An Ordinary Day
Told in twenty poems

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Smashwords edition

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Sun Rise

Under a hazy cover among the lush green
The sun peers lazily over the early hour
And the tops of the trees
To smile his warmth across the sleepy morning
And blow a familiar kiss through my open window
Like so many mornings before
Nudging me gently with his long golden finger
To present me with an unspoiled unwritten day.
Morning

Morning sun awakens-
Colorful ribbons stretch
languorously across the sky-
Cries to me, “Rise!”
It is a brand-new day-
half asleep and laden with dew,
pregnant with all the hope
and apprehension that the
unknown, unproved can hold.

I do rise-
and through eyes open, expectant,
contemplating the lushness that life can bring,
I pay homage to the sun-
its arms encompass all
growing wider and wider-
colors fade into each other
become white and far reaching,
draws shadows on the ground.

Beyond-
lies the highway, hard and gray
neither guilty nor innocent,
It just is-
it can take you
or lose you
but you will go
along with all the other vehicles
their headlights now going off.

The sun illuminates the way
as they embark on their various
routines and destinations.
I breathe deep
becoming the moment,
absorbing the lightness,
unreachable and brilliant.
All Because

There I was,
Blithely going through my days,
Never strayed off the path,
Always kept my eyes on the clock
And my hands upon the wheel
Until that inexplicable moment
When the world exploded into
A vibrant cosmos of color,
The air became heavy
And my heart pound in my ears
Like a thousand horse’s hooves--
I could not breathe,
My stomach clinched
And my knees felt as if they would buckle
Under the sudden extreme weight of my body--
All because you said, "Hello".
The Rules
We all play the same game
We play by the same rules
Some of us do well, some do not
But we play by the same rules
Some of us try very hard indeed
Some find it better to cheat
Since we all play by the same rules.

But what if the rules were changed
Only none of us citizens knew?
What if the ‘powers that be’ lied to us
Only none of us citizens knew?
What if there were secret handshakes
That caused alliances to shift and change;
If the ‘powers that be’ bought the world
But none of us citizens knew?

If we suddenly woke one morning
To find we could no longer come and go
As we choose
What would we do?
If everyone carried an unlicensed gun
Around on their pocket
Because ‘terrorist’ are everywhere
What would we do?
Or if we had to live under one religion
And sign a book if we worshipped differently
What would we do?
And if the ‘powers that be’ decided to
‘Rehouse’ the broken, the impoverished, the impaired and the elderly
So as not to be a drain on the system
Would we allow it?

We knew how to play the game
Because we knew the rules.
But the ‘powers that be’,
The powers that ‘we’ elected,
Are changing the rules
Only they are not telling us
What those rules are.
We need to make it our business to know.
Now is the time for accountability.
Now is the time for action.
Now before we ask the question,
“What could we have done?”
The Exchange
The building seems tall
in the eyes of the child
but the whole world is huge
when you’re so very small.

All brick red with concrete
for casements and sills.
The building is four stories high
with windows that repeat.

The child held tight
to the hand of her mother.
A bright colored balloon
bounced along on her right.

Between the buildings were
sidewalks and patches of grass.
The child looked up at the windows
to see a little girl looking at her.

Her mother had stopped
to speak to a passerby.
She had no choice but to wait
when something suddenly dropped.

There just a foot away,
wearing a bright blue bow with
the grass cushioning its head,
a fluffy brown teddy bear lay.
A huge smile came across
the face of the child below.
She gazed at the window
from where it was tossed.

The face in the window waved
at her secret friend below
who released the colorful balloon for
The teddy bear she could have.

The colorful balloon glided high
up toward the window child,
it’s colors shining in the sun.
Causing such a joyful cry.

In through the opened window
with speeds both swift and quick
the balloon was gleefully received
from the child on the ground below.

The teddy bear now retrieved
held tight in childish arms.
A secret pact of friendship;
A childhood language conceived.

As the mother started to go;
her little charge still in hand.
One last glance to the child above.
To exchange silent smiles below.
The Actor

Under the glaring spotlights
On top of the wooden stage
In front of the velvet curtain
The actor becomes the sage.

He wears all the costumes
He plays all the parts
He invokes all his lines
He knows them all by heart.

Now he has come to the end
He has played his last show
He has taken his final bow
Only thing left is to go.

One last curtain call
One last look around
One last deep breath
Then silence comes down.

He exits stage left
Through the side door
Onto the street

Where the actor,
Once revered,
Is just one more in a million feet.
**Walking with Elvis**

We walked a mile!
Or was it two?
I’d like to say it was because
We had nothing better to do.
But really it was the doctor
Who said we should walk each day.
The exercise, you see,
Should help take the pain away.
So, I put on my walking shoes
And Elvis adorned his lead.
Ok. He had my hands to use
But his big brown eyes said, “Please”.
So off we went down the street
Past Mrs. Wilson’s bungalow.
We quite enjoyed the folks we met.
Though it must be said you were slow!
All that stopping to smell everything
Just so you could pee on it!
And I wouldn’t have said a thing
Until you got the leg of Mrs. DeWitt.
I tell you, I’ve never seen
Anyone go into such a rant!
That woman was downright mean!
After all she was wearing pants.
Mrs. Johnson’s roses were divine.
They smell just as lovely and sweet.
Your watering them I’m sure she didn’t mind.
I’m just grateful that you missed my feet.
I thought poor old Mr. Agee
Didn’t look quite himself
Might be sick. Don’t you agree?
Plus, he had a peculiar smell.
He did have a pocket of treats.
He’s still thoughtful and kind.
I guess if he’s giving you something to eat,
An odd smell you’re not going to mind.
Say, when did the filling station close?
You know, the one on the corner.
Look, I know I may be getting old
But I thought the place got a new owner.
Don’t give me that look, little dog!
I have not yet become senile.
Besides, who tripped over that log?
You could have seen that from a mile!
I noticed you were quicker coming back.
Was it the thought of your bag of treats?
Oh no. That’s right. It was Mrs. Ferrelli’s cat
That had you pulling at your lead!
However, pooping in her yard was not good.
You see, I forgot to bring the bag
So, I couldn’t retrieve it like I should
And she can be quite a nag.
Oh well, home again my little friend
Off with your lead and my shoes.
A pat on your head, a scratch of your chin.
Time for a snack and a snooze.
I know we walked a mile today.
Or maybe it was two.
Not even close, I dare say
But I always like walking with you.

(for Elvis, my terrier, my buddy)
They
They met.
They laughed.
They loved.
They married.
Time passed.
He cheated.
She cried.
He raged.
She hurt.
He hit.
She bled.
He left.
She died.
It ended.

An experiment in writing. Two word sentences without descriptions that tell a story.
Like some strange voodoo,
You crept into my brain
Through my blood
And lodged yourself in my life.
I wear you like a tattoo no one can see-
You’ve become a part of me-
In my waking and my sleeping-
Yet you are not there.
It’s a weird magic that fills my lungs-
When I breathe deep
I can almost feel you, taste you-
The air becomes electric.
My eyes open wide
And my head is filled
With the sound of your voice;
At once lyrical and alive.
My soul gives birth to a new song
As the day gives birth to a new world.
I have been made strong.

(for Wombat)
Hollow Gourds

Hollow gourds hang emotionless, empty with holes cut through to expose their dark vacancy. They adorn barren trees devoid of life and shiver in the frigid night air; their song echoes through my mind.

I close my eyes and hear your voice. As it moves through my seasons it pronounces each one with clarity and grace.

I feel your touch, your caress, your breath on my skin. It molds me, owns me, dances rhythmically through my brain until I open my eyes and you cease to be.

I die a little more each day until I just can't bear it! The sharp edge of night draws ever near.

It pierces into my eyes, shines its cold hard glare, blinds me from what was and what could be until all I can see is the now-the greedy, hungry now! O night! Devour me! Tear the sun from the sky and throw the stars into the sea! Bury me where you buried my love! Leave me nothing but dry bones; barren earth and clay and the sorrow of hollow gourds that hang from a dead tree.
Glass

Why?
You were here.
I was happy.
We were 'us'.

The days were warm
Even in the winter
Because you were here.

The sun was bright, shining
Even through the rain
Because you were here.

There was sweet, wonderful music
In the dead of night
The world made sense
Even while it was falling apart
Because you were here.

No one ever told me
That blue could turn black;
That summer could be cold;
That silence could be the loudest sound on earth.

No one ever told me
That the night was an ocean
And the world was made of glass

Until it shattered.
Angels and devils fought,
Prisms of color danced behind exploding lies,
Fire froze.

And when the ocean stopped swallowing
You were gone.

You were here.
There was an 'us'.
I was happy.
Softly

Softly
The day unfolds
On gossamer wings
That gradually flutter
Through the hours
Unnoticed
To land on my doorstep
With the evening paper.
The old man sat in his recliner
And yelled about the Democrats on t.v.
His equally old wife made dinner;
Tried to see in him what she use to see.

His politics were red; his language blue
His skin was pasty white and stretched.
Made to do things it shouldn't do;
His recliner was permanently etched.

In his current, agitated state
He clumsily dropped his cigar.
In the kitchen came the sound of plates
Laid on the table with the pickled eggs jar.

The call to dinner was like a battle cry
That required him to stand and adjust.
“Hands?” she asked. “I did” he lied
As he retrieved his bottle of hot sauce.

Seats were taken and food generously plated
As always, she insisted that ‘grace’ was said.
Ten minutes later his appetite satiated,
Back to his pungent recliner he fled.

There she sat, alone, pensive, philosophic
In the quiet acceptance that was her life.
She had buried herself a long time back.
She was empty; an automated wife.

A demand for beer reached its way
Through the kitchen wall to her ears.
“Yes, dear” she would calmly say
Unhindered by her dried-up tears.

The beer delivered, she cleared the table
Her own plate left unfinished, cold.
Unaided, she did what she was able.
Fifty years married, she just felt old.

In his musty recliner, he sat
Swearing in his drunken way
“To hell with them damn Democrats!”
Was the very last thing he’d say.

In his fervor, he failed to swallow
He inhaled his beer instead.
His desperate pleas fell hollow.
Since his tired wife had gone to bed.
Knee Deep in Love

Knee deep in love
we'll run through lazy summer afternoons,
worship at the feet of the sun
and embarrass the hummingbirds.

Knee deep in love
we'll celebrate the fireflies
in the late August evening
dressed in our finest moonlight.

Knee deep in love
we'll drink wine from paper cups
and I'll trace the trail it makes
down your chin with my tongue.

Knee deep in love
we'll croon out our song
and dance to each other's heartbeat
until the stars cease to shine.
The Walking Dead

As evening grew long a chill settled in for the night. My dogs and I ventured out for one last walk. Dusk wrapped its velvet arms around us. I breathed deep inhaling the spicy pines and decayed leaves underfoot. A hungry wind devoured what leaves were left to cling helplessly to the trees. I could hear voices echo down the years and whistle softly through naked branches. They spoke of lives spent from the ravages of time; from loss, fear, self-doubt and loathing. When death claims life it is final; the pain is gone, the story done. But for the living who know no comfort from their loss, who drown in their own pity and live only in their memories, death does not come for them. They are the walking dead and are as real as the wind picking his teeth with the tree branches. They are shadows that cry in the night, a hunger that can’t be satisfied. My dogs sniff the air as if they anticipate the arrival of some unforeseen visitor. The moon is full and heavy as if in its ninth month. It hangs behind my house and waits for us to return. So, we do and I close the door on the shadow world- its hollow secrets- and the walking dead.
When I Go

When I go what will I leave behind?
Will it be desired? Loved?
Or just old and falling apart?
Will it have the power to heal the human heart?

Will there be music and dancing?
Or just apathy and strife?
Will I have been able to change a life?

When I go what will I go to?
Will there be angels and singing?
Or will it be shadows? Gloom?
Perhaps just the darkness of the tomb?

I'll go it alone as we all must
Until my body returns to dust.

But before I go drifting away
To join that primordial soup,
I want it to be said that
I laughed from my gut frequently,
Loved from my heart always,
Forgave every chance I could
And tried to be as annoying as hell.
Oh, and I spent all the money.
That'll teach them!
While no one was watching
Night, like a silky-smooth glove,
Slipped in.

It slipped in through
cracks and crevasses;
through rips and tears
and holes in the walls.
It invaded the streets
between tall buildings
made of brick and steel and glass.
It surrounded vehicles,
pedestrians, signs,
lampposts.
It overtook cities,
towns, fields
and farms.
It shared its presence with
mountains and valleys,
oceans and woods.

It provided cover for
the lover and the derelict,
for the addict and the killer.
It is the keeper of secrets,
holding close all events,
both good and bad,
that happen under its cloak.
It is the seductive drug for
lovers and poets
who desperately seek moments of
ecstasy and understanding.

It is the henchman,
the second-hand,
that holds the victim
so the madman can
go about his business.
It is the dark, seemingly eternal,
corrupt governance that hides
in the guise of “a benevolent protector”
but whose intent is as sour as a cesspool
and as black as night.

(for David, my night, your dungeon. Thank you)
The Woman

The woman, wakeful, stares
At the face of the moon
The stars dancing 'round,
While her babe sleeps at her breast.

Slowly, she rocks, now and then
Stares at the moon again and again
Softly, lowly, she hums,
While her babe sleeps at her breast.

A soft, gentle breeze blows
That tenderly kisses her cheeks
As her eyes slowly close,
While her babe sleeps at her breast.

(written in high school as a class assignment)
Insomnia

The night didn't fall; it crashed upon my bed.
Attacked me while I lay there, instead
Climbed up me like Hillary up Everest
Staked its claim for the moon to see.
It wrapped me in its velvet arms
Caressed me softly with it's charms
It poured over me like a lover’s tongue.
Whispered to my very soul with its song.
I lie there awake yet dreaming.
In my fevered state, it came sneaking
To steal its way into my brain
Over my skin and through my veins
Like a drug, it coursed through my body
Pulsating, throbbing, intensifying
Until it exploded behind my eyes
Then gently kissed the corners of my mind
Before it left me crumpled in disarray
Vulnerable and exposed to the oncoming day.
Ode to Attila
(may you live on in infamy)

Along the ridge side by side
Roman and Goth did meet
To await the arrival of their mutual foe-
The Terror of the East.

In clouds of dust the hordes came
The Evil under the Sun-
The Goths and Romans did steady themselves
Prepared for the mighty Hun.

Somewhere down in the depths of their bowels
Came their battle cry!
By stomping hooves and the clash swords
Many men did die.

The land was ripe with blood that day
Metal, flesh and earth became one.
No Roman or Goth would stand alone
Against Attila the Hun.

But the scourge of the earth road onward
Raging his bloody cry!
As he raped and ravished poor Italy--
Only Rome would not die.

On to Rome the marauders would go
They left destruction in their wake
But Rome was fortified and ready
When the Barbarians arrived at the gate.

Ah, but even Attila had his Achilles heel
In this case, it was Caesar's daughter
In exchange for her he would leave Rome
And not lead it into slaughter.

But Caesar became enraged!
This insult he would not take!
The Romans indignantly took up arms
Causing Attila to consider his mistake.

Long is the day for a worn warrior
And the Huns were worn through and through
Their energy spent; their resources depleted
Retreat was all that Attila could do.

In the eyes of his people Attila was a hero
And a hero's welcome is what he received
Victories of the Hun were widely celebrated
Stories of glorious battle believed.

As the custom was with his people
Attila had many wives
None had ever claimed his heart
Assuming they even tried.

There was one woman, however, young and fair
Who seemed to be sent from above
One simple glance and the fearsome warrior fell;
Attila was in love.

Soon a great wedding was made;
A feast to end all feast
People came from near and far
To see this beauty of the east.

Now there is nothing more ridiculous as a warrior in love
Their commonsense and boldness are sunk
So, Attila did what all besotted warriors do
He wholeheartedly got drunk.

Now, as with most great warriors of his ilk
Attila wanted to die a warrior’s death.
Engaged in combat on the battlefield
He wanted to draw his last breath.

But for poor drunken Attila
It simply was not to be
He suffered, you see, a bloody nose
And died unceremoniously.

No hero’s death for him
No warriors last stand
Nature did for history
What could not be done by man.
Thank you. I hope you enjoyed it.
Would love feedback or if you just want to shoot the breeze.

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