

# POETRY

AT THE

# BACKYARD

September 14, 2022  
Tahoe Poetry Collective



# Table of Contents

Tree Personal Ad Marcy Risque	1	Don't really care Julie Morrow	25
Tahoe City Marcy Risque	2	Children of the Underground Julie Morrow	26
Tonglen, while I walk Marcy Risque	3	When You Love a Poet Sage Taylor Kingsley	27
A Short History of Yesterday Morning Marcy Risque	5	The Heart of My Hand Sage Taylor Kingsley	28
Your Birth (For Ivy) Marcy Risque	7	Flame and Flow Sage Taylor Kingsley	29
Heart of the World Marcy Risque	9	Wildfire Sage Taylor Kingsley	30
(Fake) Car Girl Miranda Jacobson	10	"Women's Rage Is Mighty Magic" Sage Taylor Kingsley	31
SOUPSONG // Eclectic Love Poem // Recipe Aimee Lowenstern	15 - 16	Your Words Are Your Wonder Sage Taylor Kingsley	32
In Situ Scott Green	17	"When Was the Last Time...?" Sage Taylor Kingsley	33
The Cave of Two Hands Scott Green	19	SPIRITUAL RAP #1: "ReJoy Sing Truth" Sage Taylor Kingsley	34
Oben Ohne Jonathon Burton	20	Karma (Blackout Poem) Karli Watson	35
See // Danaus Plexippus Iasmina Rotariu	21 - 22	"I thought your face was a ticking clock, but i was wrong" Karli Watson	39
Marveling lost love // Love and Hate Elise Dixon	23	Overboard Hayli Nicole	41
Words Julie Morrow	24	Dearest Dublin Hayli Nicole	43

# Tree Personal Ad

Marcy Risque

---

I am  
splendiferous & strong-limbed  
a little rough around the edges  
tall, well-proportioned, and mature

I like  
Winter rains; can deal with hot & dry too

I am  
pungent of spicy earth moss sugar

I enjoy  
companionship and plenty of space

I like  
to feel the air caress me  
to touch tiny droplets of moisture on my tips

I aspire  
to great heights and  
therefore need support

Am seeking  
a balanced amalgam:  
moisture-temperature-light

I want  
to put down deep roots and  
a bed that's soft yet firm

I'm looking  
for ideal conditions for stability  
to reproduce  
for my seeds to thrust outward  
into the expanse  
of centuries

# Tahoe City

Marcy Risque

---

An ancient volcano  
Now lake  
Nestled like a jewel  
Fed by mountains  
All around  
This year's drought  
Sucking at its shores.  
Here for tennis camp  
For Aidan  
I sleep  
As one drowning,  
My body needing  
Rest as if it can't  
Get enough oxygen.  
I look for my bearings,  
My mental compass  
Searching—  
Who comes here  
With the latest cars  
and shiny demeanors?  
To me,  
It's a foreign  
Country.  
A resort  
built solely for  
Recreation and this town  
The same—but underneath  
It all the forest stands  
Humming with its  
Own ethereal music.  
Aspens whisper  
Their secrets  
In the meadow  
Breezes, every leaf  
Turning in the sun.

# Tonglen, while I walk

Marcy Risque

---

While walking in the woods  
tiny twigs  
crunch & snap  
underfoot.  
I think of things,  
of beginnings & endings  
How it would be ok, even  
fine,  
to end  
as a tree does,  
its limbs softening down,  
back into the ground...  
Dogs bark me back  
to the present  
I inhale deeply  
pine, cedar, moist decay  
A fertile bouquet  
a prelude to more growth,  
we like to say  
I think of skies  
and other places  
cities, farm or jungle,  
endless prairies whose  
horizons merge with nothing,  
Slow rivers in canyon shadow  
winding tunnels  
under prehistoric towns  
fishing boats, seabirds  
children kicking a ball  
somewhere  
And the ancient ones  
their faces marbled etchings

I imagine voices  
singing faint bells soft  
wind  
of people laughing  
and doors closing against the  
night  
Somewhere a child cries out  
Language spills off tongues  
like wet music  
Across the world  
there is a stampede  
of dust  
and somewhere,  
the sun rises.  
I inhale thoughts of chaos  
hurricanes fires  
sorrow & misunderstanding  
and exhale sadness  
and love  
I breathe in  
Elephants, polar bears  
rising seas  
and breathe out  
warmth from my heart  
which radiates  
outward from a depth  
of stillness  
a potent longing  
for wholeness, for all of us.

# A Short History of Yesterday Morning

Marcy Risque

---

Such stillness on this peaceful morning  
After the tidal waves of wind  
Yesterday—torrents of air  
Pushing the tops of tall trees—  
Energy the crackling kind.  
Then a little later, a spark somewhere  
Smoke wafted through our house  
As I emerged from the night  
Waking and walking through rooms  
Wondering about whose burn pile  
Or maybe ours from two days before  
There was no smoke in the sky  
And I thought no more of it  
Then neighbors called “be ready  
To evacuate soon”  
And my mind reeled  
As I hadn’t prepared  
And was unsure what to do first  
In my robe having breakfast or was  
Subsequent hours spent packing  
Adrenaline my friend  
As I went through motions  
focusing on the exhale  
I put things away and washed dishes  
And felt ridiculous doing so  
The sky was blue and clear  
Wind dancing pushing pulling itself  
Cat carriers on the front steps  
Ready and open like mouths agape  
And to my astonishment  
Each cat waltzed into each one  
We went about our day  
haltingly listening  
For changes or news

In the evening we put some things away  
But part of me hesitated still doubted  
Now—on this warm still morning  
In May—I hear birds, water, insects  
There is peace in this tiny kingdom  
Dogs, cats, and donkey standing  
Like a still life  
Sun behind trees  
As if the possibility  
Of erasure is impossible  
Even as I know full well  
It is not

# Your Birth

(For Ivy)

Marcy Risque

---

In a timeless moment between smile & received smile,  
in the tumbled rocks that roll from river mouths,  
in the clash of swords  
and the war between worlds  
and the love that spawned this poem;  
in predawn twilight you tumbled  
with rocky mountains riding shotgun over granite,  
stones' long shadows cresting & plunging  
to form the earth's mantel  
You came with streams of light,  
filling every opening & electrifying  
atoms into form  
while eons of shape-moving phenomena  
evolved you came, laughing  
your way across clouds  
With two-leggeds & four-leggeds you joined  
The tumult of evolution  
In all its slimy wonder,  
Careening in and out of life  
in all its myriad colors

2

There you were, molding tools in fire  
Tearing meat with your hands  
Jousting with the knights  
Watching with the ladies  
A handkerchief catching the breeze  
Ships traversed wet wilderness  
In search of spices for kings,  
There you were,  
Gliding through desert seas  
Of raging sun, you caravanned  
With camel hordes

And music carried you  
Through the blizzard of centuries,  
The quest for life repeating itself  
Again & again  
In the human pool of prayer & destruction  
You have flown, are flying  
Through centuries of torment &  
Wonder, your body the grass blade,  
The ladybug,  
molten lava of the uncreated, of  
desire reproducing itself

3

It was all there and it is all here,  
You & protozoa & fungi,  
You and vast oceans of consciousness  
Waving & flowing through millennia  
Fields of flowers and humans sighing  
Singing & dying, the very life  
Of sticky life, continually birthing itself  
Rolling into the past and back from the future  
Your own body in its dancing cells of love,  
The conquest of the unnecessary  
The drive for completion &  
The knowing of all creation  
With eyes that see the beginning  
As well as the unending

# Heart of the World

Marcy Risque

---

We see that things are changing  
Yet the moon rises nightly  
Its luminous face silent, witnessing

Kindnesses everywhere  
And light's piercing beauty  
We sometimes don't see

Roads in the far north buckle  
The opal sky trembles  
While heat rises vaporous

Some of us are afraid

Yet here is the moon,  
Mirror to our own stillness  
While the sun-gold hills wait,  
Listening

A sadness fills, then empties  
Opening us to the deep heart  
Of the world

Tenderness is a rising tide  
Available to us always.

# (Fake) Car Girl

Miranda Jacobson

---

## 2015

I got my driver's license six months after all of my friends. The reasoning was a mixture of my mom's fear of her first born driving a car and the lack of money we had to pay for the classes required. So I waited impatiently while the rest of my friends began to drive while I was studying for the permit test.

My first driving instructor was a loudmouth man who held the steering wheel the entire time I drove. His hand rested at six-o'clock, just above the place where my thighs met. My hands shook on the wheel and he told me I was a bad driver and if I weren't so afraid of authority, I would have told him he smelled like last week's asparagus and he was a shitty instructor.

The next time I took a driving lesson, it was with a woman named Robin and she smoked cigarettes every thirty minutes. It's hard for me to remember being sixteen with Robin and learning to drive, but I do remember she came to my driver's test and sat with my mom. They were smoking outside together when I drove up, and when I told them I passed they both tossed their cigarettes to the concrete in celebration.

## 2016

My first car was a Ford 1991 F250. The only functioning mirror was the driver-side view, my feet barely reached the pedals, and the alignment was so off, I could turn the steering wheel fully twice before the car would actually begin to turn. The seats were covered in cigarette smelling stained carpet that felt soft to the touch, even after all those years. My mom bought it for me for \$1500 and I drove it everywhere.

I learned in the truck that I loved to drive just to drive. I'd pre-choose playlists and spend hours driving around, learning the complicated streets of my refinery suburbia that was Benicia. My boyfriend at the time used to laugh at me when I'd pull up to his house in my monstrous truck blasting Taylor Swift and wearing shorts so short I'm surprised I didn't feel more shame wearing them in front of his parents. But that was the other thing about having a car. We didn't have to stay at the house anymore.



We started by driving to get food, driving to the movies, doing things no teenagers, or anyone, for that matter, should be doing in movie theaters, and then fooling around in the car before we went our separate ways for the night. We went to San Francisco on the weekends, went to Berkely for lunch, and went shopping at the mall way too often.

Back then, when we were sixteen, I'd like to think we were really in love. It makes me happier remembering the truck if I remember us in love when I had it (mostly because I can't stop seeing his face scrunch up in a mixture of laughter and love when I pulled up to his house the first day I had it).

## **2016 (con.)**

I've been in two car accidents in my life. The first was the day of my junior prom. My friend and I had just got our makeup done at her house and she drove us to the store to pick up some kind of flower I still can't pronounce to this day, and someone T-boned my side of the car. It was low impact and we were totally fine, but that was the day I realized the world is full of people who really have no idea what they're doing, especially behind the wheel of a two-ton piece of metal that could bend faster than I could. The fear kept me from letting anyone else drive me around for quite a while.

The second car accident I was in was two weeks before my eighteenth birthday. A guy I was talking to rear-ended me on the way to school and totaled my new car. (His insurance company said they fixed the problem but the car still doesn't drive so you tell me.) At the time I was driving my second car, a 1992 Dodge Stealth. It was a deep blue with a faded paint job specked with rust and dents from my inability to pay attention when I opened a car door. That accident taught me I could be the best driver in the world and still just be at the wrong place at the wrong time. It also taught me it's impossible to attempt to date a boy who totaled your car.

My first boyfriend used to text and drive a lot, which I honestly could have been okay with if he was any good at it. But the problem was he would look down or not have a pre-chose playlist and decide to listen to Frank Ocean and then he wanted to hear Post Malone, and in all the time he was looking for the song, he was also swerving to avoid the things he was about to hit.

We went to his frat formal and took his friend from high school and his date. The entire time I clutched the side of the door while we drove up I-50 and he told me I needed to relax before finally falling tired of me. No one else was worried we were going to fly off the side of the road as we got further into South Lake, higher up the mountain, driving as fast as I would normally go if I was driving. But I wasn't.

## **2019**

I don't like loud noises.

Let me rephrase. I don't like unexpected loud noises. The feeling is similar to what I would think a hammer against my skull feels like mixed with the feeling I got when Loud-Mouth put his hands above my thighs on the steering wheel.

So least to say, I really hate car alarms. When I turned twenty I was living in the dorms of my college campus still and on the weekends, car alarms would go off and the only thing I could do was stare up at my ceiling, praying to a God I highly doubted that someone would walk outside and make the sound stop. But hours would pass and I would question my sanity and then finally it would be silent as if there was no noise at all. The air was clean of the impurities that came from the man-made metal and then we could all sleep again.

In between these times I had faced hardships, like almost losing my mom, being rejected on every level possible, and going on a date with depression. But the mornings were always the same; a car alarm and my acceptance that the next day would always come.

Now I see car alarms when I walk down the street and they are silent. Bright, penetrating light against the cold air night that leaves my eyes chasing after yellow dots in its wake. I don't hear the noise and I don't know if it's because I've blocked out the blaring or if it's really not there at all. Now I'm stuck seeing the pitch-black night on my walk home illuminated with piss yellow lights and a high pitch sound in my ear trying to replicate the noise I know should be there.

I still hate loud noises but I never thought I'd miss the sound of a car alarm.



## 2020

My car for the last three years has been a 2008 Scion XD that some guy I slept with nicknamed 'The Toaster'. The white paint was fresh when I bought it, but over time began to resemble snow that had been walked through by dogs, and then a few kids after school, before finally being pushed aside by a shovel. But when people got inside they'd comment on how big the inside felt or how it was surprising I could be such a clean freak yet my car looked like I might have lived in it. The Toaster took me across mountain ranges, spending hours chugging along I-80 to Reno to visit a man who moved without asking me to come with him. I used to sing some song about driving to love, but sex in my car after six years so the roommates don't know isn't love, and my mechanic agrees with me every time I say it. So it must be true.

The difference between this car and all the others is I helped pay for it. I've invested hundreds, if not thousands of dollars fixing broken parts I only sort of understand, pep-talking the damn thing as if we're friends that get mimosas on the weekends. The people I know will come and go, sit in my front seat and tell me they love me, but at the end of the day, it's just the car and me.

Driving down another road that'll take me to my next burst of success; and sometimes the loneliest road truly needs to be traveled alone.

## 2021 (Tentative)

I spend way too much time in my car, driving to people who only sort of care about me, hiding from people who actually love me, and leaving the things I don't want to carry inside in the back seat like it's my closet. But the car is the only thing I have. The only thing I can call mine and mean it.

I find myself wanting to be in the car more than I want to be anywhere else sometimes. I hear people talking to me and I feel people brushing past me in the places I need to be, but I can't stop thinking about packing a bag and tossing it in my car, and leaving. I don't know where I would go but the idea of rubber burning against cracked tar melting in the sun in the name of taking me somewhere new reminds me of how I felt the day I saw my mom and Robin throw their cigarettes on the ground in solidarity to my success.

Like I could do anything in the world because at least someone believed in me.

## 2015

I dream about driving down the road and right out of this small town I call home. I don't know where I'll go but I just feel lucky I have a car to take me there.

# SOUPSONG

Aimee Lowenstern

---

*Originally published in Barzakh Magazine*

Oh no. Oh no. I am me.  
I am me within this dough-dense body,  
and I can feel time thickening around me  
in a clear and humid broth.  
It's boiling this made-up meatsoul,  
my soft and ghostpearl intricacies  
melting into grease.  
I watch everything I have ever done  
cook down down down into nothing,  
though their flavors grow stronger  
and stronger in the stuttering pot.  
By the scent of me now, I am sure  
I am rotten. There is no hunger I could sate.  
When they open me up  
with their forks, they will find  
the strange texture of my pinkpoached brain;  
their lips will curl back  
in disgust.

# Eclectic Love Poem

Aimee Lowenstern

---

*In the process of being published and cannot be printed here at this time.*

## Recipe

Aimee Lowenstern

---

*Originally published in The Healing Muse*

Took the remains of Eve's apple and made a scrumptious little fritter.  
Took the body of Christ and made French toast.  
See how love can transform things? Let me feed you.

I want you to eat well.  
Took the pomegranate from Persephone  
and made a curd. Eggs, sugar, butter,  
it's very easy. I'll show you sometime.  
It's amazing how red it is,  
how little I think of blood,  
these days.  
See how love can transform things?  
Come to my kitchen and we'll make scones.

*Martis Valley, CA      May 2015*

I followed the boy  
towards the stream.  
Clouds spit rain slowly,  
thunder rolled,  
                         eagle soared.

We stepped over sage and coyote brush.  
                         Ceanothus  
We came to the stream,  
it narrowly split the grass.  
Steadily flowing past,  
                         ribbon of water.

No water would course its path in a month or more.  
Its ribbon would vanish before  
a Cancer moon would visit a  
Sierra black night sky.

The boy stood by the stream.  
Holding an arrow leaf,  
He innocently asked, "is this a willow?"

                         Stream flowed  
we followed...  
I beckoned him to the small rise.  
Black soil  
rich loam in a sandy place.

An out crop of gnarled rock.  
Lichen covered  
Not good for mortars.  
Not good for grinding.

But there the boy saw them.

1 2 3 4 tools

Artifacts  
left behind.  
Stone artifacts  
lithic tools.  
Bifaces  
                         Obsidian  
   Basalt

Left long ago  
still there.  
Placed by hands no longer working  
no longer  
gathering  
cutting  
weaving  
mending  
holding  
helping  
carrying  
                         comforting  
   cradling  
   nursing.  
Tools made of rock, placed upon rock.  
Thousands of spitting storms ago,  
millions of raindrops  
                         snowflakes  
   hailstones.

The boy  
9 years old  
Starting new memories in new places,  
left alone in time.

# The Cave of Two Hands

Scott Green

---

The coolness was a shroud  
The rough surface black from ancient fires  
That warmed brown bodies  
And chased black thoughts.

A hand, another  
Above me  
Next to me  
A hand like mine.

A man  
A beast  
A message  
A sacred place.

My breath, pacing  
My lips dry  
The art on the rock  
Secretly breathing, secretly telling the message:

“We were here. We will always be here.”

# Oben Ohne

Jonathon Burton

---

*This poem is being considered for a poetry contest and cannot be published at this time.*

# See

Iasmina Rotariu

---

you see, I had to leave for a bit, get lost  
to find out what my soul wants and at what cost,  
what shall past and what will stay  
what will heal, what will remain...  
out of this grief process.

you see, I had to lose a little out of everything  
to write about being an adult since you were a kid,  
because that's what life will teach you, right?  
it's either black or white, run or fight.

you see, I had to either feel too much or become numb  
before I learned to admit my feelings instead of playing dumb  
and at the end of all the struggle  
I am becoming grateful for living outside of the bubble.

# Danaus Plexippus

Iasmina Rotariu

---

grandpa said "no crying with the whole being",  
and to protect my energy when I visit new hearts  
because the pain of being alone  
is worse than losing what you love.

all I wanted was to heal my consciousness  
to write about the stars, flowers and love  
but instead I learned to grow up and dry the dead flowers in my journal  
because I was still afraid to lose.

grandpa always looked at me helplessly when he knew  
it will again cost me my peace of mind  
to save people that imprison my soul in claws  
and then wondering how it still beats restlessly.

# Marveling lost love

Elise Dixon

---

Marveling lost love,  
reverie for their consequence,  
Accomplices christening sorrow upon this surviving moment,  
As the inviolable angels just now,  
Safe passage silver and purple,  
Glory where They all -- pray for an occasion, an occasion of you.  
archangels are, so, very, fostered ...

# Love and Hate

Elise Dixon

---

love and hate  
both at attention  
attending to seared souls  
altering love into tears of asperity  
flaming loathes into teary composure  
hearts asunder  
beneath shades of pretend  
bloating lives into fuck all (naught)  
waves of instance gone awry  
leaving lovers squandered in a recess of ascetic.

# Words

Julie Morrow

---

Know the power of your words.  
Words that calm,  
Words that love.  
Make her wild with those words.  
Words that make her explosive,  
Increasingly impulsive.  
You have to know that she's a book,  
Open wide for your cursive.  
Love that love with  
Written words.  
The spoken verse  
so perverse.  
But in a way that  
makes her safe.  
I love you but  
I know I cannot say.  
The way she feels is  
So intense.  
I don't know why she moans.  
Feeling in ways that are like poems.  
I'm so intense, am I alone?

# Don't really care

Julie Morrow

---

So sick of standing  
Apathetic Anguish  
Appreciative of beauty  
but not enough  
Don't really care  
Want to see  
the way it is  
but not enough  
Finding meaning in a bug bite  
but not enough  
Don't really care  
kinda want to see you  
I'm facing down in the sand  
turned around in his grave  
Gonna cry today  
but not enough  
Don't really care

# Children of the Underground

Julie Morrow

---

Children of the Underground  
Is on Hulu.  
A nationwide event.  
And that it is.  
An epidemic hiding in plain and legal site  
Documenting the trauma of the everyday.  
To find out that Faye Yager  
Is the Harriet Tubman  
Of our time.  
Willing to sacrifice to  
The Underground Railroad.  
I am her and she is me  
Oh Faye  
The things I would say  
Most of all Thank you for all that you did.  
For the mothers and children, you surely did build  
An empire of strength  
And ways to escape  
The legal persecution  
And the American way  
I want to see it in real-time  
What she did with her life,  
it resonates with me and our strife.  
And I love her. I give her my trust.  
This Harriet Tubman sent down for all of us  
An underground railroad for you and for me.  
An underground railroad for what we will be.  
This is just fucking nuts  
An all-out epiphany  
No need for validation.  
This is the reckoning.



# When You Love a Poet

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

When you love a poet  
Be prepared for unbridled words of adoration that will make you sway and swoon and swoop,  
eyes awonder, body tingling ...  
When you love a poet  
Be open to pulsing words of prurience that make you delirious, head spinning, cock hard/pussy  
dripping, jaw on the floor, tantalized, mesmerized, hypnotized...  
When you love a poet

Know that your wanton wordsmith is always, always searching for the perfect prose, the right  
rhythm, the lusciously lascivious length that can come close to doing justice to your beauty and  
power and fuckability and goddamn GRACE...

When you love a poet  
Accept that your every move is a mystery, a mastery of sex and sin and senses and salvation, and  
you will be—  
YOU WILL BE—commemorated.

©2022

# The Heart of My Hand

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

I open my hand  
I see what beauty lights upon it  
whether dove, butterfly or your hand  
I do not grasp or squeeze or you would fly away, wounded  
I may caress you gently  
I may sing and coo to you  
I may gaze at your splendor  
I may feel the soft weight and warmth of you upon me  
stay awhile  
move away  
the beauty remains  
if this is love  
you will return  
next time I will land  
in your hand  
another time  
we will fly together  
the heart of my hand  
is open.

©2022

# Flame and Flow

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

We are Sun and Moon  
We are Air and Earth  
We are Flame and Flow  
Finding and Unbinding  
Gracing and Embracing  
Igniting and Exciting  
We are Sun and Moon  
We are Air and Earth  
We are Flame and Flow  
Embodying and Emboldening  
Centering and Ascending  
Illuminating and Radiating  
We are Sun and Moon  
We are Air and Earth  
We are Flame and Flow  
We are Sun, pouring into Moon.  
She receives him, reflects him.  
Shines.  
We are Air, caressing Earth.  
She feels him, flowers him.  
Nurtures.  
We are Fire, heating Water.  
She spreads, steamy.  
Gleaming.

©2022

# Wildfire

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

wake me with melting kisses  
quake me with our blisses  
bide me with soft licking  
ride me with hot pricking  
fill me with your prana  
thrill me with nirvana  
praise me with your fingers  
craze me with lust lingers  
adore me with your gazing  
explore me with limbs blazing  
spoon me with time tender  
swoon me with your splendor  
behold me with caressing  
enfold me with possessing  
lavish me with desire  
ravish me with wildfire.

©2022

# “Women’s Rage Is Mighty Magic

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

our grief is palpable  
our outrage is sacred fire

lovers: rock your women  
harder, softer, your touch  
is their anchor now  
mothers: hold your daughters closer  
kiss their foreheads  
as they preen their wings  
and sharpen their  
swords  
sisters: our eyes make magic  
out of  
mayhem  
(we remember how to do this)  
for now is the time  
and mighty is our battle cry  
shaking the world whole

boundaries dissolve  
we merge flesh, form anew  
tickling universes’ edges  
swallowing worlds  
transmuting all that is  
with this electricity  
a thousand lightyears away  
aliens with big eyes  
and far too many arms  
look up as we climax, and say:  
“Wow, that was a big one!”

©2022

# Your Words Are Your Wonder

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

Your words are your wonder.  
scribbles of ink on tree skin  
Your words are your wonder.  
seemingly random streamingly wanton  
Your words are your wonder.  
‘Why this word and not that?’ Pokes Monkey Mind  
‘Later. Write after blahblahblah,’ pipes Distractor.  
‘Nobody cares. Nobody listens. Nobody reads it. Why bother?’ Pounds  
Critic.  
And yet, ever, always, still, I know:  
My Words Are My Wonder.  
My way  
My wisdom  
My whimsy  
My whys  
My wows  
My witchiness  
My wit  
My words  
My wonder.  
So, go.  
Write and speak and listen and blissen  
and shine and sing and whisper and share  
and tell your goddamn blessed story because  
You’re the ONLY ONE who can  
and the world needs your wonder  
and your wonder

feeds  
you.

©2022

# “When Was the Last Time...?”

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

When was the last time you:

~ thanked the Sun setting the world aglow, contemplative, complete, content?

~greeted the Moon with arms wide open and halo crowned?

~ soared from star to star with your eyes, mind and spirit?

When was the last time you:

~ locked eyes until time’s veil slipped away?

~ linked arms and danced until you sank down, body happy, spent, heart uplifted?

~ laughed so hard you lost your breath as you found your joy of living again?

When was the last time you:

~ kissed “I love you” to every single inch of your glorious self?

~ tasted sweat, sex, skin, crying with the beauty of it all, walls dissolved in wildness and water and wonder?

~ heard your own voice in the dawn chorus as you sang the new world into being?

And when will be the last time?

my sense of wonder returns

expands

renews

the more time I spend with birds

the less with worries.

©2022

# SPIRITUAL RAP #1: “ReJoy Sing Truth”

Sage Taylor Kingsley

---

You are a piece of God

You are at peace with God

You are Infinity

Divinity

at ease with God.

You are a ray of Light

You are a bay of Light

You are Brilliant

and Resilient

on the way of Light.

You are the voice of Truth

You make the choice of Truth

You are Courageously

Outrageously

Rejoicing Truth!

You are the art of Love

Forever part of Love

You remember,

Shining Ember,

You’re the Heart of Love.

You live a sacred Vow

Your Words of Light, your How

In all your glimmerings

’N shimmerings,

Your power: NOW!

Where am I, if not here?

When am I, if not now?

How am I, if not this?

Who am I, if not me?

What am I, if not nothing everything?

Laughing

I remember my way home

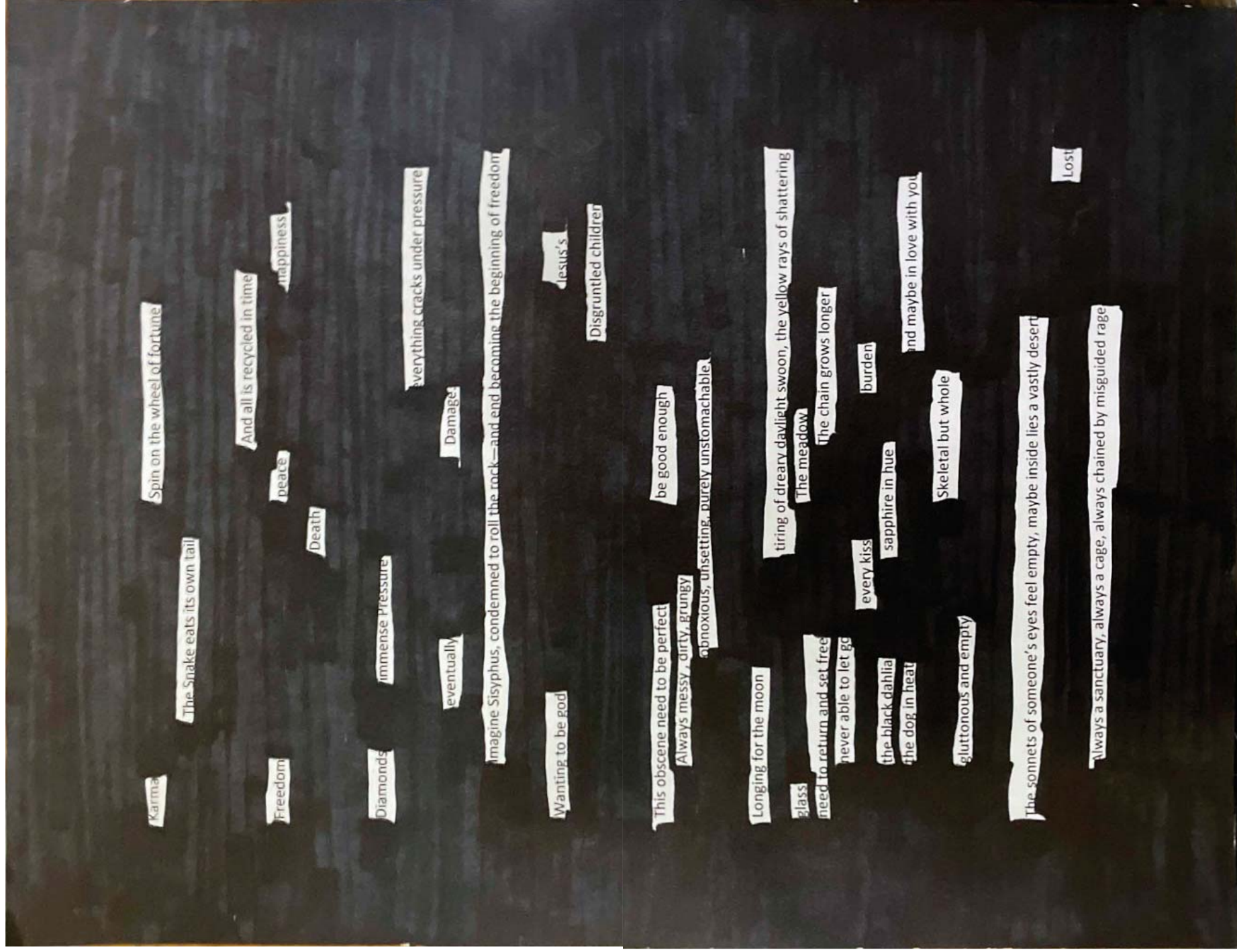
Smiling

I remember I am already there

©2022

# Karma (Blackout Poem)

Karli Watson





Berkley  
heroin  
oceans tide takes away  
the smell of the bay  
pain  
Culture  
submissiveness and brutality  
rebellion  
Chicago  
New York poets  
Hippies  
Gil Scott Heron lives on  
make love, make art, make war  
Lost  
the abuse  
empathy and sympathy  
all the indecision  
of  
A small child hides behind an adult  
don't prick yourself  
in a dark garden of barbed wire flowers  
fall into the deep slumbers of monotony

God  
the devil  
same  
with guns in their hands  
are the  
men playing gods  
quite deafening  
pointless  
want to be loved  
linger on my tongue  
sweet kiss of death  
let it

“I thought your face was a ticking clock,  
but i was wrong”

Karli Watson

---

Your face is an adjective!  
Your body a noun!  
Presumably we are all authors,  
Writing books for the big library in the ground.  
That's why I spend so much time in the graveyard.

Smiles are tempting, silly little similes',  
But I think you secretly like the allegory of my frown more.  
Your face is an exclamation point,  
Exaggerating my nervousness.

One time I met god in a mosh pit.  
She told me to shut the fuck up and  
Loosen up a bit.  
One time I saw Jesus asleep behind the wheel of a hearse,  
talking in his sleep,  
Mumbling some Kerouac free verse.

Your eyes are a sonnet.  
Some Shakespearean roulette wheel,  
Laced with LSD,  
Gambling my future away like pennies.  
Your lips won't sink the Lusitania  
But they only loosely hide your fangs,  
Poking out like broken door hinges, into an abandoned house.  
Your tongues a cherry, sticky, sweet and ready to pop from all the secrets  
you hold.

I saw God once at the supermarket,  
Waiting in line for the butcher's block,  
Maybe to feast, maybe to kill.  
I saw the virgin Mary kissing a woman once,  
In an alley way.  
They both had flowers in their hair.

Your face is an adjective and your body a noun.  
Somewhere in between your heart and head lie a factory of verbs being  
pumped out.  
That's why I spend so much time in the graveyard.



# Overboard

Hayli Nicole

---

Once I lost a poem  
to the ocean.  
in a dream on a boat  
floating idle under the Milky Way.  
It was a few days after a full moon  
and nothing terrible had gone wrong.  
So when it was carried overboard  
by the wind into the sea,  
I cursed the moon  
for the chaos it brings  
and for stealing words  
from my hands  
without warning.  
I wondered if I could  
rewrite what was written  
but I knew the words  
wouldn't be the same.  
The feeling was different now;  
blanketed by regret  
for not keeping them safe  
to begin with.  
I tried to imagine them  
into a new existence  
before the ink  
bled into nothing  
but it's impossible  
to replicate creativity  
pouring through  
scribbling hands.  
For poetry flows  
like swift currents  
past untouched beaches  
on islands unoccupied by man.  
Poetry is in the sand

churned out through time  
taking different forms  
so far from its original shape  
it is no longer the coral  
or the shells  
or the rocks  
it once was,  
but a grain  
in a magnificent landscape  
shaped by the movement of water.  
Nothing could compare  
to the rising of tides  
inspired by the moon  
and worshiped through time

as the giver of life.  
So when the sea  
swallowed my words  
I didn't feel worthy.  
For the ocean is the poem  
I could never write  
into existence  
even if I tried.

# Dearest Dublin

Hayli Nicole

---

I remember our first crisp morning together.  
Tangled sheets  
cocooned my jet-lagged body.  
I allowed the warmth to swallow  
my being whole.  
The skies were blue,

but it was the beginning of spring.  
I had never heard birds sing  
as if they were praising  
the presence of the sun.  
Their whistles were the soundtrack  
to our first days of being home.  
There was a nip at the neck  
distinct in its stinging.  
My California blood was still warm  
but not warm enough  
to keep me from freezing.  
We were like two lovers  
leaning into each other,  
learning this new land  
with Pinch me, we're dreaming smiles.  
For miles,  
we followed the river  
weaving our way through the city.  
We were pretty certain this is what  
happiness looked like.  
Our hands intertwined  
dreaming of what our days would become.  
We had no knowledge  
our new home  
would be the demise of our love.  
See.  
In seeking your shelter  
I lay roots  
in faulty foundations.

Your appeal  
was promising  
but the yield was never as promised.  
I never found  
what you said I would find.  
Your patterns unkind,  
you left me in the dark.  
assuming I could pull myself  
from the depression  
of your constant grays.  
So many days were spent  
dreaming of how to escape.  
I traced your silhouette  
with the gentle hands of a new lover  
I knew the intricacies  
of your every corner,  
but our intimacy  
was only one way.  
I remember the day I discovered another love.  
I was somewhere under the Burmese sun  
and you were here  
promising you had begun

to change your ways.  
So I came home  
to you,  
but something within me  
was different now  
and there was no going back for us.  
It rained the day we decided to end.  
Like every feeling I had been burying inside  
burst through a wide-open sky  
and poured over me  
like the first time  
I felt the sea meet my skin.  
I couldn't tell  
if the wetness of my cheeks  
was that of the rain  
or the pain  
of not seeing this coming.

I retraced those first steps along the canal  
leading me straight home.  
I combed through memories  
collecting pieces of the shattered past  
trying to piece together  
the bigger picture  
all the while  
wondering where it all went wrong.  
This was meant to be my grandest love,  
but love doesn't live where it used to.  
It's winter's arrival  
and I will be returning  
to lands unfamiliar.  
My heart is yearning to stay  
than return to the pace of life  
unbeknown to me now.  
It seemed as though  
we had more time.  
Was it really two years?  
Or was it a mirage within a dream  
I'm struggling to wake myself from?  
Everything feels lucid  
but you never did  
feel like the real thing.  
The shade feels colder now,  
but the sky the same blue.  
The frost of the winter is making room  
for new blooms  
to breathe life  
into the grey mornings again.  
Except I won't be here to inhale  
the scent of a city being reborn.  
It's strange

how I haven't even left,  
but already I see you changing  
as if my presence  
was of insignificance  
because a new lover  
will soon take my place

if they haven't already.  
The season of change is upon us  
pulling us back in the directions  
we were meant to be heading.  
I've been dreading this goodbye,  
my dearest Dublin,  
but if there's one thing I've learned,  
my dear,  
all beautiful things  
must come to an end.



Scan here  
for eChapbooks

from  
Past Poetry at The Backyard Events

by  
Tahoe Poetry Collective

# Poetry At The Backyard



Presented by  
Tahoe Poetry Collective

Sponsored by

