

## **Admitting Drunk to the Country**

Friends know my process,  
saddling up to the piano keyboard,  
slamming my left wrist against a doorframe.

Mother said,  
you're drunk.

I said,  
yes,  
but in italics.

And  
you'll never know how revolutionary  
everyone here thinks this is,  
by a bridge somewhere  
spitting syllables over the bricked side —  
I think suicide wouldn't be horrible  
if I died at the same time  
in the river with the rest of the goats,  
with the rest of everyone,  
poets who apologize to me  
when I get a little attention.

And true, poets are bad listeners,  
don't know how to observe —

for the most part there is a handful  
of moments where drinking  
sorry white merlot, some kind of blush  
rip-off, is the best sense-making thing  
in a writer's world than having  
scathing letters and pornographic pictures  
sent to my home because I say,  
yeah, you're terrible, but your business  
is substantial in Polaroid.

We must remember all America is  
is this poem, bad  
breath and unaware,  
sitting back on some drunk pill  
like me that screams  
at you how there ain't  
no apology lurking like  
a musical troll under the bridge,  
I suppose the same one I mentioned earlier,

and hey here's Muriel again (you can't know)  
getting me another beer when I've half a one  
left. She writes like mad  
while I get slurred and toilet-hover,  
thinking hard on how this poem will fly  
and about friends who still afford me  
the freedom of telling it like it is —  
they think stickin' it out with old Marbs  
will bring a bit more good  
than the things that get me  
closer to drunk —

and drunk is bigger than any one of us —

I've lived eight-thousand,  
seven-hundred-sixty moments of ugly or more  
without excuses —

Muriel refuses to apologize  
since she's said so much more than  
this piss-poor society will remember,  
I'll see everyone pro-this,  
anti-that, let me step outside  
and avoid the bugs like bullets  
in a shit neighborhood of soon-to-be  
ghetto hydrants and fuck-us-all  
faggots like me, blowing smoke,  
poem-ing at anyone who'll listen,  
knees busted by asphalt and lunacy  
screaming,  
*get your anti-anti*  
*off my lawn!*

And if it doesn't make sense it never will,  
just spending time these days  
waiting for Patrick to call,  
singers to stop moaning,  
a break in this shitty,  
shitty night to turn to Muriel  
and say you hear those horns?  
that's me and the wine, the beer,  
those loose articles  
cracked against a wet rock  
and a knuckled pair of middle fingers,  
watching the stars and my shit-faced

eyes, pasted gay against  
Ginsberg's queer shoulder,  
that long poem John said he'd read  
if he didn't need to wash his hands  
so many goddamn times.

### **Little Human Accidents**

The nightmare keeps you up tonight,  
again, one you have each time it storms.  
My poetry scatters the floor  
all the way to the kitchen,

like a free-spirit sex train blew through—  
you leave them there for décor,  
love the way my poems smell in the house,  
but you can't sleep.

On guard for me,  
are you? Since you found me  
beneath the furniture in the hall,

screaming, comatose, not knowing you  
were there? Defending me from that?

Don't.

I can turn the lamplight brighter  
and read you Billy Collins,

you're so gentle,

leave the battling of nightmares to me.

## **Apology**

I haven't done anything with these years  
but stay awake.

Was told my soul was over 150  
by a pale thirty-something  
with greased black hair,  
large eyes, and a lot of Know  
in his forehead's center

and I thought, to myself for once,  
how this physical tuft of fur,  
water and putty is a car  
I can't drive, like explaining myself  
over salmon dishes and house wines,  
wheels turning endless  
with the millennia  
and I'm just tired  
violin strings playing sad songs.

I've been abducted by a bit of sorrow

I resist along with clockwork,  
though I don't mind the vacation from Earth,  
like a test run before real death gets here  
and I can start living —

perhaps that's the thing I've not done since birth —

or maybe I forgot to leave the womb.

I wrote that before, too.

I suppose  
at 150 years we're allowed to slip  
as I've said and done in past decades,  
when my mind was less attached to direction  
of this vehicle or the hum of its engine,

saying the same things over and over again  
as my heart beats itself to death for me  
to do this life right the next go 'round,  
but at a truthful twenty-four, I know much better  
than to expect that, or anything.

## **Every Little Thing**

I read my Mother poems  
as she sits on the couch  
with a crooked, concerned look.

I know she doesn't understand —  
she asks why I say *fuck* so much,  
drink so much,  
don't cut my hair.

I show her my credit card  
statements and my cousin,  
home from the Carolinas, says,  
wow, you drink your credit cards

as mom tells me to finish reading  
my poem. Her movie is on pause.

She's a terrible audience  
and a bit daft —  
I guess I just like the sound  
of poetry in my broken  
cigarette throat.

## **Bottles of Our Own**

A friend of mine,  
we both enjoyed Bukowski  
for quite some time.

She bought a collection  
of his for me the day we started  
our first revolution on the bay,  
when we found our flag and everything.  
I think it was Nikki G.  
that said  
every nation needs a flag.

I can't remember. I was high on mosquitoes  
and my notepad.

We'll call my lady  
Courtney –  
her name  
cannot be  
Courtney was concerned  
about my poems, as I was,  
and she wrote about me  
pacing the shoreline and squawking  
at pelicans, taking  
breaks to read her Charles,  
but not that one about empties  
Adrien said was about us,

because we've gone through many  
fulls, me and C, so yes,  
a lot of empties, too.  
But we've never been Charles  
or that old car, never known  
the dusty spit of making it back,

barely.

And Adrien,  
I told her I was glad to have her around  
and that she had more than potential  
but talent,  
intelligent enough to become good,  
and that was before  
Courts had gone out and scooped up the Chinaski book  
with empties in it—

all his books say new poems  
on it, the devil,  
and we read it and laughed  
at Courtney's smelly feet and said  
yep, that's funny,  
hilarious indeed.

