

Elementary Friendship

I knew I spilt too much of myself
When I admitted that I missed you
And said I wanted to see you.
I didn't cover enough
When I smiled after I saw you
And said your name.
You didn't notice, even if I did,
Because I didn't let you.
I don't want to show you the soft parts of me.
That's why I pretend they aren't soft at all.

Did you change or did I?
People aren't mirrors.
They don't reflect each other
Like you and I used to.

I shouldn't have tried so hard, afterwards.
I was excited to find you again,
And the nostalgia washed away my hesitation.

I didn't want to lose that happy memory,
But that's why I lost it anyway.

It hurt inside,

When I saw we weren't the same
And that you had moved on.
It stained badly, like a bruise,
When I knew we were the same,
And that I hadn't moved on.
You didn't notice,
But I don't know why.
Maybe you weren't looking,
Or you didn't remember how to look.
You forgot me, though—
I know that much.

I thought about you every day,
But this wasn't the you I thought of.
I still think about talking to you
Even if it isn't you anymore.

I knew we wouldn't be friends forever,
But I didn't realize that "not forever"
Meant it would end at all.

The Trickle Down Effect

Sometimes I convince myself
I prefer being alone.

Everyone knows “humans are social animals”,
But I have the hubris to think I know better.

I romanticize it,
Thinking that there’s something to be said
In being alone but wanted.
In being separate but longed for.

I uproot connections like dandelions and daisies.
I don’t want to be seen.
I don’t want to be known.
I don’t want anyone recognizing me,
And knowing what I’ve touched
—No matter if I’ve left good or bad seeds to grow behind me.

But then I meet someone who knows my name.
And I unfurl with the joy of being known.
Someone will speak to me first,
When I’m by myself,
And I blossom at the delight of being seen.
Someone will call themselves my friend,
And I remember what it’s like
To have time spent together be treasured.

Sometimes, though, I don't remember.
That's when I feel lonely.
That's when there is no one
Who calls my name
In a crowded room,
Or sees I've been left behind
While tying my shoes,
Or asks to spend time with me.
That's when I try to be enough for myself,
Thinking "loving yourself,
Is the first step to letting others love you".
It isn't always true, but it buys me time.

When roots are overwatered, a plant can drown.
When I am overwhelmed, I drown my doubts.

Sometimes the plant can die:
The roots will rot away for the sake of new life.
Sometimes I convince myself I'm alone, not lonely:
I don't need to be with other people to feel happy.

Usually the plant can be saved:
The roots can reestablish themselves in new soil.
Usually I convince myself I'm lonely, not alone:
I have friends to speak with and things to do.

I try to water my wild doubts like you water a delicate plant:
Just enough to be self-aware. Just enough not to drown.

I've practiced enough that the water trickles past the roots now,
Leaving the soil nice and damp on top.

Maybe one day I'll try to stop,
And it will grow too slow.

Maybe one day I'll do more,
And it will rot too fast.

But I know that doubt is healthy and natural.

Instead, I want it to be easier to bear.

I want the weight of it to be lighter.

I'm looking forward to the day when the watering can isn't heavy.

Then, at least, my arms will be strong enough to carry its burden.

Then, at least, I can bloom in peace.

Alien Remains

Dust flips through the air,
Cascading down upon marble tombs.
Ash dances in the sun,
Flurrying up in a ballroom dance.
Books line shelves,
Marred by unknowable thoughts.

A place of learning: Earth,
Left behind by those before us.
A ruin of teachings: a record,
Left behind by these storytellers.

Here is what it says:

“We have watched for decades,
Listened for centuries,
Stood for millenia,
But it was never enough.
Our sentry never ended.

(We have been waiting for so long, and only now we are found?)

We reached beyond:
Calling to be heard,
Exposed to be seen.

(We have been waiting for so long, and only now you have appeared?)

Here is what we think you will not say:

You are heard.

You are seen.

You should not want either of these things.

(We have been waiting so long, and only now you have answered?)

We tried—

But to try is to discover.

To discover is to know.

To know is to be ruined.

(We have been waiting so long, and only now our vigil ends?)

Here is the greatest hubris of mortals:

Here is the pinnacle of these people:

Here is the end of our era:

We are a civilization of divided thought:

Yet melding in the maw of doom

Could not save us all.

(We have seen the face of death, and only now we are blinded?)

With this answer,

We have no regret.

(We have choked from the hand of vengeance, and only now we are freed?)

To be human, you must call.
And us?
We are human to the very end.”

Thus, the lonely hero
Treads across burned lands
Abandoned, like their people.

The temptation to unseal the breach—
To take in the air of ancestors,
To hear what they heard
To feel what they felt
To call as they did
—Is far too great to bear.

History is a cycle,
So the hubris of a parent,
Falls to the shoulders of their child.

Let the record say
That twice was man given the chance to thrive,
And twice did he end that life by his own hands.

The lesson is this:
No matter what beginning you take,
You will forever reach the same end.