

A black and white photograph of a person's hand holding a camera. The hand is wearing a ring and is positioned near a car window. The camera lens is prominent in the foreground. The background is slightly blurred, showing the interior of a car.

snapshots  
LIKE  
billboards

janet  
pearson

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KASLO, BC

for life

for love

for beauty



•••••  
snapshots



# things are looking up

playing the part of the fool:

opting to believe in  
something i have no right to meddle with  
--shame on you thinking you can know

i can't juggle but can take a gracious bow  
exit with backwards steps and a wry smile

see the fool is the seed is the risk  
the hairbrain idea sure to land me on my face  
without him i am nothing  
and the view from ground level is so interesting



so what?

my cat ran away yesterday  
so what?

you say

she was sweet and playful  
the only friend i had

and now

she's gone

she got tired of me

and ran off to find someone else

so now i'm alone in this world

with no cat to rub against my leg

purr in my ear

and sleep near my face

i'm left with a leaky hot water bottle

and two bags of dried cat food

(i'm not bitter,  
you just pissed me off)

i stood up and wondered where my orange juice was  
it had been there a minute ago  
and now it was over on the counter  
but i couldn't recollect having put it there

yet another moment of my life that draws a complete  
blank

i wondered this afternoon about carnal knowledge  
i wondered what it was—  
of or relating to the body knowledge of sensuality

it is carnal, my knowing you  
sensual  
and yet it draws a blank

who'd have thought orange juice would be like fucking  
i can remember  
your blank stare

i'd drank all the orange juice before i lost it—  
so when found, it was empty

empty knowledge carnal fucking empty glass

drivin' along  
smiling a song  
fuck what a beautiful day  
cosmic clouds billowing shroud  
leading my way  
sails climb high  
to the noon sky  
fiddler plays on the green  
i better remember  
slow down on the corners—  
too nice of a day to die.

# tube steak boogie

remember the day we  
    captured the sunshine  
as we motored down the river  
on a slothful afternoon  
our tubes filled with laughter

idiotic faces  
asinine balancing acts  
passing goofy smiles from  
one to another  
    babble, gibber and rigmarole

the river began to suck up the sun  
    but we    didn't notice  
        didn't care  
kept foolishly riding merrily along

then it was dark  
the laughter was gone  
our tubes sank  
and we all drowned

bEEp  
sorry man  
BeEp hOnk  
i ain't about  
HonK  
to run down  
pedestrians  
hONk HoNk  
cuz you're an  
impatient  
(honk) bAstARd

don't ever fall  
in love with a musician

if you took off all your clothes  
and danced naked around the living room  
to his newest album  
he'd be more interested in the mix  
whether the bass was too loud  
or the vocals should be redone

if you went to see a live band  
at a bar  
for an evening of drinking and dancing  
the next day he'd be able to tell you  
whether or not the cabinets were Marshalls  
but he wouldn't remember what you were wearing

tracks would get laid  
more than you

and he'd be surrounded by screaming girls  
dreaming they really have a chance  
he'd make love 10,000 times a night  
and even though you'd know  
that they wouldn't have a chance  
you'd consider dying your hair blonde  
--to hold on

but he isn't substance  
he's composed of a million  
tiny notes  
that are perfectly arranged

# pattern of me

finally i return  
to the source of my longing  
toes embraced by the sand  
rhythm of the waves  
soothing my inconsistencies--  
place of my melancholy  
home away from home.

the ground is pulled out from beneath me  
while Jonathan Livingston  
mocks my futility  
reminiscent of seagull days:  
after all these years  
i still wonder what i am:  
battered crab in the sand  
seaweed ripped from its stronghold  
garbage with no other place to go

the relic in me  
searches for a talisman—  
some tiny treasure to hold onto  
but there are only patterns,  
write my name in the sand  
(pattern of me)  
my offering to the sea

may the waves reclaim inconsistency

# reclamation

i am a motherless child

meticulously trained in the status quo

i saw an excerpt once from that 50s

home economics textbook

thou shalt

thou shalt not

how could i expect it to be any different

the words still ring from my own lips

upon the fragile ears of my children

i, too, have motherless children

i recognize them by their shattered faces

when magic is discarded with the trash

and so, it is high time this all changed

let us put on our boots, my children

and tromp together through the woods

in search of Her

take me by the hand while you still remember

lead me to the mushroom grove

where the fairies dance with delight

let me revel in your joyful demeanor

let us remember our birth together

we will meet Her with much rejoicing

as She has wondered too long

which textbook we've all been hiding under

but wait, my children, wait

before we rush out with anticipation

let me first telephone my mother

let me ask her if she would care to join us



trying to find a way  
to relate to the moon  
do you believe in magic

--janet?

she asks

can you see my curves as your own?  
or is it hard to look me in the face...  
she harbours a sea of tranquility  
rages an ocean storm  
conceives life

swelling from crescent to silver round  
milky way flows from her breast  
mother who never dies

# captured in significance

today i walked to the top of the hill  
and began to understand  
significance:  
giving power to those things outside of ourselves

this is important--  
this is life changing--  
i'll never do that again!

.Moments.  
captured and held onto for dear life

this is who i am,  
for dear life

old man and woman walk down the street  
after being together forever  
but if you asked each one of them  
to describe  
any one of those given moments...

stories  
different stories  
at the same place on the space-time continuum  
and yet  
two completely different memories--  
memories more real than whatever it is we call reality

captured, for dear life.

at the bottom of the hill i am so small in the universe  
insignificant  
an insignificant vital part because i am part of the  
whole

## my road

there is this road i know  
that doesn't go this way or that  
just straight ahead  
no decision to be made until the end

where footsteps flower  
and the trees impart their wisdom  
on a sometimes unwilling me

amazing how hard it is to believe  
the things i don't like about myself

# the invention of mother

the thing that terrifies me the most now  
is no longer being able to  
breathe for you—  
share my blood.

i lie awake at night  
listening to your breath.  
i miss you when we're sleeping:

the way you look clear through to my soul  
to reinvent my self as mother,  
your head on my shoulder,  
the weight recreating the existence of each other.

you as daughter, me as mother.

this poem comes as you did,  
brewing inside of me for months and then  
appearing suddenly one night when i might have been  
sleeping.

it comes from that place of mysterious magic  
that i cannot begin to comprehend  
but wraps itself around each one of us  
revealing this perfect love.

## morning baking

i only just met her  
but spent the short time  
admiring her strength and beauty  
Ruby in orange and yellow pants  
is vivid  
she was camp cook and  
i washed her pots  
in exchange for a meal  
her cinnamon buns the next morning  
were a burnt offering to the crew

i knead this dough now for Ruby  
because i've been thinking  
of the afterlife  
and regret  
i offer cinnamon buns from Ruby  
so she knows that everything is good

# for Louis Holowaychuck 2009

where does this poem begin –  
at the point of death  
when the heavy burden of grief  
settles onto the shoulders  
of the family who dared  
to love so deeply?

where does this poem begin –  
at the point of creation  
when some spark of an idea  
surfaced  
that this was how it all shall pass?

for me it began down the block  
at a house that was  
a rock for the wanderers  
across a desk  
cluttered with honesty  
and fair exchange

a place where i was bound  
to learn something in the conversation  
--not just a this or that  
but something real about me  
and my undiscovered  
strength

where does this poem end—  
when every last one who  
remembers him is gone?

blood remembers well  
strength and courage are passed  
from hand to hand  
heart to heart

this poem goes on & on

# Tira

Tira died on my birthday  
peacefully in her sleep  
none of us would have wished it  
any other way

Goddess of Wonderful  
Sweet Honeybee Queen  
WisdomKeeper

the flowing grey hair was a  
dead give-away

i`m finding it difficult to stop crying  
thinking  
-- i didn't get enough of her

my children remember her stories  
i remember what she brought out in me  
the sun remembers that she  
has been and will always be

floating in the sweet smell of roses

i went back to the graveyard  
and did a secret little jig  
terrified to be caught  
dancing on somebody`s grave

but that`s what she wanted  
because she knew  
better than any of us do

## eternity & rosehips

i would like to tell you about  
the magic that lies hidden  
among the stepping stones  
floating in the water  
waiting for a chance  
to spring forth into you  
and bring you eternal bliss—  
the bliss of magic  
and believing

i would like to kiss you  
among the rosehips  
i would like to show you  
the magic that lives there  
i would like to clasp our hands  
into the kind of love  
that never lets go  
even when the sails are about to fly  
and we are a handshake away  
from confirming what's next

i would like to walk down  
that haggard path with you  
the one that leads us back to ourselves  
to me and you  
to eternity and rosehips  
i would like you to believe in me  
until the magic is completed



## name of a wave

eighty days gone by  
since the last intoxicating shuffle  
now when i lick my lips  
they remember the taste of black tattoos  
tattoos that shiver all beauty  
and make clear to me what i cannot own

then i was the darkness  
enchanted with existence  
ear pressed to chest  
moved by the rhythms that slipped from his fingertips

he'll answer my questions  
but i stop asking  
not wanting to construct this man with measly words  
when he has built himself so straight and true

so next to him i sit  
reading astonishing poetry  
basking in  
exceptional  
silence

## better to sip

i think — i cannot get enough of you  
i could drink you until i am  
reeling and fall down —  
but what good is that?  
better to sip you slowly & savour  
each moment.

Love is not a contest  
it is a journey into the burgandy  
depths of sorrow & joy.  
Love is not empty with the cup.  
Love is the sparkle of the glass.

# distanced shade

beautiful girls with flowing hair  
leather moccasins and cotton skirts  
meet outside the cathedral to sing  
indian summer afternoon  
dark shiny hair touched gently  
by the breeze that stirs  
the dusty street  
dogs nearby bask in sun  
and stray chickens peck for seeds  
i watch them from my distanced shade

their voices start as a whisper  
then strengthen with the melody  
hips and shoulders find the rhythm  
cotton skirts sway  
the breeze seems to touch them divinely—  
it misses my distanced shade

her fingers caressingly touch another's shoulder  
soft smile blossoms to laughter with the bond  
she pushes away stray locks, unaware  
the men passing by, home from work  
notice her  
smiles are contagious  
but they won't infect my distanced shade

# girl at the gate

the girl at the gate stood waiting  
for her dragon  
eye of the sky  
slice silver wings through the shining night  
guardian of the fortress in the hill  
he weeps for her

listen to the story  
picked up from under the sweet peas  
brushed off with pussy willows  
and read out loud

once upon a time  
in a far-away land  
where nothing was ever what it seemed  
the princess stood at the gate  
waiting for her dragon lover  
he whistles sweet songs  
and spins roses petals into velvet wine  
she sits at his feet and listens  
to the stories of her life

the knight seems to think  
she needs saving  
slice silver blade, the dragon's singing heart  
drops onto the dirt floor  
shining knight drags away our  
despairing maiden  
he must have thought she would rejoice –  
not stand at the gate, waiting

# delectable

you will not find the lover  
sitting in a café  
waiting, hoping to see you--  
the lover is already  
obliging you with a kiss  
through the divinity  
of your most delectable treat.

the lover is not daring to take a peek  
at you--  
over a newspaper--

the lover is standing watching you  
in the corner of every room  
admiring your  
    beauty strength wisdom courage  
and all the other great stuff  
that makes a most delectable you.

the lover is not afraid  
to look at you  
to see you for what you are

the lover recognizes you--adores you  
over a newspaper  
revealed through the eye  
of a most delectable  
face

## the day he played me

in the morning  
before the train whistle blows  
he rises & leaves me alone  
goes to the piano  
i stop imagining what i already know  
while the music caresses  
ivory skin  
floating on waves of sound  
notes that slip in  
past my habits of desire  
to a place of  
discovery

# spectrum

sunshine plays with my mind  
as i look through the glass  
to the rusty swing set  
that used to take me to the moon  
on warm summer nights  
i would snatch a star  
the chains leaving calluses  
on my fingers  
i can feel them again  
as the breeze pushes  
the swing up onwards  
to the highest peak  
of an aged mountain  
scarce cool air against me  
colors melting into one  
my hands and legs  
releasing themselves  
spinning me until  
i become white light

# tangerine

there is silence inside the skin  
of a far away place  
where tangerines fall slowly  
slipping through twisted years  
once drawn in this space

it's what i remember of a story  
mother read so long ago—  
might be found in a forgotten corner  
of a dusty library  
but it would be unread for too long  
can't remember its name

night falls too quickly  
after eyes are closed  
awoken by tangerines  
ashes fall  
blanketing the accents of a dream  
still—always—drawn to this place



# soloman

“i am in this point of time  
but all i know are images”  
i watched his tattooed arms:  
undulating figures on sagging skin  
i looked out to try to see  
what he was finding in the opaque sky  
but all i saw was transparency  
so i concentrated on the patterns  
of the rotting wood  
his lips gently parted and closed  
and again  
but what he wanted to tell me  
i would only see as lines on a park bench  
“people whose hands i’ve touched:  
lost in boxes of stuff  
growing dusty in the attic”  
he gave me this urgency  
to sink my fingers into flesh  
attach myself for eternity  
but i looked to the see-through sky  
and there were only two seagulls  
a triangle of birds flew from sight  
but i looked to the old man  
knowing i could reach to touch his hand  
and he would still be alone with his memories

## ode to snowboarding

it starts in the morning  
when the toast pops up  
sourdough  
i am thinking of Bob  
my board Bob  
hot knife through butter  
fuel me thermos for what may arise

there will be trees  
this i know  
with dark spaces between  
that hold the magic to fly

this is the story of an eagle  
circling to swoop  
fear hitching a ride on my back

an array  
of splendid colours  
reflects in a row of mirrors  
outlined by a trail  
of brilliant lights  
the oleaginous smell  
of liquid masks  
fills the room with  
dramatics  
while practiced hands  
unleash  
a metamorphosis

# shivering mirror

absolute stillness  
frozen in time and space  
cars whizzing  
horns honking  
people passing  
drunken chatter  
two bodies  
embraced in oblivion  
their insides mirroring  
the world shivering around them

daylight moon  
sliver of my reflection  
i never even thought  
of trying to describe  
the sound of crickets  
walking with the sun in one eye  
so everything is covered  
with silver cellophane  
sliver of god

## fridge poem:

perfume i desire  
jitter latte  
sip the sacred morning  
full of fresh cream  
i shine like desire  
will you love me like the sky?  
celebrate liquid aroma  
black poison fill me  
run potent & sacred  
remembering yesterday's joe





billboards



# treeplanter disappears

tonight i cannot find anyone else to talk to  
so i will walk alone  
down this road that leads nowhere  
past fallen trees  
that i have not touched  
but will replace  
knowing that somehow i am part  
of what caused them to crash in the first place

no one told me it would be simple  
in fact i came looking for complexity  
but what i have found is  
beer, pot, cigarettes  
and a maddening urge to go home  
back home  
to a place that does not exist  
down a road that leads nowhere

the constant swarming could drive me insane  
or maybe it already has  
and i just don't know  
because i'm too far away  
i would like to be too far away  
but it hasn't happened yet

we are all playing games  
to pass the time  
trying to ignore what is hovering above our heads  
and could eat us alive  
leaving us dead on the block

\*\*\*\*\*

tonight there are lots of people to talk to  
but quite frankly  
i just don't feel like it  
walk into the sun with a cigarette  
the sound of gravel beneath my feet  
my cap and shovel  
all remind me of a twelve year old boy  
headed off  
marching toward the mine  
returning with a labour-blackened face  
only we are so close to the clouds  
and some part of me wants to be here

there is a girl with flowers in her hair  
lying on a log  
with bubbles floating past her  
and the storybook trees  
are not so far away

\*\*\*\*\*

today i learned the meaning of the word  
RIDICULOUS

if you look closely  
it may appear that i am smiling  
but really it is the onset of insanity  
the kind that goes away when you are  
sitting on a porcelain toilet again  
and don't have to swat mosquitoes  
away from your ass

i think the loggers must have been laughing  
when they toppled all of the "horseshit"  
into the gully  
knowing that i would have to plant it  
wading hip-high through bushes and crap  
more profane that i can make them sound

but then i see beautiful bodies  
moving across the land  
etching lines into the dark soil  
imitating the miracle of creation  
his muscles are the words of a new religion  
his beauty reveals to me  
the secrets of the earth  
the rain clings to his power as he walks  
silently through the forming stream  
body and water melting to replenish the land

the wind and rain chill past my bones  
through my words  
and leave me dreaming of fire

\*\*\*\*\*

when i close my eyes at night i see trees  
naturals, bushes, swamps, logs  
and i panic because i  
don't know where to plant

i wonder how long the image will last  
when i no longer wake up in the woods  
when there are no more van rides  
filled with incessant chatter and vile odours  
when i'm not in constant companionship  
with people i barely know

the streets of the city are too hard  
and too clean  
the puddles form perfectly in parking lots  
my boots repel the ground  
rather than being sucked in by soft earth  
that is so often deceiving  
there is shelter from the rain  
but i cannot hear it fall  
the sound is swallowed by the  
3 am subliminal buzz of town  
even the convenience  
of french fries and beer  
cannot justify the hard ground  
asphalt puddles  
and being told when i can and cannot  
cross the street

\*\*\*\*\*

i am looking for the promised land  
i have caught glimpses of it  
riding on the quad  
creamy ground  
smoking by the fire  
while the rain softly falls  
but the moments are quick to fade  
and then it pours

i came looking for sanity  
but what i have now is an  
overwhelming desire  
to run naked through the water  
to where the trees still grow  
and live there  
with the bears and the porcupine



# wind child

what can i say but that  
beauty is endless on the water—  
no dirt, no back—stabbing,  
you can't touch me  
but the wind gets right inside  
to my womb

water water everywhere  
we're nowhere  
because we can't touch the land

it doesn't matter what body it is  
we're all the same  
swimming in one big pool  
everybody's juices mixing  
blending, repelling and  
working a way out  
rub—a—dub—dub  
four men in a tub  
women  
boys, girls and a dog  
with 24' to mingle  
best friends, strangers  
becoming lovers  
loving because it's about the best thing to do

in six days i haven't been bored for one second  
every spot i've sat has found me

putting me into its reality  
each island is unique  
and the people there  
gather away from the cesspool

we have the magic of the gypsy lady on board  
she sprinkled it from her fingertips  
before we left Lasqueti  
it has taken her half a lifetime  
to get where she was headed  
but now she too is friends  
with the water  
she told me i have a beautiful face  
and kissed me  
like the wind, her magic sings in me now  
strengthening my womb

we are cruising the cosmos  
in a Martin 24  
to do the lunar swing  
making wishes on the North Star  
before returning to the day  
when the galaxy is hidden from view  
we reach places where time  
has no meaning  
love & the life of leisure  
are the only options  
no decisions to be made  
except where is the end of the line?  
nothing lasts forever  
not people places moments



mountains or water  
but the peace we are creating  
that blows through the sails  
has nothing better to do than mingle

laissez-faire  
let it go and see what happens  
chances are we'll end up in the same place  
but the ride will have been epic  
there's nothing to catch up with us out here—  
you can't touch me  
the sun's got me covered

Savory stars moonlight beach  
teenagers with bomb fires  
exploring drunk  
wanting in, wanting out  
Courtney wants to be me  
i want to be the gypsy  
we're three of the same  
goddess, mother, crone  
it all comes back to the womb again  
i've been doing so much floating

and when the trip is over  
each moment will be etched into my body  
the people i've met will  
live in my cells  
making me smile when i least expect it

the water is in my soul now



# freedom

i can see all the wheels turning  
the hidden crust of grime accumulated  
inside glossy metal shells  
when i put my chin to chest  
there are only two lines  
one on either side  
the left one barely broken  
my brother's stationary back  
and the ground moving like stink  
beneath my feet  
and i can say whatever i want  
because no one can hear me

on my first and last visit he said  
"you probably want to ride a Harley"  
i nodded shyly in agreement  
feigning...something  
i don't know if i'd call it innocence  
i never went back because  
already he knew too much about me  
and i just wanted to be free  
but he knew that, too

i love the feeling of being completely surrounded  
having to battle the wind  
to keep my head on  
and even though my arms  
are around my brother's back

he's one and i'm one  
and we're separate  
and i can say whatever i want  
because no one can hear me  
but still we wave at the cows  
simultaneously

freedom costs \$2.63 to fill her up  
and then i can go anywhere i want  
maybe i'll be a modern day Clint Eastwood  
riding a bike instead of a horse  
the "good" in the "bad & the ugly"  
after all, the truth stands alone  
and i can speak the truth  
because no one can hear me

no one sees my grin behind the visor  
cause i'm going too fast  
freedom is going so fast  
that i could die at any second  
not seeing it through bits of window  
but feeling it all around me  
the colors of the sunset on my back  
the amazing mountains rising before me

and when the darkness acts as a girdle  
limiting my perception  
i feel even more of a presence  
snapshots like highway billboards

of me and my bro on his bike  
speeding through the night  
120 clicks against the wind  
me going on about silly things  
talking to myself  
about myself

because no one can hear me



# these days

## GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA

outside i hear the screams of humanity  
i am trying to close my eyes  
and forget where i am  
make my energy  
dissipate  
and float above the  
stinks like piss  
girls are to be molested  
fuck you and yours  
cement where nothing can grow  
especially not a soul  
below me the city undulates  
waves of music, spit, lust & diesel  
i close my eyes and dream  
of the soft skin of a man i might love

## THE TIKAL EXPERIENCE, GUATEMALA

i look at the mountains now  
and wonder what secrets they hold  
who made them  
how long have they been standing—  
these temples that sprout trees

the journey here was arduous  
as it should be  
four hours in the back of a pickup  
through unbelievable countryside  
where the only contrast to beauty  
is the look of hunger in a naked child's eye  
stagnant swamp  
the continual search for firewood  
but even in the dirt road villages  
they dream the American dream  
the banks give away toasters  
and the woman wipe the mud  
from their fashionable shoes

the land becomes flat  
where the pine trees yield to the ceiba  
this is the place to build mountains  
where god forgot to  
where with 64 meters you can be on top of the world

we climbed the slippery steps to the top of Temple IV  
highest native structure in the western hemisphere  
i'm noticing a trend  
of enjoying sleeping in high places  
we sat on the stairs while the sun set  
watched while the tourists went back to their beds  
eventually the guard made his way  
through the darkness  
up the ladder  
to find us in the prohibited zone  
he sat to catch his breath



es muy bonita, si?

i'd never had to bribe before, but he made it easy  
so we paid for our hotel room in the sky

we laid blankets down on the cement  
where blood had flown so many centuries ago  
where people had believed in something more  
than snapshots to take back home  
they fed themselves to the gods for survival  
where then, did they go?

i watched the moon from within the darkness of the  
temple  
afraid of the back corners  
i dreamt my vision so clear and simple  
a single constellation shone through a break in the  
clouds  
and i wondered which god was smiling down on me

the night may seem like it will last forever  
yet when the darkness lifts  
pushed away by the rising mist  
it seems too soon  
more time please, with the stars and the moon  
but then the howler monkeys awoke...  
gobbling up the predawn silence  
conversations across the expanse  
conversations with god  
shaking awake the birds and coati mundo

soon the tourists return  
expecting a beautiful sunrise  
disappointed by the thick clouds  
unable to appreciate the silence  
their conversation is petty and unpoetic  
unlike the monkeys  
yet it is we who were created to give thanks—  
the monkeys who are supposedly ungrateful  
i hope the gods can hear me  
above the monkeys' roar and human babble

i have only my own words  
i have only my own way  
what am i willing to sacrifice?

i leave the temple knowing  
my spirit has mingled with the greatness beneath me  
who stole through my body while i slept?  
this is not my land  
but still it speaks to me  
still i will always remember  
that the dark corners are only dangerous  
if i do not keep the light in mind  
that it all melds together in the mist  
good, bad, dark, light, day, night, monkey & woman

grandmother stirs the clouds  
sprinkles in the stars  
takes away the moon  
once the seasoning is just right  
adds the sun at the last moment—

even if we can't see it

the soup would not be complete  
without every last ingredient

## SAN CRISTOBAL, MEXICO

Maria walks in plastic shoes  
from café to café  
through the zocalo  
selling bracelets made by her mother  
cinco por dos  
her hair is three days braided  
her sweater has seen more years than her  
at four years old she is a pro  
cinco por dos, cinco por dos  
mirar  
i cannot meet her eyes  
or she will convince me to buy

she does not meet my eyes  
constantly looking for the next gringo  
maybe it's her brother  
selling chiclets  
but she walks alone  
sniffing and coughing  
infected with poverty

i say no gracias, no gracias

mirar, mirar, muy bonita she replies  
look her in the eye and say no  
soon i won't be able to look myself  
in the eye  
for always saying no  
thank you but no  
thank you for what?  
being the one to struggle?  
being the one to starve?  
being the one to carry the weight  
for everyone else's sins?  
how many times will i say no  
before my heart is completely cold?

#### TINO'S OASIS, YELAPA, MEXICO

hanging on the beach  
la arena  
with Krishnamurti  
where there is love in the waves  
undiscriminating  
unbiased  
unjudgemental  
eternally in relationship with the moon  
without thought

we think that our minds—reason:  
concept of the self  
is what makes us special

but it only separates us from,  
inhibits participation in the  
never ceasing movement  
the churning, tossing, blowing  
flooding, spinning  
crashing, caressing

how easy it is to love the ocean  
because it makes no demands on me  
and i ask nothing in return  
in its ever ending changes  
it remains pure and constant

#### PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO

man who used to dance  
can't drink enough now  
to forget your broken heart  
the star with our name on it  
burnt out long enough ago to go shooting by tonight  
shoot the curl  
ride the wave  
sand in my toes  
i choose which way i stumble  
i choose between light and dark  
hands like mine on my shoulder  
entice me to sing sweeter  
but there's a bus ticket in my pocket  
and a sacred place i want to be

destiny means that my trip belongs  
only to me  
take me on back to Mexico  
everything is over before it begins  
like smoke from smiling lips

what i want may not come  
but what i need

has the habit of sneaking up from behind

# high level, ab – nelson, bc

story of a Girl and her Shadow

bus driver screwed up in High Level  
closed the door and drove away  
my shadow still outside, finishing his butt  
–No! i screamed, but couldn't be heard

## Paddle Prairie

run off the bus if i could  
to see how many dandelion puff wishes  
i could make:  
could spend two weeks in this field  
blowing puffs to the sky  
but i might lose my mind

both sides of the road look the same from here  
this hundred K looks the same as the last  
this road that leads me back to the crystal valleys

body hurtling through space without moving a muscle  
my shadow is sprinting behind  
trying to keep up while wondering  
didn't we just come from this direction?  
stops to wipe his black brow  
maybe he'll catch up with me on the back porch

crossing the bridge into Manning  
tour of the back alley  
Greyhound station is a video store  
is the Greyhound station  
“Deep Impact” plays nightly at 8pm next door

still lots of pick-ups and drug dealer cars  
my shadow's made it to Paddle Prairie by now  
on a wishing puff break

dirt road off the highway to an unknown town  
bulletin board with no notices  
stop on the side of the road  
to pick up an old lady waiting there  
from the highway you'd never know

on the bus again with Beth Orton  
we've been travelling since Guatemala  
frame by window frame, song by song  
native faces  
reflected on the glass  
profile of the wise one seated before me

Matt's electric kool-aid acid test  
is fucking with my rhythm

half hour in Valleyview  
looking for the view  
39th Ave. looks like a logging road to me  
so many tire tracks into the ditch

my black shadow man's checked into Manning  
for the night  
hot shower  
he sips Bushmills and watches the hockey game



in a land where it's never quite dark  
a shadow on his own can be quite conspicuous  
later he'll play in the clouds  
with the profile from the glass

moon on my left: moon on my right  
night and day: day and night  
hanging low: riding high  
leading onward: saying goodbye

Fox Creek's got clean restrooms  
Foods to Go! and a Liquor Hut  
bumper stickers saying  
"a woman's place is in the mall"  
beer-bellied Bud men  
then suddenly a handsome, handsome man  
gets on the bus  
who'd a thought?

passing the white crew cabs  
brown van, grey van, blue jeep, red & white bronco  
"you're going the wrong way"  
shadow yells at me  
returning to reality too soon  
elastic strap waiting to snap back

at 6:10am i'm sipping not-camp coffee and  
wondering who made it to the lunch table  
first this morning

Calgary sky donning her early morning pink party

dress  
made more brilliant by the smog  
four months since i've seen a city  
not a day too long  
twelve more hours to go

back in the mountains again  
where everything moves on down to Kootenay time  
voluptuous earth woman:  
hugging the curves, dipping in and out of valleys  
following the flow

my shadow man's taking a different approach today  
laying on his back, floating down the river  
he, too, yearns for the mountains  
rock castles of every size, shape and texture  
tomorrow when he gets here he'll climb the highest  
peak  
yell for me  
then ride the snow towards home

we flow together though apart

rock castles made to crumble and slide  
never know what might be sneaking up from behind  
or what crazy shadow man is waving his arms  
on the peak  
yelling a name you can't quite hear  
did something just slither down  
that sweetest of chutes up there?  
shadow riding home to his lady

Fernie has another beckoning dandelion puff field  
but i'm so close now

this is the valley where i was born  
haven't been back for probably 20 years  
caught cruising without a shadow  
arrival in my birth town of Cranbrook  
is non-momentous  
don't even get off the bus to touch the land  
that came up with me

everywhere the aspens quiver  
ask me the story someday  
they quiver here on this beach  
beer cooling in the Kokanee glacier water  
this is me  
this is my commercial  
soul tribe vibe

my man slipped back in:::  
in the garden  
savouring the luscious strawberry moment

enough said.  
better off my shadow's not dead.



# beginning of the end

he has sad eyes  
because he knows too much  
and it's so hard to be  
in relationship  
knowing all that we know  
and never being prepared  
to let any of it go  
if our lives could be like poetry  
that comes, goes and flows –  
only the innocent can love  
because they don't judge  
i'm no longer sure  
whether this wine  
brings clarity or confusion  
the words come from  
    somewhere  
    some time  
a time i remember when:  
everything flowed like the chocolate river  
including my thoughts and affections  
i say  
it's easier not knowing anything  
he says  
it's easier  
when you don't have to decide  
whether or not to call the next day  
    how can we feel so different...  
(stella luna could fly all night)  
and still be made of the same mud

only the wine  
brings me back to the poetry  
only the poetry  
brings me back to the desire  
only the desire  
brings me back to the emptiness  
gives me the courage to carry

ON

if i could fly all night  
i would end up in Tuscany  
with candlelight  
and the music  
that rips my soul open  
so that i can no longer hide  
behind  
conformity and expectations  
because still  
all these years later  
i need to run free  
but right now  
this flow is controlled by my creations –  
my ultimate creation –  
i would sacrifice  
it all for:  
for some and not others  
judgement  
(not innocence)  
(not love)  
all these things  
that love cannot be  
i know it,

and don't.  
i crave it,  
and don't.  
and cherish it,  
and don't.

come on – really  
what's a girl to do?

the irony of this union  
or  
misconception  
leading to conception

(i won't let you read this  
because i know  
it would break your heart—  
but the sad truth is that  
mine is already broken…)

Rumi  
Krishnamurti  
masters themselves yet  
there is wine  
and sadness  
always wine  
and his eyes  
are so sad  
because he  
knows  
too much

