

Writing While Blindfolded

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2018

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First Printing: Feb. 2018

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Dedicated to:

*Mum, for taking my drug-addled poetic
dreams like a champ; Em, for coming up with
a title for this book 30 minutes before
first printing; and the Reading Delivery
Dudes, for the continued sustenance.*

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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
Melt from memory.

Hedberg said,
Sometimes you'll have an idea,
Realizing it's good shit
At the same time realizing
Your pen
Is across the room.

Was your idea really that good?

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.

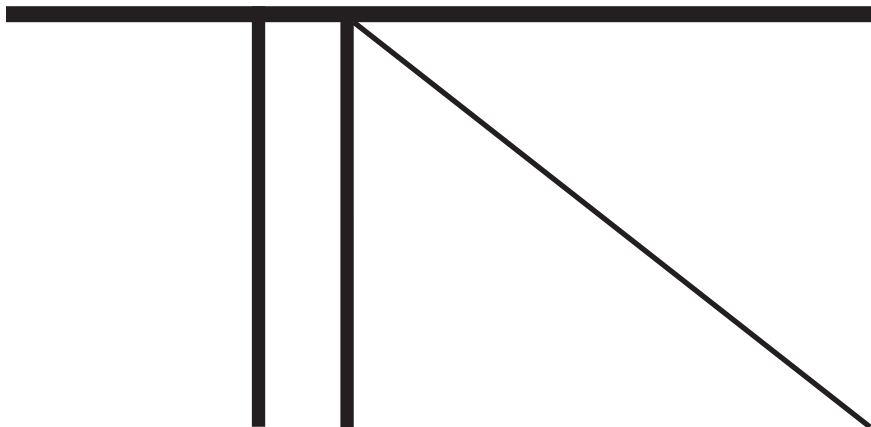
But don't forget to experience,

To enjoy,

to learn,

The Beauty of Reality.

You can write about it later.



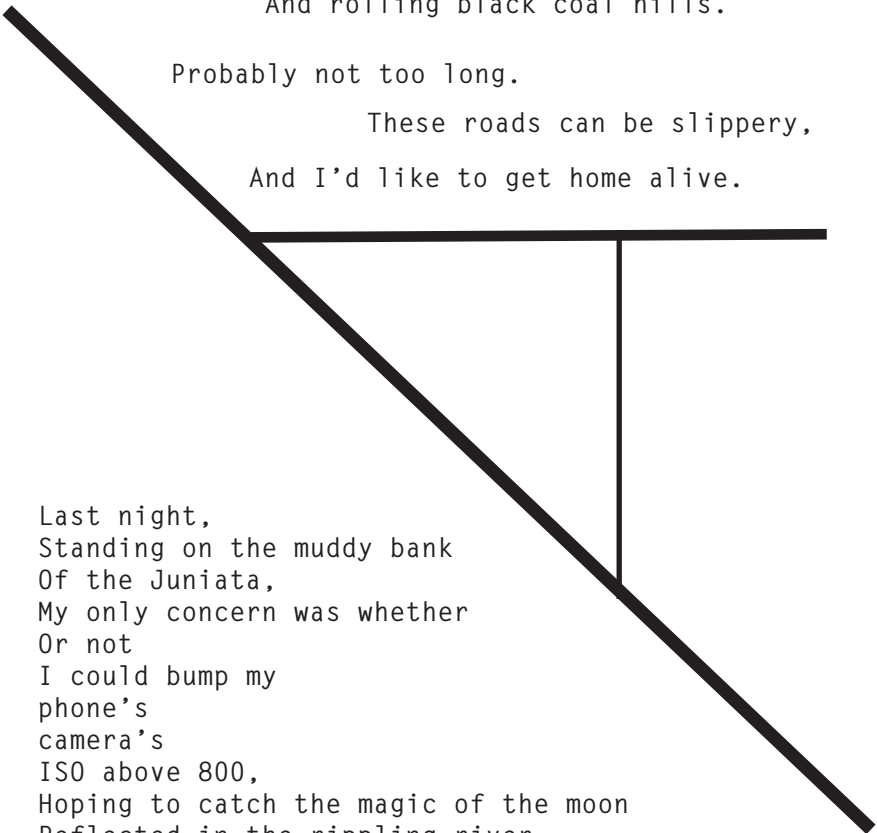
The light bends weird
In these mountains.

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.



Last night,
Standing on the muddy bank
Of the Juniata,
My only concern was whether
Or not
I could bump my
phone's
camera's
ISO above 800,
Hoping to catch the magic of the moon
Reflected in the rippling river.

Today,
I'm worried I ruined my loafers
In the mud.



The call of somatic songs
Drives me from the trance of now.

To note that nourishing
now here.

Feet clasped
To frozen Virginia pine,
The passerine sings his song.
Fresh snow sets him
As a crimson beacon,
Joyful and defiant,
against the cold.

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.

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.

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.

She (who I should specify I am not particularly fond of)

Enters the room with a bound,
 Skips off to the bedroom -
 With my roommate in tow -
 Emerging 45 minutes later
 With a thirst for post-coital
 Smalltalk.

Now this is a woman
 Of a variety
 Of which you have
 Likely met the likes -

She talks without direction,
 Telling you about her day at work
 (Though you have no idea where
 that may be)

Among volumes of all varieties of anecdotes
 You never needed to hear. You know the sort.

Anyway
 Listening to her stories
 I'll interject occasionally - I started with quips,
 But she'd ignore my jokes,
 Occasionally granting a chuckle
 And going back to telling me
 About her sister's uncle's wedding's Maid-of-Honor's
 drab dress.

So I got more bold -
Making increasingly vulgar jokes?
She chuckles and carries on -
Telling stories that relate to hers?
She waits for a pause to change the subject
Admitting childhood traumas and past-misdeeds?
She'll look me in the eyes without
breaking the cadence of HER story.

Eventually, I realize I am unheard.
My world does not exist to her

(or if it does,
she had no
care for
its
existence).

I find an alien relief
Realizing this isn't a conversation,
I am screaming into the void!

But
She did loan me this cigarette,
And she appreciates that I'm
'such a good listener,'

So I'll listen a bit longer,
But only
If she'll spot me another.



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

I think I'm celebrating,
 Who knows anymore.

These bitches
 Are faker
 Than the drugs

I'm trying
 To sell them.

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.

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.

Sushi for dinner,
 Cocaine for dessert.

What a way
 To start
 Oktoberfest

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.

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.

