claim.**

After that, the body was done, the full moon waned

**and ideals carried the weight of serious difficulties,
no longer racing full charge.**

**You walked with such exposure,
and learned how to surrender, dissolve
your fears into the light.**

**Many times it was that way,
necessary to make the decision
to release your load
otherwise you would sink –
until you stood bare beneath the sky,
resources and water tipped over the side –**

**just you now and that light,
not even time traded spaces with it,
not death or the grief of memories.**

The light came and did what light does.

**Can you hear its vibrational hum,
burning all the flash cards, all the pyramid-glory?**

**Patterns that were once grafted to your biology,
patterns that defined you, patterns that after the light
are unearthed, have nowhere to belong.**

**Dreamer, don't forget to dream,
or forget your gleaming split fire
masquerading as normalcy
lost in everyday bravery, getting things done
in range of the pawn shop and the dentist, shopping
for fruit, all the while a thousand yards above**

the streetwalk curb, seeing shadows of celestial
beings overlap on the pavement,
dense in their other-dimensional realm.

You vault off their cloud, into a place without clouds,
your mind a keeper of their language,
draped in dread one moment, the next, exploding
in effervescent kaleidoscope floral bands
feeling anxiety like thunder, touching rocks
like touching flesh

charged by the child skipping, the tied-up dog.
The estates are weeping wine, and the ships are loaded
with fat-stores racing past starving islands.

You don't know how to live.

You don't know one good day.

**Is it a wound or is it a vision,
roughed-in displays of immortality
blooming, longing
for a lasting harvest?**

**Sturdy spirit
in pure afterglow,
voyage with me
with your wealth and force,
past the Earth's mantel into
the inner core.**

**Never reckless but blinded
by refined instincts unified.
Activity without labour.**

Joy with no reflection.

**In the thick undergrowth
slide through the parameter,
making yourself a master
who faces everything as though
it was the first time.**

**Take the ring and turn:
Commitment in eternal flow.
Love at last on salty lips,
heralding in
a devouring release.**

**Smells of spring
Smells of water
No gear, no ribbons**

**of glory
for
this is glory,
and whatever else is
pales beside this bouquet of our origins,
sweet quaking, last-call fulfilment.**

**Washed clean,
washed your garments
under your garments
triumphant with truth.
You lifted your mask, opened your mouth
and let your tongue be exposed.**

Pent-up, brewing a seizure

under your skin.

The graveyard has re-absorbed its corpses.

The paintings on the walls

are breathing again.

Boat-sailing at sunrise,

entranced by the possibilities imagination allows.

O breath – colourful anomalies!

This is your place, fortified by authenticity.

The grass is finally growing,

the fires are wooed and contained.

You love this joy, your house without a lock-chain.

You love your freedom and your secrets.

You spread out, your roots have joined,

entwined, singular.

Landscapes stirred, hot coal,

hotter in the blue flame.

Summer walks terrible into your yard,

but the wind is in the lead and you will ask for

a multitude of blessings, believing.

You will die in the change and shape yourself

a new achievement. You will be diligent,

canceling old thoughts, creating new thoughts

that snuff out the physical dread of doom that infiltrate

like poison a flower's soft pores.

You will go to where love goes, following,

healed of all affliction, even death, by faith,

no longer a pawn of desperately doing

to hold yourself a little closer to God.

**When you see, you are still,
disrobed of your past,
anchored in the burn of being.**

**When you feel, you feel
his hand reaching out, lifting you out
when your faith has faltered,
you feel
his affectionate mercy, love, receiving, covering your sins
as the only absolution, and then you feel his sorrow,
are in awe of his obedience, in spite of such sorrow.**

**When you know, you know
miracles are right as home is,
are the result of stepping into the current, aligned.**

When you know, you know

**Jesus is radical, never easy -
demands alertness and surrender,
devotion and doing combined,
offers one slot, one string, thin but unbreakable -
rhythm blessed, rhythm revolutionized.**

**Into the nonsense depths
of plywood and pull
where fairness is the fallacy seen
as it always was and courage builds
like a patio – one stone at a time.**

**If you mount the depths and let yourself
go, it will be love you fall into and also
heartache from this gutsy deed. You will find**

whiplash, and also warmth

but mostly

you will be living, not driving, but whirled away

by the wind, free of dust and accumulation

of monotonous gestures. You will go

and give the best of yourself,

another light lit to rage in the corner of your room,

strong in promise but still unsure.

leap

into the place your worldly wisdom tells you

not to go, but you know if you don't leap

you might as well grow up,

assent to the rotting ways and coveted fears around you,

you might as well start picking your plot and throw out

the calendar for all your days forward will be the same

one after another.

You know the centre is wide, let it widen even more.

See the centre point as mercy.

There is fear in this new possibility of joy.

There are many ‘what ifs?’

Trade your coat for naked skin.

Your gift-risk is finally here.

Hold it, caress it, honour it, feed it everything

it needs, and leap.

Part 6 – Only The Wind

Only The Way

**Caked in the crusted past,
spoonfed a dilemma you cannot
escape from and is bound to take you down
while clawing for freedom.**

**But there is glory
in the mountain's ridge, glory
in the sewer tunnels and in the medicine you take
to kill the gnawing pain – head stretched into a whiff
of rust-dust, bolted in place, but cracking.**

**This is your name, your life today, not in an imagined
tomorrow. Feed the small creatures if you can.**

**If you cannot, remember a time when you did, and know
that moment is still going on, like all moments,
sphere-held, mighty and forever –**

so be kind

**and be ready to change at full strength, for the sky
is churning, you cannot see it, but every moment
is giving you a new pattern to play with.**

**Hold your breath, keep holding, solid in this treachery,
revolt against your own perspective,
break your debts and all your days ahead
hard against an open window**

**Bind the ghost
to the earth, touch
the covers and pull
out a song, a whisper
of forgiveness. Anchored
in sensual currents,
holding hands, thighs
and perfect movement.**

**Love, this is air, enough
to get you through
the skeleton forests of yesterday
and the milestone thicket thorns of
perceived tomorrows.**

**Still in the joy, fishing for coins, finding
coins, clean and glittering, pulled from**

the bottom.

I love my love with the same purity

**of our first gaze. I love my love, shedding our shadows,
merged in what is ours alone to know and keep.**

We thought we were broken, but we are not.

Our fires have not wilted, but

have become arrows

- shot - one after another

beating on the river's surface, leaving a mark,

then sinking, traceless,

swallowed into the flow.

You held me in the fog,

fearful I would find the fringe

and crack. I took up a broom.

You set down the broom and told me
to explore the pattern of dirt, find meaning
in its intricate vineyard, be a woman
of observation, great endurance and then of joy.

You warned me not to plunge into the reflection,
(bitterness brighter than the dubious sun)
but to hold conference with what was lacking,
sit in the open space, tie my shoes, brush my hair,
take stock of the vacancy and see
if by being still it gets smaller,
starts imploding, becomes a village of amoebas
that eventually turns into plants, then ants
and starlings, drinking at the bin.

You held me in the midnight iris

when my hope had hardened.

**You told me don't even try to comfort the pain,
because by doing so, you only make it stronger,
locking it inseparable to your vitality.**

I took the stairs, following.

I took a leap and honoured its design.

**And you, you honoured that deed
and were pleased.**

Part 7 – Arms Once Folded, Then Slack, Now Open

Freedom By The Fires

**By the fires where you saw
the hunters' faces exposed,
the groaning darkness growing, encompassing
any trace of tender love, growing like
a foal into a stallion – strong, unstoppable,
full of wild fury.**

**The hunters promised to devour
every Elder tree, every animal that took shelter
in their green folds, and even the multi-colored insects,
keepers of the balance.**

**Then Jesus walked the Earth, offered the living waters
from a well, sprang from history, separated from
tradition, mores and the lock-step of rigid ritual.**

**Tearing at the sky, he folded its skin back to reveal
a new level of heaven unseen before.**

Once this happened,

**the hunters still ruled but now
there a way was to jump over their skilled spears,
a narrow way to redemption with no training wheels,
no handle bars.**

The courage of complete surrender.

**The hunters remain in the streetcars, in corner stores,
at the family table. But Jesus remains too,**

a gift of God's greatest mercy

- the master scythe and the purifying balm -

wounds are lifted, all around the hunters,

children are dancing, lovers and old people too –

you see them,

followers of the wind,

nomad gatherers, receivers

of the charge.

The Letting Go

I

Blast

**Blast your devil's heart,
make it into paper confetti,
take it into outer space
and leave it there.**

**You stood on my shoes as I was
wearing them, dug your heels in
and spat in my eyes.**

**Cruel corpse rising from a muddy grave,
you are weak and monstrous, always claiming
to be the victim of someone else's scheme.
You are madness, the sharp ridged knife**

**of madness flaying in chaotic whiplash
at the sky, the birds, and all manner of trees.**

**Take back your darkness, swallow it whole,
let it stew in your innards, ruminate, reuniting
with the depravity already there.**

**You will never lie to me again,
pretending you wanted love when all you wanted
was to spread your malignancy, vengeance
for an imagined wrong, to give a landing slap
with the full force of violent resentment and envy.**

**Slither away, your bite left no mark, ineffectual
as your attempts to love. Judas, Brutus, master
of deep, un-emerge-able hell. Go home. Blast away
your caked-on body filth, reductive stench, spoiling
all you claimed to hold sacred.**

II

Scapegoat

Give yourself over
to the burn on your back,
the sordid array of demons
counselling your thoughts.

Let loose the bell string,
pull hard and hard again.

Find yourself a ditch to
fall into, scream out of,
wailing at the stars.

Ruin a good morning with
your sticky filth, throwing blame
to deflect from the wounds of
your own weakness.

I add you up - here, here and here.

I will not play along

with your parlour-tricks, your mayhem

of pointing-the-finger lies

when what I gave was love

- not perfect - but love nonetheless.

Coil up in your bitterness, resentments you wear

like a special pair of shoes,

walking around, leaving prints over prints

of your relentless pointless pacing.

I am not who you think I am, not willing

to hold guilt for your depravity, for a crime never my own.

I will say it again - I loved - I gave you love

the best I knew how, and I showed kindness.

**Give yourself over to the intercourse
of false justifications and accusations and
see how it feels to be alone, here,
with what is left -
broken dollar-store jewelry, dandruff flakes.**

**Give yourself over and
get lost,
out of my thoughts
out into the isolated frozen-dead terrain
of your own sick making.**

III

Monster

Surrender to restore
the gifted strength, bruised
by curses, but otherwise unharmed.
Lay down the cloak of justice,
Achilles' revenge. Shout fire!
and let it burn.

What I did was falter,
overspeak with heart-felt enthusiasm,
that is all - thinking it was to a friend,
when in fact it was a snake, no, a worm,
without backbone, fangs or face.

Pour salt on it, watch it dissolve
into its true slime-form, formless

as the excuses of Brutus who cared nothing
for Rome, for Caesar, had only his own
power-grab in mind, wounded
that he was not chosen, pride-puffed,
feigning altruism to self-justify
his ruthless deed.

Appear to me, then pass like a bad smell
when a window is opened, or lavender calm is sprayed.
I was fooled when I should have honoured
the signs before, left, when I first witnessed
your shadow-flood self-pity play. Then
I should have hung up the phone and never
called back. But I kept on, over that hurdle, ignoring
its truth, always wondering, waiting for the monster
to unmask again. When it did, it was worse than before.

The wolves of hell have you now, surrounded
on all dimensional sides. Your vicious tongue,

still twisting and twirling, angered at the glare of the sun.

**Promise me never to return. I promise you
I have walked by you, looked, then walked
further up the devil's back, out
of the inverted pit of your doing, never to look again.**

**Know I have no good memories of you,
they have all been eradicated by this hideous calamity.
Your words of love ring like lies,
hiding a hostile, grudge-madness,
a decade of trust mutilated by spiritual sickness.**

**Know your hydra head is now exposed,
sliced off, cauterised, nullified at the core, illusion blown -
your sweet-honey-poison dried up, disposed.**

IV

Deviant

Diminished in love
by excessive self-pity, locked
in anguish, in anger, in the burn-machine
lake layer of hell
as the long sword of your insanity
is wielded, intending to split
my skull in two.

I felt it breeze past, just missing its mark.
I felt the shock as I swerved, as you
suckled on the teat of your unfounded
resentments, brewing for months, draped

in pretty fabric, niceties and endearments.

How long had your soul gone foul,

and I never noticed?

No discussion, just your rigid arthritic finger

pointing, your creased forehead further creasing,

corpse-like and rising like a poltergeist

from the boiling mire.

Poor soul. Poor you as all of your

bold spiritual proclamations are reduced to naught.

Take care old woman. You cannot create

or be uplifted tied to this abhorrent deformity

of deluded self-righteousness.

You can feel good for a second, lift your sword,

and be exhilarated. You can rub your hands together,

feel the power of cruelty, demolishing

a friendship with one swift cut.

You can and you did, and it is now done –

**The cancer I never knew was there is removed,
every cell radiated and eradicated.**

**I proclaim gratitude for getting me out,
for releasing me from the leach tethered to my underbelly,
masquerading as a trusted ally.**

**I see you, your collected violent distortions, the rage
you assume, your sword in its ruthless downward assault,
swing, strike past, dark mass amputated, and I am set free.**

V

The Hollow

The burn was received, betrayal
like a thousand strikes
on the same spot - ripping off
first my skin, then sinews.

A burn like a confession of hate,
masquerading for years as love.

That side has now descended, into the hollow,
along with all that burns and whose heat
cannot be tamed or reconciled.

I put a steel sheet over that hollow,
cover it for good and breathe easy in my escape,

**tie my hair back and sing loudly with
my joy and intellect intact - with my trust in
God unharmed, my language rejuvenated.**

Layers of arsenal fumes, rising,

I see you below in that hollow

hunched over, lamenting

a sickly self-pitying cry.

Already your hands and arms, up to your elbows,

buried like stakes deep in the unforgiving ground.

You cannot move. You cannot hope

for better days.

Your hissing is useless, and the venom from your lips

dissipates into nothing as it leaves your gaping mouth.

You, stuck in a frozen mire, cut off

from the current, condensed, calcified, and stalled,

with only your conceit, your woe-is-me!

*to give you voice, some
semblance of rudimentary comfort.*

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Lethe Literary and Art Journal; Outlaw Poetry

**“New Wheel – The Passage of Arnik” was nominated
for Sundress Publications “Best of the Net” 2017.**

**All poems in *New Wheel – five long poems* are all written and
copyrighted by © Allison Grayhurst, 2024.**

About the Author



Allison Grayhurst is a member of the League of Canadian Poets. Four of her poems were nominated for “Best of the Net” in 2015/2018, and one eight-part story-poem was nominated for “Best of the Net” in 2017. She has over 1,400 poems published in more than 530 international journals and anthologies.

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

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

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

Her book *Tadpoles Find the Sun* was published by Cyberwit, 2020.

More recently, her book *Running, lightwave riding* was published by Cyberwit 2023.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Quotes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

the most intimate of passions and in the grain and grit of our earth. Such is Allison Grayhurst. Such is her poetry," *Eric M. Vogt*, poet and author.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Books by Allison Grayhurst

Paperbacks with Edge Unlimited Publishing:

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

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

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

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

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

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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

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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

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

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

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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

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

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**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



Allison Grayhurst has been nominated for "Best of the Net" five times. She has over 1,400 poems published in over 530 international journals, including translations of her work. She has 25 published books of poetry and 6 chapbooks. She is an ethical vegan and lives in Toronto with her family. She also sculpts, working with clay.

"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. Sometimes it is as unpredictable as the rhythm of clouds gathering before a storm. Made up of words, emotions, thoughts, thoughts crystallized into ideas, this river, like most rivers, is unforgettable. One poem cascades after another into a flood of poetry. As in the poetry of Wallace Stevens, Allison Grayhurst's work can be dense with meanings hidden beneath the flowing surface of words. The emotions in her poems sear with the power of Sylvia Plath. One layer reflects light over another layer of thought and emotion that leads to yet another layer. 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, scholar, playwright, and novelist.

"Allison 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.

