

27 (EXTENDED VERSION)



CARTER FORD

To mistresses apparelled in lovers' robes to conceal their wands.

"When it comes to love

A lesson learned isn't learned enough."

- MS MR

I was asked
to describe pain.
With undying love's last breath,
my doddering heart muttered
your name.

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DISCORDANT

i am made
of chalk and you are
a whiteboard

Senryu

WHERE WE STAND

Am I the only one in this?

No.

Why does it feel like it?

I am the only one who wants us.

I am trying. I don't see the trial.

You care too much.

What does that mean? "I care too much."

You are complacent and unmoving;
reciprocation is a beggar overlooked.

I have to make up for that. I care for you too.

I care for both of us. "Too much?"

I make plans for us, all you have to do is show up.

Lethargy is the block upon which you stumble
into abstractions that erase existence.

I get it; your attention is divided, but I'm still here.

What about us?

Communicate. Say anything.

Our end is a paintbrush with which you fiddle;
your artistry is reminiscent of withdrawal.

Let me know where I stand –

where we stand.

HOW COULD I BE MAD ANYMORE?

I remind you of the things
you did that hurt me; you swear
it had to be another person.
I am benumbed to your innocence.

Talking to you depletes my essence.
You often find new places to pierce me
and sample your scent on my flesh.
How on earth do you forget?

No transgression can be forgiven
if one does not atone for sins committed.
You may not desire clemency, however
decency dictates you recollect – everything.

DIABLA

you are the
evidence of hell
diabla

Senryu

DISSIPATE

You gave me vanishing ink
when you told me to inscribe
my sobriquet upon your heart.

If not, you would remember
me whenever your heart calls
out my name and you clutch it.

CORYZA

I was hysteric when fate
entwined our paths again.

The hysteria blossomed
into euphoria before long.

The mixed emotions clouded
all judgement on my path.

You gave shelter to your lies;
I frolicked in cold waters of denial.

You observed me catch feelings
as though they were a common cold.

You were my bane and medicine.
Only that time, you did not heal me.

Nature and time cured me, as they do.
They substituted your kiss.

WITH ME

We made scrambled eggs and sat
in front of the TV. The kitchen was less
laborious than strolling through my media.
Conversations sustained the meal's warmth.

We binged The Righteous Gemstones
until sleep wrapped us in a blanket of dreams.
You said that night epitomised all you
ever wanted: to eat with me, be with me, talk

about your day with me and sleep with me.
It is unsettling how that night loiters on the
street of my memories. You said a lot to me.
And like a religious convert, I believed.

FORTHRIGHT

You were all I had –
it was known to you.
I attempted to conceal

this fact, knowing how
such power at your disposal
would render you incorrigible.

You would feel relief if I claimed
my presentiment was inaccurate.
Everything within me would be rotten

with falsehood, but nothing endures.
The least I can do is remain
forthright with myself.

INTERMISSION I

"My eyes see me for what I am not

My tears make me feel nothing at all."

- Mortal Love

LONG LOST

We changed so much
in each other that we fell out of love
with whom we had become.

It was too late to revert to who
we were since we unremembered
the person with whom we fell in love.

GAOL

The one with whom I am in love
has caged me. I am ridiculed
by everyone because nothing
seemingly stands in the way

of my liberty. They do not see
the barrier; it was not designed
for those blissfully unaware
of stars disrobing at high noon.

Agony bathes in pools of impassive
enigmas, acidic waterfalls mask
the sound of tears. How could one
be trapped in one's own heart?

SHATTER

I get scared, not of losing
you. Somehow, I am already
prepared for your parting.

It is why I can never love you
truly. I'd have to let go of everything
and tether myself to your embrace.

I have loved and my heart breaks
every single time it is touched.
You hear it shatter; it crushes you.

DISREMEMBER

There is one, around whom everything
I forget. I forget lovelorn nights,
when deserts had more water
than my tear ducts and I cried dust.

I forget the times I was impaled
by despair, my heart was void of ardour,
and I died. I forget how I was resurrected.

I forget the journey to wholesomeness;
I get drawn back and lose my way, again.

She smiles at me, hugs me, and I forget it all.

SCREECH

I am alone for the first time
in eons. Silence sings my thoughts;
her voice soothes me no longer.

My being is overcome with
the stridulation of our time together,
yet my soul longs for your passion.

Solitude is but a stranger to me,
for my heart and home are filled
with lingering memories of you.

I CANNOT BE YOUR FRIEND

I cannot be your friend

– not while I feel this way.

The way I feel, I doubt

we could ever just be friends.

I promise I am not spiting you.

I don't enjoy being distant from you.

It just hurts less when we don't talk;

when I don't see you frequently, either

in person, or your pictures – anywhere.

I may have succeeded in blocking all

external reminders of you, but I am

still unable to delete you from my heart.

It is the longest, most painful and hardest

thing I've attempted. Forgetting you.

INTERMISSION II

"Hard truths bite my heels
These roots have no home
The only way I know you love me
Is when you leave me alone
Please just leave me alone."

- MS MR

ONE DAY

I fear one day, you will leave me
when I least expect it.

I fear one day, these sweet words
you savour will turn sour or acrid.

I fear one day, you will forget –
while I pretend to do the same.

I LOSE ME

You want me, I reject me.

You want me, I reject you.

You want me, I want you.

You want me, I want me.

You have me, I have you.

You love me, I love you.

You hurt me, I bleed us.

You hate me, I hurt you.

You break me, I hate me.

You neglect me, I lose you.

You leave me, I lose me.

HELPLESS

I keep dreaming, about you
– about us, about what should be.

I wake up with a feeling and a smile
which reality wipes off instantaneously.

A seemingly endless torture I endure
because I cannot dictate what and how

your heart feels and woefully
– I cannot do the same for mine.

OVER

Each time we met, you asked
if your key could still unlock my heart;
you saw your picture on my mantelpiece.
I was always right to leave it open.

Your heart was an empty frame,
I hoped and prayed you would let me in.
I knew I would never fit, but my fireplace
still burned with memories of you.

On winter nights, I sat by it and wrote
fairytales that heightened your doubts.
I knew it was over, when my fingers froze
and your sheets rekindled the flames.

DECEPTION

I loved you so much that
I did not see an end to us –

envisioning our eternity
amongst stars at night.

You delivered these visions
upon arrival, divine messages.

You were a fantasy realised;
an antidote for my scepticism.

When your presence was not felt,
I dreamed of your expressions.

I was motivated to be better
for us; for me, day after day.

Neatly embedded in our stories
are tangled lessons in discernment.

The moonlight that once graced you
unravelling the ink of your inception.

ABANDONED

I always knew
I would not be the first
one to move on.

I, however, thought
I would be the first one
to let go of the hurt.

It is evident to me
now that I am behind
on both counts.

SOBER

I miss your drunken conversations.
I miss how you called on Sunday evenings
after taking two bottles of that liquor.
Two bottles, you were such a lightweight.

I anticipated your calls, cleared my evenings
and awaited your dedicated ringtone.
Like clockwork; I smiled at the light on my screen.
You called me the epithet you gave me.

Your excitement was contagious when I spoke;
I gradually resisted the joy in your voice.
You frequently told me how much you missed me.
I said it back to avoid any awkwardness.

Maybe I did miss you a bit, I can't say –
it was a scripted ritual I had memorised.
We talked about you, about him, but never us.
You would say you missed me again.

It was only when you were inebriated that
you recalled there was someone with whom
you felt safe enough to be vulnerable.
I wished you felt that way sober.

INTERMISSION III

Forgetting you –
my greatest triumph.

Loving you –
my greatest trip.

BROKEN

Sometimes, I doubt
anyone could make me
as happy as you made me.

Nonetheless, what I never
question is if anyone could
break me like you ruptured me.

It is not only my resolve that
will ensure it. No one can ever
break what was never fixed.

ONE MINUTE

I miss you sometimes,
the duration is hardly over a minute.

But that minute bears the weight
of the entire time we spent together.

I sit and cogitate whether we would
still be together if I had been better.

I wonder if things could have worked
out if only we tried a bit harder.

I also speculate if it were something else
that would have ultimately split us.

I miss how you were the one
who understood me the most.

You gave me space when I required it,
clung to me when I needed affection.

You did not completely understand me;
believed you had me all figured out.

It was amusing watching you think you knew me
so well. It occasionally frustrated me.

Confrontations bound my lips; I could not express
how I felt when you misconstrued me.

In spite of it all, you were a saint.
You deserved better than I could offer.

I hear the whistle of the blackest bird.
And just like that, the minute is ended.

REMEDY

time away from you
is the remedy I need
to be whole again

Senryu

FOUR SEASONS

I still can't listen to Shuba
without thinking about you.

I spent more than summer
with you; all year round,

I feel everything I vowed to
never experience anymore.

Perhaps the beauty of three
seasons would not have been

lost on me if I only got singed
by the allure of your flames.

INSENSATE

The songs I wrote you
remain as I am without you –
lifeless.

My finest efforts fail to awaken
them from their insensate state.
They are repulsed by melody.

Their essence persistently
await resuscitation; lost, in the
chasm that separate you and I.

I should lay them to rest because
without you, they remain passionless.
My heart would be their burial ground.

TO THE ONE I LET GO

I told my mother about you last night.
Right before that, I was hauled to the temple
of a star gazer, whose métier is cooking
and dishing out warnings and auguries.

This time, a different spice was appended;
its flavour was one that aroused my memories.
For the first time ever, through constellations,
our secrets were brought to light by stars.

It was revealed our paths will cross once more.
I am unconfident if you still dream the dreams
we once dreamt, or if you also perceive this
premonition when you look at the night sky.

I have not dreamt nor seen the stars since
I shut you out of the sombre doors of my heart.
My anguish lies rooted deep in the earth –
its withered fruits will be dinner if we meet again.

INTERMISSION IV

"When I'm with you, I'm not alone
I still believe I might not be enough."

- London Grammar

SOLITARY

I am empty when you leave, not alone.

I share a part of me, a portion that
can never make me whole again.

On the road that leads home, I see
my discarded bits. Deficient, I wander
until I experience the warmth of safety.

Emptiness and solitude are different
states; I am an inhabitant of the latter.
I find the strength to never leave me.

LOSING YOU

I unlearnt everything
the day I met you.
I confess, I truthfully
misplaced myself.

Lines fell unto me
in very pleasant places.
To find one's soulmate –
an occurrence so rare,

it can rivalled by the gift
of a bountiful sea of stars,
or the lustre of your eyes
when love beams through.

I still linger in disbelief
about encountering you.
Tell me, how the fuck am I
to get over losing you?

RESIDUAL MOON I

When I think of home, the image
of the tall brick fence comes to mind.
I place you within and outside it.

We exit Thea as she cools off, proceed
into the compound. It was much smaller
than my previous flat. I was distressed.

My former place had a front yard, where
I watched stars communicate. They gossiped
about me; you giggled when you joined us.

You are a thousand miles from me and it appears
the stars here are tender-hearted. They entertain
me with their luminous dance and fade into my heart

where I return the kindness they show me.
They interlace with the memories you left me –
as always, their light perishes in remembrance of you.

OLIBANUM

you rain down on me
and i bloom in misery
your morning incense

Senryu

WALTZ

Our shadows came alive
in the light of neglect –
they waltzed without a care.

I was riveted by them, while
you looked away in abhorrence –
fragments of me dissolved
in echoes of awareness.

My shadow was everything
you desired, but I was not.
You were all I ever wanted.

ROLLERCOASTER

My subconscious is
her animated theme park.
Her favourite ride is the
rollercoaster of emotions.

At the zenith of the ride,
she suspends and admires
her creation, then plunges
me into merciless melancholy.

I survive the depression –
still, she grants me no recess.
She pervades my fantasies
when my mind derails from her.

LOCKED

I had a vision.

In it, I vowed I could
be yours in a heartbeat.

I offered life. In response,
you locked lips with the reaper –
inhaled the charm of his grace,
and tried to take my breath away.

It was a haunting reverie;
a nightmare draped in nostalgia.
One from which I doubt I shall awake.

ABSURD

I have not loved twice –
yet, my heart is not whole.

My mind is fragmented
into harrowing, irredeemable,
unforgettable silhouettes.

On the trail of resilience,
my fortitude wanes.
How, you ask?

I acquired the most poignant
knowledge, only to disregard it
in the moments of need.

LITTLE ONE

My eyes betray me –
they are the window to my soul.
You see my insecurity as clear
as the skies on the eve of creation.

You see the little one clad in the armour
of hope, a sentiment I scarcely express.
It remains unpolished, you touch the dents
and feel every single hurt I hide from you.

I know when you speak to me that
you won't be the silversmith he awaits.
I shield him from you; my eyes reveal
truth and you embrace me in silence.

You feel the spot on the armour you intend
to leave the most munificent impact yet;
I brace myself for the impending wreckage.
The little one sobs at the thought of your exodus.

RESIDUAL MOON II

I fall asleep to rain sounds.
Right prior to delving into dreams,
I reach out and draw you near to me.

You kiss me and my heart ignites emotions
from the first kiss you laid upon on my lips when
the moon shone through the veil of your eyes.

I drown further, haunted by the words that
moulded the monster that terrifies, relentlessly
pursues, paralyses and disintegrates me.

Its thunderous echoes soften to murmurs
as I violently awaken with my heart thumping
to the beats of my torment and reticence.

OF DESPAIR

When my heart was torn apart,
I retreated to the mountain of despair –
the fortress of solitude carved for me.

Despite her duplicitousness,
I was certain time would nurse me
and soothe my maimed soul.

I am still not completely mended.
My heart quakes seldomly, whenever
she strays into the quiet of my thoughts.

BEGUILE ME

Sketch your truth
on my heart – dye it
with your colours.

Embellish my heart –
let it spurt your colours
whenever you beguile me.

IN MOURNING

I mourn my lovers when
they tell me their names.
In their beautiful variations,

I am unfortunately expeditious
at decrypting what they personify –
forlorn in its finest form.

My candour constantly gets
the better of me. I tell them how
they will inflict upon me a form

of misery I am yet to experience.
In chambers of desolation, I grieve
them, to echoes of my name.

"It fades away when you're away
But I'm anaemic when I'm happy
I lose my way everyday
My memories of you are empty."

- Mortal Love

To knowing happiness without going through you.

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