

Lewis Lucarda

STAINED

For my community

Man braucht vor niemand Angst zu haben. Wenn man jemanden fürchtet, dann kommt es daher, daß man diesem Jemand Macht über sich eingeräumt hat.

Hermann Hesse

Dear reader,

First and foremost: thank you.

I am really honored that you picked up this poetry collection from a random stranger on the internet. Unless we know each other and you came across this by chance. Or you're a friend I sent this to, bashfully.

This is my first assortment of poems (out of a few more in the future I hope!) that I wanted to publish out there because they either mean something to me, or used to. Like some artists might relate, some creations you are just not that proud of anymore or never were proud of in the first place but they had to see the light of day at some point. But that is not to say that none of these texts are works that I dislike. Quite the opposite - they are here because I like them for what they are and have been. I hope you feel similarly.

Besides thanking the potential (and actual!) readers, I would like to thank everybody who encouraged me to go through with this. Every friend who got curious about my writing and wanted me to show them a shitty love poem of mine — here you go, bud!

Peace and love,

Lewis

WORMING

Mud, blood and sweat, I put them all in
the merry blender of disgusting despair –
for no one is to see them separated again.
Twisting and turning in my nest at night and day
and when I find a way to dream again, it's over!
It is all over when my eyes jangle from one
corner to the other, squelching in my sockets,
and the very next morning, they will find me –
after a long and desperate search, that threatened
to be never-ending and unsolvable –
below the creaking floorboards, yes, there I am,
snoring, moaning,
eating and soaking
within the wet
and cold embrace
of the soil.

MY GOD

to preface, i am not religious. at least i am not currently religious.

i used to believe, believe in many things:

people, friendship, love, the world;

ghosts, aliens, god, gravity, climate change, and the rotation of the earth around its own axis, the earth orbiting the sun, you and me orbiting each other never crossing paths.

i still firmly believe in some of these things, in some others, not so much.

i used to be, not think or believe, god.

the world to play with and work for at my very own fingertips.

i probably wasn't a very benevolent god - or a very malevolent one, for that matter.

perhaps a quite neutral god.

a god washed free and clean of all real responsibility.

for some people it might be blasphemous to consider myself a god as a fleshy squishy and fragile human being.

i don't understand why a god has to be immortal or omnipresent or kind or evil or anything at all.

i don't believe in a god at all.

but i used to pray to one, to pray away the things i saw that nobody else saw, to pray away the things i felt that nobody else felt, to pray away the things i was that nobody else was.

i was haunted by visions that were not mine, by sensations that could not have been true, by emotions that tore me apart which were not for me to possess.

my god was not cruel but she was simply indifferent.

indifferent to my suffering and prayers.

and so i shed my old belief system that caused me so much confusion and pain.

while my extraordinary experiences did not vanish, i have grown a thicker skin, one unblemished by the belief in an entity that could save me.

how can i stop believing when believing in things such as people, friendship, love, the world, has saved me?

how can i stop believing when everyone believing in me has saved me?

and so i will continue to believe

as i will believe in you.

THROUGH MY NOISE-CANCELLING HEADPHONES

I hear the baby crying in the tram,
The rumbling of the vehicle,
This slight tremor in my body,
And I hear you calling for me.
I take my headphones off
And heartily greet you
With a slight melody in my voice.

LOVE ME

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Cast into shadow

it dwells beneath the veil
of lingering terror, of swallowed pride
of terrible, terrible shame.

And cut into flesh,

it runs beneath the skin
of polished stone, of clean bone and of oh!
so tender membrane

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RETURN TO ME! I scream, awake

in my bed I hold myself tightly like a child being
sheltered from the cold

when I look out of my open window this summer night
I'd just like to open up my mouth — and yell from the
top of my lungs that

I miss you, I miss you, I miss you.

GRATITUDE

I haven't found
the correct time yet
to tell you that I love
you because that word
is as hard to say to a parent
as it is to their child I find it
has left me in bitter tears
to not feel tenderness
formed in words and it
is just like spoiled milk
I bear no single
grudge against you as
I have yet to perform
acts of gratitude
that will absolve me from
grief loneliness and everything

TO FIFI IN CAT HEAVEN

The door was left a bit ajar when you drifted off to sleep and ultimately your silent forever sleep. Fifi had always been a silly name for a fat little senior calico cat. My mom called you a lucky cat because of your three differently colored patches of fur. I think we were particularly lucky to have you in our lives. I don't remember what the weather was that day. I wrapped you around one of your favorite blankets when I left the room, not a single tear having flowed within and without me. My sister was crying like there was no tomorrow, although she tried her best to look strong in front of me. I said "see you soon again, I love you" before we left you on that table, paws white from your blood stopping to circulate in your small body. You were so very thin then. Mom believed you stayed alive for me until I came back from my semester abroad in Lithuania. You held on for that long, just to see me again one last time, and so was I. I believe mom might have been onto something just this once.

DRAG MONARCH BUTTERFLY

- Dragging your feet along the stained floor, inhaling the midnight smoke sharply between each forced step, you find yourself deeply and profoundly alive.
- You have fought tooth and nail to get where you are standing right now at this second and damn right you're proud of yourself but *oh shit this feels wrong* you say under your breath, barely able to keep yourself upright.
- Where have you gone wrong, little willow tree?
- This is exactly what you wanted from the start, and yet you turn your face away from the crowd and stare back to days bygone – are you not satisfied?
- Show some respect, show the world your whole chest that had its heart torn out and put back in the wrong place, show the world what has brought *you* back and turned you inside out all over again.
- It's going to be okay and you will be there at the end all the stronger and weaker and lighter and heavier for the better and worse of it all.
- *Take it all back take it all from me* you beg and plead and nobody hears as you drag your feet along the stained floor.

TURN YOUR INNER VIOLENCE OUTWARD

Turn your inner violence outward,
the world is waiting, they're all taking a deep breath
waiting for you to land the first hit.

Turn your inner violence outward,
your rage is deserving and your pain is unbearable,
you have been punching since your first day on the tit.

So turn your inner violence outward,
stand in the ring, bare your teeth, flex your muscles,
there is no way you can miss.

MUTED GREEN

You said your favorite color was a muted green,
A green that was silent,
A green that spoke only when spoken to,
An obedient green.
I painted myself a muted green
Over and over again
Until I turned to mud.
An ugly muddy green that repulsed you,
A green that was not your favorite color.
I guess it was overkill,
But I said none of that.

MIMESIS

Your cold sweaty hands gripped my head tightly almost as if
they wanted to split my skull in half and drink all the fluids
that were inside and I would have let you do so if only you
hadn't told me not to

One finger down your throat one down mine *we have to get
rid of the toxins* you whispered with your breath from last
night's dinner and I wouldn't have looked back I wouldn't
have darling

Be good you kept saying be good and it'll be over soon but I
wanted it to last forever and ever and ever I just wasn't sure
if I would live that long I held onto dear life just for you
I open my eyes and you left a horse head-shaped stain right
beside me in my bedsheets I had nowhere to run now so I
stayed put just for you

Sweetheart it's over now you don't have to keep clenching
your teeth anymore it's over but you kept your eyes shut
tight as well I would have let you ruin me I really would
have

AFTERBIRTH

I didn't want to believe
This is what I had wrong in my brain
When the smiling psychiatrist across me
told me my diagnosis
I let the word roll on my tongue, inside my mouth,
Skee-zoe-frey-knee-ah!
without trying to verbalize anything and having it be heard
by anybody but myself

I tried to taste it, chew its aroma out,
savor its flavor, and at the very last
I spat it out on the ground and stared at it
“A face that only a mother could love”
With that very same desperate affection I held
my diagnosis in my hands, now as a cold sheet of paper
something I wanted to hear but didn't want to know

and there it also was, what I just chewed and spat out,
black on white, simple as it was and complex as it is
a split mind in a split world
a something in a

OH GOOD GRIEF

“Nobody will miss me when I’m gone,
They will leave flowers at my grave, say
a quiet prayer — and exit.”

Unseen, beyond the graveyard, is the pain that sifts through
the waves of grief.

The cruel tenderness toward your loved ones by people who
knew you but did not love you, a gentle nod of the head, a
loving caress across the hand, a sweet kiss on the cheek. All
of which to calm their stormy hearts, to quiet the anger and
confusion and hurt they feel.

And then, the music that they hear in their minds when they
listen to a song you liked, the fragrance entering their senses
when they smell the perfume you once wore, the film that
plays just by the mere mention of your name. And those
tears will well up in their eyes every time they think of you,
and everything and everyone you had left behind.

They will think of deeds, ones good, ones bad; and they will
think of the brown color in your eyes, the tight embrace you
gave whenever you met (again), the sound of your shrill
laughter at a terrible pun. They think of you. They think of
you, wherever you are: here, there, over yonder, somewhere,
gone, never to be seen again.

And they miss you so very much.

DECEMBER

It's been a harsh winter,
The blazing freezing sun staring upon us, merciless and
cruel, almost impossible to shield yourself from the cold,
And it will be Christmas soon...

FALLING

When the sky falls, I will drink all the stars up. Like a
drunkard or even a toddler, putting one foot after another, I
try to find my way in the cold streets at night. Without the
stars hanging over us, there is no light, no light.