

Poems



Selections from
"I love You is Back"



Selections from "Born In The Year of The Butterfly Knife"

THE KUROSAWA CHAMPAGNE
THE CHINESE ELEVATOR
PUNISH CHILDREN
WALTZING THE HURRICANE
THE SILENT FALL OF NEW YORK CITY
THE DAWN OF WEIRD

THE KUROSAWA CHAMPAGNE

This poem was built after watching Kurosawa's Dreams and The Lady from Shanghai by Orson Welles. It is infused with a time I watched a lover have a nightmare and did not wake her.

Tonight
your body shook,
hurling your nightmares
back to Cambodia.

Your nightgown wisped off
into Ursula Minor.

I was left here on earth feeling alone,
paranoid about the Rapture.

Tonight
I think it is safe to say we drank too much.
Must I apologize for the volume in my slobber?
Must I apologize for the best dance moves ever?
No.

Booze is my tuition to clown college.

I swung at your purse.
It was staring at me.

We swerved home on black laughter.
bleeding from forgettable boxing.

I asked you to sleep in the shape of a trench
so that I might know shelter.

I drew the word surrender in the mist of your breath,
waving a white sheet around your body.

'Dear, in the morning let me put on your make-up for you.
I'll be loading your gems with mascara
then I'll tell you the truth...'

I watched black ropes and tears ramble down your face.

Lady war paint.

A squad of tiny men rappels down those snaking lines
and you say;
“Thank you for releasing all those fuckers from my life.”

You have a daily pill case.
There are no pills inside.
It holds the ashes of people who died

...the moment they saw you.

The cinema we built was to play the greats
but we could never afford the power
so in the dark cinema
you painted pictures of Kurosawa.

I just stared at you like Orson Welles,
getting fat off your style.

You are a movie that keeps exploding.
You are Dante’s fireplace.

We were so broke,
I’d pour tap water into your mouth,
burp against your lips
so you could have champagne.

You love champagne.

Sparring in the candlelight.

Listen—
the mathematical equivalent of a woman’s beauty
is directly relational
to the amount or degree
other women hate her.

You, dear, are hated.

Your boots are a soundtrack to adultery.
Thank God your feet fall in the rhythm of loyalty.

If this kills me,
slice me julienne
uncurl my veins
and fashion yourself a noose
so I can hold you
once more.

THE CHINESE ELEVATOR

*Sometimes you can feel them in love somewhere else in the city
and it is like having a phantom limb.*

He is staring at a bottle of pills big as a lamp.
Brighter.

He sighs a noise that comes in the sounds of ripped silks.

He loves the steady drums of her headboard
played by a stranger.

It is the tempo and timbre of men
slicing the earth with shovels.

He loves knowing that she can't last a season
without a new salesman knocking at her heart
through her uterus.

His record player has laryngitis.

The telephone's tongue has been cut out.

He had linked his heartbeat with hers.
Now apart, when her blood races
so does his.

At least he finally removed the saddle
from his head.

Someone fair had straddled his skull,
rode his dreams into the ground.

He lies still in bed with his pulse, now rising
touching his fingers to the sound.

A mouth opens nervously and dry
like young prom legs.

'I still want you.'

...but the woman is far and pregnant
with blood.

The blood is due.

He removes his medical bracelet. It reads:
'I left my heart in someone's veins.
She bleeds Valentines once a month.'

She was born with backwards guts.
Waltzing was miserable.
Always spinning. Leading with her spine.
Keeping her heart behind her.

He is a Little Boy who has fallen
over some Nagasaki.

Lovers are on stage at the comedy club.
He is a heckler who can only sob into a bullhorn.

Love is a bullet that crawls on all fours
He stumbles in the night to the poetry of whores.

Exhausted, dirty and loose.

Piss of a fighter.
Shit as a lover.
The box he checks is other.
He has the handwriting of his Mother.
The vanishing act of his Father.

'We bury this now'
is muttered
as she unrobes
for a shiny new lover.

Across town he sits up in bed
says.
'You bring the dirt,
I'll bring the shovels.
You warn the heavens.
I'll tell the others.'

He had grown tired of pressing his head
to his lover's chest
only to hear the sound of
children gasping.

It was her favorite love song.
in harmony with the creaking of dark robots inside her.

Our bed squeaked out a bad musical.

He subscribes to the newspaper,
looks for the black stilts of her name
in the obituaries.

Hangs his countenance on the wall,
crawls into bed
with a handful of pills to cancel everything.

He simply rode the Chinese elevator.
pushed the wrong button.

Someone went all the way down.

PUNISH CHILDREN

*If I ever have a kid, they'll probably be a spaz to pay me back
for my brazenness.*

Who will curl forth honesty
and say that they would like to send their child back
to that sudden baby cave?

I fear having a boy
fore seeing the day I will stare into his skin
and have to say:
“You might unravel, son.
Do not try to prepare for this.
Know that I don't know shit. No one does.”

I fear having a girl the most,
who will ask me what it's like to die
and I will have to reply:

“Lose your virginity
and fall asleep in pain.
Be better than me.”

If that small, hairless, voteless tyrant says:

“Stop talking like you're trying, Pop.
What is it really like to die?
Speak plain.”

I will say:

“Love writing with all your heart.
Then have kids
and write no more,
you wretched, screeching Leprechaun.”

She has that laugh 'cause she has my sense of humor.
How strange that the woman you always wanted to meet
came out of your own body.

How egotistical and pure.

My past rushes through her like a river after winter.

I hope she fails history.

WALTZING THE HURRICANE

*If women only knew how dyslexic they can turn men
by only holding their gaze on them for a few extra seconds.*

Waterslide architects have been spying
the smooth of your back,

Mapping blueprints
from the finger trails
adoring up your spine

stealing your design.

Do not keep ask me for more revelations, dear
or I will just keep sending you to the back of the Bible.

Revelation 12:7
And there was war in heaven.

It's still there.

In this light
I can see through your body.

Black Hills Indians wrapped your bones in arrows and feathers
for the day you make your exit, inspiring new battles in heaven.

Enemies sliced by the wit in your lipstick.

You are a Sunday porch I could do nothing on
and feel like everything was happening.

Let me pull my hurricane move—
a move to turn your gilded fortress to shrapnel—
to windscorch your overbooked rickshaws,
melting your slippers into glass formula.
Girling you out.
Bursting your leggings
into pink shredded wheat.

AAAAAAH!

Andromeda Carnivora
envy of novas
zing your flesh across twilight.

Stay asleep
so the aircraft aren't drawn to land
on the Christmas lights
crackling safety signals
from your eyes.

I saw you
panting in the oven of your skin.

Aren't you tired of awakening next to lost armies?
Sick of people looking for jade in your nostrils?

Subterranean teeth-gnashing orchestra.
Zebra killer.
Flexed duchess.
Carved cha-cha-cha.
Zirconia sass rock.

I want the theater without the drama.
I want the opera without the soap.

Lay in the stillness of a fighting-saints fairy tale.

Your partner is here,
a frog in a coma of kisses.
You, dressed as wonder,
screwed me backwards
with your
dyslexic kiss.

Fairytale saints fighting a stillness.
Kisses of coma.
Here is partner your.
Wonder dressed you.
Backwards me screwed.
Kiss dyslexic.

THE SILENT FALL OF NEW YORK CITY

*Beau Sia, Jason Muhlberger, Rob Neill, Cristin Okeefe Aptowicz and I
experienced a real NYC blizzard and I've never heard the city silenced before.
It was the most beautiful time with fantastic people. I couldn't stop laughing
and no one was saying anything.*

New York City fought the quiet for too long.

Taxis poking through the white
like Corn Pops in cold milk.

A sneak attack of slow down.

It came to us
the way a kiss turns into
a sudden veil.

The blizzard has sent down a bride.

THE DAWN OF WEIRD

*This is the first and maybe last time I will use the word 'Twas.
I don't know why I have these visions, but I do.*

'Twas the dawn of Weird
and I had woken up early.

There was no difference between
sky and sea,
so dogs chased tennis balls into the shore break
of cumulus clouds.

Sea lions flew point
in the formations of sparrows.

Fishermen caught birds,
apologized
and set them free.
The birds were understanding and as a gift
brought back worm sandwiches
which were surprisingly tasty.

Airplanes landed safely underwater
as mermaids guided us in with pop-electric jellyfish.

Guns had turned to black licorice.
All the cops were nibbling on shotguns
and one by one all the criminals cried
and turned themselves in
to the dentist.

Hospitals morphed and became
rubber bounce castles.
They had to call security
to usher out the scalpels
and to keep the elderly
from hogging the twisty slide.

Billboards became drive-in movie screens
replaying what our feet looked like
when we were chasing our dreams.

Everyone walked home.

And all the tombstones
in all the graveyards
crumbled into seeds.

Flora bloomed immediately.

Bees halted on the outskirts
of the cemetery walls,
reverence for the ending,
the passing of all.

With antennae bowed
and honey tears starting,
they pledged to stand guard
of the bright human garden.

The largest pile of flowers...
It rose from your name.
The wind swelled a whisper
That said

‘They’re O.K., they’re all O.K.’

My Lord, it was a solid mountain of sunflowers.

The world blazed in color and I welcomed the change.
It was the dawn of weird and the morning of strange.

Amazing how all this
did come to pass,
just a child cutting loose
in a poetry class.