Tipping the Memoir

by

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Advisor

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LOVE

Grandma’s Pot Holder

The red kettle rests on the oven
with Lemons, whiskey, and a tea bag
Grandma’s pot holder is hand-woven

The thick honey, fresh from a bee haven,
is tucked away in an old handbag
The red kettle rests on the oven

Souvenir mugs she has been given
line the shelf, and one has a price tag
Grandma’s pot holder is hand-woven

In a borrowed cup lies my heaven
My uncle’s mug wears a Spanish flag
The red kettle rests on the oven

I remember being eleven,
my toddy, grandma, my sleeping bag
Grandma’s pot holder is hand-woven

It was worth more than whiskey, even
more to me than honey and tea bags
The red kettle rests on the oven
Grandma’s pot holder is hand-woven
Craving

Ravenous, vanquished,
the twinge within, tied me
in knots, and left my guts screaming

for someone to release me
from this repression.
The blank page lies unwritten
full of lies, resentfully waiting

outside Shangri-La for
your body, i can’t resist.
The notes that complete my opus,
the words that express what i could not say,
and the apex i was missing.
Turbulence

The foam covers the broken shells
and debris that can cut your bare feet,
bring you to your knees and cripple you in its wake.

The sudden chill can paralyze,
fill you with urges, only repressed lovers
could understand.

The water splashing, spraying its wetness on
virgin skin, releasing the heat that was
pent up in the hearts of the blind voyeurs

who never opened their eyes or lips
when the water unlocked the doorway
for them to abandon their fleshy boundaries

and feel the temptation that sunk a thousand ships,
buried the beauty in sand, and restricted the garden
from man, woman, and their need to have it all.
Unattainable Solace

The cancer lies hidden within my heart. True love comes and goes, leaving streaks.

The light, and the blackness, hard to decipher, the grayness masks the truth.

Betrayals caused by pain emerge. Sides switched, wombs tainted, corrupted by replacement suitors.
Sting Called Love

The waves make shells and sand whip me as I make my way out into the water, cuts on my legs bleeding, the salt stings, my feet are torn.

I go deeper, and the waves suck me under, to a dark place, I fight for air, but drown, I look for a hand.

I am alone, the water is dark the sky is empty, I am floating, my face is numb.

I hit a beacon, its faint light rattles me, I think it is lost. I reach for it, it is real, it bobs and I reach again, I grab it.

It resists me, I slip down but I grab it again, and it bobs and I slip, and I reach for it, I grab it, I thrust my body upon its ledge, it floats steady, I am whole.
My Affair with New York

It began in Chinatown,
SoHo, and the Village
Hung out with Degas
and O'Keefe at the MOMA
Rested in Little Italy
eating zeppoles and stromboli
Partied at CBGB's, The Limelight,
Webster Hall, Niro, and some rave.

It dined at Yakiniku Juju
Tao, and Cacio e Pepe
Watched Rent, Aida, Nine,
The Vagina Monologues,
and Puppetry of the Penis
It dropped me off at college
and encouraged me to throw away
my wallet, sit down, and write.
Untranslatable

Looking for wisdom, 
penetrate the idea that 
they try to sell on 
billboard clichés but 
the Marlborough Man is dead.

My ears fall 
to false prophets, “God is king, 
the world is greedy, accept him and be saved, 
the Jews, the Muslims, the homosexuals will 
burn in their penthouses, can you spare a dollar?”

I stare at the cracks between the seats 
looking for black specks moving 
racing to hitch a ride with their next 
commuter U-Haul dredging back to Jersey 
unaware of their parasitic souvenirs.

Ascending, the warm gush with its 
greasy stench masked by Ralph Lauren 
and body odor fills my lungs and 
sticks to my hair and makes me itch.

Showering the disappointment 
as an epiphany runs through my head, 
I nick my kneecap with my razor, 
proceed to use the steam fogged door 
to store ideas until they fade away.
The Rescue

I drive to my grandparents,
a big red monster rests in the driveway
consuming their belongings,
without effort.

Bulging,
the monster isn’t satisfied
it lies there, waiting for more.

Escaping the beast,
I made it to the door
open it slowly.

Lemon and alcohol fill my nostrils
the moldy, dusty air
medicated and sanitized.

I see the bare rooms in front of me
the house purged by the creature
I climbed the stairs,
to the kitchen.

Scraps of life remained,
scattered in-between boxes and garbage bags
a dough-nut maker calls out,
I reach quickly,
refusing to let anything else fall to the red monster.
Medicated Coma

I do not know how long it has been, but my hair is no longer soft and brown.

I wonder if my watch will stop ticking as I lay here, listen to the dark.

An enigma, I cannot tell phantoms from friends.

Those who try and unravel me seem to lose themselves in knots.
Misguided Sheep

The bewildered herd sneers at Chomsky, 
they can't face the picture he paints, 
Pointlessness is the drive of this society, 
want redefines the meaning of need.

Stimulators filter through the airways, 
competing for the bewildered desires, 
feeding the need for creating, consuming, and 
copying things.

Influenced by artificial necessities, 
rags and bare essentials don't clothe my body. 
Name brands and designer bags make up my armor, 
I roam the world in.

My actions more criminal than the others 
who are unaware of the dangers. 
The cure locked away, in the shadow of myself 
that looks out from the mirror with disgust.
Silenced

Behind every laughing clown, there is a crying mime, walking on stilts, with painted tears, and a yellow flower.
Beauty in Silence

White water rafting on the Delaware,
a black, orange, fuzzy quiet muted
noise and woke me.

Life motionless beyond silky flutters
as your beauty shared solace with thieves.

But the silence left, the noise returned,
and emptiness filled me,
as you flew away.
Good Stuff

"It's all good stuff"
Her plastic containers, candy tins, and jelly jars
stacked on counters and tables
Books and magazine piles lying on the floor
Mountains of junk to the casual visitor,
Treasures and keepsakes for grandma.

Every year, growing, forming new landscapes in her
kitchen, sun porch, and bedrooms.
Grandpa disappearing into the labyrinth,
trapped between shoe boxes and closets
barely escaping nightly with a six-pack to his easy chair.

The boundaries getting smaller and smaller, but
he can't disturb a thing in her castle
She knows when a pile is missing; a tin thrown away,
or a container removed from the stacks on her countertop.

Everyone offers to help, but grandma resists
She may not have read the book, magazine or newspaper
The tins, plastic containers and jelly jars are all good stuff
We can't convince her to let go.

Dusty photos, greeting cards, and children's artwork
cover their china cabinet and refrigerator
Family history frozen in her realm
preserved by weakness.
Waking Unconscious

The endless waves stifle my breathing,
Invisible floatation devices hover around my head,

I had drown but
fall into a bowl of corn flakes.

My eyes blink, I slam on the brakes,
A elephant is in front of my car.
The car door opens, I get out and slip on ice.

Glass surrounds me
I call out for help.
Two children say," isn't he cute?"

They pick me up, put me on top of a flute,
A man plays it and says, "dance, dance"
I did.

I hear a bell.
My head is pulsating from the echo,
I am chain to the walls of a rotating tower.

On the floor is an alluring flower,
It starts to melt.
Dali is following me,

I blink my eyes, the tower becomes a tree.
Fortune cookies hang from its leaves,
I feel compelled to eat one.

I slip and fall into a web a spider had spun,
The spider is big, I am what he wants to eat,
but I turn into a Praying Mantis, and eat him instead.
Ambition

A vessel for strength
she holds a lot of cargo
with no release from the burden.

A curved stream pulls
in two directions
which splinters her.

Relentless, she pulls forward
as life tugs on her
and slows her pace.
Vanard Beach

Dunkin Donuts and traffic lights invade the once quiet town, that spit me into the vast sea of adulthood. Now I return to see her, my guide through the pains of adolescence that redefined my identity.

The roads are crowded with strangers who stare at me as if I don’t belong. I was here before Blockbuster, Fridays, and the other trespassers of my town.

The best surf shop is replaced by some chicken frying, atomic death sauce, grease breeder that replaced sex wax with all you can eat buckets of impotence. I guess people surf on each other’s fat asses or chicken bones tied together with plastic straws decorated with ketchup packets.

Hints of grass and some pitiful excuses for trees, planted to give the allusion of environmentally friendly developing communities, show me I am near. In the distance, my mother, unkempt, and weathered lies abandoned.

I sit on her graying bench at the edge of the shoreline with tears streaming down my face, home again.

I see my brothers and sisters jumping off docks in the middle of the night. Bottles of MDG Light appear in the sand next to piles of clothes, with packs of Marlborough Lights carefully tucked in pockets.

I see the summer boys, tan, half naked with one thing on their minds.

The summer girls came too and ravaged our boyfriends because no one back home would know they were sluts. I tried to drown one once when I mixed Tequila with Mad Dog 20/20.

I closed my eyes and everything was gone, a faded sign said, Vanard Beach.
Mr. Bird

I was lying next to my sand angel, looked up and examined the sky. The clouds slowly moved westward. The ocean breeze went through my coat. I walked along the shoreline. Then I saw him! "Mr. Bird, I gave you all my fries. Sorry that you're still hungry." He looked up at me. We sat there, I told him about my week. Mr. Bird didn’t get bored. He wandered the beach looking for scraps, then returned. He followed me to my car. I looked out my sunroof and he was above me. Mr. Bird followed me till I got home, then he disappeared. The sky empty without him. For several weeks I tried to find my friend, but I couldn’t. Sometimes when I ate French fries, a shadow appeared by my feet. A friend of mine took me to a Jersey restaurant with large windows overlooking the ocean. I looked outside the window and Mr. Bird was on the sill. "What are you thinking Mr. Bird?" Mr. Bird stayed there and listened to us talk. When he finally flew away, I thought he looked back.
Expelling Writer’s Block

Words fell out of my head.  
Dead thoughts feeding the air  
bare sound, and without meaning  
ring loud.

Proud to expel the meaningless  
mess that muffles my mind,  
binds words, and chains the soul.

Whole pages of garbage, backing up my colon  
swollen from word constipation gas

blast from my lower extremities.  
Flees, mites, and maggots that fed on my rhyme  
climb out,

shout Haikus at me and heave.  
Naïve fiends who strangle my form  
swarm the room with such ease.

Seas of published heroes drown in the pulp  
gulp up pages and become anthologies.

Ideologies freeze the creative mode,  
load the gun, and shoot the philanthropist.

Branded fists from the sea of sludge, bile,  
denial, and irresponsibility.
Poetic Dinner

There is a table in the east village
set for many, hosting but a few

A silk rainbow hangs above
a marker board with today's specials

Suits and skirts scurry pass the table
towards their cubicle cells

A guy or maybe a girl on a bicycle
is delivering doughnuts and coffee

Three sit at the table waiting
for four, five, and six to join them

Incomplete conversations missing
Clay, Ethics, and Om persist
DEATH

All that is Left

Tattered rags with ants, roaches, and maggots,
taking the earth back within
the dust of bones and skin.

Trees barren under blue skies,
lifeless seas veiled by
storms of human sand.

Dull gold, blackened silver, and stainless steel remain
with Roman numerals collecting
dust in the abyss.
The Parade

The water recedes,
beads line the burning streets,
muddy feathers and dented masks
clog the sewers.

Tambourines lose their jingles
rusted saxophones squeal,
as the dead stroll
down Bourbon Street
Death and Fire Speak to Haring

I knew it wasn’t just about the penis.
You found Death in the newspaper,
Fire on the streets, and polluted Blood in your veins

You saw broken backs holding up a life that
was long dead and did not need to be reformed
You saw Death smile as knees collapsed and arms shook.

You felt Fire burn in the distance, promising
relief from the pain and you knew Blood
waited in silence planning its attack.

You replaced Paul Clee’s image
with your own hallucination
shaped it, bled it, and awaited praise.

You set the table for the German Chancellor;
he liked your cuisine, but Death invited
himself to dinner and he was hungry.

With an appetite that was never satisfied, Death devoured
battalions of men from Bauhaus leaving scraps
for Fire to engulf and pathogens for Blood to absorb.

You avoided their path, but not for long
Your skin burned and your blood boiled
Till they took you down and ate you whole.
Awaiting My Death

Invisible bars impale
me, fragments reach through,
but not all. Ghosts dance to
my exhales, I prefer them to flesh.

Gluttonous maggots wait for
my meat. I can escape if I just open the door,
but the sun burns my eyes, and I am afraid of the dark,
so I stay inside, listening and waiting.
Flawed

Death stirred in his last breath,
shattered glass penetrates his shoes.

He approaches the door,
grabs the iron handle to the
crowded, dimly lit room.

The chatter silenced,
shocked faces look down.

Their eyes and frigid movements.
lay his course,
he must follow it.

Dark shadows circle around his body,
whispering the fears that are in his head.
Cold hands grab at his limbs,
tug on his clothes.

The jurors move aside
so he can pass.
His face turns red,

he squirms as he
kneels before the gate.
Black cuffs are illuminated,
by white cotton.
The Wreck

The book of myths offers nothing
but confusion, and a broken compass
My knife is sharper, and my armor is
neoprene with titanium lining
I do this alone because Cousteau is dead

The ladder is still here, I can
not tell what direction I should go in
because I cannot see the boat.

Stifled by tainted oxygen you
forced me to breath.
I leave the book here.
I let it sink.

I watch you sink
with your book and all of its lies.
Suddenly Blessed with Leisure

The treadmill comes to an abrupt stop
my body jerks from the force

I get off, heart racing,  
breathing heavy, tired
I am lost.

I walk to a park,  
sit on the grass,  
daydream

I see the sky turn dark,  
then light again,  

I feel my skin sag and wrinkle  
my breathing is faint.
Regretful Survivor

The bullet dances
in the barrel of the gun.
I point it at my head, and
ask God to forgive me for
wanting to pull the trigger.

I feel the sand burn in my eyes
and the blood stain my skin,
as I try to grab you, but you slip away.

If I could be the one
with scrap metal in my skull,
rotting in the middle of the dessert,
then peace would find me.
Snoopy

The sturdy house was Snoopy's hiding place,  
he watched rabbits, deer, and squirrels play  
As his brown eyes began to gravely trace  
The people he loved turning away.

A witness helpless chained to his abode,  
he watched people substitute the trees  
with houses, power mowers and swimming pools.

A fixture howling beautifully while  
the children played and screamed as he began  
to hide the bones and treats that he compiled  
for colder days.

The day the house was empty, we knew he  
had died, and we heard Snoopy howl softly.