

# home

*Whitney Hanson*

home

whitney hanson

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# dedication

for those who have loved me, hurt me,  
and healed me

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# preface

dear beekeeper,

this book starts in despair because that's where i resided when i began writing. i think it is only fair to show you the honest progression of my feelings. still, i beg of you, do not stop after reading the first section. i noticed that when i was broken, i only wanted to read the sad part of stories, but the sad part is only one part of the journey. i promise, this book will get lighter as you read, the same way life will get lighter as you live it. i hope reading this book liberates you the way writing it did for me.

love,  
whitney



losing





i remember the last night i spent in your room  
i've never really liked people touching me  
but something about the way you always  
smelled like honey  
and how you held me without hesitation  
made it easy for me to find comfort in touch again

i remember the last night i spent in your room  
you told me that you slept with her  
my skin began to crawl  
and somehow honey  
started to smell like danger  
you became a beehive  
bursting with everything i was afraid of

i remember the last night i spent in your room  
i'm not sure why i didn't run  
when the bees filled my head  
and venom stung in my veins  
and you tried to hold on to me  
but all i felt was poignant pain

i remember the last night i spent in your room  
i've never really liked people touching me  
and something about the way your honey  
turned into venom  
and how there are bees in my brain  
makes me hope that no one ever touches me again

you're not who i thought you were

“maybe it was love”  
she casts doubt into my dim bedroom

“they don’t mean to hurt you, you’re just difficult to  
love”

“they are treating you this way because you deserve it”

“they just want what is best for you, you’re making  
this up in your mind”

“they slept with another girl, but it’s probably because of something you  
didn’t give them”

she doesn’t always make sense  
but sometimes she’s awfully convincing  
~*the voice inside my head*

love letters i've received:  
i want you  
but not right now

dear empathy,  
please stop telling me  
that it's okay when they hurt me  
stop allowing me to accept  
the knife you see in their side  
is a reasonable excuse  
for them to put two in mine  
please stop introducing me to their demons  
i don't want to shake hands  
with the reasons  
they can't seem to stay  
please stop waving a white flag  
and making me pity their anger  
and make peace with their madness

exhausted from a culture of  
i love you for tonight  
but tomorrow it may be different

and let me borrow the parts of you  
that i need to make me whole  
but never take all of you

in a world where the word commitment  
tastes like poison  
in our mouths

please tell me  
why is it so difficult for someone to stay?

i want to exist in a world  
where love isn't an emotion  
it is a promise

where i love you for tonight  
means i will be there tomorrow

and where you borrow the parts of me  
that you need to make you whole  
along with all the rest

where commitment doesn't taste so bitter

please tell me  
it isn't so difficult to stay

hold my breath and count to ten  
one two three  
forget how your hands might look on her skin  
five six seven  
eight reasons that you can't be upset so stop  
nine ten eleven  
twelve i was supposed to exhale at ten  
thirteen fourteen fifteen  
sixteen maybe it takes more than ten seconds  
to let it go



if it's not meant to be  
tell me why her sweatshirt smells like comfort

if it's not meant to be  
tell me why i'm flooded with hurt but  
the minute i see her my heart melts

if it's not meant to be  
tell me why she plays on repeat  
like a song in my head  
and i don't want to press pause

if it's not meant to be  
tell me why i can't stop  
retracing her body in my mind

if it's not meant to be  
tell me why the person i am with her  
is who i want to be

if it's not meant to be  
*tell me why*

stop making excuses for their behavior

i stand here fully dressed  
to say goodbye  
but you left me naked  
embarrassed of all i showed you  
clothing can only keep you as safe  
as the walls you put around your heart  
i took my walls down for you  
i wish i hadn't

what hurts the most  
are memories we didn't make  
the pictures i had of our future  
i spent an eternity waking up to you  
tell me,  
how do i forget things that never happened?

eventually they're not going to be  
your person anymore  
they won't be the one  
you want to share sunsets and shooting stars with  
they won't be the one  
you want to call when your feelings  
are too heavy to carry alone  
i know that right now you want to run to them  
but closed arms will not hold you  
and careless hearts will not heal you

i have a bad habit  
of clinging to the people and places  
that have been hurting me  
today i asked myself to explain why  
because sometimes  
it doesn't make sense to me either  
this is the conclusion i have come to  
i stay because although i'm treated poorly  
i find comfort in the surety  
of knowing exactly what i'm getting.  
moving on is a commitment to uncertainty  
and things could always be worse  
on the other side of a big jump

i have never been good with risk  
i don't like to gamble  
i like control

when i heard you found someone new  
my blood became  
liquid concrete in my veins  
angry and shaking i cut open my skin  
hoping i could pull you out  
but instead, the concrete began to harden  
i think it is better that way  
maybe i was meant to be a statue  
a stone-cold depiction of  
all the reasons  
you shouldn't fall in love  
a reminder of the damage  
that people with  
dark eyes and enticing smiles can do  
and i hope that that someone you found  
finds my statue too  
before it's too late for them  
to walk away from you  
*~statue*

change is scary  
you're going to be okay



don't stay because you're comfortable  
this is not your home

i gave your sweatshirt back today  
it won't go down as a historic event  
one hundred years from now  
no one will care that it happened  
no one will even know  
and that's what i have to think about  
to make it feel okay

sometimes the battles  
that take the most strength  
are the ones you choose  
not to fight  
*~surrender*

at some point  
i stopped writing you poems  
hoping that you'd fall in love  
and i started writing about  
how it felt when you didn't

i bought a candle that i didn't need  
i already have a perfectly good candle at home  
but for some reason  
i bought another one  
i think i have a tendency to prepare to lose things  
before they are gone

it is never selfish to take care of your heart. if you need to move, then move.  
if you need to stay, then stay. don't let anyone else dictate where your peace  
lands.

i know that we are no good for each other  
i know that you have not been good to me  
but still somewhere in you  
i found a piece of myself  
all this time  
i thought i was the only one who's soul danced  
to this music  
then i found that yours did too  
it's hard to move on my own again

kiss me one more time before we lose our minds



prove to me that love is a verb  
let your actions speak for how you feel  
and if they are not loud  
let me leave

kisses like candle wax  
you give them  
and i peel them off  
because your love  
burns my skin

last time i kiss you  
last time i sleep with your head in the space  
between my heart and my chin  
last time you hold me when i'm hurt  
last time your skin feels like home  
last time you are my person  
last time i am capable of loving someone this way

why did you have to ruin something so good?

sometimes  
caring  
is  
a  
curse

loving you  
felt like leaving a book out in the wind  
the pages turned too fast for me to read  
i didn't get enough time  
to adore you  
to explore you  
to trace your lines with my fingertips  
and reread my favorite parts  
to live the story i knew we were meant to be  
before i knew it  
the book was closed  
the story was over  
*~unfinished*

people with the most intricate minds  
have the most turmoil inside  
you cannot be filled with the galaxies  
and not expect explosions

you loved me for my mind  
you left me for my mind

we both know that want and need  
are too different words  
but somehow we keep getting them mixed up

i know this is not what i need  
but i want you anyway



i knew for months that she was sleeping  
in someone else's bed  
why then did it take me so long to leave?

i was not surprised  
you play defensively  
like me  
reserving your pieces  
not willing to make sacrifices  
that is why the game took so long  
neither of us willing  
to give up what we wanted  
i think that's why  
you and i  
didn't work  
*~love authored by chess*

sometimes there is nothing poetic  
about the way it hurts  
sometimes it just hurts  
that's okay

i know that if you knew how you are making me feel  
you'd walk away forever  
and that is why i have to pretend  
that i'm okay with this

if you're like me, you struggle with walking away from situations that aren't healthy for you. if you're like me, it is hard to see the line between i care for you and i will put your needs before mine until my feet are blistered from racing to catch you every time you fall. if you are like me, then listen. walking away from situations that are hurting you does not mean that you are heartless. it means that you have outgrown the shoes you've been using to chase unreciprocated love. it means that you are learning to value yourself. you have not lost your capacity for love. you are discovering how to love you.

when i found out you slept with someone else  
i stayed up until 3.am painting a portrait of you  
when you ignored me for weeks  
i bought you a guitar and left it in your room  
i've realized that sometimes  
you can't resurrect broken relationships  
with kindness

i don't think you understand how many times i've had to do this. the first person that i loved broke my heart six times. every time he asked for me back. i was there with my arms open. a heart with three different cracks has the same capacity for love, right? the second person i loved, loved me for a month. the next year, he spent making sure he showed me only enough love that i would stay. he walked as close as he could to the line without crossing it. finally, there's you. you had me convinced that you were my safe place. that maybe i was enough for someone. until enough became something you found between another girl's thighs. and still i stay. because i remain who i've always been. and maybe it's me. i have never been the one that is strong enough to walk away when i am not wanted. i would rather stay with a broken heart than leave and be whole.

she could feel the ending before it came. like a book that's almost finished, she was counting down the pages she had left. she cried every time she had to turn the page.



don't doubt your ability to move forward. even as you read these words you are making progress, moving towards a destination. it is as easy as tracing these lines with your eyes. a little at a time.

you  
will  
find  
the  
new  
you

i know this feeling is familiar for you now  
you're getting used to letting go  
knowing they're the only one you want to talk to  
but not being able to go to them  
beginning to realize that even if you did go back  
it wouldn't be the same  
their heart has changed  
believe it or not so has yours  
this is only the beginning of the end  
but you have done this before  
you are stronger than you know

i don't know how to love small  
so if i can't love you a lot  
i can't love you at all

my happiness is the rent i pay for staying here

my wallet is empty now

there isn't anything redeemable  
about promising you will be there  
then not showing up

i found a list in my notes of things that i wanted to know about you when we met. i wish i could unlearn those things now.

sometimes i close my eyes  
and picture myself getting undressed  
first, i shave off all my hair  
if you want to run your fingers through it again  
it's on the floor where you left my heart  
next, i peel off my skin  
i cannot keep anything your hands have touched  
then, i pull out my eyes  
maybe it is better not to know sight  
than to see you moving on  
one by one i pull out my teeth  
and throw them  
i have to get those three words i said  
far far far away  
finally, when i am entirely naked of you  
i cry  
i water the ground  
and hope that something new  
grows at my feet

i think i am the kind of person  
that people fall in love with  
too quickly  
and i don't mean to complain  
because it is wonderful to be loved  
but i am also the kind of person  
that people walk away from  
when they realize  
the beautiful pool of water  
that they wandered in to  
is actually an ocean  
with too many questions  
i wish my company  
didn't make people feel  
like they're drowning  
mystery draws them in  
then mystery makes them leave



i'm not a hopeless romantic  
i only want romance when it's gone  
i am hopeless  
but not because i long for love  
i am hopeless  
because i never know how  
to appreciate you  
when you're mine

when you're with me you love me  
when you're with her you love her

i don't need you to explain  
why we don't work  
that won't ease the frustration  
i feel every time your name  
comes up on my phone  
i need you to explain  
why you won't try  
why trying isn't worth it to you  
i need you to explain  
why occasionally you take interest in my life  
is it just to keep me hoping?

i spend my days reminding myself that you don't care  
i spend my nights dreaming that you still do

you don't have commitment issues  
i know that you think you do  
but you must realize  
not committing  
is simply committing to something else  
every commitment  
has a counter commitment  
if you don't jump into the river  
you are committing to stay on land  
you are not afraid of commitment  
you are afraid to take a risk  
you are afraid to drown  
i hope you find what you are looking for on land

i love you isn't currency  
to get you what you want  
my body is not an experiment  
to fill your empty spots  
i am not your pawn  
and this is not a game  
it's just something you did wrong  
i'm your mistake

walking away  
means having the strength to say  
this is no longer my problem

leave and watch them  
fall in love with someone else  
stay and fail to receive  
the love you deserve  
*~pick your poison*



losing you isn't just losing you  
it is losing the me that i was with you  
i'm going to miss her

if they are not choosing you

it is not love

if you are not a priority

it is not love

if you have to ask

“is this love?”

it is not love

ice cream with my ex

“you’ll always have a soft spot for me” she teased

“that’s not funny i replied” holding back tears from my eyes and knowing she was right

there are all these words piling up  
straining and staining these pages  
with emotions i can no longer share  
i am longing to tell you  
but my tongue remains chained  
by your impervious demeanor  
you are not the same  
even if i let my words loose  
they wouldn't get through  
so i remain silent  
*~talking to a brick wall*

i still can't help feeling  
like i was supposed to love you forever  
~*denial*

kiss me  
before you go kiss her  
remind me i'm beautiful  
just to admire someone else  
keep me here  
just in case  
*~false reassurance*

you're sleeping next to me  
and i'm not sure what to do  
i do not know how to wake you  
if not with a kiss on the forehead  
but you are not mine to kiss  
so i guess i will let you sleep

when i packed up and left  
i sobbed the 377 miles i drove away  
this reminded me that just because  
leaving is the right thing to do  
that doesn't make it easy



i pierced my ear and it got infected  
for weeks my ear was red and swollen  
i knew that if i just took the earring out  
i could heal much faster  
but i thought the earring  
made me feel beautiful  
so i let it stay  
*~toxic relationships*

i learned to hold on tightly to people when death stole my best friend at age 15. suddenly, i'm 20 years old and my knuckles are still white from refusing to let go of love.

*~attachment issues*

i want to be someone you can't stay away from  
i want to be like your bed in the morning  
it takes everything to leave its warmth  
and at the end of the day, you always return  
i want to be comfort

i realize that i'm someone  
you need to stay away from  
i realize that i am more like a fire  
you want to get close  
but i keep burning you  
i am your destruction  
and i hate that

i'm not very good at taking criticism. i know you weren't criticizing me when you decided to be with her. but it feels like everything you give to her that you couldn't give to me is a testament of my faults. i imagine you kiss lines down her body that spell out all of the reasons i am unlovable.

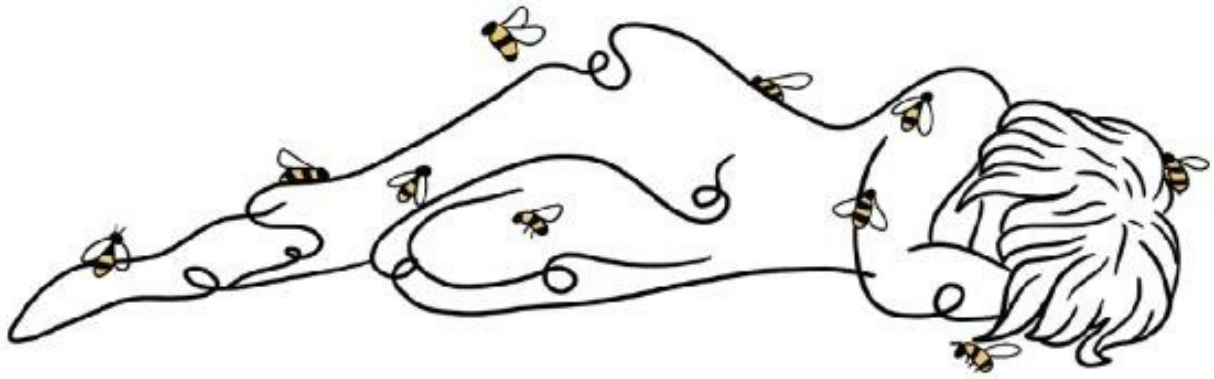
when you are asleep, i can pretend that you are still the person you used to be. your breath still moves in and out like ocean tides, calming and consistent. you still smell like honey and your hair still falls in soft piles on to the pillow. your lips are still the ones that told me you would stay and the way you twitch as you fall deeper asleep reminds me that somehow you are the same. i can pretend not to know that in your chest your heart beats for her and not for me.

to be clear  
loving her was not the mistake  
staying when she didn't love you was

how dare you  
make me promises  
you couldn't keep

lost





the bees are still in my head

someday  
i will have poured all of the memories  
out of my eyes  
and when my mind searches for you  
all it will find  
is a dried up garden  
that has gone so long  
without water  
that i no longer remember  
what it looked like  
in full bloom

you didn't break my heart  
you shattered it into a million pieces  
you hid those pieces

i can't find them

i can't find myself

it's okay  
make me hurt  
the finest art  
is painted  
with the blood  
of a broken heart

i wish you knew that it takes everything i have to keep it together around you

the sad part  
is that i can write a thousand lines  
about the way you broke me  
and it won't put me back together  
and it won't bring you back

there is no good reason to go back to people who did not choose you. do not put your heart in the hands of someone who doesn't want to hold it.



she didn't choose you  
and as hard as it is  
that means you must stop choosing her  
*~hard truths*

when i say i miss being happy  
i really mean i miss you  
because somewhere along the way  
those two words became synonymous

i mark my place in the poetry book you gave me with the polaroid we took the last time i told you that i loved you.

maybe if i can hide us between pages covered in lovely words, maybe if i surround us with raw emotion, maybe then what we were will never die.

i fell in love with you in the fall  
and perhaps that was my mistake  
i failed to realize  
that fall leads to winter  
and winter is lonely and cold  
next time  
can we fall in love  
in the spring?

i hate when i can feel time going by. when i lost you, i could sense every second lengthening the gap between who we used to be and who we are becoming. i bet you didn't know it's been 31,350 minutes since the last time i kissed you. i hope you didn't know that. i hope time has been kinder to you than it has to me.

waking up in the morning  
is the hardest part about losing someone  
something about sleep  
convinces you that  
you'll wake up with a fresh start  
but every morning i to wake up  
and remember you're gone  
~*a.m.*

sometimes when i go to bed  
before i turn out the light  
i take my heavy heart out  
and put it away for the night  
so if in the morning  
you do not see me rise  
it's because i can't seem to put it back  
without putting tears in my eyes  
~*p.m.*

seeing you hurts  
not seeing you hurts too  
*~paradox*



sometimes when it's cold outside  
i like to sit in it  
until my outsides match my insides  
*~numb*

i cleaned you out of my car today  
i needed to remember  
that my passenger seat  
is no longer reserved for you  
i threw away the empty ice cream cups  
from when we used to go for late night  
ice cream and talk  
i removed the rubber duck  
from my dashboard  
you should understand why  
i changed the playlist  
that i listen to when i drive  
i rolled down the windows  
hoped that it would air out my heart  
and i drove away

sometimes you aren't ready to unpack and that's okay. sometimes you just want to hold hostage the way she loved you once as if someone may come a long and repay you for all of the heartache you spent on her.

sometimes you have to let the hostage go without reparations.

when you lose her, for the first time in months, you will sleep alone.

your blankets will stop smelling like her, and when you reach out in the middle of the night, her hand won't be reaching back.

you will not fall asleep with your fingers tangled, one in her hand and the other in her hair. your hands will be empty. empty.

you will throw the extra pillow on your bed across the room because every time you look at it you're sure she will be there.

you will stare at the ceiling with the same eyes that used to get lost in hers and it won't matter how many blankets you put on. you will be cold.

you will question why she didn't choose you and you'll wonder who she is sleeping with now because you know she can't sleep alone.

you will breathe, reach, tangle your fingers in your sheets, stare into nowhere and cry. and then finally, you will let go.

for the first time in months, you will become accustomed to sleeping alone.

doubt keeps telling me that i made the wrong choice  
that i will never find a love like this one  
that this is the only place that i will feel at home

you are not a second choice  
they didn't choose you  
not because you are not worthy  
but because they weren't built to love you

i know their arms  
feel like they were supposed to carry you  
but their lack of strength  
is not a testimony of the weight of your soul  
but rather the weakness of theirs

you are not too much

it feels like you're lost. you're on a ship sailing through troubled waters,  
occasionally pulling a drowning soul on board. you mend whatever has left  
them broken. once they are whole, they leave, and you are alone again.  
sometimes you want to jump overboard and let someone save you instead.  
but you are too kind to be a temporary passenger in someone's heart.  
do me a favor.  
stay on board.  
you're not lost you are finding.

i can feel abandonment crawling through my veins and every time i think of how you told me you wouldn't leave, i have to pull off a layer of skin to escape the grip of your lying hands on my body.



today i was envious of a goldfish  
somewhere i heard  
that goldfish have a memory  
that lasts three seconds  
i would spend the rest of my life  
in a fishbowl  
to forget the way it felt to hold you

there is no “appropriate” way to grieve  
light things on fire  
or don't

it isn't just that i didn't matter to you  
it's that this will be another case  
in the file cabinet in my mind  
to prove my hypothesis  
that i don't matter at all  
and the file is getting too big  
and my heart is feeling awfully small  
and i can't help but wish  
that you would have proved me wrong

i want to take a knife and peel myself like an orange. i want to pick out all the parts that no one wants and throw them away.

she seems nice but  
please don't tell me about  
the little things she does to make you laugh  
please don't post videos  
of her dancing around her room  
please don't walk around  
holding her hand and looking into her soul  
because i have a sense of humor too  
and i can dance around the room  
i have hands to hold and a soul to see  
she's seems nice but  
you doing those things with her  
reminds me that you're not doing them with me

when i'm hurting, i have a tendency to shove myself into small places. usually, i get in my closet and sit in the dark. it's like if i can squeeze all of my pain into a tiny place maybe i can make it feel a little smaller.

i can't go outside

i'm too scared i'm going to run into you with her

you've just come in from a rainstorm  
you can't expect to be  
immediately dry warm and comfortable  
but you can do the little things  
take off the heavy clothing  
turn on the coffee pot  
wrap yourself in a blanket  
one small thing at a time  
*~healing is a process*



i hate you flower  
i hate the way that nature gives you all you need  
i needed her  
and now i'm alone

i ache for the music your heart made with mine

sometimes it hurts so bad that you shake and tears stream down your face and each inhale feels like a battle between you and the world that is collapsing around you.

*~panic*

sometimes it hurts so bad that you can't move. you stay in your bed for days and stare and the ceiling. you lose the line between you and everything else in the world.

*~paralysis*

i've been staring at myself  
i keep wishing that i could find  
the reason that you left in my mirror  
sometimes i think it's in the shape of my nose  
or in my untamable hair  
but you always told me you adored those things  
so, if on the outside, i am enough for you  
if i can't find the reason you left in my mirror  
then it must be inside of me  
that is my greatest fear  
*~reflection*

i love to read books  
they are safe  
if the plot becomes too messy  
i can simply close the book  
i wish i could trap my life  
in the pages of a book

please don't tell me that my space in your heart  
belongs to someone new

you are music  
constantly fighting its way into my mind  
a violent, rebellious, but beautiful melody  
i try to turn down the volume  
i try anything to turn down the volume  
i fight  
i talk  
i write  
i paint  
i submerge my head in water and i scream  
why won't you get out of my head?

as much as you would like them to be  
apologies are not always bandages  
to mend a broken heart



sometimes i'm a rain-soaked pile strewn across my unmade bed. every movement carries the weight of a thousand storm clouds. i am waiting for someone to pick me up and wring me out but every time they try, i scream. their hands attempting to twist me and remove the heaviness. they don't know that the heaviness keeps me safe. losing all of this water means losing control. leaving my bed is a risk i'm not willing to take.

i know this is my fault too  
~*guilty*

cleaning makes me feel like I have control  
as if manipulating the area around me  
will somehow rearrange whatever is broken within me  
as if removing the speckles from my mirror  
will somehow clarify  
all of the *whys* that are eating me alive  
am i so far gone that folding my socks  
makes it easier to breath?  
the irony  
that i love when everything has a place  
and at the same time feel that  
i have no place here

i author my own chaos  
then ask why the tempest won't subside

i am an expert at appreciating everything about her.  
why can't i love me that way?

i've always liked my own company  
but now when i'm alone  
your words are all that i hear

so here i sit in public places  
hoping that the voices around me  
will be louder than the voices within

i take pride in my impressive vocabulary  
so why is your name the only word that comes out of my mouth these days?  
this is getting old

what if no one wants to read it?  
what if no one else feels this way?  
what if you're just obsessive?  
*~self-criticism*



my friends keep telling me  
that you weren't that special  
and that i will find someone new  
but they didn't see the way your body wrapped around mine like i was  
destined to be covered in you

i saw a photo today  
of you loving someone new  
i forced myself to stare at it  
until it didn't make me  
feel anything anymore  
i'm still staring

here i am  
crying on the couch again  
i'm so tired of getting over you

i hate you for taking my trust from me  
i can't explain how badly  
i just want to be able  
to love someone again

it's not the kind of sad that rips at my soul anymore frantically calling you hoping your voice will bring me back. it's the kind of sad that starts to text you, sighs, and deletes the message.

i hate that now whenever someone does something kind for me i ask myself what is in it for them.

it's not what i was expecting. after you left, you became this monster in my mind. i couldn't think about you without seeing all the ugly anger i felt. but then i see your face again and you're not a monster, you're the person i loved and that is why it hurts so bad.

sometimes the sadness makes it hard to eat. when i am so full of emotion how can i fit anything else inside me?



candles candles candles  
you always loved candles  
lately all i can think about  
are all the things you love  
and how i'm not one of them

the only days that i can make it through without breaking are the ones that  
i'm too busy to remember the pain

being stuck in your own mind  
when it doesn't want to be kind  
is torture  
*~rumination*

lately all of my poems are coming out unfinished  
there are times we must accept  
that we exist in a world that isn't conclusive  
sometimes romeo and juliet  
don't fall in love  
sometimes they just stop speaking  
and always wonder what could have been  
sometimes they meet at the wrong time  
and juliet is still stuck on her ex  
and sometimes they never meet at all

some people have this way  
of always making themselves the victim  
they twist experiences in their mind  
until they convince themselves  
that the whole world is against them  
i am *some people*

packing up my apartment, everything makes me think of you. i know which cup in my cupboard is your favorite. i remember you teasing me while i cooked you dinner. i know exactly where i was standing in my room the first time i realized i really wanted to kiss you. i remember rearranging my room in tears the night that you didn't come home to me.

i still wish you'd come home to me.

sometimes i feel like someone's lawn  
and the automatic sprinklers are on  
and it's raining out  
i'm drowning

“i shouldn’t have trusted you”  
she muttered under her breath  
for what felt like the millionth time  
*-the reason*



you mustn't forget that people have different methods of coping. they aren't staying away because they hate you. they just heal in a different way. you run towards people, they run away.

i don't like the idea  
of hiring someone to be my friend  
listening to me shouldn't be a job  
*~avoiding therapy*

my car wouldn't start today  
and it felt a little metaphorical  
i'm really not going anywhere  
~*stuck*

i can't decide which is more frightening  
ending up alone  
or falling in love again

it's funny to me how everyday life mixes with the internal world each of us exists in. in the notes on my phone is a mixture of my inner demons and my grocery lists. i have no idea how to trust people again, but also i'm running out of eggs. the casual needs of life mingle with the cluttered state of my mental health. i think that might be the best way i can describe life right now. i'm going to get groceries today but to me the dairy aisle isn't far from the insane asylum.

i stood out in the cold  
waiting  
until my tears turned into icicles  
then i used them to carve your name  
across my entire body  
hoping  
i would be able to feel you again

how do you let love in again when all it has shown you is that it is cruel, untrustworthy, and inconsistent? they say you're supposed to learn from your mistakes, but if that's true than i'm never going to let love have me again.

my biggest fear is that we were meant to be. what if we were wrong, and we missed out on all the ways we were supposed to love each other. what if timing and space was just an excuse that we used to separate two hearts that beat simultaneously. maybe we are going to live the rest of our lives watching the wrong story unfold.



she took a picture of you  
sitting in a field  
playing the guitar i gave you  
i wonder  
does she know  
that we used to  
sit in a field  
and i would play music for you  
*~replaced*

infinite darkness is an illusion  
that your mind has created  
the light  
always  
comes  
back

i see beyond your silence  
you are so brave for hurting quietly

what if in my story  
the protagonist fell in love  
with the antagonist?  
what if i don't want to fight the villain?  
what if i want to invite them into my home  
make them dinner and find out  
what left them so broken?  
what if my fight  
is to make sure the villain knows love?  
and although there is sacrifice in that kind of love  
what if i would still choose it every time?

i can't wait for the day  
that i can look into your eyes  
and say  
you can't hurt me  
and mean it

i look at pictures of you to make myself cry  
i have to keep feeling this  
the alternative is scarier  
feeling nothing at all  
dropping into that empty pit  
of not knowing what is next  
seems so much worse  
so i hover above the abyss  
and cling to a rope i weaved  
by keeping my mind in the past  
but there are only  
so many tears left to cry  
before i must let go

i would give anything  
to go back  
and watch the sunset with you

in all honesty  
i didn't want to see you today  
i know you want us to be friends  
but every time i have to see  
how you have changed  
into the person who no longer loves me  
it breaks me again



it's been five months  
and i keep telling myself  
that i shouldn't feel this way anymore  
but waking up without you  
leaves me just as disappointed  
as the first day you left

i'm convinced  
that i'm feeling the hurt for both of us  
because you seem perfectly fine  
why do i have to carry  
all of this?

flowers don't feel so special  
when you pick them for yourself

sometimes i feel like i'm on the outside  
watching my life unfold  
like it is a performance  
and i'm just the audience  
i'd like to consult with  
whoever wrote this disaster

i know there are people that have it worse. there are some that have lost far more than what i have lost, but right now i want to be selfish with my pain. i want to pretend that you are the worst possible thing to lose because in this moment my soul aches for you and i was convinced that you were everything.

i thought running away would fix things  
but i can't run away from myself  
i am my biggest problem

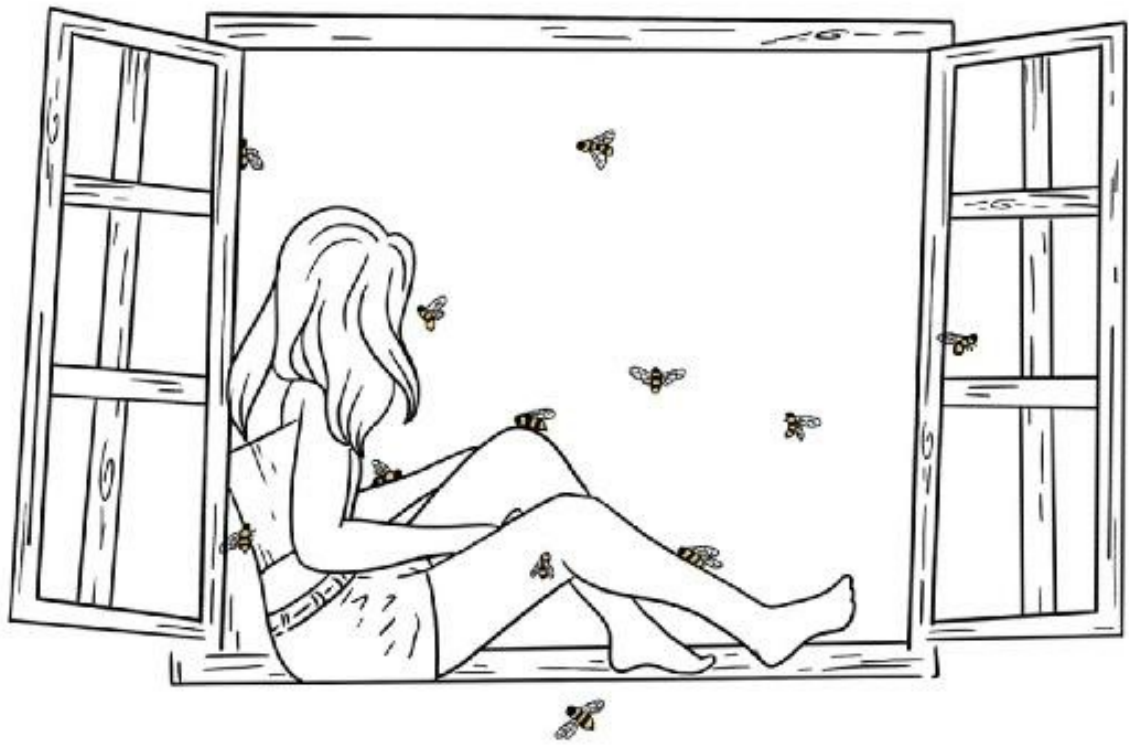
you don't need to act tough here  
hand me your hurt and i will hold you  
you are safe  
i am not going anywhere  
anytime you need me  
open this book and read these words  
you don't have to be strong right now

they crawl across my body  
touching all of the places  
that your hands used to  
they surround me  
but worst of all  
they weave webs  
around my heart  
and pull their threads  
tighter and tighter  
crushing me  
*~spiders*



it's night and everything will feel okay again with the sunrise  
trust me

flying



we don't know where we are going  
but we are flying

i told you that you remind me of springtime  
and i didn't lie  
i just forgot that seasons are temporary  
you can't tell spring to stay  
the same way  
you can't ask the sun not to set  
but sometimes  
i can close my eyes  
and remember the feeling of sunlight  
the smell of a fresh start  
and the sound of birds singing again  
thank you for reminding me  
that things will be good again  
even if it was only for a season

i know now that this is how it works  
you don't get to keep everyone in your life forever  
there are some people  
that are just meant to be a sunrise for you  
a light to pull you out of the darkness  
there are friends, lovers, relationships  
that are seasonal  
and no matter how deep of a conversation you had with that person at 2 am  
no matter how much you shared your heart  
even if you can still draw the lines of their smile  
like the map of a too familiar road  
in the back of your mind  
there almost always comes a time  
to move on  
a time to let go  
and regardless of the letting go  
i just wanted you to know  
you're always going to feel  
a little bit like home to me  
no matter how temporary  
it is still beautiful  
that i got to call so many hearts my home

i'm beginning to realize  
all we have in common now  
is that i loved you once  
and you loved me too

i will burn the memories of you  
i will light these feelings on fire  
they will fuel my flight  
*-phoenix*



the sunset reminds me  
everyday  
that not everything  
you fall in love with  
will last forever  
you were beautiful  
and you had your time  
but my sky  
will catch fire again  
for someone new

you will find someone  
that stays when you're at your worst.  
you will find someone  
who wants to hold you together  
when you feel like you are shattered.  
when you come home at 4:00 a.m.  
they will be waiting at your door.  
when your mind runs wild  
and you turn into a hurricane.  
they will stay  
you will find someone that won't let you storm on your own.  
*~patience*

the best feeling  
the best feeling  
was when you kissed me  
and i didn't feel a thing  
*~healing*

it is not selfish to tell people how you feel  
what has conditioned you to believe  
that expressing yourself  
makes you a burden?

today i left my window open  
and i let the clouds inside  
they seeped into my ears  
and clouded up my mind  
now when the weather changes  
it also changes in my head  
so i always check the weather  
before i get out of bed  
somehow it's easier  
to be told how i'm supposed to feel  
this way no one can convince me  
the storms in my mind aren't really real

i'd like to say the timing isn't right  
but i don't believe that's true  
i believe the timing was right  
and we are meant to be  
exactly as we are  
it is not the timing that was wrong  
but my idea  
of what we are supposed to be  
maybe we were only meant  
to help each other back to our feet

if they let you go, let them go  
~*easy*

i want to give you all of me  
but there isn't much left  
*~trying to love someone new*



nothing i told you was a lie  
i was not pretending to fall in love with you  
i just realized you made it way too easy  
to invest my love  
so i had to buy my heart back  
before it became too expensive

i'm afraid that if i give out my love again  
i won't be able to afford to get it back

it was all too heavy  
i was all too weak

i think the weight of someone else  
would bring me to my knees

so i'm sorry  
i'd love to love you  
i'd love for us to be

but i can't hold on to you  
until i can hold on to me

i hurt someone else  
when i was trying to fix what you broke  
i tried to blame you  
but i realized i *became* you

sometimes you don't get to be the victim  
this time you were the one who broke someone  
and i know that no one is feeling sorry for you

it's not easy being the villain

i'm not capable of loving you  
the way i want to  
so i'll watch you walk out the door  
with all the anger i know you feel for me  
clenched within your fists  
this doesn't feel the best i know  
but this is the best i can do

i think there is mercy  
in telling someone  
you do not love them

stop hurting your own feelings. stop walking into situations that you know are breaking you. take responsibility for your heart.

right now, reach over and take your own hand. realize that you are real. you are solid. you are steady. you are holding on to the one person who will never leave you, who will not walk away. fall in love with this feeling of being your own anchor.

“why are you afraid of airplanes? more people die in car crashes than airplanes.”

“because if something goes wrong in a car, i may survive. if something goes wrong in an airplane, i will die.”

you are an airplane  
you are high risk  
that's why i can't  
get on board



i am in love with you  
yes you  
the people with fragile hearts  
i think you are the bravest  
most beautiful of miracles  
if you cry when you read books  
or if another's pain brings you heartache  
if your heart cracks  
for the sake of bent butterfly wings  
please stay that way  
do not let the weight of the world  
make you hard

be loud  
and colorful  
and ridiculous  
and don't take no for an answer

it's okay to say i miss you, but you don't deserve me. realizing that your feelings are real and cause real heartache is okay. what isn't okay is allowing those feelings to drag you around to places that are harming you. you will miss them. they were a big part of your life and a big part of you. but take a deep breath and know that you were whole before them and you are whole without them. one step at a time.

people told you to be quiet and your biggest mistake was listening to them

i like the way she only drinks out of mugs  
i like the bridge of freckles that tiptoe across her nose  
i like the way she sings to make mundane tasks come alive  
i like the way she values eye contact  
and won't give it to you unless you've earned it  
i like how she can't finish brushing her teeth  
without coming up with six new ideas  
to change the world  
i'm in love with who she is becoming  
and she is me

when i was little, i liked to do mazes. the kind on paper where you trace them with your pencil, and if you run into a dead end, you look at the big picture and find your way to the end. what i've learned as i got older, is that life isn't anything like those mazes. in life, you only get to see what's right in front of you, not the whole picture. so, when you run into a dead end, and it looks like there's nowhere to go, know that you will find your way. you will find your finish line. you just can't see it all right now.

start demanding from the universe what you are worth

“i’m sorry” is a good reason to forgive  
but silence is a good reason to forgive too



you must keep moving forward. there isn't time to hover in places that no longer serve your needs. you are not a helicopter you are an airplane and if you stop moving you will crash. disregard the uneasy feeling that looms from the unknown and take to the sky.

you're holding onto a piece of them that isn't even real anymore. that person who used to take care of your heart, that's not who they are now. it's okay to grieve the loss of who they were, but eventually the funeral has to end. you have to remember who you were before them.

you don't get to take the things i love.

i'm reclaiming the song that we called ours. i liked it before you, so it is mine to keep. i am taking back the stars. just because i admired them with you, does not mean they belong to an *us* that is dead. they still belong to me and to my heart. my favorite random parking lot, my bed, my favorite flavor of ice cream. they are all mine. you don't get custody of the things that i loved before you.

i am thrilled to be running into the unknown with every possibility ahead of me. there are hands i've yet to hold and moments where a stranger's gaze will make my heart beat at an unusual pace. there are experiences i've not yet tasted and there are places that may become home. there are sunrises i haven't seen and there is the *me* i might become.

i am terrified. i look behind me and a tear falls as i walk away from all i have known. i meet the eyes of people whom i have shared my soul with. i am leaving part of me behind. the me that fell in love with the clever man with dark eyes that taught me to play chess. there is also the me that stayed up asking her questions until 3a.m. and the me that laid under the stars and relearned how to fall in love. there is the me who's heart was broken and there is the me who broke another's heart. i've never been good at walking away.

sometimes people are going to do really shitty things to you, and sometimes you're going to do really shitty things to people.  
and that's life darling.

constantly  
colliding  
with the awareness  
that flowers grow best  
when given space  
to establish  
their roots

i'm happy for you and that's how i know i'm healing

i'm going to make you a promise.  
i know that scares you  
and you aren't even sure  
if you believe in promises anymore.

there is going to be a day  
when you wake up and what they do isn't going to matter so much anymore.  
be patient



i'm beginning to realize  
that it wasn't me  
i was not unworthy  
i was simply out of place

it isn't always going to be  
the love you wanted

you've been so occupied by your hurt  
that you're not sure who you are without it  
existing in pain is not your purpose

i think i've healed

just kidding i can't breathe  
~*healing isn't linear*

it may be difficult to believe  
but the cold caused  
by not allowing yourself to love again  
is worse than the potential heartbreak  
*~trust issues*

whoever decided that there are stages of grief and felt the need to define them can lick the bottom of my shoe. grief is not a step-by-step process. it is the ins and outs. the rising and falling of the tide. one day you feel free and the next you are sobbing into your steering wheel. you can experience anger and denial simultaneously and as many times as necessary until you heal. you *will* heal. don't allow anyone to make you believe that your emotions should be anything predictable. you are the ocean and that is how it is meant to be.

when our garden was devastated  
by the fire you started  
you ran to someone else  
you started growing something new  
i didn't start loving someone new  
i stayed here for a while  
i laid in the ashes  
of a place that i used to feel safe  
finally i walked away  
with ash and seeds in my hair  
i hoped to sprout roots  
through my skull  
a garden in my mind  
that no one could devastate  
because for once  
the love i have is all mine



stop counting the people that have left you and using it as some kind of calculation to determine your value

i'm beginning to realize that  
this has always been  
about me  
there wasn't anything special  
about your love  
that should make me crave it  
the way i did  
it is not so rare  
that i should cry  
when you gave it to someone else  
it didn't hurt  
because i was missing out  
on something spectacular  
it hurt because you didn't think  
i was spectacular  
and for some reason  
i believed to you

i never liked it when people said what's meant to be will be. i don't think there is a universal intent that has guided the way people have slipped in and out of my life. i will not credit my wins or losses to anyone but myself and the people surrounding me. to do so would be to disable my growth.

*~taking responsibility*

i want so desperately  
to fall in love with the world again  
i miss when strings connected my heart to the sunset  
and i could hear the music that the wind played  
in the space between my heart and the sun

i think if i spent as much time pondering world peace as i did thinking about someone who no longer cares about me i would have solved a lot of problems by now. that is why i'm redirecting my mental energy to things that serve others and serve me.

i'm proud of you for the thing that no one has seen

i'm proud of you for getting up when you felt like it took everything to move

i'm proud of you for not crying when you felt like you couldn't hold it together anymore

i'm even proud of you for crying after you felt like you were too numb and just a broken shell of a person

i'm proud of you for walking away from someone who was hurting you so badly

i'm so proud of you

limiting your resources will allow you to get creative  
don't underestimate the power of having nothing

refocus on the things  
that make you feel powerful  
not the people that robbed you  
of your strength



i know that sadness  
feels like comfort to you  
but please don't stay here for too long

sometimes i have to remember to be kind with my pain. hatred doesn't need to be the product of my hurt.

“write me something beautiful,” they said  
so, i wrote about losing you.

“that’s not beautiful,” they remarked with tear-streaked cheeks.

“what is beautiful is that i survived to write about it. what is beautiful is that i broke and i’m still here. what is beautiful is that you cry with me because we both know loss. what is beautiful is that despite the emptiness i feel, tears still fall from my eyes because i am still human. what is beautiful is that losing someone is not the end of the story.”

there is a kindness that i have for you that will never leave me. no matter how badly you betrayed me.

i try to be realistic with myself  
i tell myself that she is better for you  
that i am healthier now alone  
but that doesn't change  
how badly i miss you

being lonely  
is always better  
than being with the wrong person  
read that again

some of the bruises  
will last longer than others  
some will hide  
in your most vulnerable places  
you'll forget about them  
until someone says your name  
a little too much like they used to

i miss the feeling of love  
as if i would know what to do with it  
if someone gave it to me



i stayed with sadness because she reassured me that i was capable of feeling so deeply. i ran from love because i never wanted to feel her that deeply again.

if you are able to acknowledge that you did something wrong and also realize that not everything wrong is your fault, that is power.

learning to thrive in stability  
has not been easy for me  
i have spent so long in the storm  
i keep asking the sun  
to bring back the clouds  
why does comfort  
make me feel so uneasy

i hope that you're happy over there with her but sometimes i hope you look over and realize my grass is greener. i hope that sometimes you wish you had chosen differently.

interpreting emotions is hard sometimes  
it's okay if you need someone else's words  
to help you understand how you feel  
~*poetry is the language of emotion*

starting over doesn't mean you have to erase every *you* that you've ever been.  
you are simply changing.  
growth is a good thing.

you can still cry for small things like you did when you were a child. it's okay to want things passionately and to ache when you lose it. even when that thing is just a cup of coffee you spilled on the way to work.

i bought new shampoo because i didn't want my hair to smell the way it did when i was with you. sometimes taking back the little things is important.



i have a habit of relocating stones  
taking them from the ground  
and moving them  
somewhere else  
sometimes miles away  
it's silly  
but i like to play god over rocks  
it makes me feel like  
i maintain some kind of control

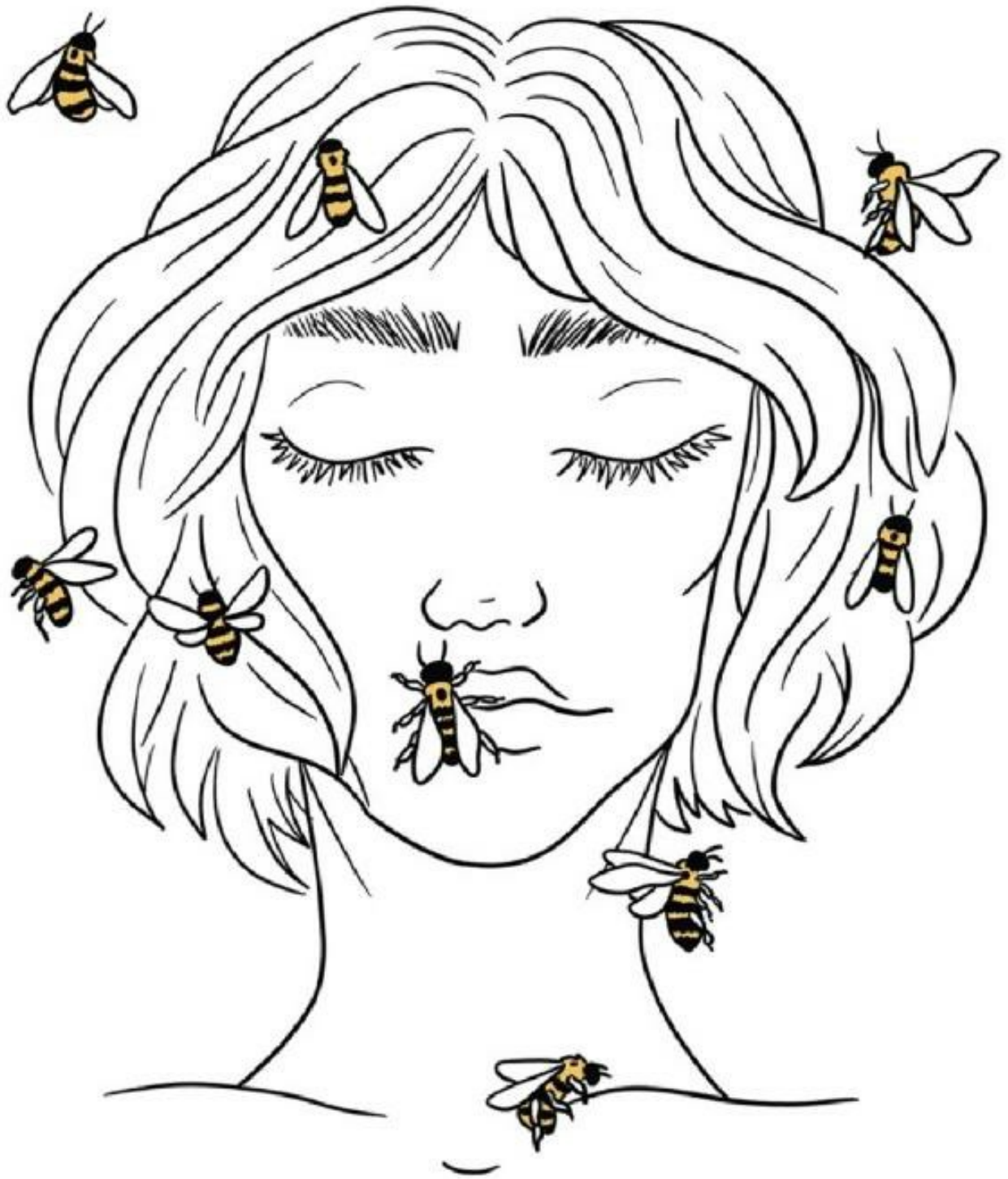
i don't think they were taking you  
where you were meant to go  
i don't think they were  
supposed to carry you anymore  
as terrifying as shipwrecks are  
however cold the water  
may be to swim  
some ships are better sunk  
*~capsize*

i want the kind of love that is blind  
but not the kind that leads me blindfolded off a cliff

thank you for saving me from settling for the wrong person by walking away from me



home



the bees aren't going to go away  
but they are going to change with you  
sometimes they will be chaotic  
sometimes they will rest  
sometimes they will give you sweet honey  
and sometimes they will remind you  
of how much love can sting  
but if you can find a home within yourself  
and make peace with your bees  
you will be alright



i was waiting to write this part of the book for a long time. i thought i needed to feel at home before i could write about being there. i thought i needed to fall in love. i thought that this part of the book was going to be about finding that someone who wouldn't let me go as easily as others have. i'm sorry to tell you i didn't find that. i found something else. i found that i had forgotten how to feel at home within myself. i found that i had become so far detached from myself while trying to please other people. so, i'm sorry to me. i'm sorry to the girl who used to be so passionate about life that she would wake up singing. this part of the book is for you. it's a love letter to remind you that you are whole as you are and that alone and lonely aren't always synonymous.

don't make plans to watch the sunset  
it might be cloudy  
watch the sunset when it catches you off guard  
pause your busy life for a minute and just be still

no longer taking advice from my doubts

staring out the window of an airplane  
and watching the morning sunlight touch the earth  
and she whispers to me  
“you belong here.”  
and for once  
i agree with her

what are you afraid of?  
name it  
throw it on the ground  
and step on it on your way out

no matter how you feel, your ability to see the good in everyone you meet is a gift. it is a gift that makes you vulnerable. it is a gift that will, at times, leave you on a bathroom floor crying at 2a.m. regardless, if you always see roses and never thorns, you are extraordinary. i see how much you care and i think your heart is a garden. it is beautiful.

pick something to look forward to  
even if it's really small  
and please stay here for tomorrow

i tend to write about loss but i must not forget what it is to find a new home within someone else's chest. i remember when i discovered that my lips fit perfectly on yours. and although my heart no longer rests in your chest, thank you for being my temporary home.



i think the rain  
is the most consistent thing  
i've ever fallen in love with  
the rain is the same  
everywhere i have been  
and everywhere i will be

there isn't this perfect destination that is out there waiting for your heart to come home to but there are place where you will find comfort and there are people who love you.

i love you.

you are afraid to love again  
it feels like everyone leaves  
so for now  
love the things that are constant  
love the sunlight  
love the feeling of a soft blanket wrapped around you  
engulf yourself in books  
and watch documentaries about things  
you've always wondered about  
there will not always be someone at your side  
but there will always be something to love  
i promise

there is beauty in the way she holds herself that makes me hope she never allows another unworthy soul to hold her instead.

i notice even the way your fingers move  
i think it is perfection  
*~noticing the little things about me*

when your universe gets smaller  
your perceived value increases  
because you become more rare

so spend time alone  
make your universe your own  
don't over-crowd you mind  
with comparison

you cannot make anyone  
become enthralled with your existence  
but inevitably someone will choose you  
for now  
choose yourself

say it to yourself:  
*thank you for staying*



it is a privilege to love you  
do not forget that

i made a new friend today  
“dance with me” she said  
i took her hand  
i found that i wasn't angry anymore  
“tell me your name, please”  
she replied, “peace”

i cannot pretend  
that i don't want someone  
to fall in love with  
but i know that my heart needs time  
and i care for her the most

goodbye is courageous

relationships are not appraisals  
do not give yourself  
for your worth to be determined  
instead please  
allow me to offer my expert estimation  
of your heart:

you are priceless

sometimes the home  
you're looking for  
you have to build yourself  
no one knows what you need  
better than you  
*~architect*

to love yourself you must first find a new definition of love that is not the one you have learned from hurt people and failed relationships. you must learn that love is not conditional and that nothing you see in the mirror can alter the portion of love you deserve. you must learn that love is not the wage you earn for what you do or how much you do it. love is forgiving, consistent, and kind. i know that this is not the love you have learned but it can be the love you are learning.

you owe it to the world  
to do those things you've dreamed of  
maybe you are meant to be  
someone's role model  
or favorite musician  
or perhaps you will write the book  
that changes someone's life  
but they will never hear you  
if you do not speak up  
if you do not become  
who you are meant to be



do not speak about yourself  
as if you are something small  
as if there are not  
whole universes begging to escape your rib cage  
there is no measure of perfection  
that you have to surmount  
and there is no trophy  
that will deem you enough  
you do not have to be grateful  
that you are worthy of their time  
i would never wish you to be  
any more  
or any less

you are not alone  
even the air you breath  
was exhaled by your friends  
the trees

today i woke up  
with happiness in my veins  
tomorrow i may not feel the same  
but i'm going to feel this for today

i think it is insane  
the depth at which  
you can care for a person  
yet still neglect to care for yourself

this time—  
you come first

you are so incredibly capable of collecting the stars  
you just have to overcome your fear of heights

i cannot focus over the sound of all of the wonderful things that i am meant to do

this section is titled home, not because everything is fixed and you've arrived at this destination of perfection, but because you have made so much progress and we are going to make your joy a landmark to celebrate how far you've come.

you know you are healing  
when the narrative is no longer about  
what they did to you  
instead it is about what you are doing now



i think of my hair as a timeline  
there is a part of it that grew  
when i finally started to get over my ex  
and part of it was the week  
that i fell in love with you  
my hair went with me  
on our ice cream dates  
and our nights under the stars  
it remembers the first time i held your hand  
and when i started to feel it slipping away  
this is the week i spent crying in my room  
this is four months i spent missing you  
and the two i started working on acceptance  
today i shaved my head  
*~starting over*

sometimes i wonder  
what's the point of all this  
why do i continue to love people  
when so often  
we end up apart ?  
i'm beginning to realize  
that i am a collector of impressions  
imprinting myself  
with the most beautiful treasures  
i have found  
in the ones i have once loved  
i am becoming  
a mosaic of moments  
a picture of joy and pain  
i think that it is quite magnificent  
i think that i am quite magnificent

i hope that the next person that calls you beautiful does so in a way that encompasses all of you. i hope when they call you beautiful, they mean your voice in the morning and the light in your eyes when you talk about what you're passionate about. i hope when they call you beautiful, they mean the way you forget your keys everyday, so you always say goodbye twice before you leave. i hope they mean the way you sleep and the way you cry and the way you take your coffee because next time someone calls you beautiful, nothing about the way you exist should be disregarded. you are not beautiful in the way a single rose petal is you are beautiful in the way a garden is.

if you poke holes in my skin  
i'm quite certain  
that sunlight will spill out

i wrote her an apology  
i told her  
i didn't mean to fall out of love with her  
i reminded her of how resilient  
i believe she is  
i asked her if she would take me back  
*~a letter to myself*

she said yes

recently i have realized  
how important other people are.  
being alone is good  
but don't forget  
that companionship is essential too  
*~balance*

if you are not unapologetically  
pursuing what you love  
with star dust in your eyes  
please please  
spend some time  
talking to the sky



today i found a hole in the ground  
and i thought to myself  
someone must have lived there

today i found a hole in a tree  
and i thought to myself  
someone must have lived there

today i found a hold in an apple  
and i thought to myself  
someone must have lived there

today i found a hole in my heart  
and i thought to myself  
someone must have lived there

holes don't make us empty  
they make us a home

i've been told  
i wear my emotions  
like a neon sign  
it's no mystery how i'm feeling  
so please know  
if i'm glowing outside,  
i'm glowing within

do not waste your time  
trying to be beautiful  
beautiful is something you already are  
not something you must try to be

it is okay to want something  
as long as you remain patient in your longing  
there is someone out there for you  
but that is not the only thing out there for you  
enjoy the present

you have plenty of voices in your head telling you you're broken and worthless. allow me to be the voice in your head that says differently.

you are loved

you are whole

you are not alone

you are priceless

allow your smile to be young  
allow your eyes to be old  
enjoy life like a child  
but have the wisdom to value life  
as if you are on your last breath

remember how wonderful it is to go where you wish to go and do what you wish to do.

sincerely,  
independence

i think i'm on my side  
it's good to have an ally



you will find evidence  
to support anything  
you choose to believe  
so choose to believe you are strong  
choose to believe you are capable  
choose to believe you are resilient  
choose to believe you belong

when you go through stormy seas  
you gain an appreciation  
for sailors who captain boats  
on rough waters  
you see people with scars from the sea  
and think “they are like me”  
and there we find comfort  
in tracing the scars on another’s skin  
and knowing they have felt what you have felt  
they have been where you have been

there are these things  
that tug on your insides  
some call them passions  
i like to think of them  
as the strings  
that tie my soul to the universe  
they remind me  
that there is a reason  
i am here

how to change the world:  
step 1. get out of bed

my elementary school teacher asked the class  
to paint a picture of the sky  
all around me were papers  
filled with blue skies and white fluffy clouds  
my teacher looked confused at my paper  
i had painted jupiter  
that's when i discovered  
boundaries aren't really my thing

don't be in such a rush to be someone else's  
that you neglect to be your own for a while

your purpose is not to be what they are looking for. you are not a ball of clay to be reshaped. your purpose is to be found by the ones who discover your soul and never want to leave.

you're not going to find it. you're not going to find what you had with that person ever again. the moving on doesn't come when you find someone just like the love that you lost. the moving on comes when you accept that you're not going to relive the same love twice. you are going to find comfort in someone else's oversized sweatshirts, and you are going to make new inside jokes and laugh uncontrollably. it will never be the same, but it will be good. the moving on comes when you can be grateful for what you had and grateful for what you have.



the most beautiful people are the ones who speak with the conviction of a thousand voices and the confidence of royalty

for so long i've needed someone to tell me  
i love you regardless so i will tell it to you  
i love regardless of your biggest mistakes  
i love you regardless of your insecurities  
i love you regardless of your past  
i love you regardless of those who haven't  
i love you regardless of how you've changed  
i love you regardless of who you love  
i love you regardless

there is no one more qualified  
to fill your space in this world

you make the stars look like they are just decoration

there won't be this sudden moment  
or profound realization  
that you are beautiful  
instead appreciating  
your body and your self  
will come gradually  
it will start with thanking  
your permanent home  
for all she does for you  
looking at the skin-colored walls  
and not wishing to design them  
in any other way  
it will come in appreciating the way  
the muscles in your face tighten and pull  
to reveal your emotions  
eventually  
in the laughter  
in your morning voice  
a little at a time  
you will begin to see  
just how exquisite you are

i began personifying nature  
i allow the wind  
to run its fingers through my hair  
i let the moonlight  
kiss my skin  
i let the rustling trees  
write me poetry  
i even personify the storms  
i let them sweep me off my feet  
and i've realized i don't need you  
i never did

they gifted you the capacity to understand  
all kinds of heartache  
each one of them  
gave you a reason to be kind to wandering souls  
use this knowledge of vulnerability  
to heal everyone you touch  
*~past lovers*

the last person that broke my heart  
gave me the opportunity to love you  
you broke my heart  
and gave me the opportunity to love me  
*~it all works out somehow*



sometimes when i look at the moon  
i like to imagine  
you are looking too  
our gaze is a bridge  
from us to the sky  
and there's an invisible line  
that connects you and i  
and even if i'm miles from you  
after sunset  
can we meet on the moon?  
*~for my someone out there somewhere*

you are a force of nature  
stop underestimating your ability  
to command the storms in your life

i sat in the river and realized the river is not peaceful because it is still. it is peaceful because it is in motion. i am the river.

i've started to think about my life  
as a long road trip  
and my energy  
as a tank of gas  
since then, i've been more conservative  
with who i give my energy to  
i'm slower to invite people into my car  
i am more intentional about the places i stop  
and the places i choose to rest  
i have learned that my energy time and attention  
are resources to be spent purposefully  
most of all i have learned that movement is normal  
staring at the window would be far less magical  
if the car never moved  
the point of the trip is that you're growing  
and the point of the gas tank  
is that you can be decisive  
about whom you are growing with

i hope you find peace when you realize that, looking back, it's always been  
the difficult times that have led you to incredible places.  
your heartache is for a reason.  
you are finding your way.

don't allow love to be an excuse to exist quietly. if their love muffles your voice, if it is not inspiring, if it doesn't resonate with the same intensity of sunsets and ocean waves, then know that walking away to the sound of your own marching band is the wisest path to take. allow each step to be an anthem of all of the reasons you should not be silenced.

i think it is beautiful how humanity can continue to write about love and never seem to run out of words. it is something bigger than all of the books can contain and it is yours

to keep

to give away

to share

to write about

this morning i woke up  
and she was standing by my bed  
palm open to me  
eyes begging me to take her hand  
i closed my eyes  
tried to sink back into my sadness  
then opened my eyes  
changed my mind  
and took her hand  
*~happiness*



stare at the colors in the sky  
count the stars until you fall asleep  
notice how warm your bed is on rainy days  
so that when you lose your way you can  
hold on to these moments of magic

there is this undeniable peace  
in having sovereignty over one's own life  
enjoy being the ruler of your own existence

you've struggled so long with that word  
"belong"  
you have tried to find  
people and places to belong to  
but people have left  
and you have outgrown these spaces  
the truth is  
you belong to me  
and to anyone else who, for a moment,  
has shared your mind  
or touched your soul  
you belong to the sun  
and to the rain  
to your trials and to your joy  
you have developed this misconception  
that belonging is an eternal state  
but you can belong temporarily  
and move on when you have outgrown your home  
tomorrow morning  
when your feet hit the floor  
please know  
you belong

you don't always notice it leaving you  
one day you look down and discover  
that your wounds have become scars  
pain doesn't usually announce its exit  
eventually you just stand up  
and everything  
doesn't feel quite so heavy anymore

when i was writing  
i felt a sense of urgency to heal  
so i could finish the story for you  
then i learned that the book  
wasn't about the conclusion  
it was about the process  
home isn't the destination  
it's the place where you catch your breath  
get back on your feet  
and continue the journey

it isn't a new beehive

it isn't a girl who held me and smelled like honey

it is me

i am home

i believe it is in the job description of a writer to love people deeply and to experience life fully. when i say my dream is to be an author, i mean my dream is to live.

find more of my work

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## about the author



whitney hanson is excited to share “home,” her first collection of poetry, with her readers. whitney is a 20-year-old university student who believes that sharing one’s story is the key to impacting others. she deeply believes that pain can be converted to purpose. she hopes that you will find the purpose for your pain in the pages of her book, and she ultimately aims to help her readers “make peace with their bees.”