

Appendix I:

From The Desk of:

This part of the appendix is a From The Desk Series from the author explaining the meaning of each poem and the secrets hidden within each line.

Each entry is aligned with the print edition in Book I, from starting poem to last.

Dive deeper into the true mysteries and values of what happened and inspired the poems.

As a precursor to remedy any confusion, you may have noticed small markings in the corners of specific pages.

*These are indicators that will be discussed within each page, they are not mistakes but intentional hidden secrets from the first printed volume that will be discussed and signified by the following symbol **(X)** at the end of each piece. Some pieces are interchangeable and may not require explanation.*

Another note of interest, all of these poems were intentionally left untitled, during the editing process we have added titles.

Stupid Thoughts (x)

Vague and dripping with undertones of dread and worry of losing someone special, this piece is a glimpse into the neurosis of the author and his early hesitancy to fall into love with knowing the dangers that lurk ahead.

The questions being asked are of self-doubt and wrought with over-analyzing the value of finding love and learning to become vulnerable. With the closing line, it shows a growth of feeling comfortable in someone's arms, as if though the person they are talking about is a comfort blanket.

(x) originally written in 2017, it was re-written and renewed in 2018 to better fit a personal poem for the authors relationship that had just begun.

Outlawed Love (x)

Inspired by a Kurt Vonnegut short story (Welcome to the Monkey House), this piece invokes despair and dread of living in an alternate universe where love is an outlawed and dangerous act.

Falling in love is punishable by death. The character finds themselves in a waiting room with their partner awaiting their sentencing while having to endure the pain of watching others be led to their execution.

This dream originally did happen in itself and was quickly jotted down and turned into this simple yet powerful concept of a world that refuses to accept that love is considered a dangerous act.

The awakening from the dream to see your partner still there by your side makes it much more intense and emotionally charged.

The ending is a point of realizing that one day fiction may turn into fact with how the current state of the world changes dramatically and drastically.

Obscured Memories

Originally written in a height of depression and anxiety, this piece is about a person so lost looking for someone they care for so much that they will search the ends of the earth, traversing mountain tops screaming to the wind hoping for an answer in response.

The meaning behind it was a cry for help in a dark point of the authors life where they were deep in a troubled state of disarray and suicidal thoughts of hoping someone would catch them if they fell.

The verse about jumping off a bridge is based in truth, the artist was at a low point when this piece was written and they attempted suicide, although at the last minute they discovered a light in the darkness of themselves that awoke the urgency of seeking help.

It is a tragic piece about loss and hoping to be taken back.

A House Built from Love (x)

This piece is a transformation of learning that love is built and not gifted to someone, a dedication to learning that even finding love means that you have to grow with it as much as grow it.

The opening shows the growth of the character and learning that their deprecating ideas of themselves is trivial and blown out of proportion and that they can in fact truly be head over heels in love with someone.

The character views their partner in that moment taking in each moment and holding it dearly because they know that one day they will ultimately lose them whether it be to an accident or natural death.

They wish they could live in that moment for an eternity.

(x) This poem was written for a previous partner of the author and was the moment of realization that they had found someone worthy of being in their life, cherishing the simple things like watching someone sleep soundly in bed and trying to not disturb them.

Under The Pale Moonlight

Albeit a very simple and short poem, this one was written with compassion and an understanding that life is causational and complex as well as love is a multifaceted concept.

The main characters are described as dying when in reality it is more of an ego death than actual death.

It shows the struggle of learning that love is a dangerous thing but also it can be a detrimental mistake to some.

It cuts through the air like a hot knife through butter, leaving a bittersweet taste in your mouth of realizing that love is a fickle thing.

Summer Clothes

A simple poem about the feeling of falling in love for the summer, a seasonal thing that ends when the air turns crisp and the leaves begin to fall from the trees in autumn.

Where did they go after they left them? Can they actually find themselves in love again after having a summer fling of exploring the country side or will the main character give up and cling to the memories of what was and will always be a fabled tale of summer lust.

What is the infinite future that they describe here? It is the unforeseeable extension of what some would consider to be god, smiling down upon them, but with no proof of evidence of a “true god” it is a metaphor for eternity and praying for eternal joy and happiness.

Empty Homes & Empty Hearts

Following the theme of yearning for love, this piece follows the character being told by their love to follow the stars in the sky to guide them back home on their long journey of finding themselves.

They compare the blemishes on their body as the constellations in the sky as though they have always waited for them, but with baited breath.

When the main character finally arrives at their destination, a house built for both to live and die in, they realize no-one has been home for a very long time and promise to wait forever but inevitably learn that they will never return and it was all along an empty promise.

The home is meant to represent the chambers of the heart and each room is a different hemisphere of it that they look in to find their fabled love.

Too Emotional (x)

This piece hits heavy and hard and is based in reality. It describes a situation in which someone is being broken up with but in the worst possible way of being left out in the rain (literally) as their lover walks away for the final time.

This event did in fact happen to the author while living in Portland, OR in 2017, the names and locations of where it took place will not be mentioned for obvious reasons.

This was a moment in the authors life that truly ripped them limb from limb and destroyed them emotionally for the first time in a long time, leaving them in a vulnerable state.

The words spoken of being “too emotional” were spoken verbatim and with such spite that when the author confronted this person again and

gifted them a copy of it, [redacted] laughed in their face and said “well it’s still true.”

To this date, the author has since removed such a toxic person from their life.

[As a side note from the author, no one should ever have to be put through the humiliation and destruction that they went through. If you know someone is in a toxic and unhealthy relationship, speak up and speak out to the proper channels and get them help because it may be the turning point that they take their own life.]

Love Is...

More meant to be read like a cascade of words than a poem, similar with the writing of a haiku, but not, this one is a random filler piece that needs no real explanation.

Addiction

In reality this piece is based off the authors original crippling addiction to alcohol and wanting to drown themselves with something that would numb the pains of being young at heart.

Since the creation of this piece the artist has since tackled their problems head first and become better at managing their problems.

The line about words growing wiser is based in the reality of getting drunk to be able to socialize with people because they suffered from a serious bout of depression and anxiety that stems from living in Alaska for many years and living in solitude of darkness for 6+ months.

The last part of the piece of saying they are addicted to you is simply a metaphor of imagining the bottle as a person and lapping up each drop of their imaginative being.

Indecipherable Scribbles

This piece correlates to older journal entries that have since become lost to a stranger somewhere in Portland, OR sometime in 2017.

At the time of the conception of this piece it is still unclear whether it was based off a pursuit of someone either in Oregon or Colorado as the author was traveling far and wide collecting memories.

We believe that this piece was conceived as an in-between process of grieving at the loss of someone that the author truly loved, but they took a piece of them and become just a memory.

To ask back for your heart from someone is a difficult task but also dangerous to the psyche as it requires both parties to be willing to move on from each other and let the past lie in its grave.

Scars

This piece is about finding a temporary love that has the potential to last forever but both parties were not meant to be even if they both felt butterflies for each other.

Based in Seattle, WA this piece revolves around the authors first journey to the fictional town of Twin Peaks (Snoqualmie Falls to be specific) and hiking with someone they had met and fell in love with.

They trekked off-trail paths and found each other embracing in a gleeful moment under a waterfall crashing down from high above.

This was the first of many beckoning calls from the other party of wanting to be together even though they were destined to never be together..

Constellations

The topic of a “rabbit hole” is a common theme in most of the pieces bound in this volume, it is a metaphor for “falling madly, deeply, head over heels” for someone, an ultimate cliché.

The imagery of constellations hidden on skin is a discussion of exploring another’s body, noticing the small imperfections and flaws that each person holds.

Breathing the universe into each other and never letting the timeline die is a line that invokes fear of loss and wanting to conquer death and live immortally.

The negative space spoken here is the fear of rejection and loss associated with falling in love and wanting to start over and attempt to make things work again in some way.

The closing line is a question of asking whether the other party truly feels the same way or is turning the other cheek and a blind ear.

The Raven & The Rabbit

This piece is a personal one of finding someone who spoke so heavily of love but never cared to believe they could be loved.

Based on an actual person, The Raven, is the embodiment of a self-deprecating but put together person who hides their emotions well behind a cloak of black feathers.

The Rabbit (the author) was at that time this was written, learning to explore the world of their own creation, learning to love themselves.

The interaction between the two characters is a conversational piece of double-standard and jealousy of how one can be free while the other is somehow shackled to the ground we walk on.

Albeit both a Raven & Rabbit are limited to the earthly grounds of the world, they both live synonymously within the world itself.

The Rabbit wants the Raven to know that even though they are prey/predator, that they can somehow find a middle ground to allow each other to grow.

(Side Note: the original version of this was actually written and gifted to “The Raven” as a special gift and has been since confirmed to still exist.)

Bridge Burner

An imaginative piece of mystery and swirling ideas of praying at the feet of a god that doesn't exist.

It is a monument of praising someone and their mysterious appearance into the world of the author, a dark shadowed figure that spoke strange new languages to them and took them undertow into their new world. A lament to the time of witches as well, this piece is heavily reliant on the imagery of old-world monuments and ideologies that still exist to this day.

The ending line “I want to do all the thing your lungs do so well” is a statement of wanting to be as good as the mysterious figure is, but can never uphold to.

Burning bridges correlates to taking a chance and rolling of the dice to change everything anew and walk away from a toxic older life and leave the flames to burn it down and birth something new in its place. Can’t speak your name is a reference to losing someone whom the author can’t talk about due to the amount of trauma that is attached to that person.

The imagery of burning pylons of dead trees is an homage to the traditional rite of burning bodies on beds of funeral pyres in older times, a symbol of birthing from the death of something, like a phoenix rising from the ashes.

Heavenly Creature

Based in real moments, this piece is a dedication to a love lost that the author truly cared about (and still does) a cry for never wanting to let go of the one person who made them feel almost human in itself.

It's an homage to the days and nights of waking up in cabins in the woods in the backcountry to snow-capped mountains of a life so simple.

The sexual arousal and imagery invoke a true human lust of desire and savage instincts, something that most people dream of having with their partners.

The ending is a call to fate damning them for placing such a heavy weight of experiencing first true love on their shoulders.

Memories My Love, Only Ours

This piece is a dedication to [REDACTED].

Based in the summer of 2006/07 in Cooper Landing, AK the author was young and full of life and drunk on love.

They found someone who understood them and they both fell madly in love with each other.

Although with it being a summer love, it was destined to not last long, albeit that has since changed during the publishing of this book and

they have both reached out to each other in a capacity of friendship and fond memories of a life once lived and memories grown.

Haunted Memories

This piece was based in a moment of meeting a first true love in such a magical way that it almost felt surreal to even happen.

The author was at a bar in Anchorage, AK and found their eyes locked with [REDACTED] through the crowd of people and in that moment it was almost as if though a cinematic moment of movie magic was happening in real time of seeing them from across the ballroom floor.

Time slowed then sped back up and the crowd swallowed them up into their might.

Later that evening they had connected online and realized it was each other, the two whose eyes locked in that moment.

A mystery of wondering was it a good choice to pursue the mystery of you?

Courage

Self-explanatory in itself, this piece is about the fear of speaking out with someone even when they are right next to you.

Fear and self-doubt are the true killers of love, but also the hardest to overcome.

Just learning to speak to someone without sounding like a complete fool is a difficult task for even the bravest people on earth.

Self-Discovery

This piece is meant to be an introspective look at learning to love yourself before you can possibly love someone else first.

Truly learning to love yourself is a very difficult task, but at the same time one of the most awakening feelings of learning you have the power to discover more hidden inside those galaxies inside yourself.

Empty Spaces

This piece is about loss and attempting to cope with it, waking in the morning to seeing your partner and then the next moment they are gone and you're left alone wondering what went wrong and was it you or them?

Butterflies

This piece is a personal favorite of the authors, and tries to paint a picture of what falling in love feels like to them.

It is a testament to the age old saying of “butterflies in your stomach” but putting a new spin on a classic with a renewed image of birds which represent maturity.

The sparrow is considered the astrological animal associated with Gemini’s in some discussions on the topic of astrology.

Birds being more aggressive in confined spaces creates the image of intense and turbulent love and desire, creating each breath you take with the beating of their wings.

The cage is symbolism for accepting the gift of love and listening to their sad songs.

Love can be unexpected and arise in mysterious ways, leading to the feeling of falling head over heels in an unexpected way.

Safety & Danger (x)

“The sea is a great place to think about the future.” Is a line taken from a Los Campesinos! song of the same title, a truly sad song to listen to and is what inspired this piece.

The safety of being in someone’s arms always makes you feel safe and loved, even with all the danger of the world revolving on the outside, shelter from the storm in a sense.

The distinction between the mountains and the other persons eyes is symbolism for the perils of the outside world but also the dangers of the wilderness inside each person.

The eyes are the gateway to the soul as they say, and sometimes they may look safe and welcoming but there is always a danger lurking deeper.

(x) this piece was written about an ex-lover who’s eyes were as blue as the ocean and also as dangerous as they were comforting.

Artifacts (x)

This piece is about boxing up memories and storing them far, far away from thought and sight, slowly decaying and rusting.

It's a piece about learning to accept the fate that has been handed to you but also learning to move forward even when you don't see eye to eye on certain things, in a sense it's a discussion of growing up.

The mountains are calling and I must go is the start of a new adventure waiting to unfold.

Are You Still Up? (x)

This piece is structured in the timeframe of a working day as being a barista by morning and waking early to leave the comfort of a warm bed to dealing with sickness of worry and distraught fear.

It's a construct of separation anxiety and not wanting to be apart from their significant other.

(x) originally written during a long-term relationship, it showcases the fear of being alone without them and wondering if they were being good or bad behind the authors back, a symptom of jealousy.

Shoe-box Memories

An introspective look into the discovery of old memories that were thought to be locked away, it is a testament to a time that the author felt alive and happy, but truly turns out to be a façade of false joy.

Store bought memories, like the photos you can find in oddities shops was the inspiration for the imagery of finding these "black & white ink stains found for \$6).

The turning point of “becoming sick and having to stop writing” means that it was the moment the author felt disgusted with themselves to have stumbled upon these false moments of joy.

The Hazards of Love (x)

This piece is about toxicity disguised as romance, showcasing the author being taken care of and nurtured but with a hidden undertone of deceit and betrayal.

The imagery of poppies is taken from the classic film *The Wizard of Oz* in the scene where Dorothy falls asleep in the fields of poppies, in which the antagonist wants to keep them preserved forever in a state of stasis.

Blood roses grown from their lungs is a play on a Tori Amos song of the same name (*Blood Roses*), as well as the inspiration was taken from an image seen in which there is a set of lungs drawn with the words “and you made flowers grow from my chest”.

A life jacket is the image of safety and rescue that is not given even when the author is metaphorically “drowning” in the seas of ocean blue eyes.

The ending is the surgical removal of joy and happiness from the author as the antagonist takes everything of value from them but keeps them “safe and protected”.

Coded Language (x)

This piece is based off the ideology of the “perfect man”, one who makes you feel invincible but at the same time more than human.

It’s a love letter to the earth for creating such a beautiful specimen and how they can speak in a language only they were meant to understand.

It paints the picture of a wild yet cool and collected person who awakens a new sensation of finding someone and exploring their body.

Wishing Wells (x)

This piece is about a toxic relationship with someone who is “perfect” on the outside but inside is a tempest of ruin and an endless void of false truths.

Tossing coins into wishing wells describes the authors never-ending love being tossed into someone who merely drains their reserves, hoping for a false reality to become real.

To be eviscerated is the wish to live and die over and over, an infinite cycle of trying to escape a damaged and unstable relationship.

Valleys of Despair (x)

This piece is an ode to the authors despair of searching for that special someone and trying to look internally for the answers, but only met with valleys of despair, barren of emotions and love.

The ink stains in reference are inspired by the authors tattoos, which detail out moments of their life waiting to add more to the history of their travels and lovers.

The ending question is a test of the authors ability to keep writing these poems or give up their dreams.

Have You Ever? (x)

A reflective piece that takes the author and puts them in the place of others they write about, a conversational piece in a sense of asking the questions that others in turn have asked them.

It picks apart the senses of what the observer can see, taste, touch and feel.

In a sense it is a piece about taking a look in the mirror and attempting to discover the ways that they have inspired others or touched their lives in some way.

Before The Dawn Heals Us (x)

Based on a terrible hangover experience once following a traumatic fight in an unhealthy relationship, the imagery described within

showcases a moment of clarity and awakening to the reality that they needed to leave that relationship.

Like having a religious epiphany the symbolism of purging their system is descriptive of learning to release the negativity out of themselves and try to heal the wounds that we self-inflicted.

Throwing Caution to The Wind

This piece is very symbolic of a turbulent relationship that both parties care not what happens, but to live in the moment of living, breathing world.

It is a statement of running wild and free, but also a discussion of learning to accept death and the fates that we are tied to.

Their eventual demise of dying under the oak tree and tying their hands together shows that even with being wild and free, they never want to break the bonds that tie them together, even in death.

Whispers

This piece is an homage to learning to navigate the world together as strangers, using only an imaginary map of the lines on their hands (palmistry).

There is a sense of yearning to become lost again in a world that is their lives, hoping to spread love to everyone and no one at the same time.

It is a question asking where do we go from here now?

Poison of Choice

A depression-based piece of wondering if choosing to take the easy route out of life by drinking poison to experience a moment of love, it is a love letter to death asking them to deliver respite.

It is a question of wondering if it is them or just the world not ready to appreciate their efforts and fruits of their labor, asking when they'll chose to leave them like everyone else has already done.

Does love exist even after death?

Destiny, The Cruel Mistress

A test of faith and will, this piece explains how a ripple effect can happen when a memory of someone arises and sets course through a sea of emotions.

It explains the cycle of falling in and out of love and how it can fade into obscurity behind the monotony of everyday life, only to come roaring in

by a favorite song that opens the flood gates of memories that were since locked up and hidden away within an illusion of safety.

Realizations

An open-ended love letter to an ex-lover whom shall remain anonymous, this simple piece shows the compassion and desire to still hold onto a sliver of hope that maybe one day soon, they will return to each other's touch.

A flaw in the human condition.

Shattered Pieces (x)

Somewhat of an apology letter but at the same time an introspective look at their own actions, this piece explains how they basically want to say I'm sorry to their ex-partner but at the same time thank them for fixing them back up in a way.

Raw emotions becoming muddled in a torrent of anger and rage at the world causing them such misery and problems, they didn't realize that their actions were affecting the relationship and pushed them further away from their original footing.

Stolen Glances (x)

A symbolic piece about the feeling of “stealing” someone else’s glances cast across the room not meant for themselves but for another person.

It is a poem about finding someone you love in someone you will never meet, but awakening to the fact that even within a random stranger, emotions and memories can be re-awakened yet completely innocent.

A Family of Ghosts

Symbolic of a broken home, this piece asks is it wrong to love something that doesn’t exist?

It is a personal testament of faith to the authors upbringing in a loveless home, void of conditional love and care.

Fish Out Of Water

A metaphorical piece about self-destruction and depression and how the artist attempted to numb the pains of the heart until the moment someone special walked into their life, changing it with the one instance of meeting each other.

Self-Destruction (x)

Another self-introspective piece about the dangers of self-destruction and self-care and learning to love yourself, but also attempt to rebuild from a broken construct.

It shows a cycle of destruction and rebuilding themselves up again from the damages of their history, but also learning to protect themselves with new disguises to alleviate any more harm that could be inflicted upon themselves.

Wild Strawberries

A piece that invokes an image of perfection and safety with someone who makes their dark and dreary world brighten with sunshine and joy.

It is a dedication piece to [REDACTED] for taking a chance and guiding the author on a wild journey of self-realization and awakening to a more blissful reality.

Famous Last Words

A brutal yet simple piece that showcases the difference between being in love and wanting to leave.

A sigh of relief or release? It leaves much to be thought of and pondered.

Conditional Love

Based in a real relationship, this piece invokes the reality of a false love.

The person described was not only a toxic person but also someone who had to use dependencies of alcohol addiction to even say they loved the author to their face.

It is a memory that still haunts the author to this day and hopes that they have learned to move forward with their life and learn to love unconditionally instead of under specific context.

Rebuilding A Future

An ode to learning to pick yourself up off the floor and rebuilding your life from a broken foundation, it is also a multi-faceted question asking

for a savior to end the suffering and protect them from themselves and the self-destructive tendencies that still haunt them.

It asks if there is someone willing to work with them in tandem as they rebuild themselves up from the base up.

Ships In The Night

Meant to be a piece about exploration and the journey associated with searching for love, it is a statement of becoming vulnerable yet at the same time feeling invincible.

Young Love (x)

Symbolistic of invoking the sense of smell through words, this piece is a statement on maturity and knowing right from wrong.

It's a simple notion of falling in love with someone's scent and being driven mad by their sly glances cast.

Message In A Bottle (x)

Based on the concept of finding a fabled “message in a bottle” on the beach, it is a statement on finding a message not meant for oneself but still finding comfort in bewilderment of wondering who the mysterious author is/where they are on this giant planet.

A New Nightmare

A self-introspective piece inspired by learning to build happiness themselves, the author crafted this piece to emphasize the difference between a false sense of happiness that is manufactured in a theoretical point compared to the reality of creating it yourself.

Tick Tock

A philosophical piece on learning to overcome fear of losing your chance against the race for time, it is an enigmatic question asking what happens when you're not fighting against the clock.

Divine Search

This piece represents the search and desire to find “perfection” in someone else, synonymous with the metaphor of “looking for drugs”, it speaks about searching the ends of the earth for something that never existed in the first place.

When you search for something, it tends to stay hidden, but when you aren’t actively searching it seems to uncannily appear out of seemingly nowhere.

The ending about finding an angel who loved and kills the writer is an imaginative line about how true love is beautiful but at the same time a deadly thing.

Dangerous Drugs

A repeating theme of the hazards of love, this piece is inspired by a line from Stephen King's Dark Tower Series in which the gunslinger talks about love being the most dangerous drug anyone can take in their world, it shows the yearning of the author to find that addiction and trying to manage the urge to indulge too much.

They want to run away from it but can't escape due to it being addicting, but instead this other person/emotion gleefully stops them and keeps them stuck in a constant loop.

Kiss Me, Kiss Me

Comprised of a loose dialog with an ex-partner, this piece holds the image of someone looking through the other.

A glimpse into the soul of the author and noticing how “lost” they are in their search for that fabled long-lasting love, and a message that they will be there every step of the way and attempt to comfort the authors character into understanding that they want to be there for them no matter the cost.

“Home is a place I’ve never known existed.” Is a statement of growing up in a broken home with a family that was barely keeping itself together as it was and the growth of the authors mindset in learning to take care of themselves in a world wrought with danger at every corner.

Roots

A statement about how deep and invested love can be, this piece focuses on the idea that everyone is eagerly searching to find someone to love (no matter their worldly views on the concept of love), it is a desperate cry for someone to never leave.

Never Knows Best

A multi-layered piece that ebbs and flows through different emotions, we'll break those down below:

- 1) **Touch & Sight:** The shimmer discussed is the “light of their eye” as they look at this person, one of the five senses being stimulated by viewing a perceived beauty. The way they touch their palm is symbolic of physical touch but also holding their hand in theirs.
- 2) **Sound: & Touch** An orchestra is symbolic of a commanding voice of power and reason, pouring down like sonnets & stanzas is a metaphor of the way the author views the English language. The line “the way your lips taste like sickness” is a metaphor about toxic love and the dangers of ruthless people taking advantage of someone.
- 3) **Desire:** What is the true difference between lust and love? Are they synonymous or polar opposites? It's an open-ended question to the readers as well as the author asking for a proper answer.

The final statement is a reference to an anime called Fooly Cooly in which one of the main characters takes a drag off a cigarette with the phrase “Never Knows Best” written on it.

A Rash In The Shape of You

A simple yet threatening piece inspired by a song from the band Los Campesinos called “A Heat Rash In the Shape of the Show Me State; or, Letters from Me to Charlotte”, it is a metaphor about seeing the future in your hands and wondering if it is a good one or an altogether terrifying one.

Can We Start Over Again?

A question asked by many of “can we begin again?” it is a testament to wanting to start everything over with a clean slate and forget the bad blood and ill-fated history of an unhealthy relationship.

The question itself comes full-turn in the second half of the poem asking if it is just a waste of time and breath in desiring to start over, realizing that it is in fact not a worthwhile endeavor to pursue.

Have we truly lost ourselves in the reality of wanting to change our own futures?

No one will ever be able to answer that question but oneself.

Orbiting Circus

Written during a very depressive time of the artists life, this piece shows the self-deprecation and regret the author lived.

The feeling of suicidal tendencies and feeling invisible to the world weakened their spirit and drive to want to exist.

The so called “orbiting circus” is based off of a podcast that managed to get them through their destructive state of mind.

The feeling of absolute rock-bottom depression is deadly as well as draining on the spirit and soul, and this piece strikes up the marching bands to scream into the void and wish for hope.

As a forewarning, if you know anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts, reach out for help even when the world feels like it's against you, you are valued and worthy of love.

Lost Letters & Regret

In a painful turn of events, this piece is about falling out of love with someone, where it was never truly love to begin with but merely lust.

In an original project/experiment the author would write letters and seal them in envelopes and randomly have someone pick one for themselves when they met someone whom enticed them.

Some of those letters were specifically meant for the mysterious person involved in this piece but the author was intentional about it as well.

The premise behind it is about giving up everything for one person and being rejected but at the same time realizing that everything is not in its right place and never was but a fevered dream of a false hope of love.

The Crying Light

Taken from a personal journal entry, this piece is about [REDACTED] whom the author and said person fell into a companionship of desire and love long ago.

It is also a piece about the day the author got a very saddening call about their health and learned that aforementioned person had given them a viral infection that has no cure to this date.

An eye-opening phone call to receive, it threw the author in a depressive state and to this day still haunts their dreams.

The Difference Between Lust & Love

“The difference between poison and medicine is in the dosage” is a line that inspires this piece about learning the difference between carnal lust and true love.

It shows how even with someone caring for another they can also be faking every emotion and becoming a shell of themselves.

It's a piece about the damages of breaking someone's heart while you have no remorse or regrets about choosing to do so to them, creating a sense of guilt.

It breaks down the truth that even though they may have held no emotions, there was still some kind of chemistry that kept them yearning for each other.

Mourning Sadness (x)

Based off a previous relationship that has since passed, this piece resonates on the concept of waking in the morning and hoping that they wouldn't just leave and never say goodbye.

Also loosely based off a tattoo the artist has on their wrist, it states:

“What Makes A Man's Heart Cease To Be”

It is a question about how someone can “fall out of love” with someone seemingly out of nowhere.

The answer that the author found is that love is a fickle thing but also protective of itself.

In The End? (x)

Looping back on the previously mentioned relationship, this piece tries to delve into the psychosis of feeling betrayal and knives hidden behind backs of a failing relationship.

It tries to shine a light in the darkness of wondering if that person was cheating on them because they would randomly disappear at odd hours of the night with little to no information on where they went or what the reason was for. It left the author with a wonderment of if they were cheating on them behind their back.

The ending of the piece closes the question s with asking if it's a false love where they are correct in their predictions and still choose to put themselves through the gauntlet of betrayed emotions and false love.

Love Letters (x)

Once again returning to that fabled relationship, this is the point we can truly explain what the (x) means after each post:

A large majority of the authors first book was fragments of journal entries but also largely written as a thank you to the proclaimed ex-lover who shall not be named.

As a caveat of publishing this book, they requested to know which parts were about them and which were not, hence the markings at the corners to specify which was meant for their eyes only.

A noteworthy mistake that the author hated having to do because it felt like censorship of their own emotions, they were soon removed from the second printing of the volume.

Rat Race

This piece is a metaphorical construct of looking for love in all the wrong places yet finding a ghost imprint of one another still hiding in the darkness of our lives.

The line that talks about a constant flutter is an homage to the authors fascination with birds and the dances they create when flying about.

Taciturn Satellites

Originally this piece was meant to be a part of the original book but was removed due to personal reasonings but still held a special place in the context of what the book was meant to be.

It is a love letter to the universe asking for forgiveness and learning to understand the inevitability of death and the remorse that it brings with it.

Inspired heavily by the artists favorite singer (City & Colour) as well as taking imagery from unique literature (1Q84) it attempts to create a universe that shows a lost soul begging with the powers that be to grace them with either death or love, but never able to obtain both.

Death Song

Although not fitting with the original context of the book, this piece is about heading warnings and the unknown dangers that lurk in the shadows of men and life itself.

It is a letter to everyone and no one at the same time hoping that they are safe but also to be cautious of the hazards of love and life.

It is a moment of clarity that tries to teach you that to survive, sometimes you must learn to observe the universe around yourself.

Autobiography

An introspective piece written before the original process of creating Death Songs, this piece is part of an older collection of shorts the author was attempting to write.

Albeit it stands alone on itself with the ideas and visual interpretation of a secondary reality, it rings a bell towards the concept of self-worth and creating a world just for oneself to become lost in, but at the same time also exposes that it is merely fantasy towards the end.

A revery of drunken lament from a self-deprecating poet who hated himself so feverishly that looking back with a new perspective, it is a shame that he found out too late in life of the joys of learning to love again.

Memories

Simple and straight forward, this piece tries to show the potential damages of what memories can do to a person by swallowing them whole and drowning them under the pressures of yearning for those moments once again but can never be.

They can be detrimental but also damaging to the soul.

Human Nature

An undated journal entry from years prior, this piece has a place that invokes a sense of existential crisis in the journey to find love.

To find love within oneself, but also learning to be human.

What does “being human” actually mean? No one can answer that question except each man & woman who chooses to pull back the veil of death and human realization of learning to love the ego and ID.

More of a psychological piece about coming to terms with accepting the fate we are dealt but also learning to love yourself.

It also is an attempt at poking fun at religious zealots who shove their dogma down others' throats, drowning them in antiquated ideas of what it means to be human.

Slow Dance

This piece was inspired by an acid trip the author took once in the Rockies of Colorado.

It was their first experience with the drug and the perfect moment of spiritual awakening and observation of the universe.

On the long stretch between Steamboat Springs & Silverthorne, CO they pulled over and traded seats and looked up into the sky and saw the milky way in all its glory (which you can actually see with the naked eye).

In that moment it was an awakening of viewing the world through a new lens and learning to comprehend the ebbs and flows of life.

Reflections In The Mirror

Yet another piece that would have fit had it not been what seemed a repeat of other pieces, it invokes the yearning of wanting to understand human emotions and how people can throw them around so frivolously without care or concern.

The ending is a contradiction of the entire piece hence the reason it was scrapped, but kept as a memento to homage the trials and tribulations of learning to love yourself before you can love someone else first.

Fragments

A roughly written piece that tries to explain the turmoil of physical destruction (such as breaking a bone) and learning to rehabilitate oneself, it attempts to make sense of how can one try to repair themselves even though it feels like nothing will ever be the same as it once was.

Suicide Notes Part I

If You or Anyone You Know Are Having Suicidal Thoughts:

Please Contact The National Suicide Hotline at

800-273-8255

Dead Man's Party

A personal letter to their inner-self, this piece tries to explain how the author would frequently feel like a dead man walking among the living.

It is a testament of attempting to let go of the past and begin to move forward and pushing through the darkness that clutches around them.

It is also about removing empty emotions that serve no purpose anymore, even though they haunt them so viciously.

Faceless God

This piece is enigmatic of the authors religious upbringing of being born Christian and traversing the many religious schools of thought that exist and finally finding themselves questioning the reality of “God”.

A gift presented to themselves as an homage to their upbringing the author purchased a rosary and prayed, hoping for answers, but found none appearing to them.

That is until they realized that they are their own god, a faceless one that exists in the mind. A god that actually taught them that they have the power to save themselves and not from the help of others who offer but with stipulations.

Rabbit Holes (x)

A personal piece that was originally intended for the volume, it was removed but kept as a memento mori of sorts to show the vulnerability of the author and how they chose to expose their flaws and imperfections to someone (the ultimate test of faith).

Broken Parts (x)

A very personal piece that should have personally never seen the eyes of the receiver (x), this piece tries to explain how the author found the most broken parts of themselves in their partner but in a positive sense.

Raised in a broken and abusive home, the way their partner would speak to them truly reminded them of the way their father had treated them.

More can be viewed in Book III: Analog Emotions Volume II on the topic of family history and the trials and tribulations that the author had to experience to get where they are currently.

O' God The Aftermath

A metaphorical piece about overcoming addictions and learning to awaken the inner-self to examine the world through a new lens, this piece is poetic mumbo jumbo in a sense, but it somehow felt seemingly appropriate to keep it as it slightly felt involved with another piece about being fed mouthfuls of poppies.

Suicide Notes Part II

A follow-up piece to the first of many “found” entries of personal depression and days of wanting to end it all, this piece was the final cry for help that the author began to realize that there were people there wanting to help them out, but they didn't fully realize it.

In a moment of clarity they awoke to find themselves being to understand that they have the power to overcome their depression and try to love again.

If You or Anyone You Know Are Having Suicidal Thoughts:

Please Contact The National Suicide Hotline at 800-273-8255

Reserved Spaces

A personal piece written for [REDACTED] during a point of self-reflection, it is an open letter of invitation for them to know that there will always be a space reserved in their heart for them, a home away from home that they learned to love but that person also taught them much more about themselves without realizing it till it was too late.

It shows the binds that tie are thick with love and desire to be together, but the knowledge that it is a forbidden love that can never ultimately happen in this reality or universe.

It shows the vulnerability of how the author is willing to allow themselves to express their emotions so directly and publicly without worry that they are being overtly emotional as being human is meant to be expressive and showcase your emotions.

Note From the Author:

At the time of writing this special volume and reissue on the (nearly) 10th year anniversary of its first publication, the labor of reviewing and re-opening old wounds and unlocking shelved memories was a tedious and extremely painful process for the author.

During the time of writing, they are currently engaged to be married and their partner was placed into hospital care for a spinal injury they had sustained over the year prior. As well as that happening, the COVID-19 pandemic was still raging across the world.

The emotional baggage dumped onto these pages was daunting and almost humiliating at points to recall how young and naïve the author was, blind to the truth in front of them.

The amount of rehashing old relationships and observing them through a new and fresh perspective is inspiring but at the same time a draining endeavor to embark on.

Thank you reader for taking the time to listen to the truths and hidden values that are hidden between these lines and the lives that have crossed paths.

If you are someone who was involved with these memories, I forgive you and I hope you are taking care of yourself and know that this was never an attack or absolution, this is freedom of letting the ghosts that haunt my heart and head to finally find peace for themselves.

May the world give you the strength to move forward and find love, but also that it heals the wounds that we have inflicted upon each other.

To Charles, I love you forever and more, this couldn't have been done without the strength of you supporting me as well as being there for you.

Yours forever, Walter

Appendix II:

Original Artwork/Photos

In this Appendix we will be showcasing some of the authors personal artwork and drawings as well as some of the photographs used to promote and inspired by the pieces written in this special collection.

It gives a true glimpse into the psyche of the author and explores the reality of learning to love death but also love themselves.

Please enjoy this never-before-seen collection of documents that are finally being unsealed.



INTROSPECT & RETROSPECT DUALITY

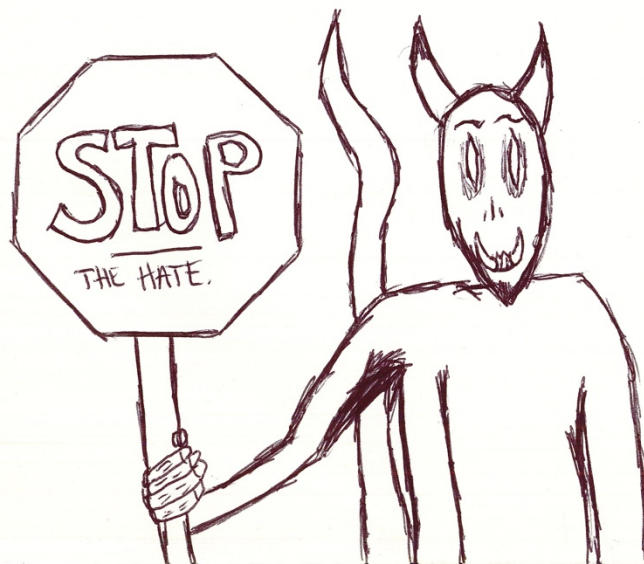


"Some nights, you just need to take a walk to take it all in..." he thinks to himself as he takes a long drag off his cigarette.

Fires of the lighthouse burning in the bay. Waters of the sound sleeping through the day. Ostrich of the night half-buried in the sand, Nearer comes the man, sickle in his hand. Battles in the back seat, Soapbox car Blackbolt lightning car. I don't care who you are. Fires of the lighthouse, Sounds of the guitar, Far beyond a cure, far beneath regard.

DEATH WHERE IS THY STING? IN THE TRAILS OF SUN FISH SAILS AND CURVE STITCH STING? BLACK MASS GHOSTS OF HALF-CHEWED HOSTS, OFF THE HENLOPEN COAST IN THE SALT WATER SPRING.

AND IN THE MORNING, WE REST IN
CORINTHIAN HEADRESS ON COUCHES OF
IVORY, AND WAKE IN THE MOON LIGHT
LIKE BADGERS AT MIDNIGHT, TO MAKE FRIENDS
IN FACTORIES SOMEWHERE...





I AM THE BOY WITH THE BROKEN SMILE & HEART...



AND THE DEVIL
HIMSELF WEPT
TEARS OF
JOY.



Paul
171

TWO DEAD BOYS WENT OUT INTO
THE NIGHT. ONE TO DIE BY ~~THE~~ ~~KNIFE~~

~~AND~~ ONE TO DIE BY THE THREAD



ABANDON
HOPE, ALL
YE WHO
ENTER HERE.

WELCOME
TO THE
NEW
AMERICA.

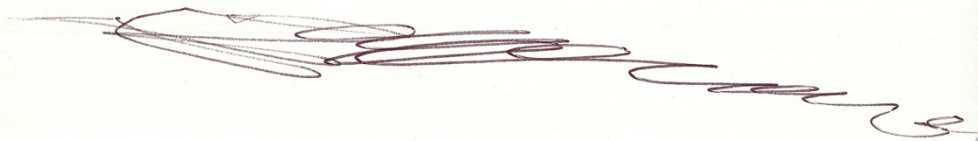
GIVE ME YOUR
TIRED, YOUR HUDDLED
MASSES YEARNING TO
BREATHE FREE, THE WRET-
CHED REFUSE OF YOUR
FEETING SHORE. SEND TH-
ESE, THE HOMELESS TEMPEST-
TOSSED TO ME: I LEFT MY LAMP
BESIDE THE GOLDEN
DOOR.

 17

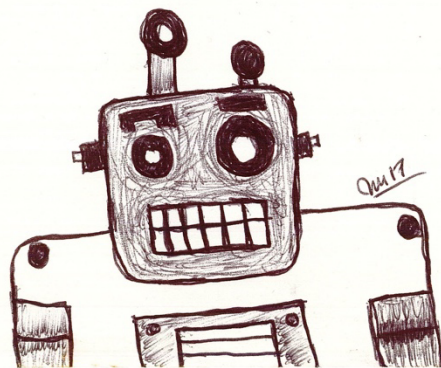


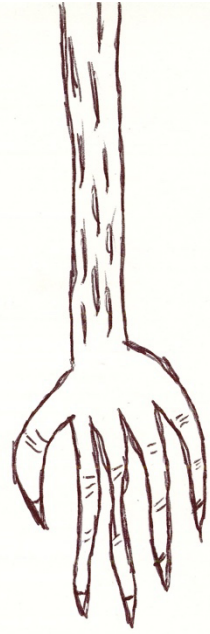
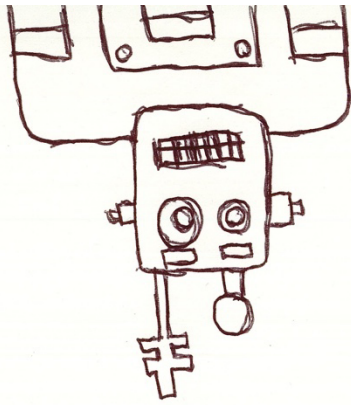
AMERICA
HOME OF THE
BRAVE & THE
BEAUTIFUL

IT'S LIKE ME ON
DOPPERS BUT MORE
SUCCESSFUL



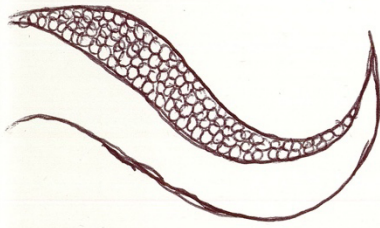
There's magical things hidden within these words, that
are penned before you, wonderful things full of a deep
rooted sadness. A feeling you get when you listen
to a song you love, or a movie you obsess over
so much. It is a sense of amazement. And in
the morning magnificent, yet in the evening
mysterious. How far can these words tumble from
the coffee stained teeth and vomit stained
beats of that lonely writer? How long can he
keep his demons at bay before they finally con-
sume him? It's a perception of bewilderment and
insanity. The familiar taste of whiskey mashes
his mouth water, is it all just one giant
dream, or a hellish nightmare of how he's avoided
most of his life crashing down steadily around
him, due to his own insanity? Values that hold
no meanings, dropping like rain from the sky. As
if these words were lines of starry and refrains
falling from trees. Dead and no longer beautiful.

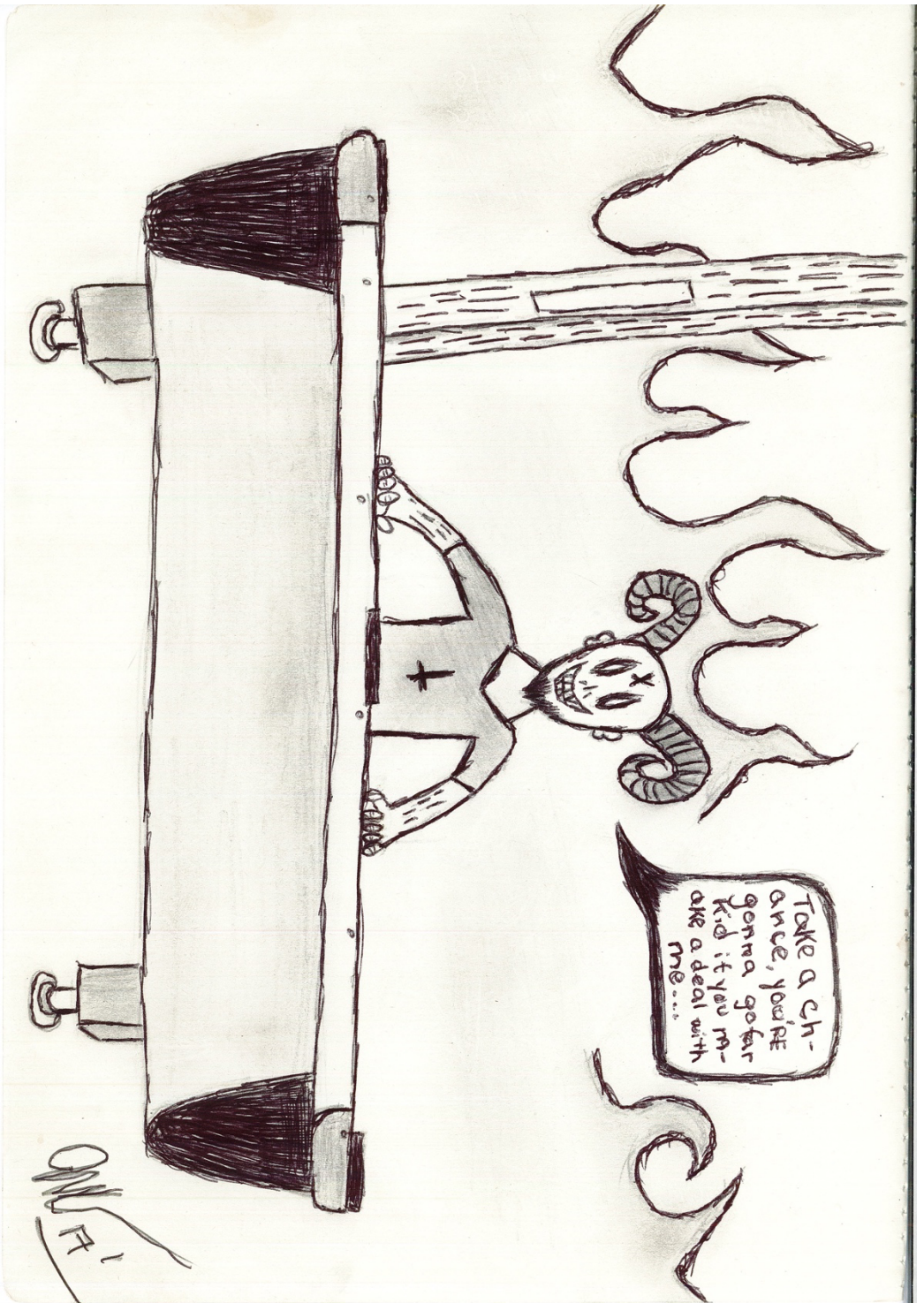




The Gongs
all Here!

Quize





QMS/1

Don't you ever wonder about
life's stuff? How you know one
person, and then ~~poof~~ they're gone!
Short-lived, or temporary, as
we call it. But then. Honestly,
sometimes it's not even your
decision. Hmm.... As I sit in
this bar, and hear so much
contradiction around me... I must
wonder, will it last though?



Paint me
like one of
your french
whores.

JAH 17

am g.
/

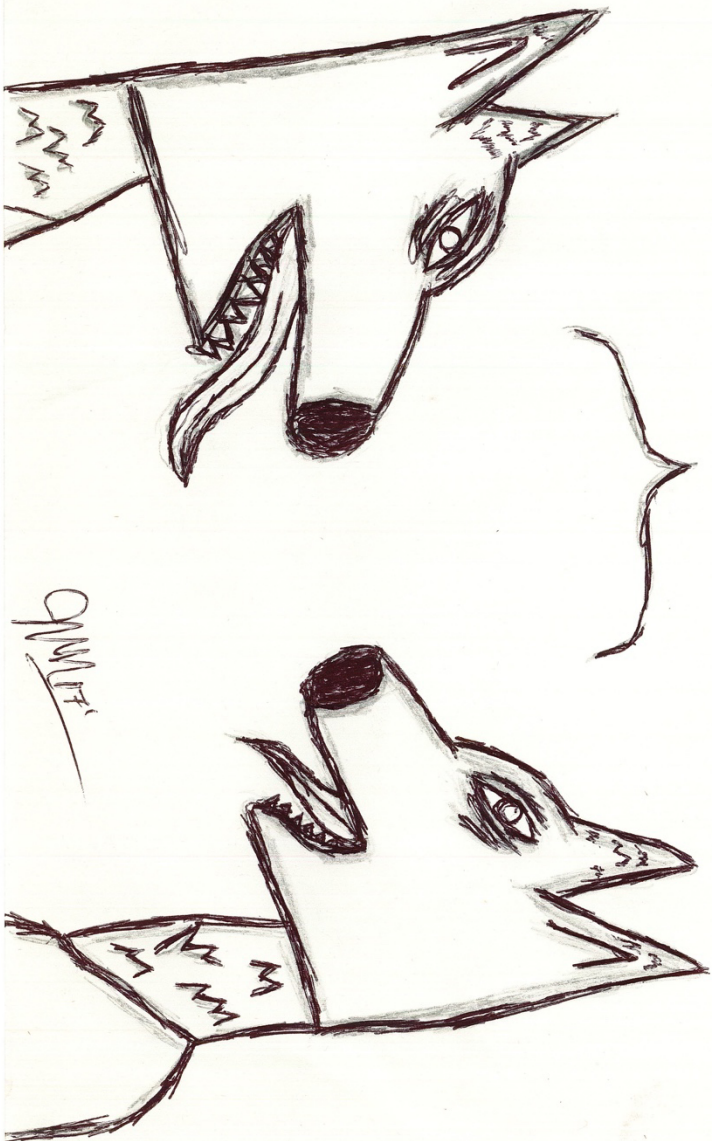
Self Reflections 2017.



July 17

"I'm what you would
consider "one of those artistic
folks".

You made purple out of
chandeliers.



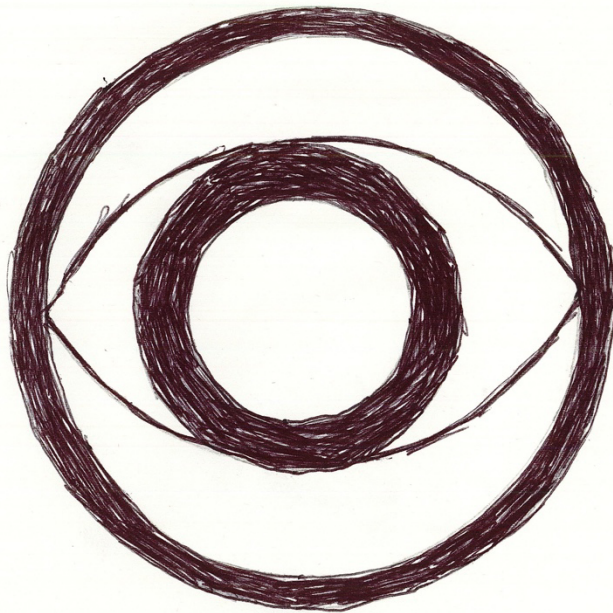
TAKE THAT SHOT. IT'LL MAKE YOU
FEEL POWERFUL...

THE DEVIL & GOD ARE RAGING A
WAR WITHIN ME, AND I'M AT A LOSS
FOR WORDS ON WHO WILL BE THE
ULTIMATE VICTOR. PLEASE, MAKE IT STOP.



Jim
171

ALL HAIL THE



MIGHTY GLOW CLOUD.

ALL HAIL.

QMM
12'

I GAVE YOU
MY HEART & YOU
THREW IT AWAY.



John 1/21

COME FEED FROM MY
MOUTH Children. I Will NOURISH
YOU.



MOTHER
KNOWS
BEST. *Jan 14*

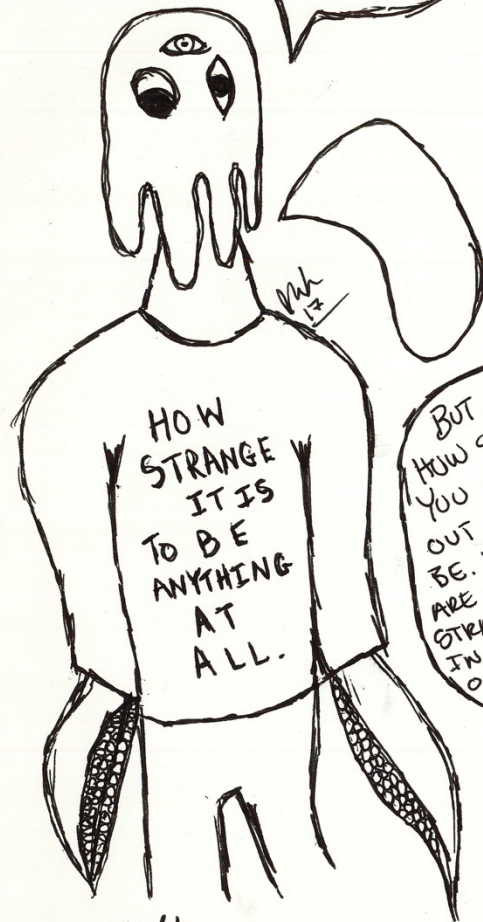
I'VE GOTTA GO, I'VE GOT THE
WORST FUCKING SPINS.



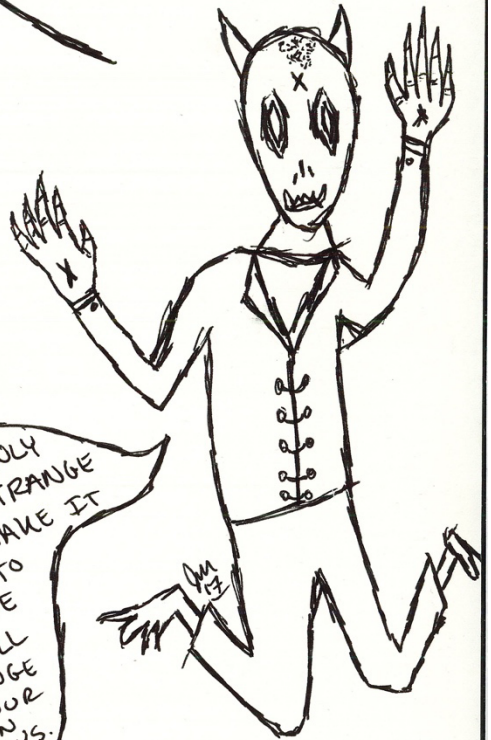
John
Fry

A thousand words, a sincere goodbye, the shaking of leaves. Are we left with heavy eyes and a desire for an invitation so cold and empty?

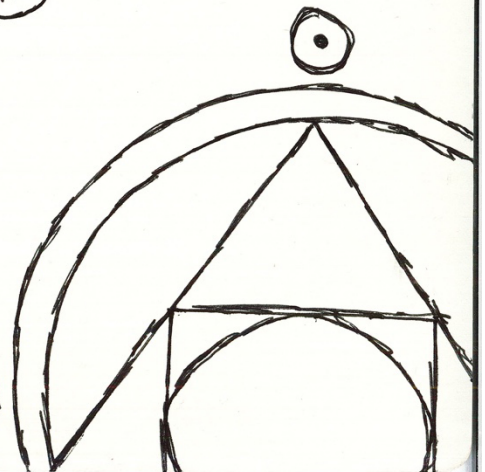
BUT YES, HOW STRANGE IT IS. HOW STRANGE AT ALL.



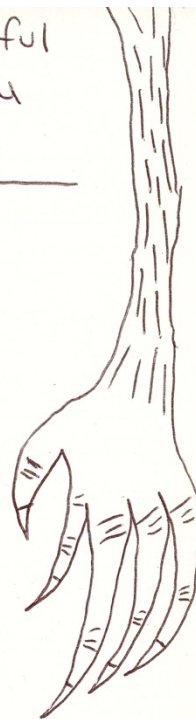
BUT ONLY HOW STRANGE YOU MAKE IT OUT TO BE. WE ARE ALL STRANGE IN OUR OWN WAYS.



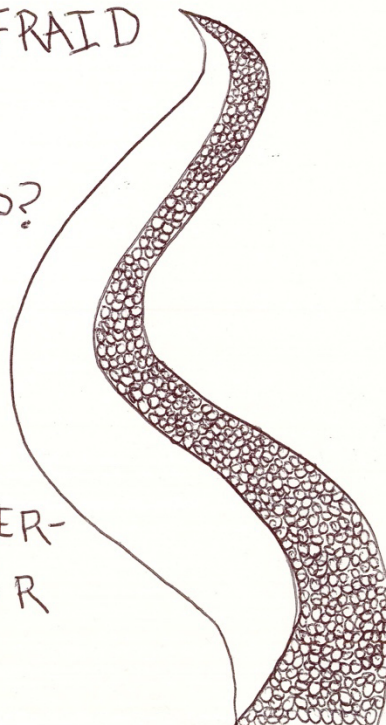
The endless
Collective Values on
the aspect of
being strange.



"There are magical things, wonderful
and magical things waiting for you
to find." - TANIS



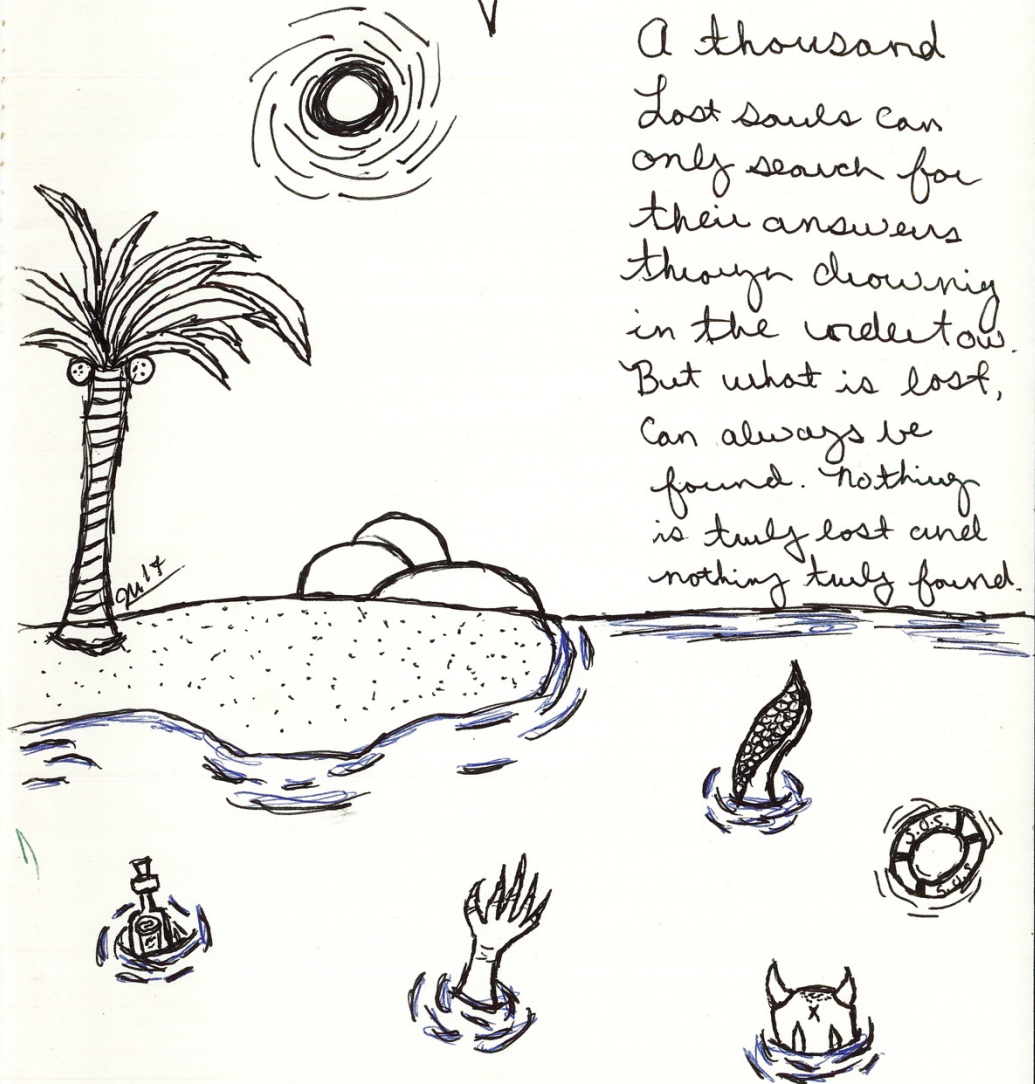
DEAR STRANGER,
ARE YOU AFRAID
OF THE
DEMONS IN
YOUR HEAD?
OR WHAT
ABOUT THE
MONSTERS
HIDDEN UNDER-
NEATH YOUR
BED?



Ami

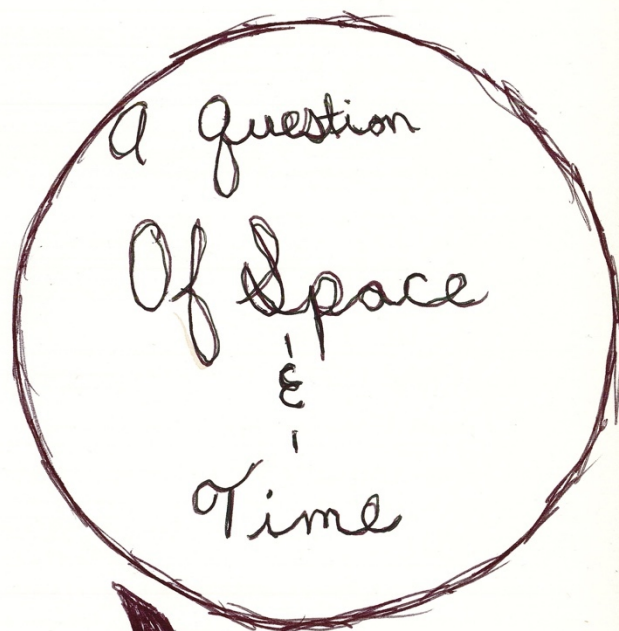
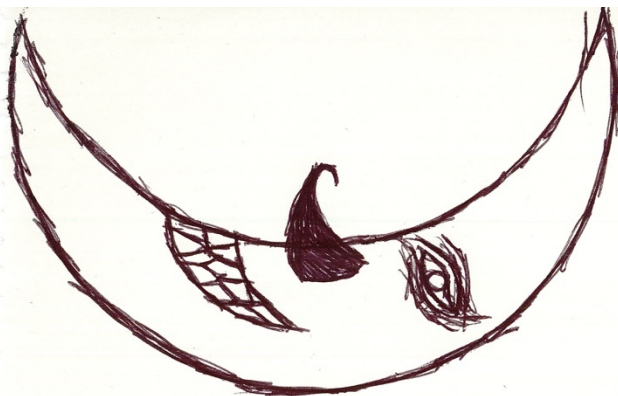
There is a time to forgive and a time to forget. The choice lies in your hands old Soul.

- IT'S TIME TO MOVE. 1/6/17



A thousand
Lost souls can
only search for
their answers
through drowning
in the undertow.
But what is lost,
Can always be
found. Nothing
is truly lost and
nothing truly found.

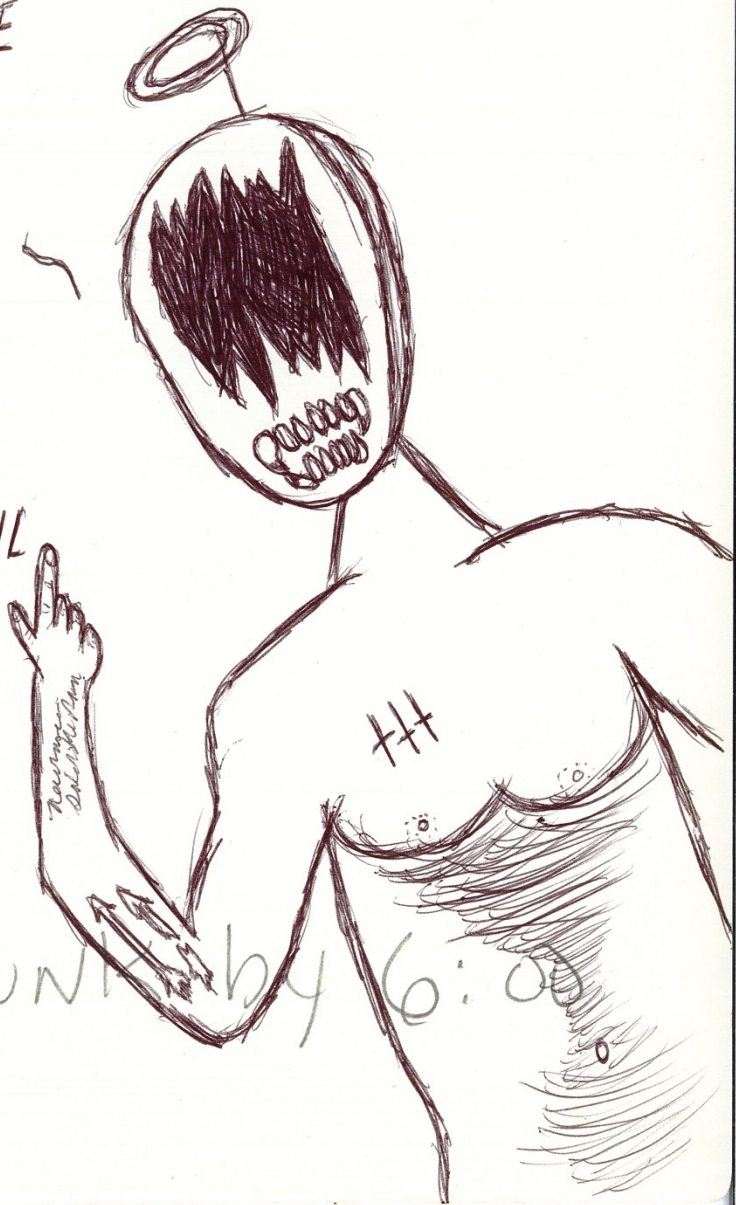
A thousand pieces of me, lost in the Sea.



BAD GIRL...

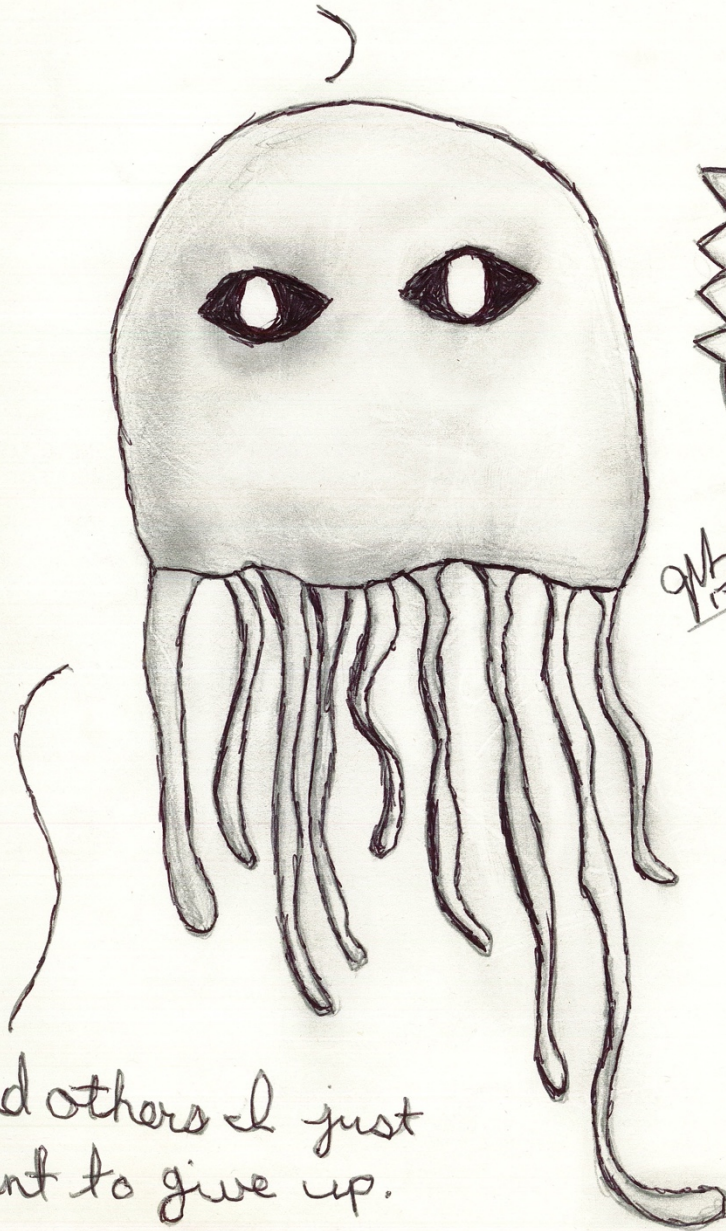
I WAS THE
SHINING
GOLDEN
GOD YOU
PRAYED TO
AT DAWN,
HOPING FOR
SOME VENGEFUL
FEX.

Feb 17



DRUNK by 6:00

Some days are just easier
than others I guess.



SUPER
FAST
JELLY
FISH!

9/11/17

And others I just
want to give up.

Qm
17.17

WHY ARE
YOU SO AFRAID
OF TAKING A
CHANCE
JARED?

DO WHAT MAKES
YOU STRONGER,
& FUCKING
POWERFUL.



I SAW THE BEST MINDS OF MY
GENERATION DESTROYED BY MADNESS,
STARVING HYSTERICAL NAKED, DRA-
GOING THEMSELVES THROUGH THE
NEGRO STREETS AT DAWN LOOKING
FOR AN ANGEL FIX.

ANGEL HEADED HIPSTERS BURNING
FOR THE ANCIENT HEAVENLY CONN-
ECTION TO THE STARRY DYNAMO IN
THE MACHINERY OF NIGHT.

WHO POVERTY AND
TATTERED AND HOLLOW
EYED AND HIGH SAT
UP SMOKING IN THE
SUPERNATURAL DARK-
NESS OF COLD-WATER
FLOODS FLOATING ACR-
OSS THE TOPS OF CITIES
CONTEMPLATING JAZZ.
WHO BARRED THEIR
BRAINS TO HEAVEN
UNDER THE
EL AND SAW
MOHAMMED
ANGELS
STAGGERING
ON TEN-
EMENT
ROOFS
ILLUMINATED

Allen

Linsberg

-Howl



Allen

characters; a collection

copyright two-thousand fourteen
house silver publishing



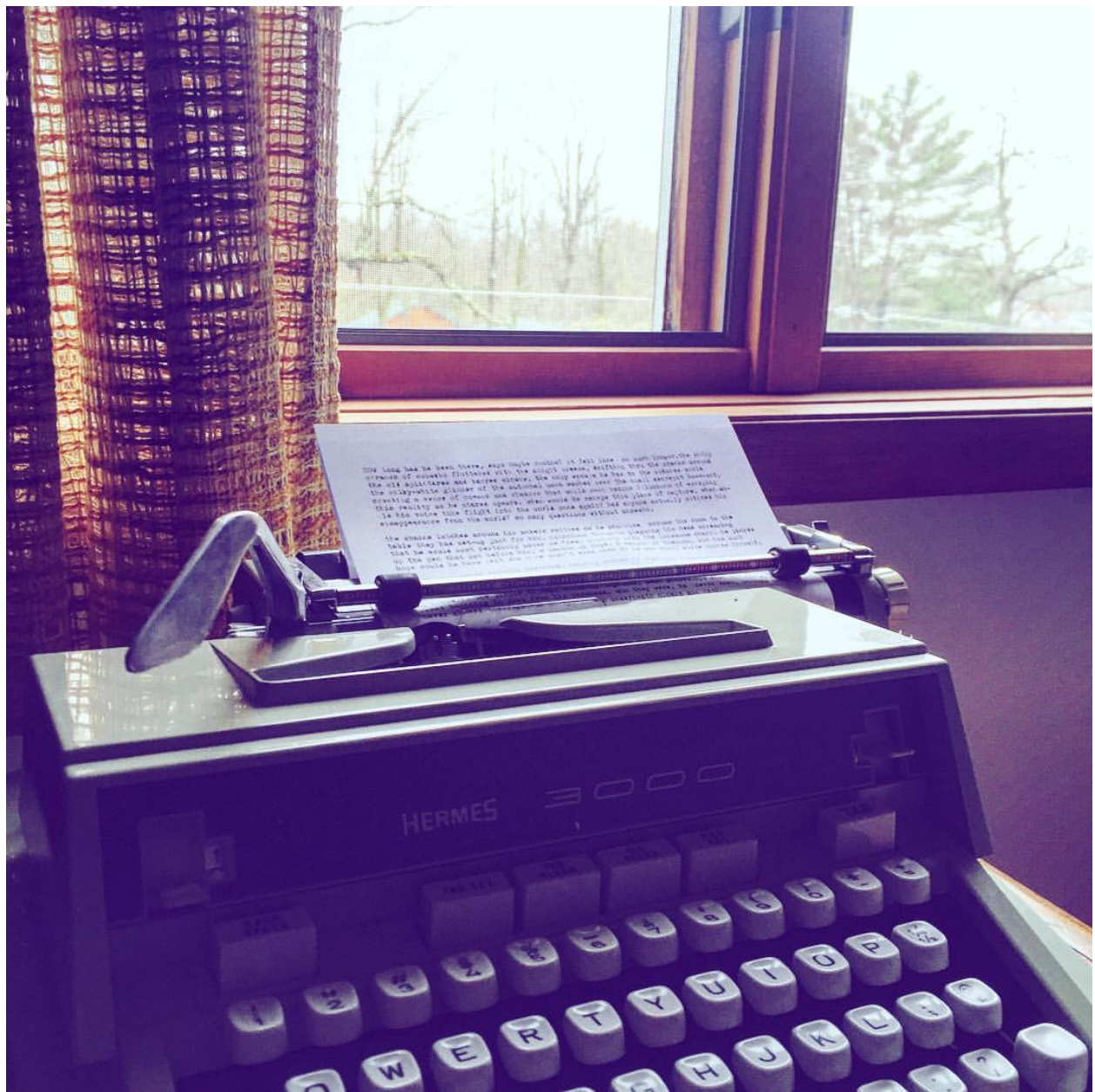
Dear Stranger (Letters Home)

Fall 2015



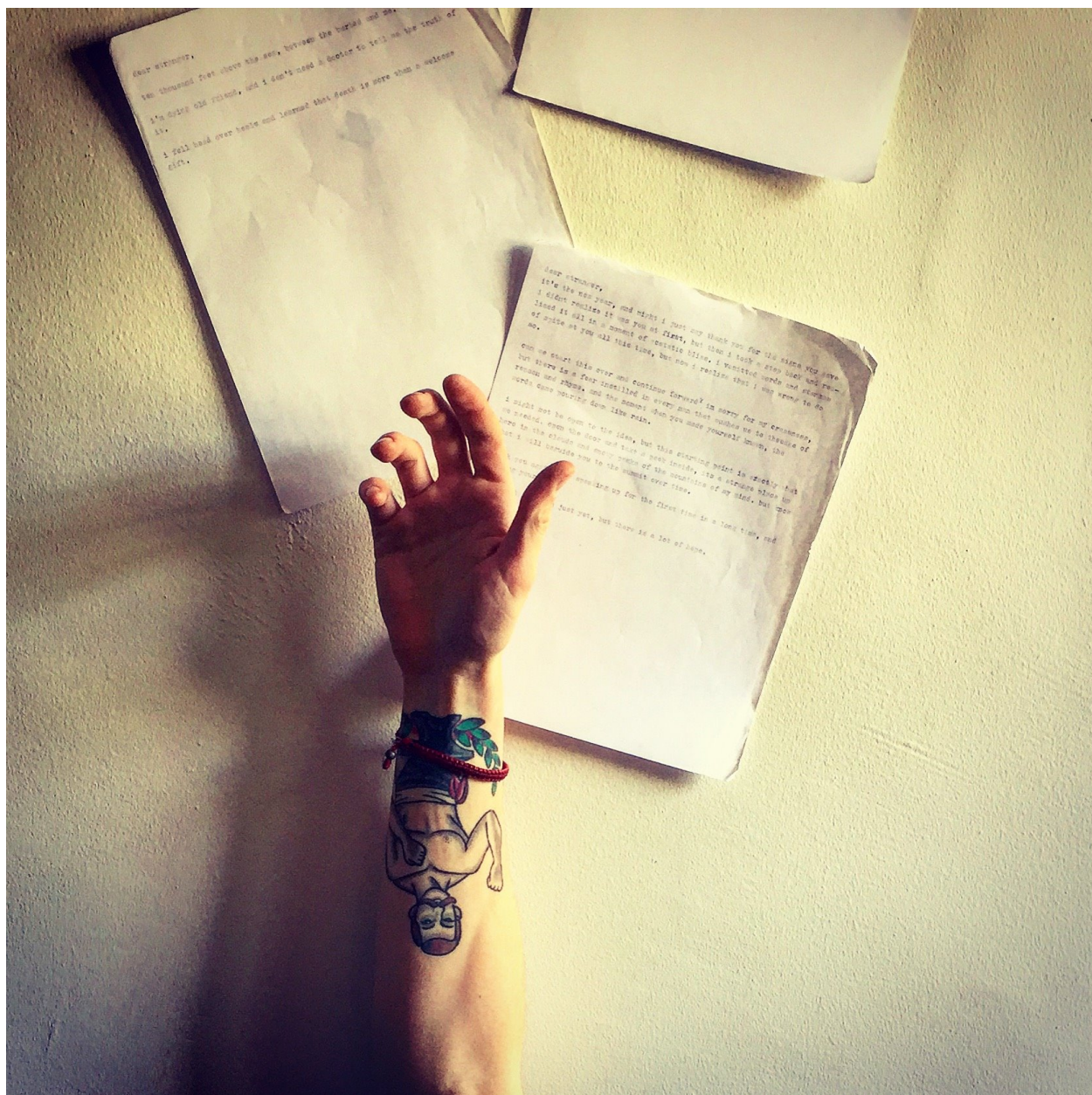






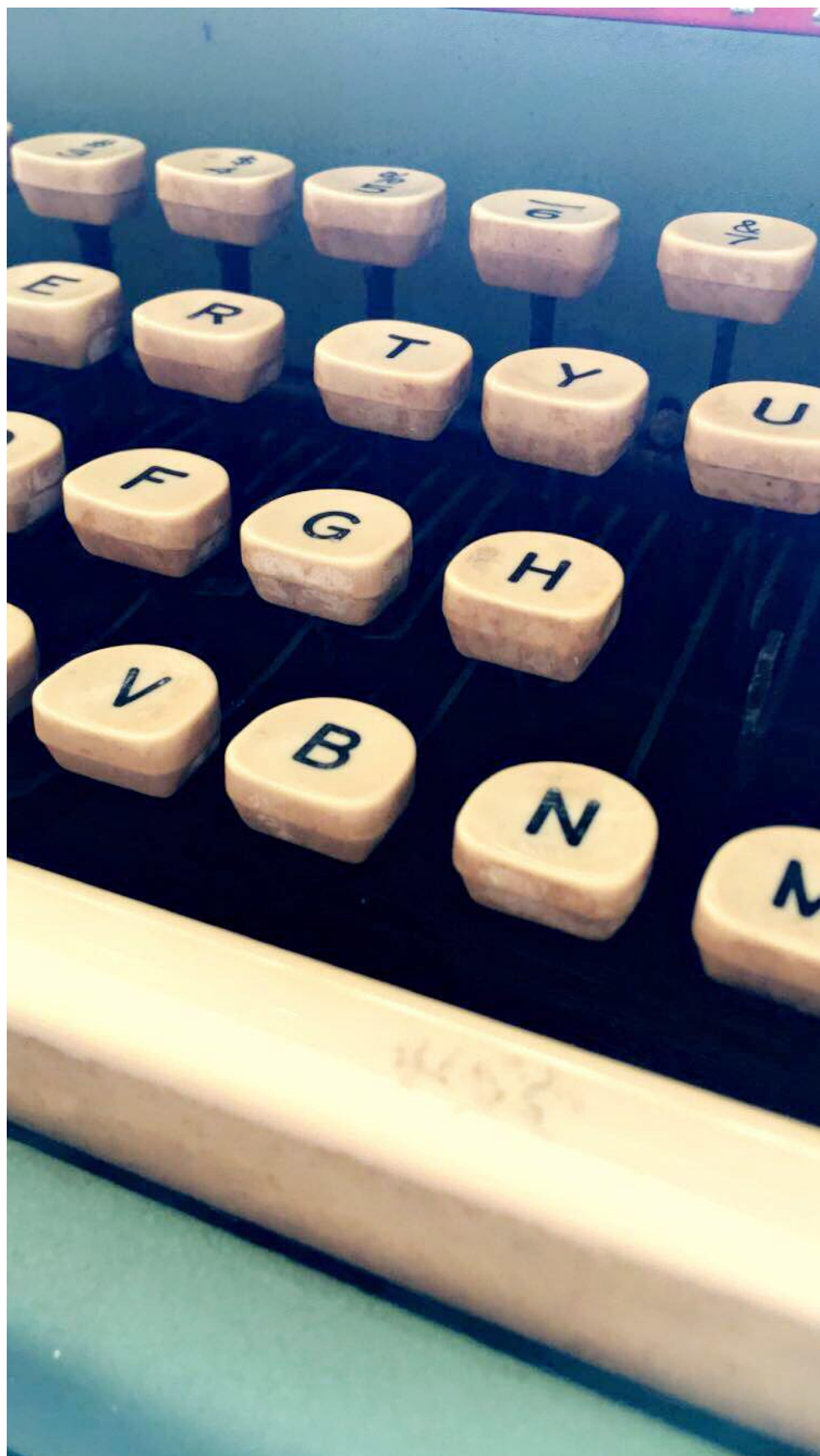




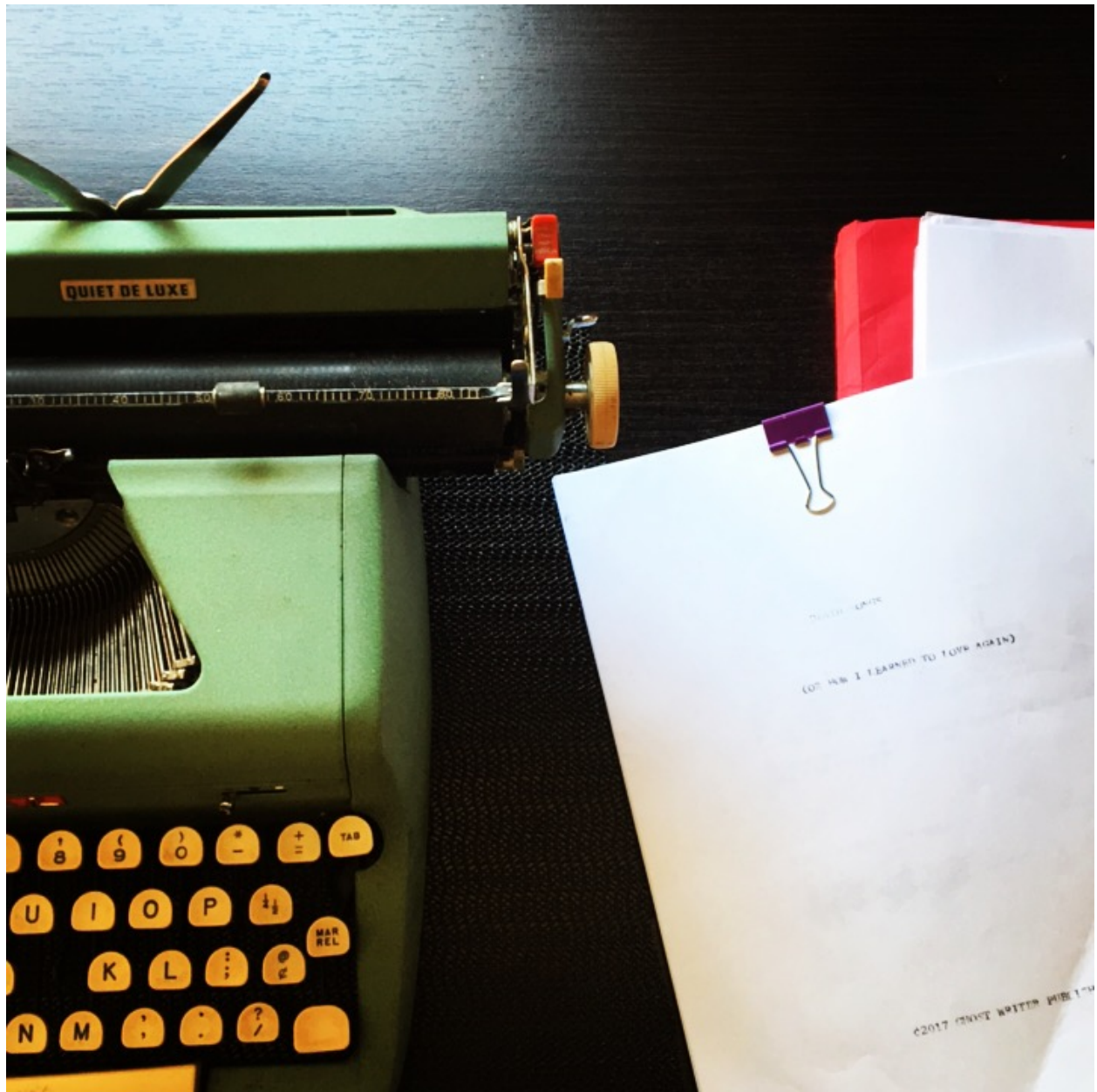


deep sympathy,
Ten thousand feet above the sea, between the horizon and the
it's dark and cold, and I don't need a heater to tell me the truth of
it.
I fell back overboard and learned that death is more than a welcome
gift.

deep sympathy,
It's the way you, and what I just say thank you for the same you gave
I didn't realize it was you at first, but then I took a step back and re-
fined it all in a moment of artistic bliss. I wanted words and images
of grace at you all this time, but now I realize that I was wrong to do
so.
Can we count this over and continue forward in mercy for our weakness,
but there is a fear instilled in every man that makes me to tremble of
regret and shame, and the moment when you made yourself known, the
words were yours: Don't like rain.
I might not be open to the idea, but this morning rain is exactly what
we needed, even the dew and the sun today, it's a strange thing to
have in the clouds and many more of the mountains of my mind, but you
will decide how to the sunset over time.
I was up for the first time in a long time, and
just you, but there is a lot of love.







i met someone tonight who
i want to explore.

i want to trace every freckle
on their body,
creating a galaxy of stars
upon their flesh.

connecting every dot into
constellations.

but i know that can never be.

but there are stars worth fi-
nding, and i want to disco-
ver myself in someone else.

Let's go down to church and repent our sins and
cleanse our ill spirits of these impoverished thoughts of
indulgence.
And by church, I mean to say the nearest bar that we
can wash our mouths with cheap booze and lessons of
learning to love again once more.
Let's go down to the old oak tree and bind our hands
together in a ceremony that will tie us together, forever,
as death eats us alive. But the ferryman will never let us
pass into the other side, because we have unfinished
business.

There may be secrets between us sailors, but
sometimes those secrets are better kept together hidden
in the sea.
I'm going to paint you a picture of utter disgust and
shock & terrify you, something that
will stick to your name.

Each of you in a shoebox locked away for years
needed to think about who and what we were.
Believed love could blossom, and all that
friendship.

It's a rat race of emotions that
I fully understand what is happening.
Hints of curiosity.

Jealousy, dismay and regrets.
Erected in your name.
Days of lavender & sage.

Yet, I still love you.

And it hurts to say those words.
Yet again.
Let's drink with our weapons exposed.
To show how intent we are on committing a n

A death in the family, a small stain of blood.
Forever left to fade over years and remind us
fateful day.
The day the music died and lovers ends began

A somber ritual of mourning will not be held, for
worth noting would be in attendance.
Soft rains will fall, like tears that drain from dry
lie of what we had expected to be.

there are secrets between us sailors,
navigators of the sky,
the we need to talk about you & i.

but only when we are ready and capable,
of truly saying one thing.

that we are in this together.



A Very Special Thank You From Me to You Reader
Learning to Love is a True Test and this journey is far from over.

Love, Walter

Appendix III:

From The Vault

Welcome to The Vault, a collection of never-before-seen pieces of collections that were believed to be lost to time as well as some pieces that were initial inspiration points that carved the way for Death Songs to become a reality.

We have diligently organized each collection in its own respective context, albeit some may be jumbled together due to lack of memory on which goes where.

We hope you have enjoyed this special edition thus far and enjoy the ending that ties the creation to the 5th year anniversary of this collection of heartbreaking but also emotional poems.

(Author Note: We attempted to organize these collections as best as we could, so some portions may be missing content or seem like its jumping from one point to the next due to missing pieces that are no longer in our possession.)

characters; a collection
(of sketches of life on the water)

copyright two-thousand fourteen
ghost river publishing

chapter one: dusk and her embrace

the haunting veil of midnight and her sinister moves had just begun to creep across the starless sky that fateful night. no one would notice the madness moving ever closer to their dull little town, a madness so destructive, that not even those who survived, tell the tale. although, as most ghost towns are, the stories become ever lost with time and false information added to weave the tale deeper and darker, no one can ever fully detail the final hours that befall the small town in the mountains, until now.

the sound of screaming and laughter hung heavy in the air as i stepped through the weathered and splintering bar doors, slightly damp from the morning dew. i had heard of this town on my travels across the land, from many sailors and harbor-men alike, they spoke highly of the women and the houses of ill-repute. a festering ground of sin and sloth, a modern day sodom & ghamorrah. a town destined to burn. no one had noticed me enter, n an easy feat mastered over years,. there were men playing cards, pistols laid out as a symbol of authority and temptation, women dancing seductive and sultry. in the air lingered the scent of stale tobacco and dry old whiskey. there was a heaviness in the air, a feeling of tension and despair, so heavy that those with a mind still intact, could sense as i walked into the room.

suddenly all eyes were on me, the room silent as the night outside. no one could possibly understand why i was there.

chapter five:the broken boy

"traumatic fracture to the scaphoid bone with minimal displacement." that's the official diagnosis they gave. a loss of limbs and ability that cost more than just comfort.

i never thought i would break my wrist, and the event was completely unforeseeable. although i learned that there are only two kinds of people in this world i can thoroughly say i hate. skiers and bikers. no offense to any reading who may fall in said categories, but they infuriate me to the worlds end.

it has been roughly six and a half weeks since my accident, and it has been a slow path to recovery. a very painful and tiresome path overcome with disrespect from others in understanding what happened. i broke myself, physically, not mentally, although who can tell which comes first?

although sometimes being broken improves your skills at life, giving you an upperhand at conquering somethings and failing only at others. it also gives a new sense of living life, changing daily routine into something that requires more thought and adjustments to life.

have you ever broken a bone? ever lost a limb for a small time? only a temporary setback in life. or have you ever been broken in another sense? so shattered into a thousand delicate pieces you felt like nothing mattered?

the broken are the most easily fixed, but the fixed are the most easy to repair

whether it be physically or mentally broken, it still made you. YOU. a human. a physical thing, something capable of seeing, smelling, tasting, touching and hearing. we may not understand it all, this great mystery called life, or anything that follows with it. death/birth,

PRESS RESTART.

chapter two: the fearless fighter

the most important question is, are you a fighter or a lover? the passive or the aggressive? he is the fighter, strong and filled with the weight of life, he fought until the day he died, never comprehending the aspect of being a lover, he would head running headlong into the void, leaving nothing but fear itself, reminding himself that he was strong, he would lose some battles and being the victor in others.

he lost everything worth fighting for at a young age, but taught himself that no matter what, everything is worth fighting for, even if you risk losing it.

standing tall, with a weight on his shoulders, like Atlas, he took the weight of the world on his shoulders, a burden to bear till he died. he was young and capable of overcoming obstacles that came his way, throwing punches left and right at his enemies, a prizefighter, a fighter of love, to protect the hearts of the broken, a savior.

he gave everything up for love once, and was beaten, broken down and left to die, he overcame himself and beat his own fears, but learned to never trust anyone whom he would fall in love with. he performed his own autopsy on himself, destroying himself and rebuilding from the ground up, a new man, once the love now the fighter, a robin hood to the broken and defeated, he would give them something to fight for, even though he never understood what he was fighting for, a fighter with no end in sight, but only the feeling of knowing he must protect what he once knew, a dying art of protecting and saving.

but who would be his protector, be his saving grace, if he gave up love? who would be his butcher and end his suffering, and misery? who would be his angel in the dark protecting him from harm? he was alone, unaided, but alone.

he had a brother, an exact, but not complete copy of himself, the writer. two opposites born as one. he strayed from the path of searching and found himself defeating his own demons instead of crowning them in the nightly ritual of drowning them in whiskey, alone at the bar. he and his brother were both very close at a young age, but what time does to everyone and everything, they faded apart from each other. only meeting at times of need, like the sparrow who only flies north to escape the creeping winter season. his brother would tell tales of his heartache as each moment passed that he would become ever more drunk after each moment of sleeping his whiskey.

they both shared a fair deal of personal demons, but the writer had more demons than the fighter. he was always searching for love, even if he would find himself searching for it at the bottom of an empty bottle. the moment he saw his brother touch the thing that was slowly destroying him, he swore to never be so engulfed into something. although any great writer is always a natural drunk something alive is distilled in their blood since birth. even being a fighter, he gave up hope for his brother after many attempts at struggling to pull him through his times of need. both parents gone and both of them apart for great deals of time, the moments they would regain, sometimes of great peace for both.

although his brother would speak of his loves, he would have no words to exchange. he gave up love years ago. he was never fond of the vulnerability of being so exposed to someone that they could hurt him. he never understood, listening to the stories his brother would tell him of love, positive emotions to something he never understood. he wondered why his brother could always cry when he would tell him his stories, wonder why he would allow himself to become so hurt by someone that it would tear him apart and create this shell of a man. a lonely man, so lost in a search that had no real end.

chapter one: the lonely writer

mark the date and leave your calendar blank, ^{it's} ~~leave your birthday~~. a child of summer, of warmth and sunny days at the beach. although he never enjoyed the warmth, tending to enjoy the bitter days of winter, caught in storms of snow always made him feel loved. (he never knew but he wanted to be ^{when} he grew up, always having a fleeting dream of words painted on walls, words he never knew or would understand, till he was older. a writer. the oldest of a generation left to tell stories from ages past. to say what became of him, is a story of sadness and misery.)

born June fifteenth, nineteen eighty-nine, with a family of siblings and two parents, he was a miracle child, born to die, but strong enough to survive. not born alone, he was brought into the world with an additional counterpart, a duplicate, but not identical. two children, one born of death, the other a healthy child. a connection between two people, invisible, yet fully connected. their mother was still a youth at the age of twenty six when she brought them into this falling empire, a society still shaken from the depression. she loved them, until the day she died, even though there were problems in a paradise of their own creation.

most of his childhood ^{was} spent hiding in barns and becoming lost in fields with his counterpart, his mother had left while they were young. their father being a drunk, an abuser, and a deserter. they were left to fend for themselves at an age no one should be left alone. he had other siblings, a sister, a little brother and a brother he knew existed, but never met, even to this day. a wolf with no pack to run and feed off their kills with. no den to nest at night, although ~~they~~ they always ran together even being assinated, bound by blood. blood runs thicker than wine, but blood also dries and stains, leaving memories and a terrible taste.

his father left at the age of twelve, for a woman he met from the north. his mother lived far away, in a place of isolation and fear of being killed by savage animals, a place he would come to know as home for most of his youth. to recall much of his past in the flatlands, fields of corn stalks taller than him, and the stench of manure lingering in the air, is a difficult task to explain, even for myself reader, as it happened so many years ago, that it is a vague recollection of memories that seem like nothing more than a stale dream of scents that creep in the dark to make one homesick.

when his father left, the young children separated to different members of their crumbling family. the twins kept together, and the youngest being offered to their mother first. they were put to work to make their earnings to return to a place far away, to be once again reunited in life with their mother. over the years in the flatlands, they lived a simple and sheltered life, void of love and compassion, filled with the feeling of longing for something better. forced to believe things that did not feel like their own, they were led like sheep to a slaughter to have their necks slit. escape was being sent to the isolated place. a place of wonder and amazement, but also unimaginable things.

this place could make or break them, leaving them whole or broken like china dolls, their faces painted pale with rosy cheeks. the moment they stepped foot off their airplane, was the moment of ultimate decision. our young writer so afraid of death and heights, he cried himself to sleep. clutching the arm rail as if though it was the only thing holding him back from wanting to be held by someone. neither of them knew what love was, or the warmth of human embrace. ~~loss~~ was something of second-nature to them, not knowing what the next move would be. like a game of chess, most of their pawns scattered across the board, their queens and kings stuck in a stalemate. so many changes that they ~~could~~ not understand what the next move ~~would~~ hold,

could

would

the first time he picked up a pen was the moment he moved his king to take the queen. at first a mixture of random memories and things he would read elsewhere, he began to understand ~~WHAT~~ ^{WHAT} it was he needed to ~~write~~ ^{write}. a story of life, of love, of loss, of despair, of human ~~emotion~~ ^{EMOTION} ~~WRECK~~ ^{WRECK}. at the moment he picked up a pen, he became an assassin, armed with the ~~weapon~~ ^{weapon} of words, a savior to some, an angel of death to others.

now, at the age of twenty-five, he sits in a coffeehouse writing love letters and address to no one but himself. hoping that one day he can understand the one word he never was taught to understand. a word stricken from his vocabulary, a simple four letter word with such depth and heart it pains him.

love.

the loneliest witer, drinking himself into a stupor nightly in hopes of easing the pain of living. he once experienced love, one of such pain and hurt, that it still affects him to this moment. an unrequited love, only told behind closed doors to people he does not know, except for one night, and only one night. a lonely writer and his unfinished love. desperately searching for that feeling he once felt, it escapes him each passing day. only when he drinks can he feel loved. he becomes vulnerable and exposed to the world, letting his guard down for a swift and deadly attack on his heart, still bleeding from two years before. never knowing the love of a woman, he only knew the strong touch and warmth of love from a man.

a man can love, but not be loved ~~he~~ ^{he} believed ~~an oxymoron, a contradiction.~~ although once ~~he~~ ^{he} was loved, with the feeling of being infinite, more vast than the expanse of space and time. time is something that changes people, making the heart grow fonder, or slowly destroying it. time is never on your side when you are a writer, the seconds tick by as you try to form lines about what needs to be said, or what has become. when time stops, what becomes of everything?

spending lonely nights in bars drinking alone, you meet new people, but also lose yourself each and every night. you lose a small piece of what you once were, another memory fading as your drinks become stronger. he did this for nights on end, wishing to find the answers at the bottom of a bottle. you can never find answers without first asking questions. but what questions do you ask, and who do you ask them to. then they know not how to even answer their own. he questioned himself every night, looking to the stars for answers, that never show themselves in the dark.

sailing in the dark isn't smart kid. monsters come out in the night and knives are wielded from behind backs to only be stabbed into your own. although the dark can be a comforting place, fears fueled by the unknown, he preferred the chilly nights to the sunny days, just like his loathing of the summer to the winter. a season of cold wanting warmth to survive. survival being a natural skill, he learned what it meant to survive by his own creation.

one time when he was twelve, he became lost. in the thickest part of the woods he prayed to a god that doesn't exist to him. finding his way, stumbling through thickets of branches as broken as himself, he stumbled through the expanse of trees, finding his way beguiled by the sun, he learned what it meant to live.

to live is equal as to die.

and he will live to die with a tale to tell to no one. a tale of struggle and loneliness, a tale everyone has to tell. a tale of past love, hurt, fear, longing and loss. a tale that will fall on deaf ears. a tale of the lonely writer.

Chapter fifteen: Walter Red

he has no actual name, only an idea of who he is, based on rumors about the mystery of himself, for he is neither alive nor dead. he lives alone in an abandoned house at the end of town, high on the hill, where the crows came from their torn apart scarecrow friends overseeing the land. a rare sight to see when he came to town, no one ever saw his face, only the colour of his hat, a red as crimson, dressed in a long coat made of wool in the winter, and of feather in the spring. when he would come down from his secret little house, all of what he asked for was left in a box at the footstern of the town statue, that stood at the center of town, a peculiar place for a matter of fact, but no one would go near the square during the time they knew he would be in daylight, but little did they know, he slunk around the city at night, watching the back-streets and corners become the playground of the night life.

no one ever questioned what he did in the secrecy of his own home, but they should have, for something was building in that house, a terrible creature. although saying that it was a creature is far-fetched, for he was not building a creature, but something closely related to it. a writer uses his skills of words to create monsters and enemies of their own ideal. he was creating a monster of those surrounding him, to understand his own questions about himself. an analytical collection of experiences, secrets, emotions and ideals.

something she found astounding, like the time he witnessed the baker having an affair with his kitchen assistant in the bakery after hours, while his wife slept upstairs soundly with their two year old child. or the time he witnessed the murder of an innocent child by his school friends down by the riverbank where the sound of his screams were drowned underneath the tide of the babbling brook, a mystery still unsolved, but solved. although sometimes secrets need to remain a secret until the perfect moment to expose them. he witnessed the transgressions of the town week after week, and found it astonishing to see them go to their chapels made of stone, and pray to a god he didn't believe to forgive them of their sins they thought forgivable. amusing and disgusted, he would laugh under his breath as he left the city limits and watch his breath form clouds of smoke in the night as he would take a drag from his cigarette.

his box of supplies would be regular, but sometimes hold a few unusual requests the merchant owner would tell the town.

- a carton of cigarettes
- a bottle of bourbon
- assortments of fruit and vegetables
- breads and cheese
- ink (something he found peculiar)
- blank journals
- newspapers (some dating back months prior)

he would leave an envelope filled with funds to cover more than a few months worth of expenditures, with a simple list of items with dates they needed to be dropped. the location was meant to be the statue in its town plaza, always. although with people and being curious, some would wait around midnight just to be able to catch a simple glimpse of him. eyes so drawn over with sleep, they would only catch a glimpse of his hat as he stepped back into the shadows of the midnight hour. they never chased him, for there was a fear of harm about him, even though he never killed an animal, nonetheless a simple insect.

the speculations our simple-minded town folk perceived were far from truth, their views shrouded in mystery of a man they

they could only sense a danger about him, one that felt menacing and malicious with ill intent, although he wore a shroud of mystery around himself to create this illusion.

enter the interior of the house where he created his final masterpiece, a dark lit hallway with paint peeling from the walls, and wood splintering from mold and mildew of years from exposure to the elements. he bought the house from an old man who no one knew existed, they only knew of the house itself, silently rotting above the city twilight, a looming danger in the distance. he was a kind and gentle man, who lived his final days while walter set-up his office in the furthest room of the house. his personal belongings never invading the original space of the old man, he gave him respect and cared for him, learning secrets from the old caretaker.

the old man was a writer as well, a very famous one, who fled from the public view after the release of his final and most beautiful work, one that shall not be revealed my friend. he voiced strong opinions on life and revealed secrets he had unearthed from living a life that brought him to far off destinations and remote islands with tribes no one has ever heard of. journals upon journals adorned the bookshelves of the makeshift library he had created by himself. he had no children, as his wife had died while giving birth to their son. a tragic day he never forgot, he took care of the boy and read him stories from his books, and indulged him in nightmares and dreams of worlds that actually existed. far off destinations that only he had ever stumbled upon, places that some men would be executed finding, but he knew dead languages and created connections that lasted lifetimes, leaving his memories with the people he met, for one day down the road he knew his son would explore and find these places. and the young boy did, he found them, the stories his father had read to him before had. he grew up living with these people, and didn't know what society had allowed itself to become, until he returned home after many years and bought his final resting place from his father.

a proud man stood in the doorway when the old man opened the door at the sound of the knock, a sound he had not heard for thirty six years. dressed in a simple overcoat with a red hat, red as crimson, he looked his son in the eyes and said "welcome home, son."

his father died a year later, asking to be buried with his mother at his side in the makeshift graveyard behind the house in the field of wild roses that bloomed in memory of her. and he did just that. planting a single red rose over the grave to respect a dying man. he did not mourn, he only shed one single tear, that he let fall to the ground and soak into the freshly dug grave. stabbing the spade into the ground, he turned to walk back to the house, and turned for a moment towards the setting sun and stared into the field of roses and whispered under his breath, "i love you."

picking up the pieces was more tedious than he imagined because he did not know a single thing of where to begin, he did not know how far people had fallen from themselves. a society so fallen from its original roots, that it made him frightened to continue this work his father had started. but he formulated his plan, and created the idea of how it will operate. observe, but remain unseen, hidden in the shadows, but known. do not let them see your face, only leave traces of your presence, create a sense of mystery, but keep safe as people will follow to dig into the past.

the past will always be there to haunt you, it is memories of love, death and every ounce of strength that will someday catch up to yourself. he had managed to remain hidden for such a long time, but the time for playing hide-and-seek was over. it was time to shed light on the wrong-doings of a society so decrepit.

the sun had just began to set on the horizon as he stumbled through the front door of the old decrepit cabin. clutching the splintering door-frame, he gazed into the empty and lonely darkness of the house, noticing the last traces of daylight exposing just how far from rememberable this place had become. paint chips collecting in dust piles in the corners, thick cobwebs in the highest corners of the ceiling, strips of wallpaper peeling and yellowing from exposure to the sun. he could feel the pain of the house, howling from every wall, begging for help to become whole again.

While still clutching the door-frame, his breathing heavy, and sweat running down his brow, he looked down to notice the shimmer of the blood in the end of a blood red sun setting. or was it the blood still dripping from the place he wondered. finally releasing his grasp from the door, he began to take the first step into the house, suddenly realizing he was alone in his own private world. another step. yet suddenly he felt the world start to darken around him, everything slowly drifting away, a sudden free-fall into a coma. he collapsed on the floor in a heap of sweat, blood, tears and grief. what did he do that he asked himself trying to keep ahold of his sanity and consciousness. what could have driven him to that breaking point. his last thought drifted away into the night as he dove into a deep sleep.

he dreamed, though he never once in his life had.

he awoke in a theatre, empty let alone himself, the seats covered in a sheet of dust and holes eaten through from the moths. although the lights had been lit, illuminating the most exquisite architecture, curtains red as crimson, and cherry-wood paneling, everything else was weathered and in state of disrepair that made him wonder why the stage was so well taken care of, but the rest of this majestic place was mistreated. the lights began to dim, and the curtain slowly slid open to expose an empty stage except a single wooden chair in the center stage.

the sound of footsteps echoed through the theatre, booming off the walls, a thunderous sound that made his ears ring. but no one set foot on stage from the darkness. the sounds stopped, becoming deathly quiet. he sat there looking around for some reason to explain all that he had heard, but could not find a reason. upon returning his gaze to the stage, there sat a figure in that once empty chair. his head lowered, he wondered who he was and where he came from. slowly, the figure began to look forward into the audience and hummed a sad tune before speaking.

"waiter, oh waiter, wanderer of the night. your crimson red hat has everyone quiver in fright. born a child in the fall, you grew up to prove them all. you discovered their deepest fears, and brought them to tears. they cower in fear when you are near."

the lights die and the sound of footsteps lead off stage.

the strangers reply is he filled with confusion and curiosity as to why & y have let loves embrace cease to be.

he stares into the strangers eyes, those oceans of blue, with a new vision of pointecrains against the setting horizon, although the stranger more beautiful than any setting sun you can imagine. there is always a danger in sleeping with someone he thinks, you are exposed, naked and vulnerable. anyone can hurt you, damage you, hurt you. he read once in a book, that love is a dangerous drug, an addicting drug, one you crave. an addiction. this is what he thinks as the stranger slowly draws his hand near his face, caressing it, holding it in his hands. he tried to turn away, hoping that the stranger will understand and leave him alone, but what happens is that this man slowly turns his face towards him, staring deeper than anyone has looked into him and kisses him.

it is a kiss he will never forget, like the first kiss, it is a memory burned forever in time, a brand of love. he has kissed others, but never like this. he speaks softly and says "you are lost. more lost than i was, and i can see. i will promise to never let you become lost again. you have a look in your eyes that says you are a forest, so deep you've become lost in there, you never let anyone in and you stay out. let me help you find your way home." but home, is a place i've never found before.

the stranger stops his faint movements of his fingers searching the exposed skin of his face, and pulls him closely, drawing our friends ear to his chest. the soft murmur of the strangers heart beats in his ears softly, calming him. he begins to cry. tears falling slowly from his face roll down the strangers chest as he looks up and sees that this man is crying as well. "home is somewhere i never knew existed either, not until earlier. fate has a funny way of creating these moments when two people suddenly become bound by some unexplainable turn of events. when i saw you, there was a feeling of understanding. a sense of knowing that everything was right. i don't believe in love, but you created something i never knew existed. i feel like home is here, in this very moment, nothing more than a place that feels comfortable."

softly the rain pitter-patters against the window, lulling them off to sleep. dreams only come when you sleep, they are sometimes beautiful things or filled with terrible demons that attack and chase you. the dreams they have are those of an ocean. an ocean that has an ever expanding horizon, with sharks in the distance. safe from harm. nobody is ever safe when there is a danger in sight though. although this danger feels comfortable. like something that looks dangerous but is not.

the morning breaks, and the sun breaks their dreams of oceans and sharks. there is an infinite ways to say what happens next, but the only thing needed to say is that two strangers met and love, something neither of them thought existed, showed itself. an unrequited love that exposed a light in one darkness, and open another's heart. naked and still embracing each other, they lay in the silence, only looking into each others eyes. never breaking their gaze, the stranger leans in and kisses him. a long kiss filled with emotions, filled with love

for a glimpse of a moment, our friend wonders how long this will happen or if it is just a deep illusion prepared by his mind to feel an existence of love. the stranger sees this in his eyes. somehow. he knows what he feels. once you love someone, you are bound to each other, like the roots of a tree to the trunk, you are always connected.

"please stay. a little longer."

i will stay with you till the end of time.

no one is every really, lost, we are just searching for someone. all of us.

Waking up in a fog each morning, he would brew his coffee and search for the hidden bottle of whiskey he would hide from himself, thinking it was the last time he drank another drop. Morning rituals of preparing himself to await for the first bar to open, he would make his coffee strong with whiskey and venture into the crisp morning air and breath in the thick air of the city he so hated. But today he felt something in the background, a faint feeling of being watched, watched by whom though. He would shake the feeling and grab his coat and walk to the bar. Upon arrival, he is the first patron to arrive, the bartender knowing him for he always came here. They never actually spoke to each other, the man behind the bar only knowing him by face and drink, he pours him a mug full.

He never noticed, or maybe it was because he was drunk, but it took him by surprise how familiar he felt. This stranger who sat next to him, watching him stumble to the bathroom to relieve himself. Finally upon returning to his seat he noticed this stranger waiting, staring him in the eyes before turning away. In moment he looked into his eyes. He saw oceans, the bluest oceans ever, one with a horizon that stretched on for miles, one that made him question everything he had ever known. The stranger spoke first, only saying that his name was Sam, then he smiled, a thing our friend has never seen anyone show him. He was always given scowls and looks of disgust by passersby, as a gesture he became accustomed to. But this single smile, a simple movement of the mouth, created a break in his drunken stupor. It felt like the time he was caught snorting coke in the bathroom, an awakening, an uplifting sensation, but nothing compared to that. He felt like something broke loose from himself. His drunk suddenly fading as he stared at this stranger smiling at him.

This sudden wave of nostalgia drowns our character in an overwhelming wave of lust as he stares deeper into this stranger's eyes. His gaze never wandering or straying. He thinks to himself of the time he felt this, only once, many years ago, twenty-five to be exact, since he just became another year aged, and another year more deeply sunk in his jungle. At the time of his birth he knew without realizing it, that love was something that existed from his mother. The only touch from a woman he felt, a touch that lasted only for a few minutes before he was left to fend for himself. Foreign, exotic, unimaginable. A deep sense of longing. He never searched for either of his parents, for fear of not understanding, understanding why they left him. Answers he didn't want to find out. Questions he never has for either. He never hated them but he didn't want to understand. He raised himself, like a cub left to die, he nursed his own wounds and found shelter to keep himself safe. Some nights he would lay beneath the stars with an empty stomach, pains running through his malnourished body, only to think that tomorrow was a better day.

He was a loner, until he started to experience the yearning of wanting, a craving of sexual desire. He slept with many people, a fair amount more experienced than him. He would let them use him to their liking. Sometimes he was hit, sometimes he was dragged into sex gangs and used and abused, left on the streets roaming aimlessly till the morning sun would sober him up. At a turning point he understood that this was not a life for him. He found himself lost and wanting to be understood, yearning for a life he saw in the movies, a perfect life, with a perfect companion. Although everyone knows that life does not exist. He would search but not focus on it, realizing that things never come when you search for them, they find you in the most unexpected ways. And that moment came, the angel that loved him, and killed him. Slipping their coats off while they barely made it through the door, their lips never disconnecting, they blindly make their way to the bedroom and fall in space onto the bed, holding each other tightly as time melts away and all that is left is them, stark naked and alone captured in the embrace of a feeling only seen in movies. Our lost wanderer pulls away and realizes that this must be a dream. A dream fabricated by his drunken mind.

as he stood from the high wooden trees, he heard him screaming to please stop, he had done nothing wrong to them, that he would steal whatever amount of money they wanted, or goods from his parents bedroom.

but young men want nothing of jewelry or money, they crave the sight of blood & fear. yes, it was hard to witness the death of a life so young and full of life, but his story had to be finished, and he knew what was on the other side, even for those whose lives had been taken by the hands of another man. he studied their faces and burned them to memory, coming to notice them lurking in the shadows as he would come into town for his supplies. their faces never fully could be hidden in the dark, their faces pale as moonlight, with signs of guilt knowing they had done something they regretted, except for one, the leader of their troupe, he was the one who made them bash his shins with stones, and stab thin blades into his side, he was the one who commenced the final blow. he wore a devilish grin filled with no regret or remorse for his actions, not sympathy nor respect for his actions.

memories came back like waves rolling in from the tide of a full moon, he once witnessed a man take life more than once, but this story was not of murder, but of killing himself. although he is very much so still alive friends, he killed love.

"the most important question is, are you a fighter or a lover? the passive or the aggressive?" those are the words he asked the fighter. a strong man filled with the weight of life, he was one who would fight until the day he died. he never fully comprehended the aspect of what it meant to be a lover, always running headlong into the void, fearing nothing but fear itself. but he always reminded himself that he was a strong person, and from time to time, he still be the loser, but overcome and be the victor in others, always pushing himself to become better than before.

at a young age, he was handed a terrible hand at life, loosing both parents in a tragic car accident that was completely foreseeable had they not decided to drive after tossing back a few too many cocktails. a lesson he had learned, but not his brother. he taught himself that no matter what, everything is worth fighting for, even if you risk losing it all. life is a giant game of risks and chances to improve or destroy ourselves.

at the funeral, he stood tall, with the weight of the world on his shoulders, like Atlas, a burden he would bare till he died. that was the day he learned to become a fighter, of love, to protect the hearts of the broken, a warrior. he was young, but capable of overcoming the obstacles that came his way he knew, he would throw punch after punch towards anyone that came between the two. but sometimes, even the toughest can be broken and beaten, especially when he gave up everything for love once, the thing he fought to keep alive. broken down and left to die, he overcame himself and beat his fears, but became distrustful of those all around him, never allowing himself to fall in love, or allow them to think they could possibly fall in love with him.

the only one he allowed to love him was his brother, the writer. an exact, but not complete copy of himself. two opposites born as one. he strayed from the path of searching and found himself defeating his own demons instead of drowning them in the nightly ritual of drowning them in glasses of whiskey, alone at a bar. two birds of a feather, they were close at a young age, but what does time do to everything and everyone? they drifted apart from each other, only meeting in times of need, like the scarrow who will always fly north to escape the creeping grips of the winter season. they would talk for hours, until the bar closed, and they would end up at home, the writer telling tales of his heartache as each moment passed, hoping that every sip of whiskey would bring him a moment closer to understanding his searches.

they both shared a fair deal of personal demons, but his brother had far more demons than himself. always searching for love, even if he would find himself

searching for it at the bottom of an empty bottle. once he witnessed this first hand, this poison destroying him slowly, he swore to never be so engulfed into something like it. although as with any great writer, they have something distilled in their blood that creates them to crave it, written in their DNA. he gave up hope though, attempting to pull him through the countless nights of screaming in the night for his parents, or bailing him from the drunk tank. but he had to keep him close because blood is thicker than water, and even in the drunken moments they spent, it was the greatest of peace for both of them.

although his brother would speak of his loves, he would have no words to exchange, because he gave up love years ago. he was not one to feel fond of being vulnerable, that sense of being so exposed to someone, that they could make or break you so easily. he never could understand, no matter how many times he would listen to the stories from his brother, these poetic insights to something he would never understand. sometimes he would ask himself and wonder why someone would allow themselves to become so hurt, that it literally tears a person apart and leaves them an empty shell of themselves. a lonely man, so lost in a search that has no real end.

the only things in life worth fighting for are the things you love, and hate. he made these words as if nothing else ever mattered, as if the world was to end, he would die without love or compassion. to die is a right, a right or moral understanding that carries a weight heavier than the world. he never loved or understood what it meant to be loved. as much as a child, but love was a goal. a goal of everything he ever knew. born to a broken home and a broken heart, he failed to grasp any understanding of love or human emotion. a life of broken friendships and lost moments, spent waiting for a day he could give it all up, and replace the empty spaces with ideas of grandeur, ideas of love.

an idea is a simple thought, although even the simplest thought can give way to a vast ocean of ideas. like sharks swimming in the open ocean, carrying the fear of death. symbols of death and fear, they seek blood like drunks seek wine. he never touched a single drop of alcohol till he was twenty six. a feeling of waves crashed over him like the riotous breaking on the battered east shore. he felt as though an angel was killing him, the most divine way of dying being brought to him at the gates of heaven and hell, a fire burning below and a cold empty place above, with no light in heaven, the stars of hell glowing bright enough for him to realize a new moral. as a boy his father left him and never looked back, leaving him to survive on his own, lost in a jungle of pain and hate. it took years to navigate his way through, wandering lost with no stars to guide him home, no virgins to guide him. then his hell like journey, journey through heaven, hell and every where between. he was lost and afraid, blind and on guard to the silent temptations of the great white world. being alone allowed him to realize his own isolation of a true man, but he never knew what the things that were there were. the emptiness of his existence was there.

he never touched a woman in a way that made him feel significant due to his parents being absent, both leaving him as a child. he explored desires of the carnal variety and experienced a longing for the touch of his own. a sin. "man shall not lay with another man, lest he be stoned to death." his first time being stoned was farther than the first time he touched the source of alcohol. he felt infinite, as if though the entire universe was exploding within him, the stars were falling.

A man's life could experience. a strong feeling that intoxicated him more than the whiskey he would mix in his coffee, black with a spoonful of sugar. he started to drink heavily when he was young, always saying it was due in part to his father leaving, and his absent mother, but the truth was he drank because it made him feel like he was human. a fish out of its element can't survive more than a few minutes before it dies. and he died a thousand times before he learned that nothing mattered. numbing himself to everything he was running from, it came crashing to a full stop in one moment when he met

he was his vigil, his torch-bearer, his light in the harrowing darkness of his jungle he became so lost in. the deepest parts are filled with demons and monsters prepared to bite and rip a person apart. he never thought he would know what love and happiness actually were, or even the fact they existed. a fabled dream of watching others fall madly in love and romanticize their childhood fables of perfect husbands and wives from the pictures and movies he watched alone. alone. he never knew that anyone would have noticed him, a simple and shy man, sitting at the bar alone, drinking his whiskey, higher than a kite, he barely noticed him sit down next to him at the bar. his thoughts clouded by the hangover from the night before. he did this ritualistically, drink himself into a stupor and puke in the alleyway before reaching his apartment steps. then drunkenly fell up the stairs to his flat, where he would pass out on the bathroom floor.

This volume compiles the only remaining and existing copies of the authors original work of a series called "Characters; A Collection", which was an attempt to create short vignettes of people they had met and shared experiences with as well as an introspective look into their own character of being a writer/poet.

The original penning of "Walter Red" came from the story included above and takes a deep dive into the life of the author at the time of creation.

Albeit there were more shorts that were created, they have since been lost to time and moving from state to state.

These are the only remaining copies.

dear stranger,

as she screams "don't speak, because it hurts" across the soundsystem, the gin begins to fog his mind. sitting under the stage light in the upper rafters of the seating area, his thoughts have been aflame today. but for what reason is he here he asks himself. the urge to be social maybe?

he sips his drink once more to let the alcohol take hold. as he glances across the room, he sees so many faces in the crowd, socializing, loving, and living.

"how do they do this so naturally," he wonders. "how do they be so human?"

another sip of gin goes down smoothly as he pens his words of self-deprecation. the words he writes are not his own, but from the man he tries to be a lonely writer, searching for the human condition. but he manages to fall back each thought, contradicting each new idea & value.

dear stranger,

i read something very inspirational last night that made me start to think deeper on how i should be living my life now that i have ~~me~~ myself. in beginning a journey within myself, i started wearing patches again, in hoping to be smoke free in two weeks, and in going to start doing yoga again, and pick up running as well.

i need to formulate a routine soon. also got my week off planned. thomas and myself will be heading to kenai for the weekend fishing, then i need to buy a mat & sleeping bag before we depart friday. in also attempting alcohol cleanse. no bars for a month, ill allow drinking w/ friends at their houses, but i need to focus on me.

i feel like ive finally taken that step to change myself.

its been six months living with this and ive realized ive only wallowed in a pity party the whole time and drt myself into a corner. i gave up writing & attempting to work on this art project. ive become bitter and lashed towards a lot of people and they have finally spoken up about it.

my little empire of misery just collapsed, but now is the time to readjust the dynamic and begin building something better. itll take time, but i know that i should have done in the first place, taken my time to build and not just create unstable foundations that were inevitable to be destroyed.

life finally caught up with me and said 'hey, youre fucking up. time to put you in check.' and im glad it did, because i feel i ultimately needed it all this time.

i need to get back to my roots i associate with and disappear into the background. COME-BACK REPORT.

ohm padme hun,

let the waters cleanse my soul and remove the impurities that i injected in myself. it must be pay and i wont stop till i make it truth.

a new dawn/a new life.

dear stranger,

ten thousand feet above the sea, between the buried and me.

i'm dying old friend, and i don't need a doctor to tell me the truth of
it.

i fell head over heels and learned that death is more than a welcome
gift.

dear stranger,

it's the new year, and might i just say thank you for the signs you gave
i didnt realize it was you at first, but then i took a step back and rea-
lized it all in a moment of ecstatic bliss. i vomitted words and stanzas
of spite at you all this time, but now i realize that i was wrong to do
so.

can we start this over and continue forward? im sorry for my crassness,
but there is a fear instilled in every man that pushes us to the edge of
reason and rhyme. and the moment when you made yourself known, the
words came pouring down like rain.

i might not be open to the idea, but this starting point is exactly what
we needed. open the door and take a peek inside, its a strange place up
here in the clouds and snowy peaks of the mountains of my mind. but know
that i will beguide you to the summit over time.

thank you again, for speaking up for the first time in a long time, and
showing yourself.

i may not love you just yet, but there is a lot of hope.

dear stranger,
once more with excitement dear friend. once more with bravado.

hark, the herald angels sing into the night sky. as the rains fall down
upon the earth & the triumphant sound of the horns breaks the silence.

~~is it time to let go yet stranger? do i keep chasing that unobtainable dream
-m of something that does not exist?~~

~~oh that lonely taciturn satellite, you drift alone just like myself in
the cold night, searching for the insupportable idea of someone out there
waiting. aren't we all just waiting to die?~~

~~or are we awaiting the start of something new? like the hands of a clock
meeting together, time will beguile us to the new start of something be-
tter.~~

don't fret over the small things, nor the large. be in the moment, let the
tide wash over and take you under.

you'll not feel the drowning.

forty winkings in the belfry, as the light house casts its guiding net-
ion across the sea.

The following volume includes some fragments of the original art project/social experiment the author created while living in Portland, OR after moving from Anchorage, AK.

As a dual project the original intent was to write letters to a stranger (a psychological concept of someone who always has loved the author) and take the thoughts out of their head and destroy them in a sense.

It's a therapy trick the author learned one time is to write a letter to whomever you are upset by and burn it in private as a symbolic value of destroying what it is that causes such pain and hurt.

It evolved into something more when the author finally made it to Portland where it became more tangible and personal.

Sealing multiple envelopes with no distinguishable markings or traits, he would offer them to strangers and friends at random moments, asking that they not be opened just then and there but in a later time and date of their own choosing.

Some of the reviews of the works were of high praise and interest in what the project was.

Unfortunately though, the project fizzled out into the darkness of the ether of the universe, with only a handful of remaining original copies and fragments that were applied to Death Songs and other works in the authors portfolio.

The original concept was also going to be a public event that would be interactive as well as showcase the authors works.

The construct was as follows:

2-4 typewriters placed about the venue/exhibit that would allow others to create their own “Dear Stranger” letters with the choice of signing an NDA/disclosure letter that would allow the author to collect all the letters and place them in a bound volume to showcase other people’s emotions, feelings and views of life or whatever they wanted to write about.

It was also meant to invoke nostalgia in folks who were born and raised in a time when computers were either just becoming a new thing or used to utilize typewriters as a means of production.

Other framed works would be on display as well that would have been personally curated by the author to inspire others.

day four: life has been an adjustment since returning, alls well that ends well

really, but it al o has been rather strange just being back. ive ran into a few people i ca honestly say i was excited tosee and want to try to reconnect with a few others sooner thanlater. i also have no phone, so communication has been lost with everything else. my first official day back on the job was like riding a bike, took a second to rememberhow to do it, but sudd nly it all came rushingback to me. time is running slowly here, almost as if though stopped, but not. im fairly hesitant ill a tually be here for a few months due to the fact that i already miss h me, and i know a few months will be ultimately the best thing to do for my ultimate goal, but i dont know if i am ready to be here for t at long. i already want to go back home now, just up and buy a flight back as soon as possible, but i feel i would be making a mistake, and leaving again with no money in pocket, would not be good for myself aswell.

day ten:

one
he can't recall exactly when, but only who. the boy next door, with his wind-tossed brown hair, and piercing hazel eyes, he kept him entranced. he was a few years older than himself, probably in junior high, while he himself was still in elementary, found his age and experience enticing & altogether perfect. his name was joshua, the boy who changed everything about my life, and taught me what lust really was. although, the memories are vague and foggy, i recall most of our childishly-adult activities we did in the privacy of his bedroom, or the abandoned dancehall next door to his fathers bar.

he was, in fact, the literal boy next door. born in the countryside of the midwest, with the sickly stench of fresh manure and cowpies hanging heavy in the early morning air, it was here our story begins. just a simple kid with no true cares in the world, living a normal life like normal kids, the simplicity would soon start to change because of a complex & complicated act the body decides to start called puberty.

although, lets rewind a bit and delve a slight bit before all this happened. no, we're not going to the very beginning(sic),. although pardon myself with my sloppiness stranger, thinking of these memories is a trifle bit difficult when one does now dwell in the past.

before joshua, there was a time in fact, that i did enjoy the subtle stare, or the soft graze of hair across skin, of a woman (and to be exact) my first 'girlfriend' happened back in '98, her name was nicole. she was fresh meat in town.

chapter eight: nineteen eighty nine

in nineteen eighty nine, a terrible crime was committed, one of an atrocious nature, the crime had me at the gallows by the time it was committed. the ultimate crime against humanity is a simple one, so overlooked, that it is an ever welcomed thing.

BIRTH.

born with a name that no one knows came from, to two people who were never read -y. he was destined to die at the moment of conception, but unbeknownst to all, he struggled to survive and push back against all odds. Unfortunately dear reader, his name has been stricken from the record for reasons of security and secrecy, but we can simply refer to him as "JACK". Jack, was unplanned, or atleast that is what i am told by the stories. Simply stated, there was not only himself born, but two identical copies of himself. Two children born to a whore of a mother and a bastard of a father, they were an unlikely pair of children, ruthless and cunning. Although later in life, they grew to be two completely different people, exact opposites of their former lives as children, they barely speak to each other to this day.

but this story is about neither of them, except the history of two lost boys. two lost boys were fighting in the dead of night, one killed the other, but they both had been dead for years before. an eternal battle like that of the mystics, with their war of religion and magic, these two battled over love. love from their parents, whomever they were and wherever they were. love is a fleeting emotion, that decides to show itself when you are least expecting to search for it.

chapter six six six: spirits in the parlour room - a night in a haunted brothel

The clock chimes ten times and silence befalls behind the drawn curtains curtains as red as blood, but faded from years of negligence and disregard. Our guests are in a panic as the screams start to creep from closed mouths, screams of murder and death incarnate.

The scent of wax melting still lingers in the air, like the cigarettes she so seductively smoked. Clouds of smoke falling off her lips like clouds clutching the mountain tops. Her face masked under her veil of lace, you could never miss those supple ruby red lips, or her naked chest she enjoyed exposing.

Their screams silenced as she spoke, as if though her words were like bullets travelling through water, slow and muted. Her voice could make a man fall in love or kill for her. The sight of the bloody axe breaks reality back into perspective as she clutches your wrist, cold as ice, and her mouth agape, a sudden void of darkness enveloping your world.

RESTART.

Let us become more familiarized with the events that just occurred for those joining our current story. These are fictionalized events that occurred in a very real place, with a much sinister history, including lies, sex and murder.

The location~~##~~ of this peculiar parlour/brothel is located in a small town in the majestic, yet madness filled mountains of Colorado. Originally built during the gold rush years as a small cabin, it was bought over by a young gentleman by the name of Benjamin. Originally owned by the ~~an~~ family as a small cottage in the historic gold rush days of old, he turned it into his own creation of a bar. he never allowed himself a day off, and knew nothing of what was happening around his own world, unknown to him were secrets. secrets of his latest infatuation, a young woman by the name of elizabeth.

she was not like most women, she had a way of swooning men into her bed with ease. she was a whore. born elizabeth whitney, to a lower-class family, she wanted a better life, one filled with luxury and glamorous riches.

chapter four: this place is death

faded memories still cling to the walls like fresh paint waiting to dry in this place. cracked paint peeling from the walls, dust collecting in the cobweb infested corners. time has not been kind to this place, but it is death. a place where nightmares happened, and dreams broken into millions of tiny pieces, with nothing left to salvage.

a ghost in the machine. des ex machina. the lonely widow. the drunken bastard. all stories holding the foundation together. a foundation rotting from years of disrepair. once a place of love, it is only an empty shell of what once was.

twenty six years ago a child was born out of wedlock, in a bloody bath towel. he was doomed from the moment he entered this life. no mother, no father. just an empty room filled with the scent of death and violence. blood stains and empty jars of ink. ink spills like blood, staining anything it touches. the lingering smell of stale cigarettes hangs in the air like the sweet scent of lilacs in the spring, potent and sweet. she died while bringing him into life and his father drunk in a ditch running from his problems. he never looked back as his automobile crashed into the guard rail, flipping in the air.

a child with no parents, a child alone.

puddles of ink are just like puddles of blood, they bleed and stain. it has been awhile since i felt love, and the fact that he says he loves me is a lie. he only tells me he loves me when he is drunk. a question of whether men can actually feel emotion is what requires an answer.

to have someone only be able to say they love you when they drink makes it a difficult thing to understand where we went wrong.

day seven-hundred eig ty-five* (excerpts)

~~like the feathers of a bird, any direction is born you at 00:00 and the~~

~~the wind is the only~~

~~the sound of music radiates through the always is one of a peculiar kind.~~
~~all the heavens open wide and drop you from the sky?~~

~~there is a place in a room that exists but is never visited, a dark & dark room~~
~~filled with a hush, a place where words still echo from chests, screams of joy~~
~~voices of sadness linger all around, this is the place where love died, the walls~~
~~once a beautiful red red, now are faded and peeling. burn marks chew at the~~
~~walls from the once passionate fire that burned from years ago, he committed~~
~~suicide. old man gives death and his embrace.~~

~~the last thing i can remember is saying i love you.~~
~~the last thing i ever heard from you was a sigh.~~

SEQUENCE ONE:
DAYS

copyright two-thousand fourteen / september seventeenth
ghost writer publishing

Day one: fear and anticipation have engulfed myself as i write these words fear of returning to a place i swore to never return to, a place that is majestic as it is deadly. winter is coming and i am ready for its embrace, born a child of summer, but reborn a man of winter, the snow and ice is my familiar realm. although my return is being taken in different ways, some surprised, and some confused on my reasoning and ideals behind this adventure. for how long i will stay is a factor based on my ability to cope with the endless winter ahead of me.

although the adventures ahead of me will add more to this story, it also will add more heartache once again, like each and every adventure i have taken, this time i've sworn to myself a secret oath to not fall in love because my home is not there in that desolate place, home is where your heart is as the saying goes but home is nowhere for me. a writer and adventurer with a gypsy heart is something that will harm the main character of this story, and he is already broken as it is.

a skilled penman can never fully write in ink what it feels to have your heart broken, he can only attempt this difficult feat with himself armed with words.

a melodramatic fool, a lonely writer, a prizefighter, a dreamer, all characters coming into form from personal memories and events of chance meetings with people. characters has been a work in progress, but becoming difficult with the original mission of collecting stories from others. the original list of ideas written of the next characters has been lost, maybe for a reason? this allows the story to remold itself at this point it seems for my own interest as well.

sequence one is underway, a kind of side-companion to characters, a day by day tracking of progress and personal journal. looking back into what i had started as this whole project, is a mess, but something salvagable. the writer may just stand as it is due to how powerful it already is for myself.

chapter eleven: eternal kingdom

there is a belief by some of a place of shimmering spires made of gold, and angels with wings more beautiful than the midnight sun. golden gods and angels with flowing hair as dark as wine, a place of eternal bliss and perpetual happiness, where there is neither death nor war. an eternal kingdom called paradise to some and heaven to others. although deeply rooted in mystery, it is not known if such a place exists, or if these highly enlightened beings exist, because the only way of knowing is dying. although there is also a place where fire and brimstone burn with heat so powerful it can melt human flesh. a place known to some as hell, and to others a form of eternal punishment for wrong-doers. dante once wrote of these places, and the mountain that connected the two heavens.

the only way to buy yourself into heaven is justify the actions you have taken in this life, with cleansing the soul of injustices. to some, it is a daily idea of thrusting their opinions down those who do not believe. to others, and there are those who do not give any damn of what happens, only believing that when you die, you die. there is neither a haven nor a hell. to others it is a place with a harem of women waiting them.

superstitious beliefs in ~~the afterlife~~ ^{LOVE} are nearly bed-time stories. a nightmare in disguise, with a common name, one that invokes terror.

the bogey-man. ^{LOVE. HAPPINESS.}

but sometimes to find this nightmare, we must only look within ourselves to notice that we, ourselves, are ~~the bogey-man~~ ^{the happiness}. we create death, war, fear, lust and fuel our own hell. this is not a crime, it is our nature.

she was only becoming a woman when she understood that hell existed. waking abruptly to the scent of fire and burning wood, she found herself engulfed in flames licking at her bed post. not able to run or let alone move, restraints bound her legs and arms, she inhaled the thick black smoke. charring her lungs with a taste she will never forget. it was him all along, she knew it to be her pain. he hated her and wanted her to burn in her own hell, as he saw fit. screams escaped from her mouth, but were choked by the thickening smoke. he never loved her, he always hated her, yet he stuck through time and patience to try to appreciate her.

they met at a strange point in life, where neither of them fully ready to be an art of someone else's life. a couple of their friends set up a blind date for the two to meet. he preferred not doing so, but everyone had reaffirmed him she was perfect for him. although he knew better to trust his friends.

chapter twelve: delusional

"it was all so real though, i am not making this shit up. let me tell you everything, if you have the time to listen."

at first i thought i was just dreaming, a place where anything can happen, you can murder someone and get away with it, you can be whoever you want to be, and do anything you believe to be wrong. at least that is how it all felt, come to find out, it was all real. there is a place in the human mind that holds the darkest secrets and deepest ideas of human nature, and i found it. i knew it existed but never thought it to be real. in a small room in an old abandoned building, you can be your own god.

at first it was simple, you enter the room and imagine what you want to exist with you. my first attempt was reliving my childhood. it went something like this.

OMITTED

seems pleasant does it not my friends? a place where i saw friends and family who have passed away and still exist in the flesh with functioning memories and skills of current knowledge and yet they never grew old, compared to myself. it went on for years that i would visit this secret place as a comfort to see everyone, until peculiar things started happening, subtle and barely un-noticed i thought nothing less on it. for instance in some of my adventures to this land, the skies would be darkened miles away in a contained area, or the sound of animals howling guttural groans.

one

Run. That's all he could think. Run till your legs give way. But what was ~~he~~ running from? why was ~~he~~ so afraid of everything, scared of life, and everything involved in living it. Is this how ~~he~~ ended up here? possibly, but more than likely not, there wasn't anything that could make ~~me~~ ~~him~~ run this far from home and everything else. ~~it all started little~~ over seven months before, when he decided to come home, a broken man hoping to find comfort and solitude with a broken family. but with most stories already forged in sadness, they always end in sadness as well.

Ultimately, our story starts, with love as most stories do, the boy meets the girl of his dreams, falls in love, beats the bad guy, they flutter off into the sunset and live happily ever-after right? ~~not~~ wrong.

chapter one

where did we all go wrong with ourselves? where did we become lost in transition, strayed from the yellow-brick road that we so destined look for every other day? our lives have become digital and void of roots, children are now born within a virtual world, not taking a moment to seek the world around them. when did we stop learning to learn versus when we started to learn? questions in the form of endless shrugs of unknowing memories that once lived in the mind and not in the cloud.

when did we fall from the storybook, reverently creating a novel of fiction and not fact? we seek instant gratification, yet we cant be labeled as being greedy. we ask for desires to be fulfilled, yet we are labeled as being promiscuous.

day two:

just a few hours more before my flight to this place of ill-repute and misery and already the over-dramatics are still in place on part of my family. i had to say good-bye to robert earlier and it hurt to see him cry in my arms whereas i shed not one tear in that moment.

(chapter idea: the weeping willow)

i am truly going to miss him and this place as a general whole, my heart is starting to break knowing that my time is coming soon. the difference between lust and love is how they break when you leave their life, i know for a fact that i love robert, it hurts me the most secretly because i am trying to hide everything behind a veil of strength and unemotional display. a heart breaks silently while the eyes bleed rivers within seconds. i tried to master even a single tear yet could not, i shed my tears the last time, and i know we will meet again sometime in life again, whether it be when i return or at another juncture in both of our lives.

now i sit here patiently waiting for my shuttle and a call. i am not one to be kept waiting for things to happen, i am far too impatient to keep still, especially with the wait ahead of myself. i have three hours to kill at the airport on a i arrive there, and i know it will be a good time to work more on characters, it is also a while of waiting for the sun to set and wait to arrive in a place when the sun does not set.

the scent of tea brewing is something of nostalgia from a memory that is not my own, but is also very familiar. i want to believe that my previous life was that of a writer, a most magnificent writer, but completely unknown, but that also fits the current moment as well. (memories are a terrible and delightful thing to have, but sometimes the most damaging things to the soul.)

-east of eden
-the weeping willow(s)
-north to the--
-06/15/1989
-me+you
-buffalo hunters
-ghosts in the parlour room (pt. II)
-the collection

day three: arrival. it is weird being back, i am still adjusting to it all,

chapter nine: a heart and a prayer

and a prayer takes my heart. cause every time is the last time. she spoke in riddles and metaphors about her life, who she was and where she came from. a phantom lurking in the shadows behind the veil of the midnight fog that rolls in quietly and secretively, clutching at your feet. with a way of words, they rolled from her tongue like droplets of the morning dew falling slowly through space to die as they crashed into the ground.

nothing is more beautiful than watching the bridges burn, lighting the way home for our fallen ancestors she said as we threw the torches into the pillons of dead oak trees. flickers of light, tiny dancers of fire, rising into the dark. a light that never goes out, even after death.

and i hate that i can't say your name. ~~although he never knew her name as he stood over her grave. an unmarked patch of mossy over-growth in the deepest part of the woods.~~ a single tear shed can hold a thousand memories, or one single act of strength.

i want to do all the things your lungs do so well.

chapter seven: heaven

help im alive, she cried to the skies. but alas no one was there to hear her cries of desperation. she was only a child, lying in a pool of her own blood, left for dead. the bloody young bride,

I feel like we
have a connection,
Like i've met you
before. I HAVE
to see you again!
Next Tuesday @
11:30. we'll meet
Here ♡ -J

chapter nine: symbols

words spew like vomit from the mouths of drunken men, hungover from the night before. but sometimes words are no more common a hng

January 30th. the days were counting down he realised, and his time was running out quicker. panic stricken and filled with an irrational sense of fear, he paced back and forth across the lobby. is this really what he should be doing, is this for the better, is it a change really worth taking? all of the previous six months came back in a whirlwind of memories and nightmares as one, making him nauseas and uneasy. he stumbled to the closest chair and sat down in a quick slump, clutching the glass of gin like a dead man.

five

she was always transfixed by it, the way the colours would dance and create shadows on the walls, always flickering in an ecstatic dance. strike after strike she would burn them one by one, watching the sulphur explode into an orange tongue of fire, and lick at the open air. the flames would ignite a fire inside her that made her quiver.

the low humming of his computer was a thunderous sound in the silence of his room, darkly lit, except from the blank white page on the screen. here he sat staring into a void, waiting for the words to come, like rain when there are dark clouds overhead. he could not figure a proper response to the questions he had been asked to answer,

as a personal note on everything that has occurred as of late, the biggest sense of emotion on my mind is disgust, with myself personally and how i let myself get to this point. of course we cant control the fates, nor can we control others, but we have control over what we choose to do.

but ever since i left my father, its much harder knowing. i don't wanna wake
up lonely, i don't wanna just be fine. and i don't wanna be my mother.

and a prayer takes my heart.

The following volume was from one of the earliest known works by the author, "Characters; A Collection" being the first initial attempt to creating a proper work.

"Sequence One: Days" was originally started when the author moved back home from Colorado with his typewriter in hand, attempting to document each and every day on paper.

Slowly it evolved into something more obscure and random with no rhyme or reason to the words coming out.

These original documents also reveal where some of the pieces of "Death Songs" came entirely based off of.

With original edits showing what the author wanted to cut and paste into something more can be noted by the pink highlighter marks.

DEATH SONGS
NOTES

- PREFACE / Acknowledgements (a journal)

- PART 1: LETTERS TO YOU: WHERE ARE YOU

- PART 2: LETTERS TO DEATH: SUICIDE PACTS
(- pre Acknowledgment of theirs of suicide)

- PART 3: LETTERS TO ME: UNMARKED ENTRIES(?)

~~Part 1:~~

PART 1

PART 2

Letters to you: Where are you
- Notes of love: few for
others and the
may people else loved.

PART 3

Letters to death: Suicide Pacts

- Suicide notes / statement on
suicide awareness.

Letters to me: an amalgamation of
my own neurosis.

HOPE: A New Meaning

On my walk earlier from North Portland to Downtown, i decided to traverse the broadway bridge for the first time in almost a year and was happy to see something like this.

It's been a year since i moved myself and my chaotic life to Portland, trying to make a social circle and just make it by in America. I've gone through more ups and downs than any other place I've lived yet through all of the bullshit I've managed to keep my chin up and push through.

I've made friends and enemies. I've had lovers and fucks. I've made mistakes. But they have all taught me how to better myself.

There is hope, a feeling I didn't know existed. It's in words and actions that others speak to me without realizing they are doing so. Just speaking to me gives me hope that i'm doing something good.

The last few weeks has been tense and distraught with depression. One person came and picked me up, even though we had only met one time. They took me by the hand and talked with me as a human.

I'm doing better, but it's still hard to keep my head up and spirits higher when it feels like I just want to walk away from it all. I have nothing to lose here if i go, and nothing for me if I stay.

But there's hope at least.

Tonight I stood on the Burnside Bridge, looking down across the water and staring into the depths of it as well. Tears in my eyes, I contemplated jumping off that bridge.

Moments and memories flooded me, like a torrential monsoon crashing into the coastline. I thought of people's stories of jumping off, the lives of friends I've loved, strangers I'd chanced meeting in my time, and the one person I love.

But no one was there to help me in my moment of sheer terror. I was alone, afraid and standing there, several hundred feet above the water about to just let myself slip over the railing into the Willamette River.

Obviously you can tell that it didn't happen, but for a brief moment in time, I truly felt like the biggest failure in life and that nothing actually mattered to me. I wanted nothing more than to be weightless, falling into the river and drowning, (although supposedly from that fall, death is instantaneous ((from what I've heard.))

This is an important notice to anyone who suffers from depression or anxiety (hell, even both, like I do.)

YOU ARE LOVED.

No matter how tough things may become, no matter how broken down and beaten you are, no matter how alone and afraid you are. You are special and you deserve to know that things will get better, it may take a lot of time and patience, struggle and heartache, broken promises and empty words to get there, but you are f***ing loved.

Always know this.

I love you, and so do the other 7 billion inhabitants of this place we all call home.

Don't give up hope; and don't let them beat you down.

I love you. And that's a fact.

B

Before we continue this journey, a quick reminder to everyone.

If you are feeling suicidal or depressed, reach out. there is help for you. you are not alone.

i've suffered from serious depression since i was about 13, and have attempted suicide many times, always remembering that there is more to life than what its handing to me. ive stood above many bridges, staring down into traffic, or black waters. ready to jump and end it all. but no one ever came, it was all up to me to talk myself down. and talking yourself down in the most difficult task ever.

reach out to friends and family, search for a friendly counsel-er. its not going to make you worse, it'll make you better.

create a hobby, pick up a book, escape into a world where depression doesnt exist. but know that they are other people out there who suffer just like you and i.

below is the national suicide prevention line.

if you ever feel alone stranger,
i'm here for you.

i love you.

chapter one

i met someone tonight who i want to explore.
i want to trace every freckle on their body,
creating a galaxy of stars on their flesh,
connecting every dot in shapes of constellations.
but i know that this can never be.
his lips so soft, the scent intoxicating,
but there are stars worth finding,
i want to discover myself again,
in someone else.

gwp 04/05

although he wore his heart on his sleeve, he never allowed anyone to see he was vulnerable to attack, exposed and naked. although, when the average onlooker spots him in a room, they feel intimidated by him, afraid to speak. he held him-
self in a position of high regard in his circle of friends, being the leader of the pack.

the year and location shall remain disclosed, newll names and events. everything is eventual here. nothing is truth and nothing is lies. there is no true north, nor is there a sense of time. there is no rhyme or reason. it is not madness or paradise, nor is it heaven or hell. there is no sun and clouds, or stars and moon. there is no love or hate.

this is a place where there is no god. no good nor evil. no need for justification or ramifications. there is no crime nor punishment.

there are no mountains or oceans, no rolling plains or swamps. there is no scent of summer or the bite of winter's icy breeze. there are no rains that fall and no leaves that fall. there is no colour or shades.

there is no death or pain, no regrets or remorse. there is no need for luck or skill, no need for rest or comfort. there is no age or sex. no empathy or sympathy. this is neither a place nor a destination.

there are no questions and no answers. no titles or meanings, no anger or greed. there are no rewards or treasures. no darkness or light. but there is one thing above.

a single heartbeat filling the vast expanse with noise.

two hearts beating as one, two hearts that never die. a single playing card. the two of hearts.

a heart.

this is nothing more than words from a writer who speaks his coffee every morning. words that have no value or meaning to anyone other than a dying man.

a promise to a dying man, to write. to tell a story. any story. of love, of hate, of fear, of sadness, of losing yourself to the unknown. a voice of mystery and ambivalence.

to the reader,

this is not a love story, nor is it a story at all either, it is more than that. it is an understanding of human emotion, finding who you are, and learning to love yourself. it is a reflection in the mirror, a subtle glance of understanding what another thinks. everything is a part of what we learned from living. it is not an instruction manual on how to live, but it is a collective piece of emotions. love is just a joke, so forget anything you have heard.

i've also included pieces written by others, as a social experiment, one that allows others to express their stories. share their memories.

we enjoy stories, but we never stop to listen to others. this is our downfall.

we are a society becoming so engulfed in our technology we forget to stop and look around. yes, we interact, but not without feeling there has to be a reason to rhyme. digital media has taken hold of everything we know as social interaction. we try to get to the point quickly, or find a way to avoid others.

where did we ever go wrong?

a single tear escaped from his pale blue eyes, as he let go of the weather
-red and soft hand he held. this was life he realized, everyone some day
will die. and today was the first day he knew that it meant to be left
alone. the year was nineteen seventy-two, an early

what do i start with? well, sunday has been busier than saturday... thats
erid. coos, it is sht cray. but i.m stoked.

when the fires have died and the faces all gone, where does it leave you?
wondering questions, having no answers. the lonely writer, urinking alone
to fuel his ramblings of despair and inebriation. the whiskey is never strong
enough and the beer is too light to feed the monster. monsters under the bed
are the most docile of creatures, whereas monsters of the mind are the true
danger.

dd. dont lose your dinosaurs. . r r t e m h n
this place holds many memories and new ones. people you meet, new friends
and some familiar.

PART I: LETTERS TO YOU
(WHERE ARE YOU NOW MY LOVE?)

at this moment, you should be with us
feeling like we feel
like you want to
but never will
a gain

*James *addiction

You couldn't find it if you hadn't already been to it.
It was found by scent and the sight of eyes who had already seen and knew
Sometimes blood led the way.

A rustic, primal thing. Something better considered under the safety
of day and covers.

Once had though... Once tested and felt... All was undone

If you were lucky, you would find yourself at Bon Fir, on the banks of
the Big Sag, screaming for mercy... The mercy of ignorance...

Because now it's happened and you are forever tainted and the neighbors
do hear but they just don't care.

There was fire that burned and serrated knives that drew blood and after
that marked the sound of the ritual sawing.

And you lose yourself on purpose...

In the pain, in the elements, in this place you love to hate...

Because you know that when found, either by others or yourself,
what is left is the result of some fucked alchemy of need and greed
and the yearning is your substance...

To feel... something

To bleed for another...

To die at his hands in the best and worst ways possible...

Limited only by time and space and the physical capabilities of the
felly of physical form.

and within the blink of an eye, everything became so clear to him. love, life, and pain all became one unanimous emotion, blurred into a nightmare.

YOU CAN WAVE YOUR FLAG OF
ARBITRARY VALUES AS PROUD
AS YOU WANT MY DEAR,
BUT YOUR TRUE COLOURS WILL
ALWAYS SHOW CLEAR THE
VANITY AND DESTRUCTION
YOU SET OUT TO COMPLETE.

A SACRIFICIAL RITUAL OF BLOOD
CIRCLES AND CHILD BIRTH
INTO CRADLES OF PRISMINE
AND YEARNING.

YOU CAN PROVE ME WRONG IN THE
WAYS OF LOVE IF YOU WANTED
TO, BUT I'M JUST FAR TOO NEAR
TO HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING
OF WHAT THAT TERM ACTUALLY
FUCKING MEANS. xoxo



Sony I missed
you, it's been a
day (super fuck the
world) but I
wanted to say
one little thing.



I'm that kinda
boy who
knows how
to handle his
lizard. totO

The final volume in this Vault Series is a collection of oddities and some originally cut content from the original pressing of “Death Songs”.

They showcase the darker side of the origins of the book from the initial concept of how to format and split it into parts (which was cut from the original pressing and showed only the appendix) to some of the obscure pieces that yet again helped influence and create the book itself.

It also includes the original preface that was meant to be used in the first pressing of the book which was cut back and revised to make it sound less dramatic and overtone with suicidal thoughts.

This concludes the end of the Death Songs (Or How I Learned to Love Again) Special Collector’s Edition.

Thank you reader, for picking this work up and enjoying the new and exciting concepts and information that we have compiled to showcase the grandeur of what is a poetic love song to the universe and an invitation for Death to learn that they can be loved a well.

XOXO,

Walter