

Poetry Series

Jason Stutz
- poems -

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Jason Stutz(08/25/1972)

I grew up in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. I enjoyed a fresh, vibrant and sacredly naive poetry scene in Georgetown, 1992-3 where I met great, true friends for the first time, fellow writers and artists, and, most of all, the mental and emotional freedom offered by them. I lived briefly on an Israeli 'kibbutz' (commune) and came back to D.C. with fresh insight and courage to be myself. I left the East Coast in 1995 with my friend, Matthew, for San Francisco, and travelled increasingly more rapidly and moniless until arriving in upstate New York at my friend, Noah's doorstep in June, 1996, exultant, half-dead, but inspired, struggling desperately to assimilate practically all I had experienced, both injurious and blessed, having absorbed an abundance of both. In that state, I argued with Noah about many things, sadly, and we are no longer in communication, though I consider him still one of my true brothers and one of my major poetic inspirations. In January, 1997, I came to New York City with \$175 and a palm-full of faith. In a week, I found a closet of a room in Harlem and a job at a Chelsea deli, making sandwiches. For seven years, I lived, worked and struggled while my natural joy painstakingly re-developed in me, using the mulch of my failures and hardships to fertilize it. Early in this period of seemingly bi-weekly nervous breakdown where I could not even afford to feed myself and often, through ridiculously poor nutritional choices, made my state even worse, I did not write and even suppressed very strong writing out of a mistaken belief that it was from demonic sources. I did write, at times, desperate, but empty prayers to a God I felt I fell too far from, and a little while later, when I could at least (at last) feed myself, sometimes a spirit forced its way through me in order to write, with my hand, with my mind and heart, poems. These were a Grace given to me. Oft times I overthought them, altering the originality of them with my futile brain, but other times, I bowed my head and let my mind and voice be guided. I could not have written them on my own without trusting some Overtruth to guide me, but they are more intimate to me than I still have yet to grasp. In such, I consider many of them a gift to my name, which I was given for suffering through a process of hardships.

Over the past 8 years in New York, much of my time not writing was spent in states of complicated emotions. I have been healing and now lament a little at my lesser sensitivity, but I think, after this time, I will expose myself again to the storms of Love, but this time in a more balanced, capable manner, so much that I might enjoy and utilize the forces that act upon and within me for some greater purpose again.

At Eddies

</>At Eddies

I.

He stood leaning on a parking meter
observing people outside the nightclub.
They'd flow outside, then eddy in front, chatting
until one of their members found a cab or a car,
and they continued on toward home.
Some were beautiful or funny to watch, some wretched, some sad.

He noticed her, not startled, not knowingly,
but somehow, she registered behind his eyes
to a more subtle place of perception.
She filled him slowly
as though pouring into him through a sieve,
or as one looks up to the sky at night
looking for stars and seeing none, then one, then three
and then, there they all are
intercommunicating and twinkling in your eyes.

She had already hailed a cab. Her friend was already inside
hidden deep in the back seat in shadow.
The door was already opened and she was stepping in.
That moment, it flashed in his mind
he would never meet her, never love, never laugh,
never fight or misunderstand her;
never ever anything
with her.

As she bent into the back seat, her hand on the door,
she looked up for a moment, surprised
called by the pull of his silent voice
and when their eyes met
a magnetic field stretched taut and sounded,
like a drum skin just then beaten by the force of their meeting
resounding in the small, perfect world
created out of their two beings. □
There was that powerful magnetism

There was a mysterious recognition

and there was a vague understanding,
coupled with an ill, helpless feeling
that they both hadn't the strength or courage
to take the opportunity to be found in knowing each other.
Perhaps it was not meant to be,
but perhaps, if they were better people, more alert,
more confident in facing their joys
it would have been.

Time had given them reprieve;
nay, Time kneeled at their feet and cleared a path for their meeting!
and there they were
gazing upon each other, reflections
reflecting and reflecting each other each other each other! !
in the enclosure of their Eternity.

She lightly opened her mouth
as though to utter an unpronounceable phrase
saying (almost) in the honest shrug of her shoulder,
"I don't know, Friend,
But this looks deep to me." '

□

II.

There was
a powerful magnetism that diminished the
ordinary chaos of the rest of the scene
revealing it all to be little more than
shadows and prerecorded songs—
angered echoes and rasping, half empty voices
calling out to lovers that were no longer there.

There was a mysterious recognition
and a flash in their minds of sex,
but more than that, the true richness of sex,
what it is when a right pairing is made,
as they walk along side by side through the world
sharing perceptions and thoughts
and everything that it is a joy to share with another,

withholding only that which would aid to increase their love.
That was the flash:
of the true richness of being together.

Strange that at that point
any ordinary human being would not
slough off their present circumstances in order to find out more.
But, quickly accompanied by the impulse to take immediate action
was the overwhelming urge
to stay comfortable,
rising up over the spine and washing over the brain;
a sickly, sweet blanket of ease.

There arose an ache deep in both their solar plexus': remorse.

Standing there, his eyes widening, foot angling off the curb,
she turned to her friend, to the driver, to the world she was sure of.
Her hand slid from the door, a smile from her heart
and swung it shut from the inside.

He saw her mouth move, indicating to the driver.
There in the seat of the cab,
her motions reminded him
of a pool of water
eddying behind a rock
while the river rushed past her all around.

III.

Destiny is, in this instance,
for the woman, the man, and for the man, the woman
not at the top of the river, but simply,
a little upstream- Destiny is
always a little up stream.
Destiny is something that must be earned
like money made investing oneself
against the downward current of ones life
in effort to gain immortal, beautiful, heavenly possessions found upstream.

The greatness of one's Destiny is result of the Will in a man
which is a power he has built in him

akin to building strength in his muscles
by moving opposite the downward tug upon his intellect
when he beholds some preter- or super-natural thing of beauty,

thereby towing with him
a portion of the entire conglomerate mass
of mankind's accumulated inertia
lightening the load for all humanity.

If we were angels
we would simply fly
hinged already
on God's Will
delighted to dismantle or rework the elements
until they accord with Love.
Time would be like
a nature trail we knew well how to find our way upon;
one we have an infinite supply of energy to traverse.

We could step
eddy to eddy
simply placing our foot down in some region of time

if we were gods
and slumped not in the strain of
mankind, his counter-thought
weighing down the waters of Time
blotting out his number in Infinity.

We would see
and then go to it.
But, a man sees
and then looks down
seeing the water flowing against him
and then he looks up again toward his destiny
still remembering the rush of water,

so strong

so pleasant

IV.

I wish I could say that this instance
was an occasion for the heavens to dance and sing.
I wish I could say that the love in this match
was real enough to both of them
that they called out to each other
and detained each other,
long enough to have known,
for at least one night,
or for many, many days and nights together.

I wish I could say
that the cabbie was not given the cue to drive.
But he drove
on into the flow of traffic.

At the stop light
she turned
and saw through the back window of the cab
the man still looking after her, stunned still
(a photograph) removed from time
and she thought to tell the driver to turn back
but when she asked her self "Why? "
and the pressure of the great and glorious truth
moved to part it's lips and voice itself inside of her
she lied, as loud as she could, told herself she was crazy
and that there was no good reason to turn back
and it was probably only a physical attraction anyway.

The driver pushed on to his destinations
while in the back seat
his passengers settled in
finding a current of conversation they found easy to navigate.
They spoke of everyday things
and were like little delightful streams of water
lapping against each others banks,
so pleasant and nonsensical to the ear
it doesn't even matter what they were talking about;

so pleasant it really doesn't matter at all.

Children In The Garden Of Eden

Children in the Garden of Eden

I.

We were like
children in the garden of Eden...
love without limits
without names

but then, the snake entered
and colors fractured
and all of what would be history
was then born.
Suddenly we were searching for
words to name things, words to cling to things
as, suddenly, everything
lost something vital that we could never describe or name;
but something was lost:
perhaps, it was the coating
of our own innocence playing upon things;
but, suddenly, all was slipping away like quick sand at our feet
pulling us around the ankles
while our still bright awarenesses shown
on our swiftly dwindling immensity
and drew us to a terrifying conclusion.

Tree! ! River! ! Man! ! Woman! !
Catch them before they have departed.
Catch them so all of history may know them
and, in their names, remember them from
when they were original, perfect, Ours.
Snake! Body! God! Body! Snake! Body!
Adam, come near to me, I have something to show you.

What was love was now
a swarm of bees beating against suddenly sealed hearts
and, hearts now excavated, a prison of loneliness, a shelter from life
that no companionship could draw us from.
We interwove no more;

our hands could touch, but not feel.
Anguish was our acquaintance, now
angling into our hearts
from the eyeballs, tongue and genitals
of the snake, who bore into our imaginations
and planted seeds there.

II.

I remember sitting with you
your tears spinning in the repetitious dance of your thoughts
asking me if I believed in you still
Mastering myself, I told you I did
although my heart withered to be near you, to love you
cut in three between our lines of division.
Oh, the snake deigned to devour the boundless fruits (stars! galaxies!) of our
love
and make us worm inside his belly as we contained ourselves in earthen lives.

We were
children in the garden of Eden
knowing and fearing nothing of wrongdoing, oh blessed state!
All was a joyous and brilliant sharing of light and breath and words.
I see us dancing in the air in great sunlight above a beautiful, green field
joyous and laughing with and around each other,
around Ourselves (a tear drops from my eye upon remembrance of that word:
'Ourselves') .

But, something deigned to tear us from our endlessness
from the limitless spaces we had built
in our hearts for each other to dance and roam within

III.

I have been thinking.
I seem to do almost entirely that, now.
Time. There is only Time,
conflicting within our hearts at every reach.

I've weighed and measured every inch of our love

and I think we do not need to feel ashamed anymore.
I wonder if the snake's seeds were already sown
and needed only to be watered by unerring love.
I wonder if they were sewn with us
when, in eternity, we were conceived
and that these raucous, violent weeds
will eventually show to bloom into new flowers
of a beauty that we have never seen before
if we give them care and labor for them
and give them, yes, Time (our new home,
dimension of separations and reflections,
the long breadth of it devouring and sustaining itself at once)
for these flowers to grow within.
We will learn the patience of the seasons.

Not Love's perfection, but it is something else
that builds in me now when I see you:
a warm, bubbling spring that bulges
when you fall or say a misguided word
and I can not help but see their causes in myself.

I see you now
differently, my love.
I do not think
of God's immediate perfection when I see you,
but I think of a larger, varying, forgiving perfection,
unseen, but yet the most present theme of our actions and our lives
as though someone is entreating me from far away
and their voice sounds in the nerves of my heart!

Oh, it is a love!
It is a love that is being built as though beneath our feet
and will emerge in full light
when it's rightful moment comes.
It is a love
whose bricks are the very rubble
of our once perfect union.

Our children and our children's children's children
will suffer and war and fear.
I feel an æon of terror in my bones;
but at the end, there will be a child

whose mouth the whole long æon was waiting for to open:
a pained child learning to speak with knives
jutting against his flaming heart—
and yet, somehow, his words are hewn by Love.
His mouth, opening, will open, thus, a new era;
He will shape a new existence with his lips and his tongue
and his words will draw forth the elements and conditions of a new world.

This I sense now
like a shadow of light
behind every slip and fall we make.

Jason Stutz

Daisy Chain (Of The Heart)

The work is as endless as there are people;
suffering is as cyclical as the sky.
But how can we spend our lives stretching our hope thin
upon the success and well being of others?
"It's too tiring, it never ends, it's a whirl,
they become helped and then go right back to the way they were.
What if anything will do any good? "
But look at her- asking for only a little.
And look at him
frowning and cold faced
asking for nothing at all-
deep down, he is a forgotten one,
almost dead from crying so long, hard from fighting.

A smile. A girl smiles
and it enters him through special cracks he left open
for the off chance that something beautiful and worthy of trust is presented to
him.
He appears unmoved: 'What if it isn't? ', he thinks) ,
only his eyes look more intense, more cautious,
more wounded, more hopeful. 'Maybe, ' his body says.
But then she is gone. She saw something in him,
perhaps the bright color of his neck tie drew a time of well being to his
complexion and that juxtaposed with him now was endearing to her...
and he sits, inhibiting any decisions about it, with that moment
held in every one of his senses for the rest of the hour-
it dances about like fireflies in the jar of his heart,
he can feel it in his fingertips and on his lips and in the tip of his nose, lighting
him like a candle: her carefree turn,
her white smile, the beams of affection from her eyes:
they struck him- unmistakably- it was him they struck-
and despite the rumbling it caused inside of him,

he did not crumble
his walls are secure
he appears unmoved
no one can get at him,
he will remember her, probably forever.

Tomorrow, he may look out the windows of the train
and feel a stirring inside of him as the city comes into view.
Tonight he will go home and read a book or watch his favorite show, and it will
seem to speak of him.
He will wonder what his name is:
is he worthy of remembrance?
With an effort, he realizes it.
Maybe, he considers. Maybe he is good.

Jason Stutz

Images Of The Woman I Desire

Her lips part and open to a white arctic sea
a baby seal gutted and bleeding all joy and desire.

Everything given to this world
must be born somewhere.
'Happiness' is an element
which claims it's birthright in her eyes-
merry birds appear spontaneously where she looks.
Yet how can it survive through such sorrow
like a sun beam that thrives on an ocean floor?

She cries, but laughter intertwines and chokes her;
she laughs, and tears do the same
round her throat, an ivy vine
choking sorrow with laughter round the tree.

Ivy vines
choking sorrow
with laughter round the vine.
ivy round ivy round ivy vine
laughter, sorrow, tears, and joy
ivy vine round ivy vine

In her eyes,
a twinkle, a song of the universe lightly chimes
a light child and a dark child,
holding hands and dancing round the vines.
"Here ye, here ye"
"There ye, there ye"
"Dear ye, dear ye"
"Fear ye, fear ye"
hand in hand
like ivy round the vine.

The light one laughs
the dark one cries in rhyme
the light one yawns
the dark one yells in perfect time.

Lonesome Sailor

I.

It is winter and the nights are cold
and the sound of the wind
is the lonesome companion of my heart.
The beauty of the moon offers me no relief
but only waters my garden of sighs and misspent wishes.

Tonight
we are the only two left in this bar
and I don't know
what you are like or who you are

but I heard the wind
howling
through both of our hearts
at once.

Yes, it would be nice
if Love drew us to the side
and coached us on the meaning of intimacy.
Then, we would see our innocence
and cast off this armor of need.
But without such guidance
nothing ever comes together the way it could
and we must guide ourselves
though I am drunk, and lost, and far from home.

Love does not frequent here.
He was shunned by too many like me
who felt his life too dirty and hard
to enjoy the pure, softness of Him.

But, sometimes,
He seeps inside, underneath the soles of some patron's feet,
or from their pockets when they pull out their billfold or handkerchief
and He slips under someone's eyeglasses
silent, more subtle than to surprise anyone,
and their eyes begin to tear

until they wipe away their slumber

and suddenly a bashful light shines about the person
on their little spot in the dim room.

But, where is Love tonight?
I drowned Him, I think,
in the aged sobs I hold inside.

Oh, He is a friend who abandoned me long ago!

He used to reach down
with childlike gestures
to play in my footsteps.

But I barked at Him
like a dog to scare away.
I couldn't help it, I told Him.
'I'm angry- that's why.'

He has forgotten me
and He will never come back, I know.

You, Miss! Hello.
That's a pretty dress you have on.

'Oh, (ahem) , well, thank you.
You look smart in that coat.'

Yes, well.
It's late.

'Yes.
It is late.'

The bar-
the bar will be closing soon.

'Yes. It will, sad to say.'

There must
be somewhere else

a man can go:
a place that
won't
shut
him
out.

II.

Tonight
we are the only two
left in this bar

and it doesn't matter
what you are like
or who you are.
You don't even have to tell me your name.

But, I heard the wind howling
through both of our hearts at once
and, lady, if we needed a reason
let it be that we both have bodies
and we both are aching for Love.

Let us say that Love, for tonight
would not be diminished
if we sourced the river of each other's dreams
and abandoned our troubles there
like a filthy treasure
that no one will ever find.

Jason Stutz

Proper Lovers

I radiate from myself.
You open like a wave and consume me.

After eating
flowers bloom in your mouth
and wisdom and laughter emerge from your thoughts,
like little whales leaping through your surfaces

And we dance together,
an infinite muse for ourselves.

We make one home of each other
and bare wild, beautiful children
that ride off like brisk, white summer rapids
toward their destinies.

Jason Stutz

Right

</>After all you have read (Rumi, Gurdjieff, Jesus)
you don't now wish to rise above
the "right and wrong" way of thinking?

Millions of people, maybe half the world, my friend
are at war against other men;
against causes that mirror themselves hatefully.

Will you be the judge for each of them
while you fight any war but your own?

These men are dying
dying! ! !
each of them has one life
and this terrible, tragic fire
devours their good causes;

Their heart's tenderness (stabbed
as their brother was shot
or as their best friend went down)
is what Evil greedily preyed upon
to wrile them toward this violent banter.

What? Would you save each of them
with hot words offered to the side you care for the most?

It is tragic
perhaps most of all for the persecutors
but we can not see beyond this world to prove that yet (but for
priceless moments piercing the beyond
when we are shown first what the actions of other men amount to
and then how those actions take place in ourselves) .

What will all of this amount to
to the individuals at play
and to our world,

the world that the Earth
with her joyous vision

creates and then feeds upon
for right
or for wrong?

Jason Stutz

She Pretends

She pretends
that my love
has no effect on her,

but she will go home
and delight on her bed
dreaming of my love
like clasping to her body
a new dress given her by her daddy
who spent the whole weekend
and his entire paycheck
on just the perfect one for his little girl.

Tomorrow
I'll go to her
and speak sweet, manly things
to her smooth face of pearl
and her heart which, like the moon,
saddens me to tenderness
with it's frailty and it's distances.

Jason Stutz

The Serpent Beguiles Eve

And the serpent went to Eve
and asked of the creatures:
How shall I call them?
To God, they answer
as to an arrow that draws them inward.
But to me, a little magick, perhaps- a word
to bind them on our tongue, a name,
to make them ours forever.

What are their names, dear Eve?
Sit a while and think on them,
as we pass the day together.

Jason Stutz

To The Old Men

</>I.

Sometimes,
listening to you speak,
I was showered by the pain of your past
and my sense of myself absorbed
into the depths of your longing

I wished I could tell you the beauty I saw in you
so mixed within your sorrows
as if your beauty was a result of your sorrow,
I had such affection for you then.

But I had to turn away, remember myself,
re-sense my shape, my borders, my name
To separate myself, to forget you.

But you returned to me
and the fear-maligned surfaces
of your beauty reflected in the air
like a charge of hate

sometimes, every time I turned
I turned, like into burning walls, into anger.

I should have wept for you
instead of arguing about the enemies of justice
that lived in your hands.
But to look at you, you were so much 'history'-
like blocks of wood that time recorded your life upon;
household legends whose authors abandoned their common glory;
Tears would only embolden you,
and God only knows what you would do then.

Why didn't you see the potential for beauty in my eyes?
My heart, still pained, asks this. Why?
At times, yes, you looked, but you could hardly bare it.
But, oh, at times, your eyelids cooled and you turned to the side
to sit with my meaning in your heart,

for a moment, until you started again

A thousand sorrows in those moments, like tears
were wiped away from the face of eternity
the gold of your hearts materializing on your faces
and you enjoyed love, so briefly
despite the demands that threatened you into action each day

Every day those same demands
moved you always...away...
away from danger and away from love
But those demands that moved you away
moved me more urgently to love
and to make companions of all the fickle lions who frightened me.

II.

I can't see through these dirty clouds of reason-
has God, yet, made me whole?

... my feet still cling to the soil of earth,
but a bridge escalates out before me
into a grand, majestic distance.

Oh, let me die to the world: break my heart- just a little more.
Tell me another blasphemy!
One more dirty joke about how Love has orphaned us
and we must instead waste our time
on pleasurable but empty pursuits!

Oh, but only talk me out, just a little more,
from this barren cliff of impotent reason
for my impregnable brain
shields me from your voice's beautiful rain! !

III.

It has been decided.
The only way to resolve this matter
is that I am the one who has to die.

I accept this as the only viable solution.

□

I become pitiless, unsympathetic as stone
even as you plead through tears or violence for me to stay.
I abandon my mind; you dropp from me,
like a limb I wasn't sure how to use.
You were so beautiful; I loved you.
I think to make toward you, but
there is nothing I have need of anymore
as there is nothing the Universe withholds from me.

A dark distance absorbs us
and Death laughs a coarse whisper in my ear
enunciating my loss.
But I will grab Death like a horse by his throat
and ride him through the gates of eternity
to find you there,
a happy boy, like a sunbeam,
waiting for your bestest friend,
me.

V.

To be

-at the center of all things;

-where the impulse to love gives seed in the heart
before it flowers out into life;

-the unifying substance and common denominator of all hopes, all dreams;

-in each thought that comes from light,
and in those that have a darker caste,
the invisible, gentle filter
that guides you to understand them;

-behind your nerves
like a shadow of light
backdropping all of your actions, the subtlest and most evident
receiving and absorbing the light that gives you impetus

to breathe to act to speak to do anything any part of you does;

-before the mind conceives to reach out into the world for attainment
and all the tiny idles of your hand are laying in wait
as though withholding it's reach
for the sake of some unnamed special mate

IV.

I
reside before a dream begins
in that pocket of eternity.
Death peers back on me
questioningly and sarcastic, knowing not.

Forms that confused me once are seen whole and simple, now.
Like a young woman's loud flirtations at a bar
seeming so daring to herself
yet, one step away from her defines her easily;
illusions are discovered;
mysteries are shouting themselves to the world.

Sparkling in the tension between material and void,
in the center of all the trillions of images and formulations
that roll into what processes we call "being a man"
(i.e. what he knows and defines himself by
the ways he maneuvers through the world
his social functions, relationships and associations,
what he believes in himself and is believed to be, true or untrue;
in his thoughts that contain light
and in those that have a darker, reflecting caste) ,
I.

VI.

O, let it be me your hand waits to reach out for!
I am coming very soon, I am almost there
you can sense my intent for you
"I am as good as looking at you, now."

I will help guide you
without the blur of anger
and without the fear of losing myself
into the mouths of your heart's-losses.
I am your heart's losses
and I know that I have cried
alone to God in the dark,
only to be saved in the lifeboat of someone's love.

It is discovered: It is
each other we feared losing this whole time,
and, fearing, lost ourselves for each other's sake,
and now we have lost so much time together;
how much time lost is according to the fear
and resulting indifference and sarcasm
that we projected upon each second of the ticking clock.

But we can laugh with each other now, bashful, knowing;
a little inside nudge my elbow and a wink between you and me

Through the wheel of your lifetimes,
I will gradually return myself to you, you to myself.
It will not be easy, for you or for me
but such is the way of great romances.

Now, I am at the bridge,
I am ready to walk on, to say goodbye
to drop my handkerchief for you to find
and the whole world rolls up behind me the instant it touches the grass.

Did it find you? Are you reading this poem?

Jason Stutz