

WHERE NATURE AND THE UNIVERSE MEET

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Against the Grain

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Heart Beast

So close to the window in the dark  
Coyotes in the distance

Change those nights with the nights we have now  
Highways you talked yourself down

Rain of your ache  
Stronger than your sadness

Let the past be so light  
It fills with birds

The long lick of source  
The slow journey into roughness

Pushed deep into fields  
Bring handcuffs

## Cold Smoke

Tree sitting quietly On a hill by the water Wants to become a fish  
Lifting itself out of the water The fish now a bird Looking for a tree to rest in  
Your guitar was made from a tree Born from a seed Created from a song  
Buried inside another tree How far you walked Through trees and listening to  
Their origin stories One from a mountain One from a countryside  
One from a temple One from a castle burned down  
I walk this long road at night Trees black and pointing upward  
I button my denim jacket To stay warm The air cold smoke blessing me  
This quiet tree without a name Birthed itself The sun gave it breath  
Still breathes on it If I met you on this road tonight It would be no accident  
The trees inside our souls Ripening fast

## My Bleeding Vagina

Meant to be seen flower in dark leaves  
In a room under a sky with stars after midnight  
An image made bright from the flash  
Precious unearthed strength  
Inhale and taste my energy singing wet  
Reflection of the feminine we can look at again and again  
Blood an extra kiss my flesh says  
*I never left* clitoris thicker than a rose petal  
Slick hair tangled with blood  
That breathed around my soul and  
Exhaled between my legs  
How I bleed honestly for you so late at night  
The folds of my glowing mind loosening so I can feel  
Your body say *love me the way I love you*

## Journey

1.

Rushing water and green life spreading across rocks  
Cliff lush with yellow grass and rough flowers

*My womb is now the ocean*

If you look at my clitoris in the shower  
I'll put my hand over your eyes and say *green field*

A thick crack breaking the sky open  
Flooding spiritual magic

Flowers heaped on the statue of a god  
We don't want to break a single petal

*If I love you enough you will return*  
*If I love myself enough you will return better*

Kissing in the field softening with warm rain

Our hearts fill with lush green medicine  
Scars broken free through love

Take seashells back to the water  
Wash them clean again

2.

I sit in the middle of a field in a nowhere town and wait for you to return  
Hummingbirds fly out of a love note yellow and uninhibited

White blossoms spill into my lap  
Some of them float in the air around my head  
Hummingbirds dart through them

This will get me through the days I have to spend without you  
If I wait long enough the wind will bring me your voice

I toss seeds across the field sit and continue to wait

You sit in a room and let the moonlight in but don't look at it  
Because of all the nights we rolled around in it  
Filth within us making a darker filth

The seeds become tall flowers we can disappear into

At night the moonlight bathes the whole field  
Come stand at the edge of it and look at what I made for you

A field of mouths and tongues  
Never wanting to separate

3.

I was on a hillside filled with heather when you appeared  
Bees floating in the sky their wings humming tender

You want to be led again a new journey springs through you  
Like a young sun eager to burn rest under these trees with me  
Your consciousness rubbing up against my consciousness

Afterward we'll walk to the waves wild against the rocks  
Disappear inside a small white beach house with pink trim  
Undress and smell the scent of salt and grass on each other's skin

I find quick moments to write these lines move my pen until  
You pull my hair and say *forget the words for now*

4.

After you left your anger  
Fired a gun into rituals saints gods

Walk down this jagged green hill  
Grip the seeds you collected

My fingers feel the tears  
That fell on your skin

Reemerge a flame of heat and delight

The pear blossoms are  
About to open

## Neon Flamingo

Get to the waves rolling clean and dirty  
Empathy becomes a blue field  
A sun bleeding love  
The word *quasar* written on a wall  
Stand under a sign in Brooklyn that says *No Standing*  
Kiss wildflowers into existence  
Go back to the beach  
A man walks by with a parrot on each shoulder  
A sting ray swims too close to the shore  
Let all that starlight and ocean in  
Little fish swim through a clear lagoon  
Refill your invisible glass a coconut busted open  
As a woman sits on a giant rock and  
Gazes at her cellphone

Mirror

The bullets sank into the ground  
The field grew over them

Long before we met  
Your name was a shadow

I left each gun behind  
A scene you can't describe but can only feel

Flowers open everywhere  
Gods in the clouds

All summer all fall all winter all spring  
Your mouth talked so quiet

Dig into the earth with your free hand  
Drop the seed in the hole

Stand in that morning light naked  
Your body a cosmic dream

It takes a few days  
Your memories undress my memories

Wreckage of overgrown brush  
Rip it from the earth

Wasteland of trees and other houses  
Burn it down and let the sky have the smoke

Your mouth talked me into a better room  
Dark bloom about to be tasted

My body an arsenal  
Language of thrust and need

Wake up to light pouring across the bare floor  
Through the naked window

I could bring you to this emptiness  
Language of holding and taking in

Pull me into your licking  
Yellow petals loosen

We could live in this emptiness  
Your mouth pulled my guns loose

I pull up out of my body  
An old seed that can still grow

Save this knowledge for later  
Hard ache you set loose

Lick without pride or principle  
Sunlight fades into moonlight

Hand that gently touches your arm  
Circle of peaches around the tree

Gentle with each other in this emptiness  
Erase it with your nakedness

## Rebels

The revival that thunders  
After being with you  
I don't produce into it slowly  
It charms me instead  
I've been somewhere vigorous  
Origins we cassette for each other  
Eventually we will testify it  
And mercy it

The earth is where we torch  
Where we scenario  
As many times as we need to scenario  
Where you start to flash loose  
I know you best there  
Walk right up to me and ask for  
What we both mirror  
Your body is the mountain

Unlearn age  
And the patterns that blast from it  
The ache of my complication  
Can be true again and again  
I wake up filming it  
There is no better photograph  
Than the one that nails  
The exhibition you breathe through

A field now a forest  
Stars that don't exist yet  
Flowers developing  
More flowers

## Second Nature

Our fingers move through Waves of misery loosening Covered in rain dried by the sun  
Years push away from you like The sound of everything You write the word *lovable*  
The hum in my throat Makes its presence known Flowers more gold than yellow  
The cars were clean A room surrounded by fields That kept me inside  
Our minds pressed together We write the next song Like seeds dropped in my hand  
The sound of nothing Field of green grass We know can sing again  
The mark we made on each wall Your eyes are different now  
Our mouths pressed to every window Green and all the grass that it is Remembering how big  
The flowers used to grow here Beautiful junk instruments Until it makes us smile  
The sidewalk was clean Yellow flowers above our heads Shut the door to block out  
Train in the distance How deep the dirt gets Drums and guitar In a room all afternoon  
How to break down into harmony Slow and true

## Dark Moon

Small bright long trail  
This is why I'm here now  
I think it's easier  
To let the moon do its  
Dark slow rhythmic work

I taste again and again  
What my appetite calls for  
Sink deeper into  
This hole in the wall  
And roll in the dirt of it

Low heavy wild  
To slowly come apart  
Just enough to see  
Woman bones woman heart  
Woman soul woman love

Higher

Wind can be fierce

Fruit heavy in the branches

Ocean prairie field

Secret worlds

Love is not your friend

But your savior

Magnificence for hours

Do not return to the field

Where you struggled

In the grass that hid you

Sometimes the world feels

So far from your room

And you want it that way

Pale pink beads reassure you

The heart can go back

To being kind It rained so well

Thunder left its voice behind

To soothe you Grass brighter

Than you've ever seen

Since you first came here

Against your will

You will be led out of it

Against your will—

*Sunflowers lilies bees butterflies*

*Lizards dragonflies birds roses—*

Always strong enough

Where Nature and the Universe Meet

1

I thought I saw you on a red motorcycle at night  
Your eyes blue stars burning too lonely

Gold I didn't believe was gold  
Echoes of old songs still thundering

Dirt blows across the road  
A horse moves slowly in the grass

Clean this pearl with your tenderness

2

Embrace an aching death dance  
Dove with the sound of fortune in her wings

Put the flame to the fuse  
As the woman I should've been whispers  
*I will walk through a poppy field*

3

I felt my star awaken

I wait for sunlight to come back  
Skeletons of fallen trees

My gut wants to release pleasure

Journal with the first few pages ripped out  
White birds fly from a temple

4

Pull in the magic of the strange

Neon beads and a cactus garden  
Streets full of bars we never have to drink in  
Abandoned truck rusting

A dozen paths become one

5

I will walk through a neighborhood full of rain and bonsai trees  
Lilac rose wild honeysuckle at the end of spring  
So many ghosts instead of gods

Find me by flying over deserts and mountains  
Statues drenched in deities  
Silent room made electric

6

Coolness of purple flowers  
Whether it comes from the sun or the moon

Love is the streaming galaxy  
When the room is dark

Balcony covered in green vines  
Focus on the journey as it feels now

The quiet of your bed not so quiet  
The walls feel really gone

7

I will find a horse in a meadow  
The finger that drew a pentagram on your car window

A gong bangs in the distance  
I will pull a loaf of bread out of the van

Flowers growing behind all that wood  
Put the stones down warm from your hands

Quick blooms of goddesses powerful and ethereal  
Black butterfly drinking purple flowers

8

Never bury the invisible groove  
Necessary messy eager  
Find a cat there  
Filth in the garden of our souls  
Spill out into the light of the world  
A gift among the garbage

9

Poet with a cock wanting to harden again  
There's a blank space in this poem

Birds fly in groups above my head  
Hold back the storm

Always let the light in  
When I'm alone and want to be with you

All the poems turn into birds flying free

I thought all the flowers were dead  
But some of them are already coming back

10

In bed naked enjoying the night alone  
I accept the rough  
The sound of bottles in a trash bag  
Being carried downstairs to the dumpster  
Frayed ribbons in the wind  
The color of water not quite green  
But not quite blue

11

I drive the empty roads  
Over railroad tracks into darkness

All night the heat amplifies  
The prolonged magic of our love  
Keep it like a stone with a phallic body

Grow big dark flowers  
Where anything can grow  
Golden parts of the dream

## Texas

I feel good letting you drive us  
Miles away from anyone  
Lick hurt into pleasure  
Vibrant wild magical sexual  
Words fall out of me  
A cyclone of butterflies  
Let the smoke curl upward  
Heavy grit rubbing me smooth

I was hungry when you found me  
Sunflower lily hibiscus  
We walked together all night  
Heard women rushing by  
Their bodies were the wind  
A blues song with a groove  
A hillside of red flowers  
Part affection part ache

Don't lower me gently  
Lift the hair from my neck  
Roll over loosening  
Put the empty glass down  
Hard rock that it is  
I walked to the edge of the water  
The moon was bright pink  
Your gut fills with song

Lion headed toward me  
Smoke leaves your mouth  
The field brightens green  
Dimensions you lick from me  
I kept a handful of stones  
I gathered flowers  
Get lower than the ground  
I want to hear you sing

Beginning with feedback  
Beautiful slamming sound  
Burns under moonlight  
I walked for a long time  
A wolf gazed at me in my dreams  
A lover slowly emerging  
I burned herbs for you  
You fed me until I was satisfied

Jagged holiness  
Hitting the ground  
Ending with feedback  
Herbs I would burn  
Let it be part of me  
Praise song full blast  
Who would take it from you  
A world we already built

Andrea Syzdek received her MFA from the University of Houston and writes independently for her website *Against the Grain* ([andreasyzdek.com](http://andreasyzdek.com)) which focuses on book reviews and essays. She currently lives in Hockley, Texas.