

AT THIS MOMENT

'My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary'
– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 'The Rainy Day'

1.

Housebound and landlocked, eye to window to rain to leaking gutter and sodden towel in corner of the studio. I would be a sunshine man, sitting in the shade; I would be a fairweather sailor sipping onboard wine and watching others daydream. I would be overgrown and forgotten, knowing she is always right and that there is nothing to be afraid of.

Shallow end, strange cadences, the city of the sun

2.

Owl song, moonrise and low cloud. No more fallen branches but the imprint of the last is still there on the lawn, along with this year's acorns. Even asleep I can hear the rain, can feel the dampness of the air and watch the garden path become a stream and then a waterfall as it descends the concrete steps. I am dreaming summer backwards, afraid to live within these clouds.

Ice of the north, dry sands of the desert, morning still hours away

3.

A rusty future calls, one of decaying metal and rotten, broken boughs, things which this quiet man is not well suited for. This long winter of storms and banter has reduced him to hallucination and frostbite, layers of warm clothing and endless online dreams. Everything happens to me, nothing feels the same, my heart is a twisted oak. The children remind me and then move away. There will be different days.

Muddy water, happy sad, thunderclaps and late night booze

4.

All roads from this village lead only to the next, the paths I've found circle through mud back to where they began. I am better than I used to be at all of this, can't wait

for me to get here or for silence to be declared. I sing rain songs and cast spells to ward off infection and pain, am waiting for the miracle I promised myself would be here soon. There must be a way to expand into the universe, however hard I want to be like me.

Teenage wildlife, yellow flowers, evening sky on fire

5.

For the birds, for the children, for the person in your life. For the sake of the planet, for the silent majority, for an undisclosed sum. For the uninitiated, for the first time, for the foreseeable future. For good reason, for the benefit of us all, for the rest of the year. For the best experience, one for all and all for one. For the last time, head for the hills. Thanks for nothing, thanks for the dance, I am out for the count. This is where everything falls apart, where I don't know how to begin or end.

The sunsets are meant for somebody else

6.

Drystone songs and fairweather tunes, cardboard boxes cut down to size and stacked under the skylight's grey. It is just you, just me, and the storm outside, dreaming ourselves back to then. In the glimpses between powercuts I imagine phantoms of the sun. Take all the stars and half-tongue the moon, I have been swallowed by the sea.

Call me Noah, call me Jonah, call me up another time

7.

In and out of the fading light and everywhere I go. A small boat in a week-long storm, an echo of my own devising, a rather soggy scream. On the other side of knowing is a hidden future but the forecast is not good. There are invisible seams in the sky and endless streams on the ground. It is not just winter rain and all these crooked words cannot turn things upside down. These are poems for broken birds and stories for strangers, songs about broken shells and flooded roads. An invocation to the god of dry.

Fluid dynamics, solemn goodbyes, black cat sleeping on our bed

8.

Out of all this blue and water come invisible connections and email blessings,
messages made of sellotape and glue. Secrets sent from the white starline bring me
back to earth, where it is time to become ocean and turn my inner landscape grey.
What do I do with all the sorrys owed to my other selves or with the storm within?
From nothing to nowhere, I have found another version of me to inhabit and
persuade. It is raining in my house but I now have a time machine.

Land of doubt, liquified, secret passage into spring

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