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*The Ballad of the
Sea-Sweet Moon
and Other Poems*

Author of *Songs from a Wild Place*

*The Ballad of the
Sea-Sweet Moon
and Other Poems*

Jason Kirkey

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*Dedicated to the Anima
and to the women in whom
I have seen her reflection;
who have initiated me
on my path towards
embodied spirituality
and integrated masculinity.*

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Book One

The Great Eastern Sun

Conversations with Maple

After all day working at my desk
with the sun behind the clouds,
gathering green tea—pearls of jasmine,
with cornflower blue specks
boiling in the water,
thinking to sit for a while with a book
and seek the fire of the mind.

Out the kitchen window I catch
a maple branch covered in May
growing seeds edged with red and
new leaves still learning their hue
in a brief autumn-come-early canvas of color.
Incredulous, it inquires of my intentions
for quiet,

“What are you reading for? What are you reading for?
Let the *world* come in your eyes!”

Now I sit in the brown light of sunset just before a storm
with space enough in my tea for the rain.
The lawnmower is broken. The grass is knee-high,
and bends in the wind like a river.

“Just once, let what is in your care grow wild
enough to see the world through its own eyes.”

Now my tea is mostly rain,
my best shoes turned to glossy brown,
and flecked with grass and flowers.
It is evening now—I can feel it in the trees
like time is just a mood to shift
with the light from brown to gray.

“Just once, do nothing for a day
but study the life of a leaf.”

Even in the city, there is quiet in the earth
and fire that the rain can not put out.
The sky seems huge above the house
as I enter, returning to the mind,
but trailing purple petals at my feet.

Sacrament

You see, I love ordinary things,
beautiful things.

Tea is the sacrament of my faith in the world
and my Sunday is the mirrored sunlight's hue
in the steaming circle of my hands;
on evenings under stars I drink the sky.
This one ordinary cup is enough.

In Praise of Boredom

I am listening to silence, the same
full bodied silence I heard in my sleep.
In this house I am alone with myself
and terrified of that shapeless stranger
who clings to the feathers of boredom.

Now I wish to be drunk on that silence!
I will not close my eyes a second longer.
I will let go, washing myself in the evening
with the soft gold light of the interior sun.
I will prepare my home for this arrival,
incense filling the room with welcome.

Tonight there will be a knock at the door.
I will open it, laughing and praising,
the tea kettle already steaming with anticipation.
We will settle in the center of the room
drinking the sweet smelling silence
from the cup of freedom he offers.

September Seeing

And in the warm prelude
of an early autumn, ready to discard
everything in the wind accomplished
fall of leaves—I too am ready to shed July,
shed August in September seeing.
Forget the meaning of leaf and tree,
everything I've learned of water over stone,
tumbled on the too-smooth surface
of what I see;
a fragmentary lens of beholding.

Now you come flooding back to me,
no longer a horizon of words, scribing
meaning on the parchment of the world,
but the pure brilliance of color and sound,
a shape and texture without context;
eyes innocent with the memory of freedom,
and the pen too, free to draw the images
through sound, before returning to the
brown crunch of leaves underfoot;
my fallen concepts, no longer familiar,
so the eyes open again to the world
for the first time, not for the last.

Thunder Bridge

Life and death were close
but the deer didn't seem to mind
that the conversation wasn't moving,
that it followed a dialogue on death.
The world wanted to say,
"What we want will bring us alive,
taking it will bring us death."
And the wind moved in to change.

I dreamt of water when I wrote
those words to you, and tonight
you brought me to the river and life
turns to a dream where a boy stands
on the bridge terrified to jump—perhaps like us.

You said, "I don't know," but told me
almost everything with silence, the rest with laughter.
And for all my thoughts I said nothing, but listened
tried to speak but also laughed.
My sleep is littered with things unsaid,
and I am still reminded of a dialogue on death.

I am tired of complicating lives with words
which point to the full moon of my heart
but the words are just the pointing finger,
so forgive me for my silence,
or save it for when I speak.
In my river-dream we spoke and I left
to stand and wait on the water's bank.
And I am still standing there by the current,
imagining us both on the bridge,
legs poised above dark water,
such tension all through liquid and limbs!
Broken by jumping, breaking the surface.

Tonight we jumped—tomorrow we will swim
to surface and shore, and what happens next?
Complete and utter and perfect surprise.
A little life, a little death
but beauty tastes as good from either side the grave.

There is no one there!
I have looked for years.
“No one to be found!”
the poet says laughing and weeping,
“but everyday the longing to find.”
And that, somehow, is the best of it.

Easter Rising

1916

I.

The poet sits beneath a branched canopy
on a field wall of hope and defeat,
his body a caduceus of mingled emotion.
His sight muses down the road
in irregular patterns of thought.
He mutters a birthing poem
in the dense summer air:
All changed, changed utterly.

II.

The revolutionaries have been court-martialled—
and shot.
I dream that they hand me a sword
saying, “Brother, fight on in our war.”
I awake clutching a fountain pen
at my heart.

1889

III.

As long ago as the first
apple blossom bloomed
we met in Dublin city.

You were a singularity of beauty,
and I all outward heart,
all fire brushed head,
all toward you as I am
toward God.

There began an apprenticeship
to you, my servant of queens—
my Helen of Troy.

IV.

Knee-bent toward the sun
of our desire
I am holding your hand
in proposal,
but you are a siren song
of rejection.

What rhythm will win your acceptance?

V.

You pull me into politics;
ever the mystic, I retreat.

Will you marry me?

I say again;
there is a yes in your eyes
but a no circled on your lips.

I asked you again for the sake
of fairy tale thirds,
but life it turns out
is not as structured as stories.

1908

VI.

Paris, after a divorce:
I will be your revolutionary.
Now the acceptance in your eyes

is on your lips
is on your naked breast
and elsewhere.

I kissed her lips and took her hands
but my soul was still a virgin;
the tragedy of chasing
a sterile and outcast image, the illusion—
banished in the audacity of action.

VII.

Eight years later, the revolutionaries shot—
eight years later...

*All changed, changed utterly:
a terrible beauty is born.*

And I am old, older than you imagine,
aged in chasing apple blossoms,
bitter and bereft of image.

I thought you were the girl
“who called me by my name and ran,
and faded through the brightening air,”
but I was wrong—
and you were just a mortal thing.

I will ask you, just one more time,
just to be polite,
because today, my freedom comes from “no.”

VIII.

No.

What utter delight ushers me
from outward to inward image?

Utters me to freedom?

No.

1916

IX.

The poet sits beneath a branched canopy
on a field wall of hope and defeat,
his body a caduceus of mingled emotion.
His sight muses down the road
in irregular patterns of thought.
He mutters a birthing poem
in the dense summer air:
*All changed, changed utterly:
a terrible beauty is born.*

Married now, more in image than in hand
the poet plucks a leaf from heaven
and rises from his field wall.
He opens the gate and enters.

Ninety men dead,
martyred for freedom—
but I am not amongst them
anymore.

Tá mé ar shlí na firinne.
*All changed, changed utterly:
a terrible beauty is born.*

Last Snow, First Green

an elegy for Uncle Bruce

Those who have lost are dissolving into grief.

Those who have left are dissolving into love.

And we are left behind, sadness raging on our tongues
and weeping ravens crying out atop their snowy trees.

Winter is hard when it creeps in frost across the green,
but harder when unannounced it tangles in our hearts.

This sweet sadness is a snow that's falling in our chests.
And what flower could grow under this blanket of cold?

Who has not risen at dawn to see the world turned white,
returned in winter to some pure heaven of perfection?

Like a flower, Beauty is the dying as much as it's the growing.
Without death Beauty is lost to the unchanging human eye.

There is no shame in this sadness, draughts of water from
the well of our heart; grief nourishes this body of love.

So, friends, those who have lost dissolve into your grief,
because those who have left are dissolving into love.

The dead are not gone—they are as close as the wind.
Feel that light touch, as if to say, “mourn for our parting

“but we will meet again, held close by the unseen world;
this is not a dying, but a joining into the song of everything.

“Though I am gone to human eyes, the greater eye of the heart
is never blind and sees the infinity of our unbreaking bond—

“this love, no passing can alter.”

Find your tears, prayers in the dust, and shed them,
then rising to your feet look out toward the horizon.

There the first green glow of spring thaws the frozen earth,
so witness the blooming of the rose of the heart we watered.

Remember this, Beauty is giving the full moon heart of love
to the fragile things we know that we will one day lose.

Life from death and death from life as day turns into night;
love from grief and grief from love as life turns into death.

Those who have lost will dissolve into this love.
Those who have left will dissolve into new life...

One Taste

Calling all cosmologies:
We are requesting your departure from the stars.
A warning to the head:
Do not tread in heaven—you see
 hell is the quality of mind
 reflected in the sulfur of the city.

Today the quality of light that prisms
through the grass in yellow is all
the cascade of heaven that we need.
Sometime, let the world
 redeem your mind
 from culture.
That is why the wren has laid her eggs
upon my doorstep.

I will show you a secret
but only if you promise to
tell everyone.

Find a yellow flower that looks
as much like a child's drawing of a sun
that you can dare imagine.

Lean into its perfume;
note the autopoetic elegance,
 the weathered delicacy of petals.
Crane your neck into the stamen;
observe the constellation of pollen,
 a peep show of plants in love.
Bend into its radiance;
mark the scented exchange of photons—
 there are flowers in your eyes.

Then lean and lean and lean
looking down from stem to roots to soil
until you circle back to cosmos,
then down and down and down
to milky way, earth,
 and back to the patch of soil
where you kneel,
looking through a flower
to your mind.

Calling all cosmologies:
We are requesting your departure from the stars.
We are abandoning religion
in favor of the one pure taste
of being.

Great Eastern Sun

for Chögyam Trungpa

This poem is about the dawn of the Great Eastern Sun.

This poem is all about love.

We will speak in time of these simple matters,
but for now watch the blossom of snowdrops.

Everything you need is right here waiting,
patient for your arrival weeping and laughing.

Let your breath illuminate the faithful dark,
and your feet be naked in the dust of the earth.

This poem is about the dawn of the Great Eastern Sun.

This poem is all about love.

This is the hard way of finding the sacred world,
and there is no antidote to the longing for union.

This is the open way of surrendering to the heart,
a fearless proclamation of compassion in action.

I will not say that you walk a path without risk,
but that death is worth the Lion's Roar.

This poem is about the dawn of the Great Eastern Sun.

This poem is all about love,

love that haunts you to surrender,

surrender to the dawn of the Great Eastern Sun.

The Other Side of Silence

The sky is still tonight, a dark iris around
the bright pupil of the moon,
and I am just a body, standing a dim figure
among the silvered glowing trees,
and the water running smooth before me,
is dark and full of stars.
Something wild in me will not die.

My bare feet find their way to water,
gaze into the black infinite surface,
can't help but listen, see with not-ears,
not-eyes, something that must touch the water,
reach out, leaning forward catch a glimpse,
a fractal liquid shadow motioning deeper—
into the trees or me.

I creep without a noise until the breaking
of a twig says “stop,”
and stand still through the tall grass feeling
the wind and the soft cloth of my shirt,
the full belly of the moon piercing the sky,
the waves, and me—brimming with this full-bodied
motion as the currents carry on the light.
But the shallow pool before me is still,
and I am face forward again over the water.

I see the image now, a dark reflection drenched
in the possibility of unshod sight,
all wild hooves, the call of carrion crows,
riding like a storm through my heart,
refusing everything but the mountain of my mind.
And I know there is a corner of my soul
that I can never touch, but touches me—
it's in the soft water, and the trees,

pounding hooves across the mud and
red-mouthed ravens who know the crimson,
ugly side of things.

So much effort spent to domesticate the soul,
hiding from the hawk of nature,
blinding the body from the diamond eye that sees
because one glimpse into that untamed stream,
seeing for the last time a definite self
means our home will never be the same.

So I look and drink deep from
the river of all things as they are,
drink in all the world, then turn toward home
for a quiet cup of tea.

The Dervish Dances

“Walk out three days in the desert,”
says the dream to the delusion,
molting the psyche
and planting tender kisses on the cheeks of the heart.
Everyday I pray to fall apart,
a death-wish for life and obliteration
into the ecstasy of passion.
Spin dervish, spin! I want to die laughing.

Book Two
The Sea-Sweet Moon

*The Ballad of the
Sea-Sweet Moon*

Prologue

FRIENDS AND ENEMIES,
LOVERS,

(**day**)*dreamers* & (**night**)*seekers*:
these words will poison you to

TRUTH

...like mercury madly beading in your blood.

Your veins will howl for love
Before this aged night is done!

Set sail or die;
blind tonight we
resurrect the sea,
parting red with blood.

BEWARE: *The world will end
before the close of night,*
while we make love to the goddess in:

blasphemous*
french kiss
erotic art...

All the while
SHOUTING
immaculate* praise to the
heart!

**blasphemous immaculation*: the process whereby duality is dissolved in the act of making love.

Chapter Heaven

I am a city man,
a busy man,
an “*I don’t have time for poetry, man!*”

Oh yes, I almost forgot—
I am a linear man,
bound by time and space;

I live in the city because the
universe is too big a place.

Its dimensions frighten me
so mirrored in my psyche.

I have heard that I live in a world
where sky and I and mind are one.
The meaning unclear...
I close my eyes to the sun.

I am a city man,
a *God-fearing* man,
a wealthy man.
What more could I want?

We have built skyscrapers that tickle the moon
and banished her shadows with our lights.
Now she has rejected the sun
and her clouds rain tears on the city's night.

I am a city man,
but *a snowdrop blossoms* through the concrete
and I follow it like Alice down the rabbit hole
it smells like sweat and blood and love.

A Woman is singing
her voice is drowned out
by shadows screaming names;
they have my face but I could not face them.

Back up the rabbit hole I go,
but no longer comfortable in my home.

I used to be a city man.

In the moonless dark
i dream that...

night howls
lovers cry
resounding through darkened hollows,
playing hide and seek with
tongues and lips

and,

**OH,
SHIT!**

THE

SUN

IS

ON

FIRE!

I awaken having dreamt of sleeping on the moon,
my lover beside me,
she lacks a name and a face as if I awoke too soon.

She fades before me—
dream-dust scattered in the wind
of
conscio-*us*-ness.

For three cycles of the moon
I bleed from my eyes
where vision has graced my mind.

I see the **World** from the *inside*
and I died(!) to bring you these **Words**.
(world is impermanent utterance)

Please note: The poisoned veins have reached the heart, which has continued to pump black blood through rivers and into the once blue sea—a dead sea provides no loaves, nor fish.

And..

**OH,
SHIT!**

**NOW
THE
MOON
IS
ON
FIRE!**

So I ride
the tides
or raise my heart
into the wind,
but I'm afraid
to grow fins
because the ocean is dark.

Set sail
the heart.

Tonight.

*So long to the day I left—
where has my life gone?*

Who is this returning on fire
with a heart weeping tears of the earth
and blood pumping through placenta?
No, this ain't pretty.

*This poem was born of
cities in love.*

Who is this returning to home?
The language from abroad
is not spoken here,
only the vulgar tongue
of the wrathful spirits you've slain.
Can you speak it and live?

You don't want to go
you won't go
you will
you won't go
you will

you won't go
you won't go
you won't go
you will
you won't go
you will
you won't go
you will
you won't go
you will
you won't go
you won't go
you will.

Chapter Sun

And now you're dying.
Did you forget the price of healing?
It's the only way to know
com(passion).

You'll be fine.

Just close your eyes and **sleep**.

*I'm dying now, but
when I'm born I'll love you.*

The heart is a sea called
"Great Lover."

She was all eyes and lips and flowing hair;
a beautiful cliché of a woman.
Beyond the horizon there is an island,
it is forever distant, she is forever there.

I met her once, half asleep, on a cold night
with the sea spray dancing in the moonlight,
our limbs entangled with sore rapture,
her breath on my neck like supernovas in heat.

She was my sea-sweet liquor;
she must have been a goddess
who I drank with a malnourished thirst
that burned away this night of stars.

(this wound divides us, love, moon from sun)

I woke at dawn with an *ache* for a heart.
There was nothing left of her but the
scent of flowers floating on the wind
and the words, “this boat will hold our fate.”

Ahead of me, faint across the horizon: **land!**
at last, I pulled at those familiar oars.
I rowed! with violent! fervor! through the day!
until the moonlight lit the sea with silver fire.

I rowed until the moonlight lit the sea with silver fire.
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I rowed until the moonlight lit the sea with silver fire.

Dawn again—the land is still there
across as many waves as yesterday.
A trail of blossoms leads the way
to another lonely night at sea.

I row, not toward an island, but arrival,
toward the flowers and fruits of a voyage;
toward the woman whose liquor I drank
to haunt these interior sails of the heart.

Some nights she still comes in my weariness
seducing me on with her *morning sun hips*.
I am powerless against her phantom scent
which draws me again to this **impossible** horizon.

And still, I would sail on like this

FOREVER!

a letter recovered from the wreckage of the sea:

Dear Beloved,

I have seen your hips reflected
in the clear silver curves of the moon
and watched your shoulders
undress in the wind of your hair.
O, Separation, how we ache!
These are desperate times
and desperation calls for love.

Could you love a broken wheel?
Like I love the sweet musk of your valley?
(Here I sweat at the sound
of my pleading voice.)
I need you, my Salvation!
Let us elope as two rivers
flowing together with the currents
toward the passionate ocean of song.

What is it stops me plunging into you?
Your depths seem an invitation to heaven.
I would lose myself in your universe,
a dizzying galaxy of color around
the bright pupils of your moon.
That bliss of laying with the goddess.

This liquor in my heart
came between
Ulysses and Penelope.
It isn't safe for mortals!
But still I drink and die.
No more! You will be my Ithaca.
Let us give up this grasping—
you, dancing in the tide and
I, sailing sweet on toward union.

Faithfully yours,
"Ulysses"

This boat will hold our fate
like hands cupped in prayer
or dipped into a forgotten well,
nourishing naked invisible thirst.

Let loose your *soular* sails
to catch the wind of the sun!
FORSAKE YOUR HOMES FOR LOVE,
tempting Poseidon's wrath
to boil the sea below the heart.

Through trials of icebergs
we crash into the unconscious.
The waves are growing taller
and I dream that I am falling
through *wastelands of metaphors*,
abstracting the sky reflected in the sea.
My heart is a symbol of drumming
so I sing of my buried instincts;
animal with bared soul and teeth
gnawing bone marrowed truth
from the depth of the old god's sea.

"But this boat will hold our fate,"

I repeat like a mantra to the wind—
white squalls and icebergs
aren't the only danger here,
and as if in confirmation a
dark
pillar
of
the
sea
rises
above
me
in the shape of an old woman.
She has salt tresses and barnacled eyes
and her gaze rips through my chest,
trembling with

MYSTERIUM TREMENDUM.

Then down she falls to swallow me
whole and uniting
back to the sea.

*But this boat will
hold our fate!*

I scream to the deaf sky
as the boat rocks then tips
and I sink deep into the sea.

“This boat will hold your fate
but you lack the necessary **faith**,”
and hands plunge me deeper to...

the lotus-eyed place where
time and space do not meet
opening a womb-door to paradise,
regained in me, I breathe with

gilled lungs

but suddenly I'm rising, watching my body

sink

halfway to the moon
halfway to the sun.

Now I'm sinking into an ocean of stars so deep
I can see the curves of
TIME AND SPACE
and they mirror the curves of a woman's breast
as she presses soft against me
speaking names into the wind.

but still my heart beats to its syllables and speaking
in a holy comm(union)_{yes, sex.}

of **bread and wine**
turned now
to **passion and dust.**

(love being first, death being next)

And now I'm hanging on a tree
with ravens plucking my eyes
for three turns of day and night,
and three times the old woman comes:
offering a cup brimming with **blood**,
mine and hers mingling in one.

Twice I refuse the third time I drink.
Now she is a young beautiful thing
whose eyes carry the heat of the sun.
Unable, I am burned by her gaze.
"A road of death before you," she says,
trailing the ^{"A road of death before you,"}scent of apples as she leaves.
_{"A road of death before you,"}

Chapter Moon

I awake washed ashore,
clutching sand like lost dreams,
my eyes stinging,
raven-pecked by the sea of earth's blood.

My boat is wrecked but I am not.

This boat will hold our fate.

I am **eclipsed** by night
on a beach of superior dreams
having seen truth hanging
from the jaws of the sea.
This will be a night to surrender.

I follow a trail of cherry blossoms to you
navigating the dark by your phantom perfume
passing hanged
men with failed dead stares,
bellies blooming with disemboweled fears.

(I told you, this ain't pretty)

**WHO
AMONGST
THE DEAD
WILL
CRUCIFY
ME
TONIGHT?**

This time I have tasted the sea.
IAMREADY

I strip bare,
draw a circle
in the dirt
around me
a horizon of
(you and me
circled by
eternity.)

And the air howls
and the night growls
and the trees shutter
shaking the dead
men's bowels.

Voices quiver in the stars.
as the moon reveals to me
these corpses are my fear.

i have feared myself

(in quiet revelation the
night slips past)

Dear ego,

Your current position within this psyche has henceforth been terminated. Your final paycheck will be mailed to the address you have provided, less the damages you have incurred during your employment. Please be aware that this is an upper management decision and as such is non-negotiable. Reasons cited are gross misconduct and an assessed inability to follow through with decisions in the best interest of the organization. Furthermore your role in this growing department of consciousness is becoming increasingly irrelevant to the transpersonal policies currently in development. Please do not use us as a reference.

Sun^{rise} in the
ELYSIAN FIELDS

as corpses ignite into torches of light
the day kisses the symmetry of night.
the day kisses the symmetry of night.
as corpses ignite into torches of light

You appeared before me
a vision you could only imagine
even the stars felt self-conscious

this dark noon moon embraces the sun's full fool;

making love with more than the body
you need only shift your hips
and the entire world shudders.

By midnight we are
an ecstatic mess
of cosmic orgasm.

LET US

BE

SACRED

TOGETHER

LET US

BE

PROFANE

we dissolve into luminous union...

and maybe when we
die

we will not need
heaven

but can surrender again
falling

to the joy becoming
rain

Dissolving,
dissolving,
dissolving
into your electric body,
making love to the very idea
of passion,
collapsing into the heart.

she said,

I am your altar of
belonging. Come pray
if you wish—or not.
The choice is simple:
die now, taste love now;
die later, taste love later.

*Refusing to open is
only postponement.*

Forget religion, *this is the taste of blood.*

Quiet now.

Your veins pump with the awakened state.

“You ask,”

what is this feeling in my chest?

“Your heart is weeping with sadness.”

how can I make it stop?

“You can’t. Give up trying to change.”

it hurts.

“Give it space. Open deeper.”

i feel longing.

“That, we call being human.”

Somewhere, a snowdrop blossoms.

Somewhere, lovers fold into union.

Forget religion, and learn the

art of love;

this is the taste of blood.

taking apart the self to see

we open

cherry blossoms and spring leaves

OM
OM
OM

Chapter Earth

I have dissolved into her heart,
our love is considered fine art.

She is that moon

I am that sun

and we are one.

We live in a world where heart and art are one,

where dances are offered to the

not two, not one, but none,

divine consciousness of love,

and

why are you not
dancing?

This is not a
rehearsal.

So I start dancing to the beats of forever
and she dances with me
worlds are born in her rhythm
her light does not banish the night
but casts our shadows across the earth,
the stomping of our feet
is as the pounding of a drum.

I realize we are performing an exorcism
and my eyes now see beyond forever
we are Shakti and Shiva

world-makers,
dream-shakers

My singular identity dissolves into the ground.

I am not me but I am you

and you are the light

of a thousand suns and moons.

So why are you not

dancing?

Why have you not forsaken your homes for

love?

Why have you not kissed the goddess with your

tongue?

Why have you not heard god in the beating of a

drum?

We are enacting a passion play for
the ego:

KNOW YOUR PART

We are reclaiming all the fires of
the night:

KNOW YOUR HEART

We are tempting fate with ecstatic
lovemaking:

KNOW YOUR ART

Chapter Human

This is not a rehearsal.

This is
opening
night.

Tonight I am watching the draw of evening
with **moonlit whiskey** soft in my hand,
(it isn't alcohol, boy, it's the water of life)
a well of reflections brought again to my lips,
under the wide ocean of the night.

Of all my **faith** this is the **certain** one,
of all my **exiles** this is the **hardest**,
this *opening heart*, this *learned*
precision of mind, this *carrying forth*,
letting go of false riches in exchange
for humble rags woven in gold.

Our love affair
was a slow blossom of trust—
now when I am gone I will long for your
heaving hills and red rock curves,
the way you filled your sky with
(**emptiness and thunder**)
as if a marriage proposal to **wonder**,
opening again, one love for another
drenched in solitude and the
passion of blossoming flowers.

And now the apprenticeship is ending,
having learned the *one-fierce-rhythm-of-love*
that

terrifies and uplifts the heart toward

UNION

Turning from you to another face I love,
you letting me go, the true consummation
of what can not be spoken;

*two bodies wrapped in the cloth of the unbreaking
heart.*

Now **I am ready** to go on in that space,
knowing that it was you who filled me
with the

ache

of all these dying stars,
destined to be extinguished, fading into ash,
but for a moment bright, as the first love
folds again into the last.

The world is collapsing around us.
Each shiver and moan brings
down another fallen star closer,
crashing from the firmament of heaven and mind
as the world kneels down around us.

It was the end of days
but all we could think about was the ritual
unfolding around us in the cloth of night
and skin turned molten with love.

The ground collapses at midnight
as sun and moon explode
in an equinox of surrender.

i dream...

this time of cities on fire,
sprouting lotus from the ash.

Set sail the heart.

Tonight.

I am a city man,
a diamond man,
a forest man,
an *“I don’t have time for stock quotes, man!”*

Oh yes, I almost forgot—
I am a circular man,
mirrored by sun and moon;

an embodied man,

am I the only one who swoons with love?

I know that beyond the city
there lies union with everything;
not even you could say no
to those lips.

I have sailed beyond.
I have sailed beyond beyond.
I have returned from her
aching dew-soaked hips.

Sometimes a blood red moon
still shines on the sweeping of the sea;
on those nights I weep,
weep until my throat is hoarse,
until my heart leaps tall with flames.

Last night I dreamt you came to me again,
you were awash with the sea and breathing light.
You started to dance. I started to sing.

Last night I fell in love with a girl I've never met.

It was beautiful. It wasn't real.

It was dharmakaya blossoming like a flower on my tongue.

I wanted to shout. I wanted to cry.

Instead I sat with an open heart

bleeding simplicity onto the carpet.

What a mess! It wasn't real.

It was vajradhatu growing like a tree in my eyes.

I bathed in salt kisses.

Love is washing this buddha in my bathtub.

Weep, heart – weep! But not too much.

I will not give you old clichés.

You may have my *broken* heart.

It's useless any other way. It isn't real.

It's your eyes planted like seeds in my heart.

I wanted to run. I wanted to sleep.

I was sick of buying land. No more territory.

You could be a flower. Or a rock. The ocean.

A blade of grass.

You could be a wind or a storm.

See, there, a butterfly braves the hail!

You could be these things. But not my territory.

I will erect no fence around the heart.

You deserve more than fences, so I will knock them down.

If you'd like I could plant a little tree

to shelter our two growing hearts.

It wasn't real! It was real!

It doesn't matter.

These are only words approximating truth.

Let us find our hearts suddenly pure.

Let us not be timid!

Love evokes the warrior's cry. *Ki ki so so!*

It was **Shiva** dancing with kisses on **Shakti's** lips.

*Would you like to dance with me
in a field without fences?*

Genesis:

The Day After the End of the World

I am alone in that summer field
and the field is alone in me.
I brush my hands through lilac like hair,
bring them to my face—inhalé.
All there is anywhere is birdsong
and heath and wind on the pond.
Something, yesterday, luxuriously transformed.
More than a bang it was a lover's sigh.
I think, today, the world is free.

This time I awoke with her face and name,
and spoke it into the dying wind.

No more prison breaks for the heart
I thought, then saw you across the pond,
naked as I,
the curves of your soul
traced across your milky skin.
We met under an apple tree
plucking fruits
like they were suns and moons.

We ate them without sin.

About the Author

Jason Kirkey was born in 1895 to a man and a woman in Boston. At the age of 18 he found himself on a train heading west to Colorado where he worked as an itinerant miner and scoundrel. After losing a significant amount of money (which he didn't have) in a game of chance, he took a hot air balloon to 10th century India where he studied at Nalanda University. At the close of his studies he traveled to Hibernia on the back of the wind and became a hermit in the monastery at Glendalough. He was asked to leave by the monks when they discovered he was washing his mind out in the lake. He shipped back home to Boston with a merchant vessel that was shipwrecked in the middle of the Atlantic on the back of a whale. He is still swimming home today.



Jason Kirkey grew up in Massachusetts. He is a poet and a student of mindfulness practice. His poetry is influenced strongly by the natural world, Buddhism, and his ancestral Irish roots; through these he hopes to kindle a deep love of the earth and a relationship with the creative spirit as a means of transformation. He holds an interdisciplinary degree from Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado and is the author of two other collections of poetry, *Portraits of Beauty* and *Songs from a Wild Place*. His website is www.jasonkirkey.com.

The Ballad of the Sea-Sweet Moon tells the story of a mythic encounter with the divine feminine and how it shakes and shapes the life of one man, setting his heart ablaze. In their poetic and tantric love-making, cities and structures of consciousness will fall, ultimately making room for a new way of being in the world. This collection also includes a newly edited version of the chapbook *September Seeing* and several never before seen poems.

from *Conversations with Maple*

“What are you reading for? What are you reading for?
Let the *world* come in your eyes!”

Now I sit in the brown light of sunset just before a storm
with space enough in my tea for the rain.
The lawnmower is broken. The grass is knee-high,
and bends in the wind like a river.

“Just once, let what is in your care grow wild
enough to see the world through its own eyes.”



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