



# A FALSE HEAVEN

A BOOK OF POETRY BY  
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*A FALSE HEAVEN*

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## Older and Uncomplicated

Growing older and uncomplicated  
Is a feat felt more like punishment  
In a world that glorifies  
the youthful lie of convolution.

## Yours to Catch

I used to walk out  
Softly on the balls  
Of my feet, feeling  
The world for soft  
spots in my foundation,  
Foot and the rest of me  
Following into a deep  
Cavern of the unknown  
And unexpected.  
But You've outlined  
the next step  
Within the bright light  
At that same foot,  
No longer faltering  
but stepping heavily,  
Knowing if I fall  
I'm Yours  
to catch.

## The Death of Miriam

So little  
And a tiny  
Knot  
Was the life  
Of  
Miriam.  
Skin eaten,  
Bleached white  
When old  
Ways blinded  
Her eyes,  
And I often  
Wonder  
If Zipporah  
Was like  
Watching  
The want of  
Everything  
You've ever  
Wanted  
Being handed  
To someone  
Else.

## Bone-Faced

---

How bone-faced in the dead  
Of winter do we have to be  
To remember the slight  
Curve of a hip,  
The fat in one's chin,  
The forever He made  
That we've traded  
to watch ourselves starve?

## Coffee Spoons

T.S. measured the monotony  
In coffee spoons,  
And I can do the same,  
But also in every prayer  
Whispered  
Or groaned,  
The way the lights dim  
Without our doing,  
And in the sun  
You always manage  
To bring up  
Even as we  
Claim  
We are the ones  
In control.

## Picking and Loosing

---

All my life,  
You've spread the cards  
For me to pick  
The one that  
Reflects the path  
My walking feet  
Were meant to take.  
But there they go,  
My unwashed hands,  
Picking and loosing  
the pile only for You  
to gently pick them back  
Up and offer them all

## I Know You Are

---

I am known to me  
All the things I'd thought  
I'd be,  
But what's even better  
is all the things  
I know  
You are.

## A Conciliatory Promise

All this time  
A conciliatory promise,  
that You are more  
than just vapor  
But the rush of wind  
my Spirit craves.

## All Your Goodness

---

I guess sometimes, I get  
chinks in this armor  
from where I rub a hole  
With my wayward thumb.  
My prayer?  
For a stronger mind,  
an obedient heart,  
An understanding  
That all my faults  
Could never  
Even  
Claim to measure  
Up against  
All Your  
Goodness.

## Oh, at Last

---

My hands fascinate me.  
All the things they'll never do,  
But all the things they  
Already did.  
If I could tell her anything,  
It's to hold on to right  
Now,  
But also make room  
for tomorrow.  
That place where God lives,  
In the infinite everywhere—  
Taken to watching  
These hands  
fumble  
In the last world  
And this one too—  
Seeking to calm  
The shake of them,  
Admire the shape of them  
And set them free,  
Oh,  
At last.

## Better Than It Is

Maybe the hardest things  
Are the point.  
A sharp scepter  
He's written  
To divide out every  
Careless word  
And unhinged heartache,  
Removing from our core  
The way life  
Feels when it's really  
No longer life,  
But the long, laborious  
Trek of pretending  
Everything  
Is better  
than it is.

## This Path That Leads to You

Here's my room to roam  
As You narrow it further  
Down this road, becoming  
Gently closer and encompassing,  
This path that leads to You.

## Up in Flame

I can count them

My matchsticks,

Light them hard

against phosphorous,

powdered glass,

And up in flame

They go.

But whose breath

snuffs them out,

A mere whisper,

parting of lips,

Reminding me

that I've never

Once

Controlled

The flame?

## Dead Man Awakened

---

I have a deep desire,  
A gaping hole,  
A rabid need  
To teach everyone  
Their faults and flaws,  
Just so their knees  
Will kiss ground  
And their eyes  
Level with Yours.  
But there I am,  
Wrapped up,  
Unconscious  
In my folly,  
My dead man  
Awakened  
With the graze  
Of Your hand.  
And when my  
Eyes are opened  
They can't even  
See because of all  
I've incurred,  
Injurious against  
All those I love.  
And yet?  
You won't stop  
loving me.

## A False Heaven

---

The world is leaving–  
All machine  
and raw numbers.  
And where it's going  
Is a netherspace,  
A false heaven,  
an online cacophony  
Of what heaven  
Would be,  
If closer to hell.  
And I imagine my father,  
Younger,  
hands working the farm,  
hating every minute  
Of it,  
And if that hate  
Would still take  
In a reality  
like this.

## Leading Back to You

Every little bit of truth I've walked,  
I take and place behind me,  
Stone pathway  
Leading back to You.

## Who I Am Now

Heart sore  
and shedding  
itself,  
lungs louder  
Than the car next to me  
Can take,  
I share “Salvation”  
by the Cranberries  
and ask “If God Was One of Us”  
Because even in my  
90’s alt rock misery,  
You still see me,  
Say my name,  
And remind me,  
I’m not who I was then  
but only who I am  
Now.

## A Deathlike Flower

---

The battle is half the life  
I've lived,  
The other half—  
The raw stench  
Of library books  
And CDs well-worn  
through the polycarbonate  
And the list of lies  
That reeked of ink—  
A deathlike flower,  
Budding and bursting  
Through each neuron  
Until my brain was victim  
to itself.  
But then my eyes turned  
Virgin-like to the words  
on Your pages,  
And I saw a truth,  
the Truth,  
About where we've  
Been,  
Where we're going,  
And how to heal  
My weathered nerves  
Beneath  
the helmet of  
Salvation.

## Ever Not Known

I am like a leader  
with a broken  
Heart,  
but when have  
You ever not  
known  
the same?

## The String to My Balloon

---

I had an edge  
in all this,

A sharp-white  
Break  
Between  
the way

Life  
Works  
And the way

I'd let you  
Live it.

But then He  
showed me  
Grace upon,  
Grace upon,  
Grace upon  
that same edge,  
The steep cliff  
My toes curled  
Over-down  
Was all I saw.

And now?  
The gentle push  
Into ether,  
My chin tilted  
Up,  
And you fluttering,  
Flowing behind me,

The string  
to my  
Balloon.

## How Much Easier?

My heart throws up its arms  
Sometimes,  
Waving in the wind,  
Because how much  
Easier than  
to let them  
Draw me closer  
to You?

## One Syllable at a Time

I can't eat my words,  
But if I could,  
Would they taste  
Even as slightly  
As sweet  
As  
Yours?  
Or would the bitter  
Root serve to sever,  
My duplicitous tongue,  
Sprouting praises  
where cursed?  
In that case,  
Let me starve,  
One syllable  
At a time.

## A Lifeline

---

Maybe it was something more like this...  
You found me, out of time  
When I was in it,  
Drinking down thoughts  
And the bitter taste  
Of everyone's dark  
And becoming all that I wasn't,  
And only because You  
Formed me, cell by cell,  
And knew my heart  
that You could gift me her,  
An "other" to all that I am  
So I could hold a lifeline,  
To all You've made me  
To be.

## Threading You Bare

Today is your birthday.  
And every moment before this “after”  
has been pulled through  
and knotted over  
by God Himself.  
And what a beautiful tapestry  
(except for where I spilled  
the wine and used  
the wrong stain remover).  
But here we are.  
Here you are.  
Still all the same  
but even better for it.  
And how can that be?  
What is this thing  
that undoes all  
the terrible  
I often seem  
to do?  
His grace.  
His forever peace.  
His unconditional understanding.  
And the only gift  
I ever want for you  
is to know this,  
deep down,  
and to never waver.  
Which you never will,  
if you let Him  
continue the work

of threading  
you bare.

## Blinded by a Wave

How hard to see  
the gaping sea  
When blinded  
by a  
Wave.

## A Difference

---

Yesterday, I saw a woman drown  
In her self-righteousness,  
And another choke  
On her hate.  
One for You,  
One against,  
And it was hard  
To see a difference.

## Better than I'd Like

Our pastor used to say,  
If you're not the biggest  
Sinner you know,  
You don't know  
yourself very well.  
I'm afraid I know  
myself  
Better than  
I'd like.

## Looking and Falling

Sometimes I think about  
One of the ways  
I should have died—  
A stupid teenager  
falling off a scaffold,  
At a school made for girls.  
My father telling me  
Not to step without looking  
And me stepping without  
Looking.  
And falling  
through until it was  
Just me  
And then air.  
And what a metaphor  
buried in my bones  
that day,  
Worth a million times  
Of not looking and falling  
To realize it's never been about  
The steps of my feet  
But the depths of Your love.

## The Music That Made You

In my car it's the worst–  
The old man creeps  
in as the dial cranks  
Harder,  
And I hear my past  
Like dust glittering  
in the window  
And hands holding  
My heart  
and the beat of always  
being alone,  
But never really  
When you hear  
The music that made  
You until you  
Realize  
That God has made  
The music.

## The Softest Scream

The “why” is the softest scream  
I’ve ever spoke into existence.  
I liken it in my mind’s eye  
To Your Word, the Christ,  
whispered into the void,  
the “tohu vavohua” as it were,  
The Hebrew ringing  
And weaving  
It’s way through  
My heart  
Like my  
own noise  
coiling  
through  
my  
soul.

## Surely This is Heaven Too

If everything is out of time,  
this hurt is nothing more  
than one small blip  
made one day,  
outside of heaven,  
Inside this hell.  
But the moment  
You had burst  
Through the nebulous  
Of ungrateful hearts  
And desolate darkness,  
You restructured  
All we've grappled  
To construct,  
Renaming,  
Reworking  
The mess of all these  
things,  
Only to bring our hurt  
forward,  
bright-like and shining,  
so the blessed  
shall always say,  
“Surely, this is heaven too.”

## Dreams are Dust

---

Dreams  
Are old  
hat,  
hard  
and unforgiving,  
But I dream  
them anyway  
Because  
Like Paul,  
I can feel it-  
The old me  
suffering  
to strangle  
The new.  
But in every  
Instance,  
There's  
the renewing  
Of my tired  
mind  
and a remembering  
That death  
Is done,  
Dreams  
Are dust,  
And the  
Feel of fingers  
on my throat  
Is a phantom  
Itch

at best.

## The Weight of Never Knowing

Two roads diverged  
in a yellow wood,  
And I took the one  
That led to Truth,  
Red-pilled beyond  
Belief and looking  
Into the faces  
Of those blued  
With the weight  
Of never knowing,  
And never wanting  
to know the feel of  
bark beneath  
Their fingers.

## Boys Will be Boys

---

Boys will be boys  
Until you jar their hearts  
In dusty bottles,  
Take their ego out to play,  
And watch their faces  
fall from forcing the world  
On them but never giving  
Them a safe place to land.  
Maybe men should be more  
Like David, iron-hearted  
And soft-souled.  
But the only difference  
Between David  
And the men I've  
known is the God  
they don't.

## The Semblance of Such

---

How quickly  
This all becomes  
about the things  
We'd rather not  
see, a "No thank you,"  
playing at our lips  
Like a hand pushing  
away the hors d'oeuvres.  
Fat, happy, or the semblance  
Of such, shot out into  
The digital world,  
When the real one  
Is on fire—your heart can't  
Stop beating during all those  
Moments you wish it would—  
And if only there was a god  
To believe in, you think, as  
The One who made you  
Reaches for your hand,  
Encourages you to eat.

## A Small Torture

---

One of these is not  
Like the others,  
and I've always  
known it was me.  
What a terrible  
Thing to have  
to learn in a world  
Where one thing  
Is like everything  
Else, the sheep  
offering  
their scrutiny  
on the way  
to their own  
slaughter.  
And in the noise  
Of their bleatings,  
throats cut,  
Dirt red,  
You remind me  
That not being  
like the rest,  
Is a small torture  
to pay in exchange  
For the hope  
Of one day  
Being like You.

## Out Loud

What a blessing  
To be able  
to write into words  
what my heart  
Can hardly  
Say out  
loud.

## Here You Are

Where am I  
In my mind's eye  
That You can longer  
Reach me?  
It feels like here,  
and there,  
and then everywhere,  
But always, still,  
here You are.

# Of Angel and Universe

---

I guess  
what is the point  
of you living  
In my dreams  
when you never  
Really lived  
Even when  
alive?  
Knowing what I know  
Now,  
the only gift I can  
Give  
Is the knowing  
Hope  
of how much  
bigger  
God is than  
You  
or  
Me  
Or the sin  
Nobody  
seems to want  
to own anymore.  
So maybe  
there's a finite  
audience,  
A cacophony  
Of angel and universe  
Who oversaw

Your leaving  
the body I knew as you  
and taking in a side  
Of yourself,  
You didn't even know  
Was there.

## It Is Done

---

What did You say to me  
again?

*Watch what I'm  
doing...?*

What are you doing  
besides

Taking my  
heart,  
ripping it  
to shreds?

But there,  
they are—

Your needle,  
Your thread—  
new veins  
and arteries

clustered  
and cloistered,

Starred into oblivion,  
And I don't know what You're  
doing and seems like no  
one else does either.

But yet?

You still do it.

And yet...  
...it is done.

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