

Writing While Blindfolded

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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.

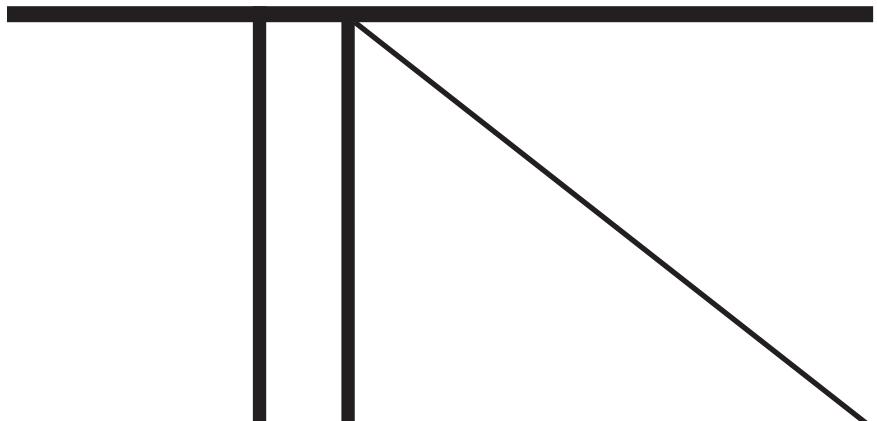
In art and poetry,
Sometimes,
We may glimpse
Something that can't be framed.

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.



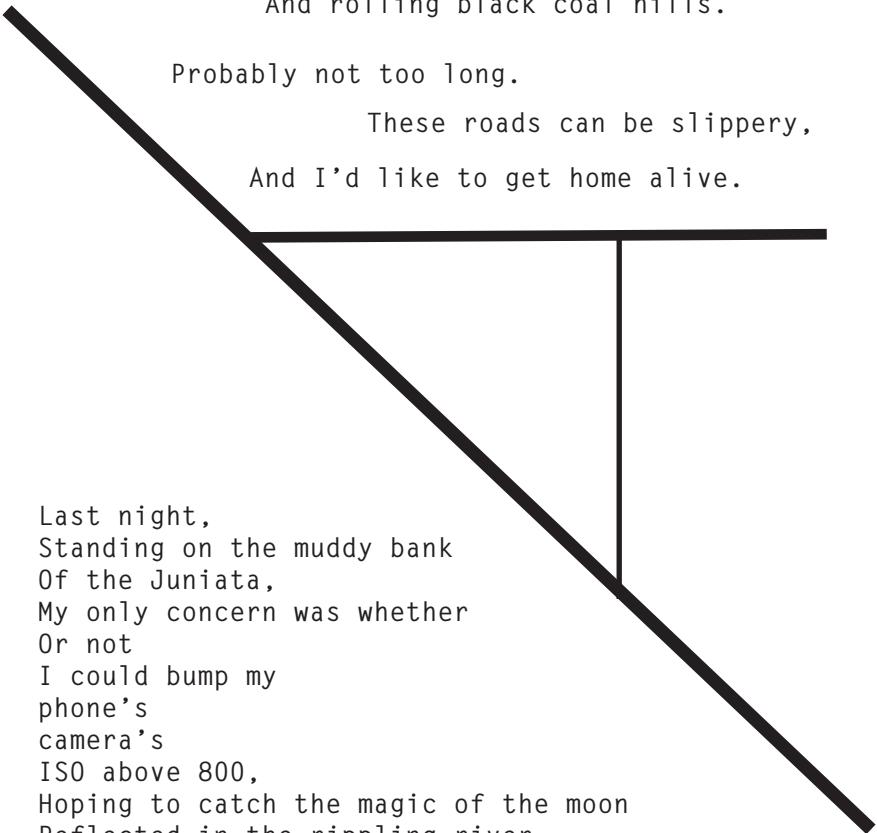
The light bends weird
In these mountains.

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
Meant figuring out the here.

Feet clasped
To frozen Virginia sings his song.
The passerine sings him
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

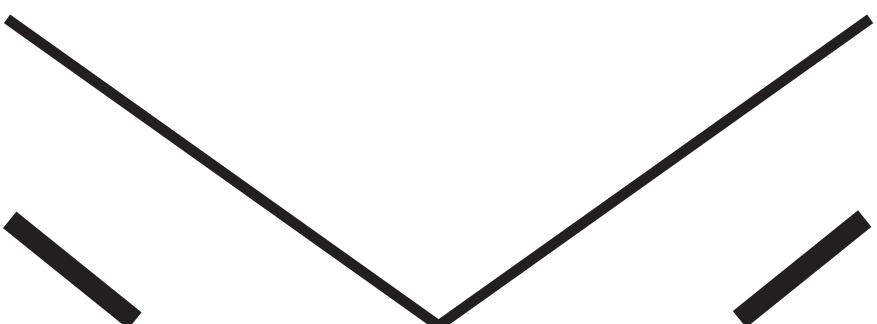
She did loan me this cigarette,

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.

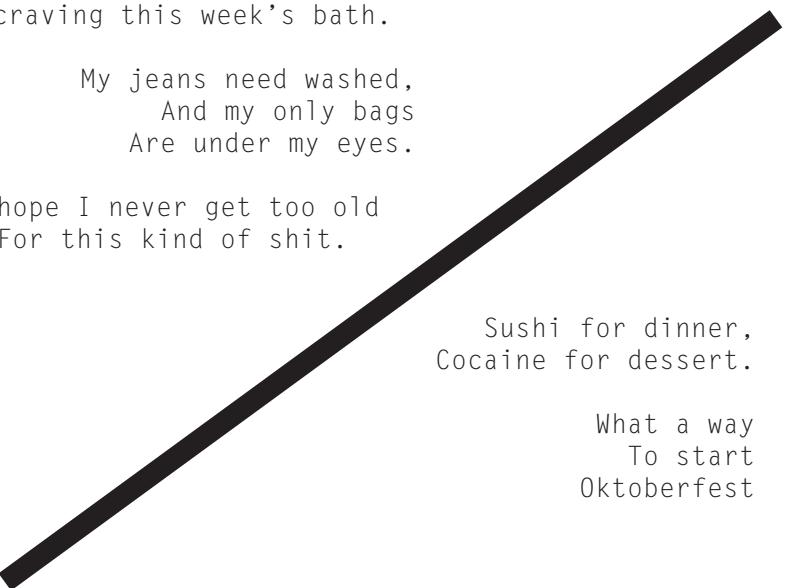
Homeward bound,
With nose stuffy from blowing
And craving this week's bath.

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.

