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# Sacred Lucidity: Embodied Identity Through the Lens of Poetry

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Sacred Lucidity: Embodied Identity Through the Lens of Poetry

A senior project submitted to the faculty of Dominican University of California  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in  
Humanities and Cultural Studies

By  
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## Introductory Essay Component

### Sacred Lucidity: Embodied Identity Through the Lens of Poetry

Reading and writing 'confessional' poetry has concrete value as a means of exploring individual experiences of personal identity. The poet Salvatore Quasimodo stated that "Poetry...is the revelation of a feeling that the poet believes to be interior and personal which the reader recognizes as his own." This statement allows conceptual space for the writer as confessional in their work, and yet also allows for the reader to identify with specific experiences or emotions conveyed by the author. The poet may write passionately of their solitary fears or loves - but ultimately, the experience of writing and reading poetry (particularly upon personal themes) impacts the group of readers and the group of society to which to poet belongs. As poets, we have an opportunity to write about the overarching human condition from our own perspective; we also have the opportunity to describe our specifics of self in relation to group identity. As a woman, I write about my experiences of gendered violence, or microaggressions. As a fat woman, I write about my experiences of body image and body stigmas. With my mental illness diagnosis, I write about the fear and lived experience that comes along with chronic bipolar disorder. These are aspects of my identity, and areas where particulars of my social location interact (for instance, the crossover experience of fatness and womanhood).

In the poems “Mirror” by Sylvia Plath and “in salem” by Lucille Clifton, brave dissections and expressions of the truth of individual and group identity are further illuminated. The provable value of writing and reading poetry becomes apparent in close readings of these two poems. Without confessional poetry written about personal themes, neither individuals nor groups would have access to the free divulgence of truth with the same high levels of efficacy. As implied in Quasimodo’s quote, the reader finds themselves within the words of the poet, while the poet excavates and produces their personal selfhood on paper, sometimes without concern for the audience. A new avenue in contemporary poetry is the work of social media poets, such as Rupi Kaur, whose primary platform for distribution is Instagram. Kaur writes short poetry, with general themes - as opposed to the specific, detailed, and highly personal poetry of Plath or Clifton. These contrasts provide more clear evidence of the value of writing one’s truth as individually as possible.

Ultimately, the process of exploring self through the lens of poetry is a radical act. This includes the process of healing, learning and growing, and in the process of creating political change. Detailed confessional poetry is a powerful medium which provides the space and methodology to best understand personal identity, through the framework of our demographic groups or who we are as individuals. My creative component Sacred Lucidity will demonstrate the product of my personal identity exploration through poetry, and will provide the reader possibilities for identification of their own components of positionality and sense of self.

Sylvia Plath is a classically confessional poet, and demonstrates the value of detailed personal poetry. Her poem "Mirror" shows aspects of mental illness, womanhood, and aging, which are all potential points of contact for the reader. "Mirror" by Sylvia Plath is based upon an anthropomorphization of a mirror, written from the perspective of the object itself. The phrasing and imagery used in "Mirror" are vivid, relatively numerous, and fully explained. For instance, "Now I am a lake." (the first line of the second stanza of the poem) is a visual cue that readers can use to add sensations to the sight of a mirror. We are given a time marker ("Now") as a part of this complete sentence. The idea of a lake gives way to the readers own imagination as they understand commonly occurring lake activities; stagnancy of water, the act of swimming, some sense of depth, and even the fishes in a lake. These are all immediate associations that may come from Plath's clear and simple metaphor of this mirror as "a lake." There is little mention of this metaphor until we see its recurrent theme in the last phrase. The woman (the owner of the mirror, or person using this mirror) "day after day" is described in the last line of this poem as "ris[ing] like a terrible fish" and thus Plath recalls her initial metaphor of the second of two stanzas.

Overall, one theme of "Mirror" is an emotional tribute to honesty (the mirrors consistently 'accurate' observance with the passing of time in the woman's life). A second theme presents itself, though less overtly, in the mention of womanhood, or the initial visions of "a young girl" (in the second to last line of the poem). There is also an ambiance of sadness or melancholy running through the language ("flickers" in line eight, and "darkness" in line nine,) the concepts ("she rewards me with tears" from line

14,) and the resulting tone overall. I am discussing "Mirror" by Sylvia Plath for the sake of Plath's professed themes, and possible tones of mental illness. Above all, Plath's exploration of her own identity, through the mirror's experience of its female owner (as she ages and "search[es] [...] for what she really is" in line 11) provides a framework for poetry as an act of empowerment via self-reflection. Though we are not, as readers, explicitly informed if Plath is the woman subject of "Mirror," Plath is certainly not entirely removed from the poem's personalization of the woman's experiential trajectory, as described by her mirror. The examination of the intimate meaning of literally viewing oneself (and its emotional impact) provided in "Mirror" alludes to the intrinsically healing process of emotional self identity discovery which is accessible through 'confessional poetry.' Plath's works are often labeled as such, though academic feminist ethics discussion - in relation to female identified poets labeled as 'confessional' - argue that men's works of the same poetic content would be seen (and categorized!) quite differently, providing a more general or neutral accessibility. "Mirror" by Plath speaks to the power of poetry and poetic self-discussion of personal identity - much like the poem "in salem" by Lucille Clifton, which uses a similar style of depth, allowing space for magical realism... yet, Clifton draws directly into a political space, unlike Plath's "Mirror." The political implications of "in salem" may be linked to the ongoing politicization of the black female experience in the U.S. (where both poets wrote,) in contrast with the privilege of Plath's poem's more narrow and individual scope, as per Plath's whiteness. The difference in thematic reach, however, may be nothing more than a difference in their respectively intended styles of writing - or Clifton's poetic ability to broaden her

impacts juxtaposed against Plath's fixation upon self alone. Both poems are, nevertheless, critical and relatable examinations of selfhood.

"in salem" by Lucille Clifton is a gorgeous poetic foray into the idea and feeling of magic and witches. This poem directly confronts the realities of the spiritual threat of racism, along with the menacing physical threat of racism to a black woman's bodily safety. When Clifton writes "the terror is in [...] the plain face of the white woman watching us" (line 8-11,) we feel the emotional and spiritual intensity of racially charged fear and the written simplicity of an eerie tone in Clifton's image of the "plain face of the white woman." Clifton begins in a stunning and satisfying, almost musical style of writing about the power of black female witchcraft and (an implied) sense of black femininity. Clifton's use of end rhyme is subtle and not overwhelming in its frequency, yet allows the reader into a potentially 'magical' space of language, in parallel with definitive themes of the supernatural or metaphysical. This poem, like "Mirror" by Plath, is an exploration of identity, yet Clifton adds a new elevation of power and impact through language about a group of women, and her use of "weird sister" (line 1) as a call to certain readers of this poem. Clifton explores identity yet also writes to group identity, fears of the dangers of racialized judgement, and perhaps even to racial trauma ("the terror" repeated in line 3, 5, and 8). Clifton expertly weaves truth, personal identity, and the power of political honesty into her brief poetic masterpiece of "in salem." The last line describes the white woman's object of action (her bread that she is presumably about to bake) as "ordinary" thus striking a strong contrast between the black witch's magic and the normal, perhaps even boring realities of the white woman's dullness -

this may also link to the veil of mundanity surrounding the hidden or latent racial prejudices of white women. The witches in this poem are truly entrancing; with “the moon / choreographing the dance of wereladies” (line 3 and 4). Clifton paints a vivid picture of the “weird sisters” and their witchcraft as almost celebratory or joyous; “the terror is not in the broom / swinging around to the hum of cat music” (line 5 and 6). All in all, Clifton creates further evidence of the beautifully radical and transformative power of poetry for healing, truth-seeking, and exploring of social identity. This provides further evidence of the concrete value of writing and reading poetry towards intrinsically critical aspects of self and life. Yet, not all poetry carries the same level of impact in relation to the specific identity of the author and reader - we see far more general content in the case of Rupi Kaur.

Rupi Kaur, a particularly well-known Instagram poet, had sold 2.5 million copies worldwide of her debut collection, milk and honey by 2017. This large quantity of sales is a rarity in the world of poetry. Kaur has talent, and she is wonderful at creating accessible and well-liked poetic art. Yet, it could be argued that poetry created for social media platforms is often vapid and written with the intention of easy mass relatability and post-sharing by popular consumption. The more personal forms of poetry add an element which is inaccessible to Instagram poets such as Rupi Kaur; although she has clear skill, specific to her aims, she does not take on the arduous and profoundly important task of deep personal dissection of the specifics of self. The intrinsic nature of seeking viral poetry takes away the intimacy found in describing emotions or occurrences available in longer or medium length poems. Kaur has so much to offer;

her religious faith is wonderfully incorporated into her work and many of her writings are beautiful. Nevertheless, the youth's embracing of 'quick' poetry has potentially detracted from contemporary interest in highly sensory and detailed poetic exploration. On page 124 of milk and honey, Kaur leaves the reader an entire poem in these four lines: "your voice / alone / drives me / to tears" and on page 150, she writes a poem of three lines "you must enter a relationship / with yourself / before anyone else" which reads more as a motivational quote than a full personal poem. It must be conceded that not all poetry has the same goals, or serves the same purpose. Many brilliant writers, like Kaur, have leaned into aphoristic styles throughout history. Nonetheless, within the context of "Mirror" by Sylvia Plath, and "in salem" by Lucille Clifton, this counterexample of short and somewhat depersonalized poetry displays a clear contrast in possible benefits of different styles of work. Ultimately, many contemporary social media poets are successful in circumnavigating the gatekeepers, which is a powerful component of self-promotion and accessible publishing platforms. Yet, poetry which dives deeper into individual experiences of identity has so many positive aspects and ways to contribute; perhaps the identification of the reader is not as frequent, but it may be more meaningful or emotionally moving nonetheless. Are a larger quantity of reblogs worth the sacrifice of specialized and rare forms of reader's identification?

Without poetic exploration of our place in the world, we are left wandering through an artistic blank space regarding who we are as individual human beings and the groups to which we belong. I have learned a great deal about who I am through the process of creating Sacred Lucidity, and I have found categories of my sense of self and

my behavior which are both changed by my role in society and in which I can make change, myself. Now, I want to assist the process of a re-popularization of the craft of poetry. If our educational system and our cultural paradigms continue to dismiss the value of the humanities, the use of poetry, and the beauty in writing about oneself in a confessional style - then we will lose the depth of knowledge that confessional poetry can provide to our understanding of self in relation to group. We must remember that this is not just the work of poets; anyone can write about their experience of social location through confessional poetry styles, and anyone can experience the healing and political intensity that this act creates.

When we see ourselves reflected back through the selected harmony of a poets work, we are confronted by beautiful and sometimes saddening truths. It is our work, as human beings, to find methods and means to become our best selves. This is the work of the group and of the individual. If we want to heal the society within which we exist, we must create art that confronts the issues in that society. If we want to feel safe, happy, and healthy - we should create art that reflects our pains and joys alike. In order to feel and understand who we are, reading the works of other people who have walked similar or disparate paths from our own can cultivate a renewed sense of self and of overall heightened awareness. If we want to understand where the real problems exist, within the dynamics of group interaction, the political sphere, and the realities of marginalization or privilege, we ought to read the works (and thus hear the stories) of all people. For these reasons, the liberation of self through reading and writing confessional poetry is critically important to improving society as a whole. I hope that in

reading my thesis, you will get a sense of my own process in exploration of social location and much more. I hope you, thus, find further proof that we must not forget about the true power of poetry, especially around the details of our experiences of identity. We can make this world a better place and heal ourselves from all kinds of pain: confessional poetry holds the power to play a valuable role in this innately radical process. Write your truth, and read the truths of others. Few tasks are more important in this life than understanding our experiences, and from that understanding moving forward into most brilliant iterations possible of both self and society. When we embrace the power of poetry, we embrace the betterment of our world altogether.

Works Cited

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## Context

Sacred Lucidity, a 22 page poetry chapbook, is the creative component of a larger project which was written for my Dominican University of California senior thesis. The precluding analytical essay comprises the first piece of my project. The two parts of my full project synergize, comprising the creation of Sacred Lucidity: Embodied Identity Through the Lens of Poetry. This two part contribution adds to academic conversation around social location and the exploration of personal identity and positionality through the art of poetry. This chapbook represents evidence of the power of poetry to describe experiences of self and group, through intimate confessional poetry - even when the poet is not overtly present in the poem itself. Thank you for reading, and enjoy!

Thank you to the Tuxedo Arts Journal for publication,  
in the Spring 2019 Issue, of three poems from my thesis:

“You Are Ready Now”

“Be Present Forever”

and “The Cure for Shame and Emptiness” [title upon date of publication]

# Sacred Lucidity

by APL

*for my mother*

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# *I. Sand*

a detailed decision

I will subvert my own flesh  
when I write  
*nothing is off limits*  
not even the hand of death  
I will describe my nightmares of malignant martians  
who screeched in my face with his arm raised  
above my crumpling body

I will expose the honesty of my spirit guide - blessed, extraterrestrial mother  
who set herself together with me, eye to eye

I'll create fresh documents upon  
the likely toxicity of whiteness  
and acrid prejudice steaming through interactions  
observable even in the speech of my childhood friends

I will explore my stuck sexuality  
phobia of my aspects of gayness and  
contrary obsession of seeking male energy

I'll type up  
my alcoholic tendencies  
tabs of LSD, all of the drugs on the kitchen table  
I shall scrawl in notebooks  
the hypersexuality of my manias  
orgasming alone on the front-room couch  
of the mental health care holding facility

I will write these achey triumphs  
running through five dimensions  
and forbidden lessons  
sex is gross. I am ashamed. I am the enemy.  
I am a survivor  
I am healing  
radical honesty is a curse  
and the most lovely form of personal witchcraft

I will profess my universal philosophies and put forth my meaning of life  
deleting absence of coveted wisdoms  
forgetting the terror of showing rotten items  
this is to be  
of use  
of service

I will provide my information

one human woman  
and her tip-of-the-iceberg soul  
dissolving  
sugar water  
dripping down my fingers

it's a girl!

reminding me of what  
    fresh air  
        tastes like

must've been a  
    d  
    r  
    i  
    z  
    z  
    l  
e in the sky  
        last night

our mother planet is getting hot and the fires won't stop and my  
sense of feminine self becomes consumed  
    with worry of the end.

feminist ethics of care about Earth, please. foresight should be  
trendy. *community isn't a myth.*

## Mindful Suffering

Oh cruel creation of mine→ A Temple of Insanity + dust

(I contorted form, feet point pain  
for the dancers,

for my competition of other fine young girls using their bodies too,  
as instruments of classical dance.

I starved you, my drained flesh  
I sickened you, my limbs  
organs screaming for reinforcements  
as I puked out prunes  
in the shared bathrooms  
of my first college dorm. )

I am a body-vigilante  
I am the woodworker of self  
carving into my own tissues with battle cries and panic

Tied down to the realm of the physical, while my head is lagging in space  
I wanted to become a practitioner of astral projection  
so I could forget my dear body in another dimension,  
upon the physical plane  
of my well-neglected twin bed

I dreamed of detaching my body from my soul, returning to the spirit world-  
until my mind took charge and did these things for me.

She-brain turned on she-body and made she-body ever sicker

I had a short shelf life  
after expiration, I exploded into thousands of unseen stars  
I became my own worst fear, that of pure isolation,  
because I disavowed my vessel  
my fragile spaceship of olive skin  
and took it upon myself to wound the very most precious object of them all...

*(in preparation for worship)*

I was a lunar mirage in those days  
sickly and skinny and tamping down tears *(temple priestess bathes in her fluid)*

## Be Present Forever

Just so much to touch, like cobwebs and a spider's freshest home  
each spun thread in contact with another  
the online abundance of ideas, like a woven net  
high fidelity truth unearthed in each moment  
because this is infinity  
and you are its steward  
its observer  
its guest.

## Waiting for the OB GYN

There is nothing living  
in this room, except me.  
No plants, no pets, no bugs  
Maybe microorganisms which we have  
yet to define  
A big watercolor shows me a forest, and  
greens-  
all kinds of greens! All of the  
mint, and forest, and bright,  
and yellowish possible from the paints.  
A big matte black phone on the wall  
with its faintly glowing screen.  
Me, with a small protrusion  
a growth of some kind (living)  
on my left nipple  
and my intense curiosity about smell  
about health  
about me, and all of my living.

## Waiting for the OB GYN, Pt. 2

my craving for paper and ink is  
quenched by this cell phone here  
Google Docs app rescues me from  
writing these poems, over and over  
silently out-loud in my brain  
Biohazard is orange  
will my cellular biodata go in there?  
Red metal

filled with red blood, or tissue, or  
disposable medical tools  
long sticks with swabs  
she is taking her long-wait-time  
while I comfort my brain  
like it is a child  
pregnant women have sat on this table,  
heard all of the types of news  
from the lips of the doctors  
click of metal, crumpling of paper  
wrinkling of the soundscape just beyond  
my barrier from the rest of the office  
blue paper fabrics cover  
my torso and lower body  
myself to be examined in all  
the female places  
news to be found, news to be told- or,  
no news at all. She will inform me that  
all is well-  
but when something has changed  
already, that [...]

Exam's over. Everything's fine.  
A lovely older woman waits in the lobby.  
A man is curled into sleep on the waiting  
room bench. I walk out, walk back into  
life. All of my changes were normal.  
Effects from the passing of time

## Layers of Resist:

Patterns fill my life in dope rhythms  
sweeping gesture of opulent proportions  
waving seas and hands that seeth  
pulsation of the nights of the outliers  
Knight-time strikes the clock  
tick tock  
internet videos, sensational lyricism  
lipsync your parallel universe themes

Oh how I trust the palm extended  
ready to die for the newest cause  
effect and reaction, sweetness of musical beats  
alternative sugars, coconut flower

Islands and mountains and cultures filled with glory  
swimming into hybrid vibration- line by line  
line by line, I swing to your same dance  
pendulum  
right - left - arrow up  
rise up  
raise your fist in the act of creation  
we will consummate our  
future as one race  
our souls as large entities  
swallowed with glee and compassion by the nighttime skyline  
cityscape lights and skyscrapers  
become one with our smiles and miles traveled in  
one instant  
warp speed  
I believe in time travel, and I live for this moment.  
Welcome, my children, for this is the uprising. Come home.



## *II. Silt*

## holes

I dig into my body with the cigarettes  
the bad food  
the lack of physical activity  
I dig in to my body  
like a shovel in a hole to plant a new rosebush  
like hands in sand with dusty fingernails  
like construction  
creating the harms  
so that the harms cannot create me.

## Faded Madness

medication dreams of me  
Big Pharma saved my little life

my grand existence, hobbled by the ultimate safeguards  
and yet  
I inhabit the same lunatic, here.

cracks in the concrete became a childhood obsession  
stepping for the feeling of an even footprint-  
at all times-

I believe in

angels

magic

martians

time travel

I became my self when I took their pills  
spilling ideas over into this bronze bowl of the now

God cannot create such a dilemma- I play between the realms

so, I straddle timelines  
and sift the sands of spacetime  
rupture the wormholes of the cosmos until I become dizzy

I saw a thin red-looking crack on the wall of the psychiatric ward  
it become my most sincere destiny. Now, the medicines inhabit *me*.

calculated to forget

I've looked up at these same forest hills before  
detailed trees blur in the morning mist, at almost 7:30am  
but it is winter. the trees look like paintings of the tops of a fine set of cruciferous  
As a kid, I remember pretending to be a giant eating trees when there was  
broccoli for dinner.

I couldn't live in that forest on the hills beyond my apartment  
I wouldn't feel okay after two days  
I wouldn't survive a few weeks  
animals in the forest  
mountain lions maybe, foxes and bucks  
with their antlers that make me afraid  
the crackling bratches and lumpy detritus  
beneath the paws of skunks  
the birds and bugs, and microbes that I don't know  
the oaks in the pitch black of an unlit night  
the sounds and smells  
of animals and flora interacting  
drive away  
stay home  
in my apartment.

humans forgot how to survive our nature  
an extension of god  
looks like technology  
is our newest home.  
I sit by Lincoln Avenue  
listen to Lana Del Rey  
smoke a cigarette

and stare up into the hills of forest  
not more than 200 feet beyond this bus stop.

when i was

Rape takes away the body  
divides it into disgusting sections  
to be eaten by the victor  
killing off your appendages  
your openings  
an unfair trade of  
nothing for orifice and dignity  
subhuman woman  
with the shame you so graciously offer her  
for life  
a deal that stays forever  
a contract for the unwilling  
forced her hand  
sign away your body immediately  
or you might  
die.

## A Welcoming

Do we look the same in the cemetery?

Do the gates greet us with the grace that the men wanted us to give?

Will we end up there okay?

Will it be painful to arrive?

Have we arrived already- the proper tones of numbness

the chimes clink together, harmonies of hive mind,

slow wind rustles nothing. your pace takes the place of all else.

your legs shimmer with misty moon- and cold, bare feet wander

as you peer around trees like a curious Ophelia,

exploring his expectations that are tough as sinew and slimy as snail.

death's truest altar sees woman. of all sorts and types, we all survive the blood.

### *III. Clay*

## Extreme Self-Love

I am the only 'character player'  
I meditate upon my  
singularity of existence

I am a part of a  
mass which is  
me

I'm the simulation

and, here I am.

the most interesting  
woman in the world !

the only being in the universe

I am this

this is

only me.

## sweat

my body  
curves slowly  
in the same tones  
as a perfectly tuned  
piano on a balmy evening  
in the musk of summer air, bright.  
My body is musky too when I feel the  
softness of my curves with droplets of steam  
of the sweat of my own vigor, dropping down my  
small tight curve in my strong spine and I feel ready.  
I hold my hand and hips and grind into the tightness  
of my own moisture on the newness of the summer  
wicking away any new fears with old temptations of  
lustful awakenings upon heated flesh, dripping now  
thickly held by fresh skin in it's own undulations the  
trueness of my own preferences and my lovely  
exploration of a territory of myself so wet it  
feels like a sexual momentum in raw fuel  
eating up my time into a new clock, way  
of turning the knobs the handles into  
ecstasy of many moments within yes  
my own self reruns on a high channel  
four five six seven and all goodness  
heightened sensation on new a time  
for pleasure that rubs you ready and  
fulfills the desire you've been waiting

## dreams of lovingness

Wear bare nails because there is magic in them. Keratin tones appear in moments of doubt to show my natural goodness. I was dipped into the mountain melted water in a merging of small streams and came out looking upwards; I felt my own angelic goodness. I walked down from a house of mountainous perch, down a big, wooden, old outdoor staircase and towards the water; my sleeves and dress train flowed gossamer upon the steps and the night was full of moon. I am divinity and I am sacred. I know, in this nightdream, that I am truly good. We discussed public health earlier, in a futuristic supermarket. I was both informative and encouraging. I described how to know if an action or decision is motivated by goodness, love, and sweetness. It was a clear test and I explained it well, including examples of loving choices. I am angelic and I am full of love.

[If only I could *remember* the litmus test for actions and decisions, to know their real goodness. Like a Kantian Categorical Imperative, before I ~~knew~~ what that meant. Advanced <sup>dream</sup> knowledge. Give it time, but seek it *now* i will **always** be an **angel**]

not-magic

i am broken-hearted and abject  
we have stolen and performed an alchemy of thin shadows  
the Black diaspora shaking  
the white-skinned witches burning Palo Santo from not-their-land  
the shamanic practice of a Scottish woman  
who claims the pain of Brexit  
she lights candles, lives in Virginia  
upon the river and sets small paper boats to sail in  
the current. she checks the time and the moon  
and whispers incantations that are not Pagan  
nowadays, these are the wicca, and she is white  
go to the East Bay, and find an herbal apothecary  
is there a young woman with light brown dreads and French ancestry  
at the front counter?  
She'll sign you up for the upcoming workshop  
with a half Guatemalan chick  
whose ancestors practiced this, she teaches of tonics and oils.  
us newbies dying for a fix  
to siphon and hold the power of a goddess  
we are taking, again. clumsily woven into someone else's ritual.

but remember what we believed  
the manifest destiny of the visiting white woman  
she took it all, and made it HERS and kept the treasure for  
her Swedish wooden carved chest, where the linens were  
and where her mother left heirlooms  
and left whiteness for her daughter  
but this other magic is not written in our sequence,  
our genetics are full of domination and dominion and now, of regret

If I have a white daughter,  
I will tell her...  
darling, you can meditate  
but understand these practices  
of ritualistic manifestation  
as belonging to small groups of Women and Girls  
within the many worlds and cultures of Asia,

of Africa,  
of the Latin Americas  
and among their descendants.  
Colonizers do not get this chance. Their descendants do not get this chance-  
for we stand in the cold trauma that our ancestors induced  
we have no right to write the future of  
ourselves, of anyone else  
we have stolen enough, my dear  
it is time to return the talisman of power  
break your bond to the power of creation  
create to restore  
and stop trying to win  
there is no game anymore  
our magic is scattered to the wind  
we lost our privilege to use the womanly blood  
our lunar ties severed the moment they cast the first boat  
we destroyed, so why should we keep stealing?  
Leave the magic to the witches, my love,  
and bring home just truth instead.  
Press your face into my body and cry for hours on end  
but do not burden these women, my child  
for old sour Europe has already called these witches dead.  
Our history owes a debt  
that we can never pay  
so throw your spells to the wind  
and give your sage away  
you are here for empathy,  
and to help the whole world shine bright  
dissolve your need for power  
and let go of the broom, mid-flight.

## *IV. Loam*

## You Are Ready Now

Test yourself:

are you tantalized when you hear her work?  
The powdered words, spilling forth  
as she reads her own ink, flowing like blood and then  
pouring from her own mouth?

if you are angry, fed by a fierce envy  
of her open opportunity  
then...

You are ready.  
Take your 2B graphite and forget to erase  
scrawl and break the lead  
your passion is productive and more real than you might imagine.

Become her

When I used to watch ballerinas  
the sugar plum princess dancing her pas-de-deux  
I would become red with jealousy  
/ want to be on that stage- I deserve it! Oh, if only I could  
work harder  
*become her...*

When you attend a reading, remember: the gasoline is in you too  
it just takes one lit match  
maybe a mere ember  
*to ignite the whole thing*  
and blaze deep into your soul  
and spit out real fire  
into the mind of those humans  
who then become jealous  
and then become poets too  
just like she did to you.  
Become. *become her.*

you are ready.

now .

## Angelic Martians

quiet opera into my bedroom of a home  
plush blanket under toes - feeling slight chill and silence

I have everything I need here, on this bed  
the water from my best friend's car, nicotine  
ideas in my small journal  
this chromebook, and the internet  
wifi is invisible but its access is so fucking infinite  
each moment is endless → but so microscopic

smallness  
tiny noises of italian singing  
and my memory of minuscule imagery in  
my pitch black space behind my eyelids  
looked like i had zoomed out into space  
floating in absolute zero and darkness  
my peace of watching our planets from too-far-away

i float with myself, here, in timespace  
gloating to no one about my interstellar imagination  
*bring me back*  
i only draw alien creatures in my notebooks,  
they soothe me because i know them- I didn't believe  
but then... they continued to visit  
to appear, eye by eye and the oblong shape of their heads

I can't ignore their calming presence anymore. i don't know  
within which dimensional reality they are real. silent slow songs.  
E.T. friends in my bedroom of a house.

## The Cure for Emptiness

The Becoming of oneself, not another  
Springboard to fantastic, bubble joy rhythms  
Dive inside, drive the scenic awakening  
fill the tank with petrol kindness  
real wealth is buried beneath the cynic  
take a breath every morning to remember your aims  
take a nap on occasion, to forget your unique pains  
become a butterfly, and shower under the clouds  
let your hair become rope, swing from willow boughs  
pour forth the bounty of your soul, I know it exists  
don't hoard the truth anymore, life cannot be missed.  
You are here like a shaman, sacerdotie imagination  
you are present like an omen, love is your only weapon  
become the burgeoning realism of all races mixing  
become a supporter of the pride of the marginalized  
find your pain again and understand it as revived  
let god take your hand in the vibrant and unpredictable  
winning streaks are brilliant and highly livable  
don't fade into daffodils, keep leaning into the daisies  
your potential for trust is positively amazing  
become an agent of love, it is here you are needed...  
the broken ones don't dance, the independent dance alone  
spotlight circumnavigation builds humility, you are home  
relinquish the boredom of control, your nexus of energy glows  
recharge your visions, and wake up grown  
Don't forget to remember your dreamweaver beginnings  
we were specks in the eye of the cosmos  
so create a new kinship of being friends with ourselves  
rekindle the fire of this-time-around  
we don't have many more chances  
become the person who broadens the road  
give yourself bright vigor of past error, but don't falter  
You are here. *Delete, subvert, and renew.* This is Earth, and you owe a debt.

## Lucid Lunacy

### *When you see infinity:*

your eyes will soften and take in 100% more information. the visuals in normalcy will surprise you. you will feel an overwhelming exuberance  
*it's a Tuesday, perhaps. you're stuck in traffic. maybe you're walking the dog, or coughing because your sick. you might be visiting a friend, or at a bar, or with your kid.... when life becomes vibrational- it is a generally normal day.*

### *When you hear infinity:*

your listening will be startled by brilliant minutia becoming alive.. cars on the highway, the refrigerator running, rain: these will fill you and yet, float by your mind. you will integrate the nuance of noise.

### *When you feel infinity:*

you might notice simultaneous desires to stretch your arms out wide and also to dissolve your physical ego. you'll touch the out of body, but become so connected at the same time...

### *When you taste infinity:*

the molecules will meld into the fabric of existence. your tongue will perceive raindrops as tears and tea as a magic potion. your tiny taste buds reach like sea urchins, waving in the ocean of your mouth. the shores are your lips which become silent, as you are enthralled by the mild sweetness of this sacred vastness

### *When you smell infinity:*

the most oxygenated substance of all. chugging down the scent of animal and sky, you feel vivid. each cell is quivering with the elation of the odor of true immensity. the perfume of God, herself. You are sane, this Tuesday. You have been taking your medication. But life *is* this beautiful, and you can sense the essence of it all. You learn that reality is far more stunning than psychosis could ever be.

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