



Valentine's 2018

By Paul Wyatt

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*corporatism sucks, but modifying a corporate logo to abide by
fair use laws and use as a cover for a Valentine's Day chapbook
in an attempt to make a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the
commodification of love is pretty cool, I guess.*

Dedicated to:

Mum, Mcdonald's and the friends who
read my poems and tell me which ones
aren't shitty.

I need to stop writing
About you.

I know you know
That I know
How things are,

But that won't stop me
From staring for so long,
Hoping you're so sloshed
You won't see
(
Even if you did,
I doubt you'd mind).

I know you know
When a poem is about you;
(Your eyes gift a peek
Past your persona.)
And I'll play it off
As if it were about someone
You didn't know.

Maybe you don't know, though.
Maybe you just inspire good poetry.

Someone
(I think a former first lady)
Said something like
Shit art makes you feel nothing
While good art reminds you of
Things you've felt and been.
Great art, though, evokes
Emotions you've never seen.

If that's true,
She
(Not the former first lady
But the woman who inspired this,
Who'll be referred to as She
To preserve her integrity
And this poem's relevance in posterity)
Lives as high art.

Until tonight,
I'd never known the
Joy and amazement
I found
In her willingness to
'Cooch'
Contraband during
Contacts with cops.

Next time we drive
I'll bring my bong,
Blow by a speed trap
And make her put
Her money where
Her Cooch is at.

I'm not sure this form, Tom Wyatt's Sonnet,
Is appropriate to convey the proper tone
Of the sentiments I'm trying to make known -
Not that I could ever know the phonics
To make this more than histrionics -
But I haven't yet been thrown
From this situation I can't bemoan -
One that is refreshingly exotic.
I sometimes think her being here tonight
Is just a step in some diabolical plan -
I know just how easily she can
Have me wrapped around her finger, tight.

They say the way to a man's heart is a meal
or through the chest,
She can cook, I know, but maybe
I should also wear a vest.

She was helping me sort
My shite from aight poems
As she passed one for the aight pile
With a glimmer in her passing glare
And maybe a palm-muted giggle.

It was a poem about her,
About nights like this night.

Nights of sexual tension
And stupid videos
And getting sloshed on vodka
Despite her plan to leave two or three drinks
ago.

Inevitably she will head home
And I'll take that shit
I've been holding ten hours now
And check to see if she ate all the Chinese
take-out.

Cruising in my convertible -
Which was cool
Before worn brakes and leaking exhaust
Cried out
Like a cacophony of cats
Crying in heat -
I'm deafened by acceleration as
The October wind whips
And bites my bald head
And bare hands -
And for barely an instant
I felt perfection.

Radio not working,
I listened to the roar
Of my hoopty -
The wind's bite was sharp,
But not sharp enough to shiver -
I don't remember what I was thinking,
Nothing? Maybe another memory
Of some other seconds of satisfaction.

Maybe it was that night
She was adding Fanta to the Manhattan
I'd made her myself -
Saying, 'it's not bad!
It's just strong!'
As she's
Standing in my kitchen -
Wearing a jean jacket
Made elegant with her mother's
High school embroidery
I tried to tell her
That this was one of those times -
Praying she'd share
One of life's perfect moments -
But I was too drunk
To explain,

And
She was too drunk
To understand.

Bukowski said
 Writing poetry should
 Never be forced,
 But should explode
 From your chest.

Write when you realize
 That keeping your
 Voice within your head
 Leaves you exploding -
 Fearful you'll forget
 And let the most lovely linguistic twist
 Or profound point on whatever

Hedberg said,
 Sometimes you'll have an idea,

Realizing it's good shit
 At the same time realizing

Was your idea really that good?

Your pen
 Is across the room.

Nah,
 Just convince yourself
 That if it matters,
 You'll remember it,
 Before moving on with the day.

Maybe Lester had the right idea.
 Life is beautiful,
 It's overwhelmingly beautiful,
 Sometimes to the point
 Where you fear you might burst,

But in those moments,
 Just relax, and let the beauty

And profundity
 And good shit
 Flow through you.

No one can own
 Those perfect not-too-cool fall breezes,
 You can't capture
 The stars for that perfect person
 Sitting,
 Star-gazing in your arms.

Artists outline the shadow of beauty,
 Poets, alchemists of art,
 Transmute beauty
 Into symbols and similes.

In art and poetry,
 Sometimes,
 We may glimpse
 Something that can't be framed.

Admittedly, I don't know much about art, but
 Poetry is hard,
 It has to explode from you,
 It best be fresh,

Let the poetry explode from your chest,
 Write of the nipping autumn breeze
 And how it reminds you
 Of whatever,
 Write of the stars being brighter
 In the eyes of your perfect lover
 Than any in any cloudless sky.

But don't forget to experience,
 To enjoy,
 to learn, The Beauty of Reality.
 You can write about it later.

Capturing the intangibles
Of her beauty
Is a lot harder
Without whiskey,
But it's too early
To drink
And unlike her
Grace and
Smile and
Eyes,
My poetry
Isn't perfect.

Somewhere between
Caffeinated couplets
And
Liquored-up lines,
I can't get her off
My mind

These bitches
Are faker
Than the drugs

I'm trying
To sell them.

Sushi for dinner,
Cocaine for dessert.

What a way
To start
Oktoberfest

Tonight I learned:
The best way to abuse
Suboxone
Starts with slicing
The strip into
Eight small squares;
Turn the sink
To a light stream
Of slightly warmer than lukewarm
Water;
Place your square in the spoon,
Swirl with a toothpick
Until dissolved;
Tilt your head back as far as it goes
And dump that shit down your nose.

That's not my thing, though.

I just toked,
But I'll admit
I was stoked
To watch the wild
Ways these guys
Get high. I can't really say
Why I liked seeing it.

Tonight I learned:
She sees the tragic beauty
In life and it's absurdity;
She's noticing and cherishing
The twenty-four characters
Between A and Z;

She's writing poetry!

Tonight I learned:
That she was just as stoked
Watching dedicated drug abuse
As I,
Also adamant about
Sticking with her weed high;

And probably wondering why
She liked seeing it.

The light bends weird
In these mountains.

Thinking I see opposing headlights,
Again and again,
I think
I'll drive with mine off for awhile.

Let's see how long I can enjoy
The calm of 3 AM navy blue skies
And rolling black coal hills.

Probably not too long.

These roads can be slippery,
And I'd like to get home alive.

'Listening to Friday I'm in Love,
Realizing yesterday was Friday
And she spends Weekends
With her boyfriend.

Friday, I may not have been in love,
But
I'll spare you the details
Of Wednesday and Thursday!'

He said with a wink.

The tape deck keeps skipping
During this classic love song
As I drive way too fast
Past lights I hope aren't cops.

It's a good birthday so far,
But it's only 3am

Above all else
Ya gotta keep taking steps.
It doesn't matter which way:
Forward,
Left,
Right,
Ideally not backwards;
But a step backwards
Is still a step.
Each step we take
Wards off that devil:
Stagnation.
To stagnate is to die.
Besides -
No one knows
Where their path leads,
But so long as you
Keep taking steps,
You'll end up
somewhere -
Somewhere
Far from stagnation's rot.

Homeward bound,
With nose stuffy from blowing
And craving this week's bath.

My jeans need washed,
And my only bags
Are under my eyes.

I hope I never get too old
For this kind of shit.

The vodka is burning
My chest
And finishing this smoke makes
For fashionable lateness.

I think I'm celebrating,
Who knows anymore.

They can see
On my sweating face
That I drove drunk home,
If I even went home,
Last night.

It'll catch up to me
Someday,
But the only consequence
Today
Is a clammy handshake.

It's 4:15
and I just got her home;

With a .45 ACP in my pocket,
My poetry in her purse
And her friend sick in the back,

I drove as we lit menthols,
Unable to tell the difference
Between breath and smoke.

My face hurting
From hours of smiling
(From hours with her
(From the drugs)),
I spent the drive home
Trying to describe tonight.

'It makes sense'
Is the best I could surmise.

It makes sense,
Somewhat to my surprise,
That I turned out alright.

The Stones said it: no satisfaction.
Things have been swell, yet still it
Don't matter what for, I still want more.
The dark is nice, but the room's ill lit;

I miss sight, but just to be higher
Would make this weeknight better.
I still want more, don't matter what for.
"Join me, drink up! Call me an abettor!"

But none will answer that drunken call,
They have jobs and loves and cares -
Don't matter what for, I still want more
Risks, tomfoolery, foolhardy dares.

It's early now, and I'm still alone.
Benzos, wine have taken hold.
I still want more, don't matter what for,
I'll forget soon, if I am so bold.

Today
We sat down for lunch
(Building a buzz at an Irish bar)
With a window behind her
And me across.
At first I thought of moving
To sit next to her - with the sun
To the back of my head -
But then, while my eyes
Were adjusting from bar lighting
To the sun's abrasion,
I found her - again -
With the light framing
Her face (focused on
Mine fighting to focus on hers)

I should visit
An optometrist.

Mixing tonight's last cocktail
Nude
In the kitchen somewhere
Around 3am on a Friday,

My mind racing,
Me praying,
'Please god,
Don't let my roommate
Wake up and walk out!'

As I crush ice in the blender.

I walk weird when I'm watched.

Leaving a little late,
Walking the unlit walkway
Away from her kitchen,
Heading to my car,

I couldn't keep my stride.
Not stumbling,
Just some (likely unseen)
Insecurity.

Sitting in my car,
I see she was watching,
Wishing I'd stay just
A while later.

The thought of being a crook
Has always had its appeal.
Just imagine how it would feel
To know each trick in the book,
With nothing I'd overlook,
Nothing I wouldn't conceal,
A fate I will not let seal
Until the day I'm overtook -

At which point I'll pay my debt
Knowing I have lived a life
Full of victory and strife,
A life I wouldn't regret.

I realize it's all just a fantasy,
But I just don't want a life that's not crazy.

I told her I knew her;
I had her all figured out.
She told me I was wrong,
And that I thought too much.

And I do,
And she was right,
I don't know her,
But I know her well enough
To keep her on her toes -

As she does I -

I find myself in the midnight hours
Following a day spent mostly with her
Anxious and anticipating the next
Chance for us to meet.

But today was a great day,
And if I were never again to see
The fire in her brown eyes,
I'd be content with the memory.

24 years old plus one day,
I don't know how we let it happen,
But I'm still okay.

I should have had my say
When they mentioned weapons.
I was 24 years plus one day.

I could not let them have their way,
Half-stepped when there's no half-steppin',
But I'm still OK.

They ran, they shot, we did not stay
My fight or flight had set in
On year 24 plus one day.

I'm hearing noises from every way,
Needing to get back on the wagon,
But I'm still pretty okay.

I survived and somehow got away,
But I'm still crawling out of my skin.
At 24 years plus one day,
I need to know I'm ok.

I might not know her,
But I know today we both enjoyed ourselves.
I know we laughed and traded stories,
And I know I want to do it all again -
And I think she does too.

You're not so vain
That you'd know this
Poem is about you,
And - shit - that's a relief.

If and when you read -
Or listen to me read -
This poem,
You won't know -
Though you may suspect -
If this was written for you
Or one of the dozens
Of other dames
I've written to.

All I'll tell you is that
Not only am I a
Cunning linguist -
I also eat pussy.