

## Breakup

Lately, everything is melting,  
and so is nothing at all.

I spend much of my time driving,  
and watching the  
meter  
tick lower,  
and talking about everything in terms of “used to”,  
or not talking.

I feel more economical with my mouth closed, and my eyes on the gauge.  
More efficient, and credible, and honest.

I *feel* more ~~economical~~, with my mouth closed.

It snowed again this morning, and all the melting froze.  
Huge, white, surging drifts  
flowed past my window, and in under the door, and  
ravaged the treeline.

It reminded me of flood stories:  
of Noah and his Ark.

Of this home, before it was mine.

And reminded me of 1967,  
and my great-grandpa unlocking the kitchen door,  
and my great-grandma unlatching the back gate,  
and in doing so, letting the water

seep(*sweep*)  
through,

because it wasn't worth keeping out anymore.

Maybe it will flood again.

Lately, everything has been melting, and freezing, and flooding.  
And so has nothing at all.

Maybe I'm waiting for another flood  
to tell me what it is I'm missing.

Whisperwind asks  
"Do the plains need water?"  
But grass does not talk.

What sound does cold make?  
Winter fog crawls through the slough  
Clinging, soundless grip

## Portrait of Grandmother

Snowflakes and remnants of the dancing waves rest on her face,  
accenting the diary of creases imprinting her skin,  
furrows that speak a story of life, love, loss.  
Her laugh, plaited in between the crashing of the tides,  
never trailed with an apology, always with a lift of her chin,  
an extension of gratitude to the heavens for the blessing of joy.  
The powder dusting my cheek feels like a kiss,  
one recognizable in the absence of sight and sound,  
my existence molded from half of hers.  
A still-life: my knees bent into a crouch,  
her arms reaching, wrapping around me,  
speckles of acrylic left on my shoulder,  
a paintbrush lingering in her back pocket.  
I yearn for this to be my parting encounter with eternity,  
to only be perceived as the disposition I hold now,  
a child predicting condolences signed with Fate's signature,  
pleading to whoever's listening for one last minute,  
an allowance for her voice to embalm my youth,  
and for soothing proof that hands beyond mine will hold her.  
Like clockwork, the winter sun embraces the horizon,  
my head embraces the dip of her shoulder.  
A worn button-down clutches her, a second skin.  
A head of peppery curls, a life extending it's final leaf,  
and a head of spilling blonde, a life that's only just bloomed.  
I know only what she has taught me,  
I hold no stories that didn't first escape her lips.  
A lockbox, welded of the silver lining each clouded memory.  
A safe, with a stained interior of fairytale endings.  
A wish, thrown to the being that swallows my faith,  
for a purchase of another life knowing her  
with the currency of wrinkles hugging her eyes.

## Stars

Hush, child,  
Look at the sky  
don't you see?

Stars shine—  
you do too,  
you know,

or maybe you don't.

See, child,  
Your eyes.  
The window  
to your soul,  
they say,

Blue, brown, grey, hazel, green.  
Different-colored eyes, partially one  
and also the other.  
All the colors that shine in your eyes.  
They all sparkle.  
In their own separate ways.

Like each star twinkles differently.

The stars —  
Bright, everlasting,  
Old, wise,  
Shining,  
and always  
there for you.  
No matter what.

Don't you know,  
Or have you never heard?  
The story of how the stars  
Came to be?

Let me tell you, child,  
And you shall see  
Exactly how you shine  
Like the stars,  
And how the stars  
shine like you.

A lady once sat by  
A pool of water  
She wept her tears  
And the silky drops  
Went sighing down her  
Pale white cheeks.

The Moon, alone in the  
Black sky, wept with her,  
And left to tell her husband,  
The Sun.

The lady wept for her broken heart,  
For her fears of tomorrow,  
For her woes of loneliness,  
For all her troubles,  
That no one could see.

Tears fell into the pool of water,  
The lady wept, and the Sun rose.

The Sun shone on the pool,  
Imbuing it with the fire of his light.  
And the lady wept on,  
Caring not for his warmth.

The Moon rose once more,  
Pushing aside the darkness  
And the lady wept on,  
Caring not for her gentle light.

Then from the pool,  
Little lights rose in circles,  
And the lady stopped weeping,  
And watched in awe.

The little lights flew to dance with the Moon,  
Shining with a gentle, calm light,  
That yet burned with the fire of the Sun.

And the lady smiled,  
As the Sun rose,  
For she knew  
That the *stars* would always  
Shine like her tears from her eyes,  
And her tears were part of her soul.

For don't you know, child?  
Now do you see?  
The stars are only  
Shards of your heart.

Today,

questions rarely are unanswerable.

Connection moves as quickly as sickness once did.

Grief, a flu

Love, the cure.

Loss, a disease,

Connection, a remedy.

all spread like flames across the ridges and depths of the world.

What was once obscured,

swallowed by uncertainty,

is brightened by opportunity and answers.

The miles once wedged as a doorstep between you,

have bent into inches.

The definition of distance has been rewritten.

Today, the word misery is not a hole you're forced to fill alone.

Hands, countless hands,

reach across the globe to fill it for you.

Today, love is not something that must be tended to in the flesh.

Today, the heart is a seed that can bloom miles from the hand that planted it.

# I Am From

I am from pictures of flowers,  
from Norwex and Clorox.

I am from a snowy porch, white, wet,  
it tastes like dirt.

I am from watermelon berries, sweet and small.

I am from hunting and long limbs. From Melody and Tucker.

I am from watching tv and road trips.

From “be stronger” and “be yourself”.

I am from Christmas morning and 4th of July in Seward.

I am from Seward and New Jersey, cinnamon buns and homemade  
lasagna.

From how my uncle lost his pinky to cancer, to my aunt is a doctor.

From Seward cemetery to Wasilla parking lots,

from old pipes that belonged to my great grandpa and candles

that belonged

to my whole family.