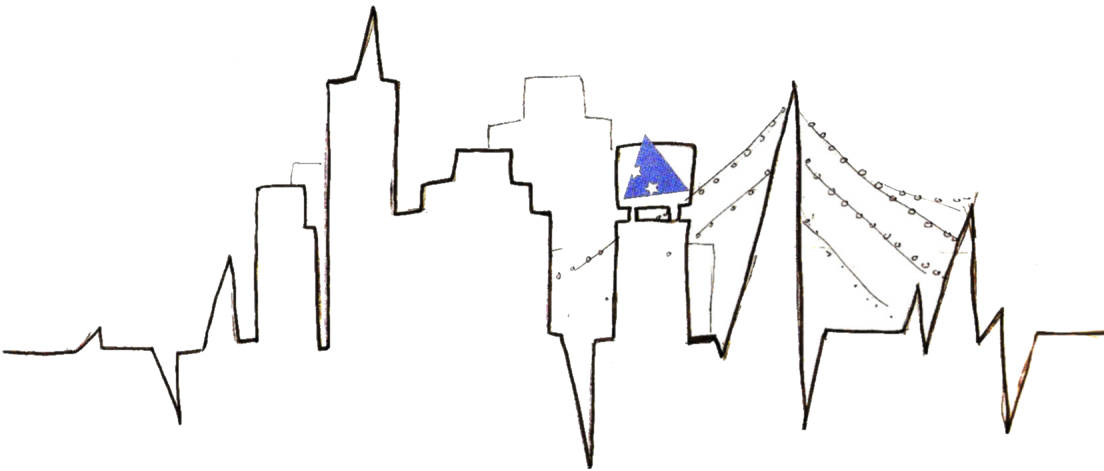


i hear
cities
in my
head



thoughts and prose by
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preface

okay so i'll admit, i went on a lot of walks when i should have been doing other things. i like to tell myself that i learned more on each walk than i may have learned if i let myself ignore the thoughts i was trying to stew (with my Old English homework.) there are more honest things i bluntly tell myself if i stay up late enough to give up on listening for distractions instead. i hope i'm getting better at learning from the things i don't always like to admit to myself. i hope admitting this counts for something, as far as the end of the night is concerned. i hope this is okay to say so early on the page.

because these compiled thoughts did me the courtesy of refusing to let me stew, i am trying to do the same for them. this is me attaching legs to my thoughts so they can stretch them and keep running-on somewhere that isn't between my ears and around the pixels on a computer screen. i didn't write any of this with the intent to publish so i tried leaving each entry as arranged as it was each time i stepped back from the page for the first time.

most of all, i hope this finds you well.
thank you for reading.

-jess

* = page 18 - qtd. Write Your Story Now, Kevin Devine

page 19 - qtd. Rowan Jacobsen, Mother Jones

page 26 - qtd. I'm Not Crying. You're Not Crying, Are You?, Dear And The Headlights

january 28, 2013

metaphor is pretty cool because

even though maybe it can kind of be full of shit when you get down to thinking about how everything is what it looks like most of the time and we're all so average and present but not really all that inherently special for existing despite the meaning we've assigned to our existences to cope with the stifling thought that Oh My God We're On a Huge Fucking Rock Rotating Around a Giant Orb of Gas in A Cosmic Splash of Acne On The Face of The Ultimate Thing With a Face That We'll Never Ever Be Able to Comprehend Past The Point of Hyperventilation and Crippling Mortality,

it still helps you organize that Panic into something that makes it kind of easy to swallow in pieces you don't have to break teeth on chewing before it scratches your throat on the way down

and it also gives people the idea of putting a paper shredder in the student center with the open invitation to write down whatever or whomever you want to get over only to shred it into a ball of scrap made up of worries and fears and achey thoughts probably similar to yours, but belonging to 99% of the people that you might not have ever cared to speak to despite the fact that they occupy the same campus you do nine months out of the year

and it feels kind of silly, to admit to giving into the reduction of thoughts and feelingsy junk to shredded paper in an attempt to make them go away, because they're not going to go away that way but i feel better for now, i think, maybe

so that
is also pretty cool

march 17, 2013

if everything happens for a reason then why did
reason drive a honda into my mother's car in front of a mcdonald's on a
saturday night and only bust one of those little front lights i don't know
what to call? because i don't know shit about cars

we pulled into the mcdonalds as people slurping mcslurpies slurred
their eyes over the scene, i don't know which orifices on their faces
drank more but i hope they paid as much attention to the cars on the
road and didn't chew what they swallowed.

young mom with braces and english more broken than either of the
fenders: she clutched her son for support.
"calm down, mami," he whispered

he held his arm over her shoulder similar to how my mom's arm shot in
front of me so my head only hit the edge of the rearview mirror
when i tell her this later, she doesn't remember doing it even though
we happened to be talking about motherly instinct a minute before it
jumped between Reason and my body

my body, it still shook in the parking lot
neon M winking down at me, sky blue in the face, holding in its cackle -
it has more tact than my limbs, my skin can hardly contain the jerks

six months ago i was the other lady, it was 80 degrees F out then -
as far as biology is concerned, it is always 80 degrees after a car accident
even when it's actually 37

so if everything happens for a reason, what is the reason for an accident
leaving four people unscathed and one car scathed and the other sturdi-
er than the lady driving it with her son in the passenger seat?
and if everything happening for a reason means we're supposed to learn
something from this;
be reminded of our mortality, etc
how do we remember this when there are bills to pay

i say, "hey at least we're all okay"
i say this 4 times

“hey at least we’re all okay”
it is established
we’re all okay

we’re okay, so
did this happen so we remember to empathize with the new driver

so i could find myself in the scuff of her flats and the way her faded pink
skinnies hugged her ankles the way my favorite jeans used to before they
ripped?

(i always see myself in others at the worst times)

so i could count the braces on her teeth? the more i see,
the more scared she was
is that how that works? is this how it works? am i finding the meaning
yet? is she?
she’s too scared to do that right now and Meaning won’t pay the bills or
drive her son to school if the state eats the license out of her pocket

“i’m a new driver too, got into an accident over the summer,” i try
to empathize.
she picks up half my words and her son smooths out the rest before
handing them to her
she smiles, then implores me while my mom surveys the damages
i am here to attempt holding hands, i am here in the middle and i was
next to my mom but i was also driving the car that hit us, kinda

i want to ask the boy his name, does he go to school
with my sister? but he walks away, i
always want to know people at the worst times

she holds her face in her hands and i think
about how i always want to hug people at the worst times

i always see nothing in the meaning of things when
i sit down to start writing about them and i don’t
know what to call most familiar things anymore
i don’t know what lives behind the smirk in the sky anymore
i don’t know if that will ever not scare me

november 8, 2012

sometimes

you never know how angry you are at a passing thought

until your toothbrush hits the bottom of the cup by the
sink hard enough

to widen your eyes at the sound

you spit into the sink and narrow your eyes

at the reminder, swirling down the drain but leaving

the basin tinged

sometimes you never know how angry you are

until you make your gums bleed.

april 13, 2013

the past week has been calling home only to have frogs living inside my mom's voice. i called my teta on her birthday and she said allergies were living in hers but then she told me that she didn't understand what god was doing and then she told me to eat my vegetables and take long walks and not to worry. another night i left my dorm to see a rabbit in the grass outside my window, it was hiding in the shadow that the trunk of the tree threw on the grass. the orange streetlight is never not disarming. i called my mom again but it went to voicemail. i took a walk and came back later to see that same rabbit playing leapfrog with another rabbit, bounding around in the orange light, not giving a fuck but probably hoping to later. i thought of how rabbits feet are supposed to be good luck when they're hanging from chains on backpacks and keys and then i figured they're even better luck when they're happy and hopping and connected to something with spring in its bones, so i called my mom again. her voice was disarmed, and i hung up before i had to hear her surrender to the possibility she didn't want to put into words for me: that the organ that lived outside her chest and went by Sister would go too far out of tune to bring back.

the next day there was a fever and no one told me what that meant and so there was Web MD and pacing around my room and peppering a friend with questions until she called her nurse mom who yelled "HOLY SHIT" on speaker phone because she didn't know i was in the room but she did know what dialysis meant.

the next day i dreamed that i hugged my aunt and she told me to stop crying because that wouldn't do anything for her but staying happy would and then i woke up with my pillow wet and the sun slapping me in the face only to shatter into kaleidoscopes on my eyelashes because I hadn't wiped them dry yet. I felt her hand on my back still, until i pulled the teddy bear out from under me and my bed was flat again. I wondered if it would be the last time I hugged her but I got to hug her today. my grandma still had her crucifix around her neck. i still don't know what the fever means.

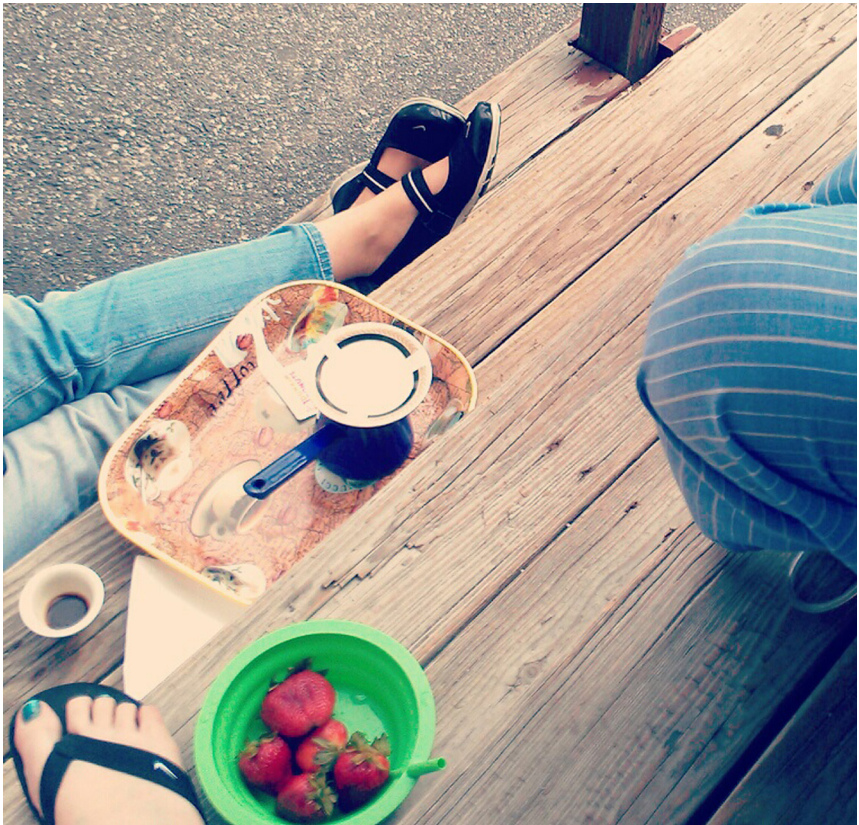
i talked to jido about god, about how it's actually the universe and the sun and the clatter walking sticks make on tile when they're no longer needed and i came out as unsure to him and he came out as unsure to me and i felt god in that moment if only because i didn't feel as alone in this family for the first time in two years and i think that's what god is, probably. the not-alone feeling. there

are bibles written about that every day, i clutched them to my chest as a kid, i suffocated under blankets and flashlights to set myself on fire. i hold them in the ink under my nails and in the acrylic cracked over my knuckles when i punch the sky in the face.

this week i prayed the only way i now know how, taking pen to page and it's not effective in any way i can touch but it makes me less angry at the sky if only just a little bit

jido's eyes crinkled and he laughed when i asked him how he felt about god after having to flee his home to come to this country
"now that's a good question, that's a good question"

the faded floral tablecloth ringed with olive oil was the bible between us, it grabbed our palms right back and that's enough for me.



november 12, 2012

two hour walk and i've fallen more in love with cam-

bridge despite how very fluffy writing it is to claim that you've fallen in love with a city because it says nothing about the city and nothing about you

global fucking warming but the weather was beautiful

the earth is dying, but even the most optimistic of souls will tell you that death is not beautiful, but it was beautiful outside today

i met a french woman and i told her about my jido, said he'd love her bookstore, he'd love speaking to her, and it made me want to speak to him but i just got him books instead. they're in french. he was a french teacher. i wish i spoke french. sometimes i get to feeling as though i'll never learn everything i want to learn because learning is Hard Work. i stare at harvard students walking by with heavy bookbags and a frantic whirring to the way they move and i want to touch them to see if they're still even real but instead i just pass them on the sidewalk and part of me hopes they'll drop their books some time to snap out of their worries or their studies for just a minute. maybe i'm assuming too much. i'm assuming too much.

i passed a handsome man across the street and i hated that it was the first thing i noticed about him even though it's the first thing we all notice about a lot of people. but he seemed familiar. i know i've never seen him before, but he looked like an archetype that floats around my head sometimes.

i sat across the street from a church at one point and there was a statue of jesus hanging on the wall outside and there was a light over him but it hadn't been turned on yet because it was only dusk. if i could guess, the people that would need a light to remind them of jesus are probably the ones that need him most. but i wonder if that's the reasoning behind why there's a light over the jesus statue and not that This Is Your Lord And Savior Jesus Christ Don't You Dare Fucking Forget because that's what people on the internet make it seem like and i think the people that feel like they need jesus the most should get off the internet and just take a walk until they remember jesus and if it feels like he's right there walking next to them, that's better than anything people on the internet will say about Cleansing and Salvation and Blessed Be and the LORD (I'm sure he hears you without the caps lock, friends)

and maybe i'm just saying that jesus is an imaginary friend but it's better than a statue staring down at you as you walk by.

the night started to remind me of Lebanon, and that's always when i should stop walking but it's always when I want to walk the most. the air smelled like it but mostly the air felt like it, on my skin. cedars grazing my arm hairs. the past few weeks have left me with a bad taste in my mouth when i talk about being lebanese because so many people force their own identity onto it and those identities are not like mine and i end up feeling like i'm doing something wrong or like i'm being something wrong despite knowing it's not the case

but when cambridge turned into lebanon for those scattered moments before the night fell, i knew that i was lebanese and feeling lebanon everywhere i go is enough to keep it alive, despite all the politics that tell me otherwise.

i sat down on some monument thing in front of one of harvard's lawschool buildings and i watched the stars. there were only three above me but i kept seeing more and i know more came out because it kept getting darker but i felt like i was pulling them out of the sky with my eyes so that's what i kept telling myself. and then i listened to the stuff around me and it's weird how much cars can sound like the ocean and how rustling leaves can sound like swells and how you'd think that the cars would sound more dangerous because they're giant metallic tons of metal that can kill people

but it was the treetops that made goosebumps sneer along my arms

and the ocean itself is not as dangerous as its swells

and ultimately, the trees will be more dangerous than our cars because our cars kill us and kill the earth, but the earth will take us down with it and then rise out of its ashes like a phoenix headed straight for the sun

when the earth heads straight for the sun, its feathers will be all the colors we've stripped away and it will burn brighter than it ever would if we were along for the ride

but still my mind floated back down to the empty space next to me and i won-

dered when it wouldn't be empty anymore and when i tried to pull the one visible star i could see through the canopy of clouds that was passing by overhead, i knew the only way i could be closer to the stars and closer to people is if i got up. so i did. there are people around me now and i'm still sitting alone but it's okay for now. i am more than okay for now.



Reflections On The Glass (Family)

(characters property of JD Salinger)

thinking about buddy and seymour glass. thinking i'm more buddy than seymour, but knowing i'm not even very close to being a buddy either because at least he did Something. he did a lot of Somethings. he spent so much time holding up all those Somethings to seymour, though. his Somethings were shadows to seymour's Somethings.

so we can be like buddy and soldier on, leveling the intensity of everything we do, keeping things consistent, being too counterintuitive for our own goods

or we can be like seymour, grabbing everything by its balls and flipping it over and getting so unbelievably sad or way too happy about it or start worrying about how even our stray locks of hair are inconveniences to the universe. we can be bursts of intense Anything.

we can throw everything we Are into everything that Is and we can burn out bright enough to cast light into places, either causing more shadow or eliminating it

we can burn out

or we can smolder in mediocrity

and write about it,

write about the seymours we want to be.

december 4, 2012

attempting to write my story now

Yesterday I was microwaving my coffee and while I was waiting for it, I got distracted by my thoughts and didn't notice that the coffee had bubbled to the top of the cup and spilled all over the inside of the microwave. I mopped it up before anyone in the student center could smell the mess I made but I've been making those kinds of messes ever since being back from New York. I don't mean to be melodramatic when I say that I'm still trying to process everything, but that's what it is and I'm having difficulty processing much else. Every time I go to quote Shakespeare, I hear cities in my head.

It wasn't until the bus started rolling through Harlem when it hit me that I hopped a bus to New York City and that's where I was and holy shit I was in New York City. I had a few hours to kill before the show I went there for so I walked around Chelsea. I kept thinking about all the worthwhile things I could be missing that were under my nose somewhere if I would just stop looking up at the sky that was trying to swallow everyone that was already stuck between the city's teeth.

(we erect shiny buildings only to stick to them like plaque)

So I just looked at the people instead and turned streets aimlessly and sat on a few stoops and looked at street art and I stopped letting my thoughts be saturated with expectations of what I Should Be Looking For because it was getting in the way of what I could just find. This was no Cambridge but it was kind of like Cambridge and that's what I do in Cambridge. I just walk.

I went to get pizza because apparently in New York that's what you have to do: pizza and bagels and fuck the boston red sox and etc. but it tasted like regular pizza and it smelled like my uncle does when I hug him long enough (he is a pizza man, he makes pizza) and it was just pizza but it went down easier than what did between the two men sitting a few tables away from me.

“You’re a creep! You’ve never done anything for me! YOU’RE MY BROTHER. YOU NEVER WROTE ME THAT LETTER.”

Chairs fell down and one brother ran after the other, leaving behind nothing but a “sorry” hanging in the air for everyone left in the room. I sat there staring at the crumb constellations on my lap, unable to look up because the voice sliced the air so hard, I half-expected to see a miniature abyss poking out of the torn atmosphere over where they were sitting, dust particles falling out onto where their laps would have been. But it was fine. The chair was picked up and it’s like they were never there. The woman behind the counter seemed unfazed, snapping her gum, thumbing through her phone. I almost wondered if they had actually been there.

It was colder when I stepped back out and there were a lot more people that came out with the dark. It’s like all our body heat was dissipating into the air but it’s not like anyone was going to go out of their way to warm anyone else anyway.

New York is different than Boston but not so much in that way.

It got warmer when I found the show, though. Webster Hall. I was standing toward the front on the right, leaning against some part of the stage. I was near a group with wrist bands - years older than me. It’s weird to think that I’ll join them in a year, no longer watching X’s fade on my hands. I’ll wear a wristband in a year but I’ll still have ink getting under my skin.

They were talking about the Miracle of 86 days and how they hoped Kevin would play a few of those songs. They called him the best songwriter of our generation and that made me smile. They called him the nicest dude ever and recalled memories of conversations with him. Then they lamented This Day and Age when electro-pop-funk-dubstep-heavy metal-polka-what the-fuck-ever music could dominate airwaves but Kevin “Fucking” Devine couldn’t sell more than a thousand tickets. What was wrong with people, they wondered. There was a point buried under the bitterness, but looking around the room at all the people that traveled from all over the country to celebrate something so special, I

couldn't deny these fans any credit that the group I was eavesdropping on could. Then the group started making fun of some kids that didn't appreciate Thursday.

(I decided that the Scene was still alive in the disgruntled Thursday fans.)

I was hoping to find my friend before the set but I realized that being alone during the show was important for me in the same way that coming to nyc alone was important: being a satellite and having a satellite can be two different things but they both leave you feeling too comfortable to work on what needs to be worked on, sometimes. I was too unsettled to focus on anything but the music contained in this small room but stretching for miles within all the people around me that were singing along or staring in awe.

"Here's to ten more years."

It feels really nice to have been a part of something as special as that.

I walked around the city after with that friend I couldn't find earlier, and his friend whom I didn't really know. Maybe I still don't know them as well as I'd like to, but I walked away from them at half past four in the morning with feelings for them that I'm not sure how to articulate without inducing any cavities - I want to keep knowing them. I'm not sure I would have known what to do or how to feel if they hadn't invited me along. They asked me what my plans were and all I saw was the yellow wallpapered room in the hostel and I didn't have to consult the mirroring piece of literature to know that it was a bad idea for me to head back there.

We walked through Brooklyn and over bridges and down Wall Street and into Manhattan and I don't remember the names of anywhere else because of the conversation but our final destination was the Staten Island ferry. At some points i wondered if we'd turn back and at others I wondered why they kept trudging on if they were so tired. Mostly I felt that even though we were walking together, I was out of step with them and a lot of what I said was met with what I feared was cordial enthusiasm, because sometimes i just don't know how to talk to people.

And then it wasn't, and then we were on the ferry and something changed and that's when my heart swelled even more for these people. I'm not sure I can ever tell them how okay they made me feel for the first time in a while.

I got back to my room around five-thirty and i just stared at the yellow on the wall and it looked duller than the nauseating shade it had been in the daylight. It was a small relief. My heart was still sprinting from the image stuck in my head of the creep on the train that made me feel scared and self conscious, and the creeps that had followed me down the street as my fingers curled around the x-acto blade in my pocket, and I couldn't shake the existential loneliness I felt at 5 am in the subway by myself.

"You're up pretty early, eh?"

"I suppose so... I was walking with some friends."

"Well. Be safe. Remember, take the 1 to 18th. Good luck."

Gone.

It was like one of those dreams you'd have as a kid, where you've lost your mom and you can't find her and someone is after you and they have her. Only, this time I had words and images and insight into what that monster is

(everything)

and even though I'm back in Cambridge now, feeling like I'm hugging it back for the first time in a long time,

I can't shake the feeling that it's somewhere around here because

It's that feeling you get at night when everyone is quiet and sleeping but you're not because you're thinking about the Someday when Nights like these are going to extend into the Day and then into Weeks and then into Always, as you move away from everyone you love - first with distance, and then with age and then with death -

that feeling that manifests itself in subway stations in the "city that never sleeps" so you know that everything is just lurking.

It was the kind of night embedded with words I haven't found yet and for the first time since turning 18, 19, 20, I feel like I may have actually done something I needed to do.

*this kind of wordplay gets you ostracized**, but I feel more alone without it.

from a mother jones article about apples:

*“If you like the apples made by a particular tree, and you want to make more trees just like it, you have to clone it: Snip off a shoot from the original tree, graft it onto a living rootstock, and let it grow. *”*

my jido taught me that a long time ago
and then i decided he was a garden wizard
his hands have been responsible for so many apples



october 18, 2012

after waffles

there's a tree in harvard yard and it seems to be saying

“why do you only look at me when my leaves are dyed?
when my leaves are dyeing?
my leaves, they crunch each time you step.”

i squint against the wind, it grates through the branches like:

“why do you flash your teeth and flash your photos
and flash your fiction
when my leaves flash red? i pop vessels in your eyes
and blood usually concerns you when you see it”

there's a tree in harvard yard and it seems to be saying that

“poetry should not be all about slowly dying
when it makes you feel so alive —
i'm dying for your attention, as far as
your poetry is concerned
but you've never felt more alive, and that's fine,
i didn't like the Romantics either.”

there's a tree in harvard yard and it seems to be telling me that maybe i
should just get to class.

january 4th, 2013

blue line

can't decide if the sunlight makes everything feel like poetry or if it illuminates
the poetry that's already there -- i guess that depends on how i feel about poetry
today

how i feel about the consistency of this moment: the olive oil
shining in rings on the table as the light breaks through glass stained with baby
hands.

the sun doesn't dance with any colors as much as it just rests in the gleam of
wedding bands buried in hairy knuckles on the other side of palms filled with
blood kept circulating by rhythmic beep beeps
beep bee bop bop da do wop yeah, i

can't decide if the playlist named after you makes everything feel like music or if
it's just playing songs that have always been there, i guess
that depends on how i'm feeling about you today
how i'm feeling about the inconsistency of your face, the
music i hear in its place

i'm at this place where i equate Everything to art and Everything to the way it
feels in comparison with everything Else and i'm told this
is the last stop before Wonderland
the last stop on the blue line, the blue in the face line, this place where no uv
rays can catch the blue (in my face) line, ultra violet light undisrupted by baby
hands grabbing for light elsewhere, so ultra violet beauregarde with too much to
chew, gum tucked where my pencil should be, my hands keep sticking together
so just

disregard me as i sit here waxing poetic equivalent to the soggy end of a q-tip,
here's a tip: no one takes the blue line unless they want to be alone

something about, the sea, and feeling the blue on your face

july 26, 2012

a homeless woman yelled at me for giving her just a dollar, even though she really needed it. i probably should have given her more. there was a man playing the saxophone by faneuil hall and it made my insides balloon up with Happy. no one was watching him, but barely more than 10 ft away, everyone was watching some guy hanging upside down, escaping from a rope hugging the length of his body. everyone wanted to know how he was doing it. i just wanted to know why they cared. the music wanted to know how they felt - it will eventually, when they lay down to try to sleep it out of their heads. they won't. you can't sleep music out of your head - it fades to a hum on its own, and then you just feel with it instead.

i carried a glass bottle with me in my bag tonight. it's been in my room for a few weeks. that's disgusting - that i felt compelled to bring a glass bottle with me, not that it's been in my room for weeks. well, maybe it's a little bit of both.

I got lost in the financial district, and I felt okay about it. It could have been the bottle, or it could have been the two businessmen discussing Harry Potter as they walked ahead of me.

"it's going to rain tomorrow, it's going to rain and you're going to be begging your parents for money. Trust me." he said it like it was rhetorical. i walked by a conversation a homeless man was having with a worried teenager that didn't have money save for the soggy dunkin donuts cup at his feet. i wish i dropped some change in it, because it's going to rain tomorrow.

i went to starbucks in harvard square tonight, i sat down to write. i mostly read what came out of me this past year. i have enough poems about one person to bind into a book and release into the world and out of the hollow space in my chest the poems sometimes bounce around in because it was their home for so long. sometimes when i step too hard on my foot, i feel the scar where the glass was cut out of it and stitched up. it doesn't hurt for longer than 1/3 of a millisecond before it is just a buzz on my skin. i feel it just enough to know it's there. the poems - they're kind of like that.

i drank too much coffee and it's almost 5 am and i'm still awake. i could be awake for much longer if i wanted to, and i want to because Fuck time and the hold it has on my conscience. but i don't want to because i hate sleeping in so late. i miss what the morning tastes like on my eyes. everything is a mellower sort of bright and feels like maple syrup. i can see it dripping into the sky now. i will wake up with it up to my nose and in my eyes and i will feel sticky all day - i never catch up because my feet keep sticking.

my feet have been sticking.

i got lost in the city tonight and i really needed it.

august 13, 2012

Perseid Meteor Shower

my mom went to the vegetable farm today - she got me sunflowers. they made me happy and sad at the same time, because they're my favorite flower but they are already dying, already dead. they are in a vase anyway. it's like when you let a dying thing float itself out to sea when it knows it's going to die. it's poetic to watch it float away, but there's nothing poetic about watching the sunflowers not be able to float away on the two inches of water my vase allows them. they've been in the kitchen being caressed by carcinogens and the smell of onions and the sound of children giggling, and at least one of those things is healthy.

i asked my mom for the car tonight so i could go out to look at stars and i was too tired to saturate my question with the casualty it didn't need and i think my family was too tired to ask me what i was really up to even though i'm too tired to come up with anything i never got to get away with when i had the chance to be a delinquent. i forgot that the shower was tonight. i was thinking about the shooting star i saw the other night and i felt a pull to look up for some more. i think i probably just remembered in the back of my mind, but that doesn't change how meaningful that instinct felt.

i have this hill i like to go to and it's the place i felt like i was in love and it's the place i got over that love and it's the place i felt i could feel it again and it's the place i realized that i won't feel it as soon as i thought i would. i hung out of the door of my car and rested my chin on the roof and i turned my face up and my heart swelled at the first star, i made a wish at the second, i cried at the third, i begged the universe to mean something at the fourth, laughed bitterly at the fifth and i felt lonely at the sixth,

like i needed someone next to me. the sky was swallowing me up and people were shooting wishes at it, hoping they'd attach themselves to the burning rocks shooting around in space so that they'd have a cosmic satellite looking out for them in case their god wasn't. and there i was, doing the same, while swatting away the earthly longing for the space next to me to be occupied with fleshy warmth instead of lyrical

comfort that shaped itself into a presence that assured me i was not alone under the sky, even though for a minute i felt the most alone i had ever felt in my life.

when i look into the stars, my eyes feel like they will be starving for as long as my eyelids allow them to peek out from under my lashes. that sounds incredibly corny, but if you look up into the stars too, you will know what i mean and it is terrifying and beautiful all at the same time and you don't even feel your neck starting to strain like your heads going to pop right off and be lost forever. you kind of want it to do that. i kind of wanted it to do that.

but instead i am here and i am back in the kitchen and my mother is back to filling my head with orders to change my sheets and hang my sweater and take out the garbage and these sunflowers cut my finger - i feel like the splinter is still under my skin. i am always getting things under my skin. glass and splinters and ink and people that i want traveling through my bloodstream the way they travel through my thoughts, but they just fester beneath the surface and i can't stop scratching.

i hope the morning comes slower than it usually does.



September 12, 2012

today i had two work-study interviews and a meeting with one of my professors. i felt like an actual college student and not the occasional impostor that shows up to class to scribble in the margins and make a good point or two or none before checking out.

i sat on the edge of my bed this morning to put on my necklace. my hair was still wet and it fell over my shoulders, dampening them but the sun was splashed all over me through the blinds. the sun made the red of my dress pop and it made dust particles look like they were shimmering and it made the chain between my fingers glint enough so that when i blinked, i could still see it, just turned into light and colors that faded before i opened my eyes again.

it was really vivid and i felt like everything i needed to see was in the red of my dress and the clasp of my necklace and the curling ends of my hair as they fell down over my face. i remember thinking "this is what it must be like to live in a poem." i'm not sure where the line came from but i felt like i could touch it and i knew it was filled with the right words.

i felt like i was in a poem, one of the happy, fleeting ones that enter your mind and leave you with a feeling instead of a story. but i felt like i got to flee with the poem to a place no one could touch me because there wasn't really anyone there to touch me. i felt put together and presentable and floaty and even kind of pretty, if that's okay to admit. then when i came back to my room at the end of the day, i looked down at my midnight blue nail polish, dull and flaking away -- a small reminder that i'm closer to all that than i am to a poem. i'm still an impostor and not inside of a poem. but at least down here, everyone's an impostor. at least down here, there are people to touch, even if a lot of those touches are pushes that trip us up. i always want to float away when i am crashing to the ground, when i am the furthest from the sky.

february 28, 2013

i feel like everyone tries to picture how mornings will go more productively when they get their own space. they'll wake up early in the morning, brew coffee, get the paper, sit at a desk, turn on some music and let the sun in through the blinds. they will then proceed to get shit done.

i slept on the wrong end of the mattress and with the snooze button between my fingers, i got out of bed an hour after my alarm to find myself tangled in last night's cardigan. i've got my shy cup of coffee, laced with hazelnut so it doesn't have to hear it from my mouth and the wrinkle in my nose. i am weaning myself off of the sweeteners, slowly but hopefully. i haven't decided what this is a metaphor for yet.

i've got a pile of Weekly Digs and Phoenix's at the foot of my bed, but i don't read them until it's too late to do so and i bet i could if i stopped opening to the page in my notebook that has the word "okay" written over and over again, i bet i could read more paper if i stopped filling it with Okay Okay Ok oK oKAY okay Okay over and over again. i opened the blinds before going to the bathroom and the sun isn't out but the clouds brushed their teeth extra hard today and are baring them through the window and under the lamp throwing light across my bed. i'm telling myself i would sit here even if my desk wasn't covered in "piles of life"

a corny phrase someone used to describe my messes, but i can't let go of it when i look at my side of the room.

i have the illusion of sun on my bed and captain crunch that i stole from the dining hall and glasses that the hem of my shirt only make dirtier and i've got the same album i've been listening to for weeks - i am told this is a side effect from the disc-man generation
i have told this to myself.
i guess this is what the space of my mornings have become

*"if it ain't what you had pictured, then yeah
that sounds about right"*

yeah, that sounds about right.



