

Poetry Series

**Abby Koning**  
**- poems -**

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# Abby Koning()

Eyes of a blue dog.

# A Contemplation Upon Curls

Your gentle and tentative fingers curl  
Softly about my own  
Reminiscent of the curls  
Falling about your downturned face  
And, what is a curl, really?  
Not quite a circle, not quite a square  
Not quite anything, truly

And what are we?  
Not who, but what  
For I know who we are  
You are a boy and I a girl  
A man, a woman  
With hands interlaced and hearts  
Entwined  
In that shape that was not among the shapes  
I learned so studiously in school

And if I was a little more wise  
A little more worldly  
A little more like something  
And a little less like nothing  
Perhaps then I could discover what we are  
And with that knowledge I could begin to uncover  
Why.

Why is the question that goes too often  
Unanswered

So, by a scientific method, what are we?  
The same as who, a boy and a girl  
A man, a woman.  
For what defines who we are.  
Towers of blood, flesh, muscle  
And when we kiss, what is that?  
A pressing of chapped lips upon  
Those of another's  
Eyes framed with lashes closing  
And hearts deep down beating faster.

Is that a Kiss?

But it must be more than that.  
Science is not all-knowing, but then  
What, What, What, What, What!  
Lovers?  
Is that all that we are?  
Two people fighting to retain a tiny bit  
Of Companionship  
In a world that all too often thrusts us  
Into loneliness?

Perhaps.

Or perhaps what we are is  
Indefinable by words or thoughts  
Only existing for one purpose:  
To exist.  
And only worth noticing because  
We exist.  
And perhaps, when the day is done  
We mean only as much to the world as  
A single, withered leaf in a vast forest  
Or, even less, for when the leaf is dead  
It will never come back  
But once We are no longer We  
Each one of us will linger on, separate,  
Unwanted  
By each other  
By the world

But for now, our hands are still together  
And we are defined by each other  
'We' is so much less lonely than  
'I' or 'You' or 'He' or 'She'  
And we are nothing more than curls  
Existing, but not meant to be known  
Or studied  
Or admired.  
Not quite circles.  
Not quite squares.  
Not quite anything at all.

Abby Koning

# A Lie Slipping From Sticky Throats

...a lie slipping from sticky throats  
across lucid tongues  
exiting through pursed lips

tripping and sliding through rainy street  
to plague the lonely traveller  
who walks with bent head and  
downcast  
eyes

splashing in puddles  
wading through piles of garbage  
that smell of flies and deceit

playfully it romps  
digging into the traveller's neck  
and his vulnerable  
mind

the brim of his hat does not deflect  
the falling rain  
or the slippery lie

his galoshes lay haphazardly in a faraway  
ditch  
raincoat neglected in some remote alleyway  
(he never bothered to carry a walking stick)

his useless hat  
he tosses into the streets  
to be picked up by someone  
still possessing the luxury  
of naivety

head tipped back  
tongue extended  
he opens his mouth and catches the drops  
(how bitter they taste  
how sweet!)

and the lie enters through his lips  
slides around on his tongue  
makes its progress to the back  
of his throat

and as he swallows  
he whispers  
i have betrayed them all

Abby Koning

# A Man Asked The Poet

A man asked the poet

"Where do these words come from?

The poet replied, "It's a slippery thing, "

And smiled as he slid down the drain.

Abby Koning

# A Poem For You

I poised my pen above  
This too-empty paper  
And waited for the brilliance-  
That lay in wait behind the point  
In a messy conglomeration of blues or blacks  
Or in even more disorganized chaos in my mind-  
to pour forth  
In streams and rushing torrents  
All about you.  
All for you.  
But nothing came.  
And my canvas remained dry.

I wanted to create an image of you  
With words so saccharine sweet  
And lyrically sappy lines such as  
"His eyes are not like the stars  
They are like the moon  
Shining more brightly alone than all the stars  
Combined."  
But that simply falls  
A word and a mile  
And a lifetime  
Too short.

Or suppose I should begin  
With a metaphor  
"You are the world.  
Nothing less.  
Nothing more  
Simply and inexplicably the world."  
And extend it thus for lines until  
The whiteness is filled with something  
Lacking brilliance but containing substance  
But it's all so clichéd  
For you are like none other  
And none of these words are coming out  
Quite right  
It appears you have dammed up

Or maybe outstripped  
My streams of brilliance  
By being so...incomprehensible!

A most beautiful blockade of indefinable substance.

Frustration builds and still my pen  
Remains without declining ink  
And this paper turns its  
Garish white stare upon me  
Demanding to be filled  
Demanding to be smeared with  
An impeccable image of you  
Yet it only resembles a bruise of letters.  
An alphabet for the unhappy shadow  
Trying so hard to emulate the night.

But ink doesn't do you justice  
And words could never capture  
Who you are  
Or what you mean to me  
And all the brilliance of literature  
Of poetry  
Of me  
Fades to naught but a candle besides your exceeding  
Moonlit glow.

A string of adjectives perhaps could aid  
But which to use for you?  
"Indescribable" or "Unbelievable"  
"Dazzling" "Radiant"  
"Made of light  
And grace  
And beauty."  
"Whimsical as a child at a  
Carnival  
Surrounded by sugary cotton-candy scent  
Whirling lights and buzzing voices"  
But you are so much more than that.

I longed to write a poem for you.  
But you are a poem in yourself

That to write down  
In mere mortal creations such as  
Words  
With use of even more mortal  
And thus, more tedious  
Punctuation and grammar  
Would render  
Nothing but a feeble plagiarism

And all these useless, frivolous  
Clauses, adjectives, sentences, phrases  
All these nonsensical disjointed words  
Amount to nothing more meaningful,  
Nothing more poetic  
Nothing more brilliant  
Nothing more like you  
Than each individual drip-dropp of water  
Falling sluggishly from a leaky faucet  
Only to plink emptily down the rusty drain.

Abby Koning

# A 'sign' Is Not A Sure Thing

I inhale your scent.  
And see us together, our hands forming a perfect circle while  
The brown of your eyes and the green of mine  
Somehow combine to make purple...  
Which somehow makes perfect sense.  
This must be a sign.

And I've got an unlimited supply of ten dollar bills  
Just waiting for anyone that can explain you to me  
And why, in the list of names in my mind,  
Yours is always bold, underlined, italicized  
And means more than any other.

This must be true love  
For I find that I could forgive you for anything.  
No need to hurt me, I'd hurt myself first  
If you were only to speak the words...  
Is that a blessing or a curse?

And I'm losing my concentration  
And I'm finding that I simply don't care  
You're the only thing worth focusing on these days  
Between the waiting for you and wishing on stars  
There just isn't time for anything else

Now I exhale slowly.  
Awakening painfully to this reality without you.  
I breathe out brown eyes, purpose, scars, stars  
Which become an ever expanding cloud which spreads  
Into the air around it and disintegrates.  
And I think to myself...  
This too must be a sign.

Abby Koning

# A Subway Train Screams Through Semi-Circles

a subway train screams through semi-circles  
teetering along parallels, swallowing the distance  
in one gigantic gulp  
and choking on the remains

it rasps, announcing its progress  
(heads bob in motion to the beat of its dying breaths)  
inside, drops of blood yawn and stretch  
and bend down to scratch a navy-blue itch

their eyes are bleary, unfocused  
discarded briefcases and slouching bodies  
clog the arteries  
(the train continues its groaning)

the walls heave; the metal pleads, feeling its pulse  
grow unsteady, throb in spurts  
of grogginess and frenzy

the droplets slump, grimace, surrender  
as the rails squeal beneath them,  
burying their responsibilities in a cup of coffee  
and the morning's paper  
drowning out the anguished screeches  
with a few clichéd remarks about the alterations  
of the thermometer

eyes glance at wrists, watching tiny hands tick away  
moments  
never realizing what the subway knows-  
that its fate is tied to theirs

with final burst of vitality, wheels soar across steel  
"my life or theirs" it wheezes, releasing its pain  
in the blast of a horn  
searing pain shoots through its muscles, as inside  
the blood stirs impatiently  
awaiting its death with tapping feet  
and drumming fingers

an echoing scream, bouncing off walls and into ears  
and wiry eyes disconnect, rolling back in metal face

a gathering of briefcases and scattered jackets,  
a death wound left gaping  
as arteries unclot  
as blood regains its momentum  
only to cascade, jostling and disjointed  
(without a glance back at the majestic beast,  
now lifeless and cold)  
onto the concrete planks

Abby Koning

# Before I Met You

Before I met you, I was  
Lost  
In a maze of vertical shadows  
Better know as  
Tree trunks,  
Stumbling blindly, hand  
Outstretched  
Wondering which side of the tree  
The moss frequents.

Dirt and my fingernails are one  
From other escape attempts  
Other searches  
But from past, present, or future days  
I do not know,  
For time,  
Forever and nonexistent  
Is all the same  
When you're alone.

Yet I am here  
So time must be also  
Infinity is running out...  
And I've passed that tree before.  
The desperate undergrowth  
Grasps at me  
Trips me  
And I fall  
And decide not to get up.  
I close my eyes

And in the  
Darkness  
A voice echoes clear  
As crystal water  
Rushing over cliffs  
Of diamonds.  
A wordless cry  
Containing the promise

Of hope itself.  
I open my eyes.

Now it's to my feet  
And down the path  
That had eluded me before.  
For, in your voice,  
I looked past  
Where I was  
To where  
I was meant to be.

Darkness recedes before  
The unfamiliar curving  
Of my lips and  
The trees  
Pull back their branches,  
And I see you.  
Not hands, but whole arms outstretched  
Offering belonging  
There, we met,  
Both our lips and our hearts,  
And I was lost no more.

Abby Koning

# Benediction

God bless the hungry serpent  
Fangs in my neck  
That jungle wildness creeping  
In my veins

God bless the hungry serpent  
That brings darkness on its breath  
A hissing inhalation  
Rushing over my lips

God bless the hungry serpent  
My body broken for you  
Get drunk on my blood  
Eat your fill

God, where are you now?  
Under which leaf?  
The serpent is tangible  
Leave him be

God bless the hungry serpent  
Slithering through my mind  
His fangs may tear  
But your silence destroys

And God, bless the hungry serpent  
Let me feel him writhe  
For though his tongue brings poison,  
Your blood on my face  
Purifies too slowly  
□

Abby Koning

# Blenderwhir

jAgGeD lipstick b-i-t-i-n-g  
those unsilken notflowers  
(no roses for the Baroness,  
to be modern, one must be UNpretty!)  
crumbling colored bits of have-nots  
smearing  
gnawing on Androgyny  
(notmale/notfemale)  
all hail the whorishness  
the blenderwhir blunders of  
MODERNITY

Abby Koning

# Broken Shadows Of Dreams

Look into my eyes.  
With your irises so radiant,  
Reminiscent of moonlight dancing off water,  
Throwing broken shadows  
Across the world.

To be in your presence  
Is to be at my ease.

The night is lonesome and lacy starlight  
Reveals how  
Our fingers are laced.  
And we stroll together.  
Discussing both serious matters  
And matters as light  
As you.

Who are we?  
No more than a moment  
In time  
Yet, a moment that means much  
More to me  
Than any other.  
Your beauty is infinite.

Reality has blessedly set with the sun  
Leaving behind only  
Dreams  
That can't ever come true.  
Yet still we strive for  
These dreams  
That mean much more  
Than any reality.

For when the sun rises  
We will be vulnerable again  
To all those who doubted  
Our love.  
To those who asked

“Why do you love him? ”  
Or  
“Why do you love her? ”  
Then went on  
To list all of our faults.

But if they could only see  
Our passionate eyes,  
Or bathe in our light,  
Which outshines the stars  
They would  
Envy  
Instead of question  
Us.

But the cursed sun,  
Which is reason,  
Once again  
Overpowers  
The fire of our love.

Abby Koning

# Can You Hear Me?

Can you hear me?

The canyon is vast and though my voice echoes  
I wonder if you'll let yourself hear it  
And if you do, I wonder whether it will make you

Smile. With impeccable lips that would make mine blush  
Redder than the polish on my fingernails  
Which is even now slowly chipping away,  
Teeth whiter than my ladylike fingers as they meet your

Hands. Slightly calloused, yet somehow gentle,  
Fingers weaving the greatest tapestry of all  
Our hands fit perfectly, like a thread to a needle  
In your hands, mine are smaller than a needle's

Eye. Mines of diamonds I would love to explore  
And fill my pockets with your gemstones  
And maybe a tiny fragment of your heart  
Will go into the pocket over mine

Which now holds only a pen.  
The pen which I used to write these words  
That have been, are and will be left either unspoken or unheard  
Can you hear me?

Abby Koning

# Eve

And I, like Eve, wandered through my respective garden  
(suburban dwellings, unbeautiful but clean)  
Naked, cool autumn breeze brushing against my skin  
Happy, or Naïve (similes, perhaps?)  
My Adam having gone to lie beneath the rays of the sun  
Having gone to warm himself  
To let the beams of light settle on his tongue  
(\*chew\* \*savor\* \*swallow\*-innocence)  
And as I strolled, hands and arms  
Swinging in sync with that patter  
Of my sneaker-clad feet  
That snake slithered from out of the leaves  
(disguised as a man in dark shades,  
Casually smoking a cigarette)  
And, stretching out his gloved hand,  
Offered me Knowledge of Good and Evil  
(in the form of a book that I suspected  
Morphed into an apple whenever I glanced away)  
One bite, he whispered, one.  
I will not promise you happiness; rather,  
I offer you the chance to know the grittiness of life.  
Of sin and salvation (they are intertwined, are they not?)  
Of good and evil (for one cannot exist without the other, am I right?)  
Of right and wrong (and all the gray areas in between.)  
And I was sorely tempted and, finding my curiosity  
Unable to resist such a treat, flipped through pages  
And absorbed the mysteries of the world,  
The cruelty of men, the ugliness of reality

The apple was bitter-sweet, for I too tasted, I too discovered  
The beauty of life, the kindness lingering in the eyes  
Of a stranger, the gentle touch of human hands

And the book was dangerous, I found I could not remain unchanged.

And perhaps my story will be considered blasphemy  
For surely I was punished, I and my Adam  
(for love led me to share my Knowledge with him...sin?  
Or something more? Love, perhaps?)

Were banished from our respective garden  
Destined to dwell among men, to taste all that the world had to offer

But, I must admit, I do not think this punishment is anything more than a  
challenge  
For, though I do not smile always, I've learned to never take a smile for granted  
I've learned the beauty in tragedy  
I've learned, most of all, the art of understanding

And, in the end, I cannot help but feeling that this understanding was worth it  
Although my Adam and I often toss and turn late at nights  
Trying to understand  
What exactly we had done to warrant punishment,  
If punishment it was indeed?

Abby Koning

# Frozen Forget-Me-Nots

The winter night was misty  
As we stood side-by-side.

And the night was so cold that the stars,  
Shivering even as we were,  
Buried themselves beneath blankets  
Woven of clouds and threads of blackest night  
And all was shadowy and silent.

My winter coat was not quite thick enough  
To shield my thin frame from the ice that  
Sought to destroy us and all we stood for  
But you took my hand  
And transferred part of your warmth to me  
And we were warm together.

You kissed the stars back into my eyes  
(The night whispered, "Beware the end."  
But I didn't understand)  
You whispered in my straining ear,  
A few words that I believed I longed to hear  
But the strings of letters froze in the air between us  
And my ears remained naïve

I blinked and when I opened my eyes  
To peer through the sheen of frozen rain  
You had vanished into the night  
Confused tears froze upon my cheeks.  
And I went home feeling completely empty  
Except for my pocket  
Which now contained your words.

My house was warm that night, or so  
The thermostat tried to convince me.  
But it felt cold to me, for I had seen warmer nights  
Particularly when you were beside me.  
I slumped into a kitchen chair  
Removed the ice from my pocket  
And gasped in pain.

As I cut my finger on your words.  
Blood had never seemed so crimson.

Quickly, I filled a spotted glass with warm water  
And poured in your words.  
A familiar susurrations accompanied the melting  
And now I understood.  
Your voice  
(which was not you, for I knew you were gone)  
whispered, "Forget me."

I knew it was impossible.  
I would die before forgetting you.  
But I also knew that I would do my best.  
If it would only make you happy...

A spoon was my means to my end  
I stirred, my frantic face reflected  
Up-side down in the dull shine.  
The water and painful words mixed  
And turned a bright red...  
The exact shade that my finger had spilled  
Only moments before.

I closed my eyes tight  
Tipped the glass back  
And swallowed all my hurt  
And your words.  
I drained the glass my first try,  
Although I nearly choked on the taste,  
And set it gingerly on the table.

I felt no pain.  
I felt like I was flying through a winter storm  
Your last words to me were colder  
Than any winter I've endured before  
(the thermostat, however, remained the same)  
But for the first time in my life  
I didn't have to endure it  
For your words were poison.

And with my last breath,  
As my cheeks turned to blue frost  
Coated with icicle tears,  
I whispered  
"I'll never forget you."

Abby Koning

# Glassy Eyed

Those divine fragments  
Of beauty  
In your eyes,  
Remainders of  
Former radiance,  
Maybe even perfection,  
Shattered  
By their words.

Indescribable.  
Unfathomable  
Beauty  
As unique as a snowflake  
In spring  
Which the sun melts  
Because it is unique.  
So too the world is cruel.

They envied your  
Perfection  
And did their absolute best  
To squelch it  
Before it outshone both them  
And the sun.  
And you cried.

Yet even your tears  
Were jewels,  
Moonstones and pearls  
Pouring from your  
Sapphire eyes  
Only to cascade down  
Your ivory cheeks

Ugly, you were deemed  
By those who  
Couldn't understand  
Why you were blessed  
And they were not.

And with their taunting  
You began to realize  
You were indeed  
Ugly  
Hideous, in fact  
Borderline on unspeakable  
And indeed you did  
Fade

While I watched,  
My eyes reflecting your tears  
Which were no longer  
Jewels  
As they once were.  
Those who had ruined you  
Moved on  
To better, more beautiful targets  
For their work was  
Complete.  
Or so they thought.

For as I wept,  
As your hand found mine  
As you smiled,  
Your beauty shone through  
Your eyes.  
Your diamond eyes,  
Cut and chiseled  
So that they were even more  
Breathtaking  
Than before.

And as I stared  
In wonder,  
At this change, this phenomena,  
I saw my reflection  
Mirrored in your eyes  
Of shattered glass.

Abby Koning

# Hydrocholeric

squeamish age of  
offensive nature  
minority squeal, color-we-normalcy  
Civil rights? The right to be civil?  
Be civil to what?  
CHURNING STOMACH!  
(churnchurnchurn...washing machines  
eating neckties)  
acidic tongues  
hydrochloric protestations of maltreatment  
("We the people" we, of course, meaning  
The Privileged Few)  
slang epitaphs/fouled HCL d-d-d-dripping  
scalding hearts  
soulcombustion  
red-white-blue discoloration  
neon stars, malicious stabbings  
Screams!  
(Civil Wrongs?)

Abby Koning

# I Caught Your Scent Today

Today, my nose  
Caught a scent that for so long  
It had missed  
And my mind traveled  
Back to the time  
When that scent meant  
That you were near.

My senses identified  
That scent  
That scent that was you,  
Which defined you,  
More completely than words  
Or even a paragraph  
Ever could.

Like peppermint mingling with lilacs,  
And oak trees in  
Autumn  
As the leaves change,  
So you once did.  
You were -no- are  
The bitter-sweet smell  
Before rain.

I inhaled your beauty,  
It smelled of fairy dust,  
So perfect  
That imagination itself  
Would gasp  
And hold it's breath  
In wonder.

Yet, my breath caught  
For something was  
Missing,  
So faint that I would have  
Missed it  
If I wasn't so familiar

With you.

My senses identified

Winter

Awaiting a spring

That would never come.

And I cried

For I realized that

My hope

Was no longer

A part of you.

Abby Koning

# Impermanent Shadows

a shadow  
she said  
that's all we are  
simply a pair of impermanent shadows

no, not merely that!  
i exclaimed  
certainly we are more  
indeed, we must be  
we must!

why  
asked she  
her eyes studying my indignant  
face

because  
we are alive  
we deserve to be more than just that  
than just  
impermanent shadows

we deserve it  
she questioned doubtfully  
we don't deserve anything

and her tiny hands  
pressed against her tiny eyes  
and when i tried to hold her  
she turned away

look! i said. look!  
i have hands  
i have a heart  
i have a mind  
a will

you also have a shadow  
she responded

and pointed to the ground behind  
me  
where a jagged dark blotch  
defiled the ground

not if I step into the dark  
said i  
and to prove my point  
stepped into an immense darkness  
between two buildings

see!  
i shouted in triumph  
see! see!  
no shadow!  
and i smiled happily  
thinking i had won

but she  
shaking her magnificent head  
fixed her eyes upon me  
and moaned:

but don't you see?  
nothing has changed

but don't you see?

now you are merely an even smaller part  
of an even greater shadow...

Abby Koning

# In Winter's Chill

You glisten faintly in winter's chill  
So pale, so fragile, so thin.  
Breathing in the silence,  
Reveling in the isolation,  
Which is mirrored in  
Your chilly blue eyes.

A snowflake falls.  
Another.  
And another.  
A perpetual haze of frozen tears  
From unseen eyes up above  
Showers you in remembrances  
Of past and future seasons.  
But to you, winter is the only reality

A forest of heavy laden trees  
Stands stark against the sky still crying  
Its crystal pearls,  
Which you gather in your arms  
And string together  
To adorn your haunting frame.

A shaft of sunlight  
Slants between the dying branches,  
Shattering the fragile beauty of winter.  
It surrounds you with an unearthly glow  
As the world disintegrates  
And so do you.

A puddle stands where you once stood.  
A slowly-melting necklace of frosty lace  
Floats upon the surface.  
And rain replaces snowflakes as the sky weeps  
For your loss  
And for the sacrifice of the coming of spring.

Abby Koning

# Jaded

Through eyes of jade hue, tranquil waters I survey  
I watch and await the dawn with bated breath,  
Though I've become so jaded  
Where is the rising sun that will banish my ennui?  
Where are the rays of hope in my ever-present dismay?  
I long to breathe in the scent of the sea  
And in doing so, to cleanse my lungs  
Of all the deceit and insults this world has offered me  
The smoky lies inhaled long ago.  
So I take to the jade sea, as the heroes of long ago  
As the winds of mystery fill my sails  
And onward I will sail to where sky meets green  
Until I find the object of my quest.  
With my hand to my eyes, I peer into the distance.  
I sail for truth.  
I sail for purpose.  
I sail for the horizon.

Abby Koning

# Just Some Guy

Oh, he's just some guy  
The one you don't even notice until you walk into him  
Then forget the moment you turn away

He's just some guy  
The one who's memorized all the floor patterns  
And blends into the bricks

He's just some guy  
The one who always enters the room unnoticed  
Who isn't missed when he leaves

He's just some guy  
The one whose lips are constantly locked and sealed  
For he never knows the right thing to say

He's just some guy  
With his classic rock turned up just a little too loud  
Just to drown everything out

He's just some guy  
The one whose name you could never quite remember  
Or maybe you just didn't care

Oh, he's just some guy  
It's true that he doesn't mean a thing to you  
But he means everything to me

Abby Koning

# Lawnmowershavings

lawnmowershavings

Summertime savings

In a piggy bank, beneath the willow tree

Weeping tendrils till apocalypse sun

Slinks behind the railroad tracks

And Night slips under the train,

Like a hobo clutching ratty gloves,

Folding bits of newspaper into boots,

Kicking the sky, smearing clouds

As I crouch beneath the stars

Sucking on a peach,

My teeth sprouting fuzz

And choking on a worm.

Abby Koning

# Memoirs Of A Lonely Coffee Shop

## Memoirs of a Lonely Coffee Shop

If I could, I would pass my days in coffee shops  
Pensively sipping my chai tea latte and watching the passersby  
Doing what they do best and simply passing by  
The world, never stopping to think,  
To consider.

A lifetime of realism, understanding, creativity  
Traded for a few moments of happiness  
And I wonder, is it really such a bad deal?  
But happiness is fleeting  
And verily, verily it flees from me  
Try as I might to hold onto it  
Happiness is a fickle emotion, dependent on others  
And I've always been too independent  
So, I suppose I was doomed from the very beginning

And I dwell when I should forget  
And I think too hard when I shouldn't think at all  
I sit in my room and read poetry and Shakespeare  
When I should be out laughing with people  
But people are just so exhausting  
And I'm just too pessimistic  
It's the bane of my existence,  
I am the bane of those I love

It's getting so hard to smile and pretend  
That I don't over-analyze  
That I don't feel on the inside  
Emotions are frowned upon  
Emotions are a sign of depression  
Or so they tell me.

This is ridiculous  
I want to scream at the passersby  
Stop  
Look around you  
Everything is not perfect and pretending it is won't make it so!  
No one ever changed the world by thinking!

(How ironic. They could say the same to me  
I guess we're all hypocrites in the end.)  
Yet they pass me by  
And I watch them go  
Envious, yet pitying,  
I am alone in this coffee shop  
And my chai tea is getting cold.

Abby Koning

# Naivety

Come, journey with me  
Into imagination  
From the melancholy tones  
Past the wailing moans  
To the night of utter darkness  
Undeiled by any sacred light  
Save one

A wraith holds a candle  
The one pale, the other vivid.  
Wide-eyed,  
Clad in innocent white,  
She stumbles over her hem  
Or maybe it's over her naivety

The first flicker  
Wax dripping onto her skin  
Burning, but she doesn't even notice  
For her work is not yet complete  
And she must bring light to this world

The second flicker  
This time across her face  
A flicker of fear  
For the darkness is so oppressing  
And the stump of wax in her hand  
No longer resembles a candle

The final flicker  
Then the flame simply is no more  
Shaking hands drop the useless wick  
Soot staining her gown,  
Staining her innocence  
And a puff of smoke is all that remains of her dreams

Abby Koning

# Road To Nowhere

Once again, I find myself driving silently  
From somewhere I can't remember  
To nowhere at all  
On this road paved with apathy  
Which is a word I use too much  
But I don't care.

The world rushes by in a meaningless blur,  
A tree. A blade of grass. A garish road sign.  
(screaming YIELD in a way as  
Brash  
as the chipping red paint.  
In a way that I ignore.  
Yielding has never been in my nature.)  
It's all the same to me.  
And would anyone come to find me  
If I spun off the road  
Hit a tree  
And flew into a ditch?  
I didn't think so.  
This ditch is damp.  
And I've left my galoshes  
In some far off place  
I'll never see again  
Some place that looks like, sounds like,  
Tastes likes, smells like,  
But never feels like  
Home.

And maybe I think just a little too much.  
And I wouldn't object to that if  
I could be sure that it was better than  
Thinking too little.  
Or not thinking at all.  
(If writing all these words could erase these doubts,  
I'd never leave this room again.  
And I would slaughter countless trees  
For scraps of paper to fill.  
And ink would stain my hands, my clothes, my hair

And I would smile, a blue or black, toothy smile  
That would make my entire face look like a bruise.  
But I digress.  
Writing can't erase the greatest doubt  
And that is the doubt  
That writing won't change anything)  
Maybe if I turn up the radio a bit louder  
My thoughts will wash away...  
I sigh.  
(But not in sorrow, for, as I said, I am apathetic)  
The speakers aren't loud enough

And maybe, just maybe, if I drive fast enough,  
Far enough,  
Long enough,  
I could leave the past behind  
(with the place that never felt like home)  
And the future ahead  
(where it rightfully belongs,  
But never seems to remain)  
And just breathe in  
Breath out  
and live in the moment.

But even as I think that thought  
I realize  
(as I continue on my way to nowhere)  
The past has just stolen another minute  
In which I've accomplished nothing.  
And the future has just become the present...  
And it isn't anything I hoped it would be.

Abby Koning

# Scuttle

jeweled crabs scuttling  
\*sparkle\*  
as sun progresses from east to west  
or west to east  
or whichever way the wind  
b-l-o-w-s  
opal eyes peering, shells writhing  
pincers devouring  
the limbs of loved ones  
(the sun turns in disgust and vomits into the ocean)  
flecking diamond trails  
stones spouting from those red, red rubied-backs  
a penny for your thoughts  
a fortune for your flesh-eating  
sweaty-faced and queasy, i shelter behind a rock  
as crabs swarm about me, nipping at my  
toes  
a bite of my feet and the emeralds pour forth  
canvas dragged as shoelaces spew from greedy mouth  
gone are my legs  
hips  
stomach  
arms  
one crab settles itself upon my face  
transfixed, i watch while the eyes of the creature  
and the eyes of my own  
reflect into each other, dual mirrors  
and i scream,  
for they are human eyes  
and as the cannibalism proceeds  
the sun continues to vomit darkness  
again and again into the sea

Abby Koning

# Sipping From Fragments Of Dreams

Dreams

Are as starlight in my eyes  
Carving rivulets in my cheeks,  
(oh, such anguish)  
Racing through the air  
To splash on the ground  
In a puddle of tragedy,  
Drenching my feet  
In sorrow and starlight and tears

Infinitesimal razor-edged stars  
Slice into the rubber soles  
Of my 'impenetrable' tennis shoes  
And torment  
My even more 'impenetrable'  
Inner soul  
Causing pain upon pain  
Even as they diminish  
And melt away

My tears dissolve the stars.

My feet are immersed in a shimmering liquid  
I lower myself to hands and knees  
And cup the opiate liquid  
In my filthy hands

I drink of fragments of shattered dreams  
I drink of loss and emptiness and worthlessness  
I drink of unfulfilled desires  
Of promises  
Of hopelessness

The taste is bitter-sweet.  
My soul aches.  
My stomach churns.

Abby Koning

# Song Of Your Eyes

Your eyes are ivory keys  
With blackest pupils in between  
And they play the sweetest music  
My eyes have ever seen  
And the notes flow on and on  
A song from your heart to mine  
Skipping and floating through the air  
And throughout my mind.

And my heart dances  
Upon its strings  
Like a puppet upon the hand of its master  
It follows along with your rhythm  
Mimicking exactly  
Each movement of your hand  
Each curve of your mouth  
Each radiant dropp of moisture on your lips  
I'll vow to be your puppet forever  
If you'll give me the chance  
And I promise my smile will never be forced.

I wish I could comprehend the song of your eyes  
For, in doing so, maybe I could raise mine  
Above a whisper  
That your heart must strain so hard to hear  
If, in fact, it even cares at all to hear me  
If it cares to join in my dance  
Or to be the second half of my duet...  
I am a lonely note in a cleft unlike anything you've heard before

So spare me a glance  
Of your piano key eyes  
And allow me to attend  
The concert of your soul  
And please, please, attend mine as well  
There's a place inside my heart  
With your name scrolled upon it  
In notes and staves and rhythms  
The key is called Devotion

The time signature is Forever

So place your hand in mine and sing  
Sing your heart out and I'll sing out mine  
And our hearts will waltz away from us  
Into a separate concert hall  
Reserved for just the two of us.

Sing louder, my dear.  
I'm begging you to be the song of my eyes.  
Listen closely, my darling.  
Listen as I play my piano key heart for you.

Abby Koning

# Squawkings In Nagasaki

...and now the twittering of birds becomes incessant poundings in my ears  
squawkingSQUAWKINGSQUAWK!  
while atomic bombs, those discordant voices, wreak havoc on  
the Nagasaki in my mind  
screaming, wailing, whining, beating verbal fists against  
metal cages  
(that are really of something much softer, butter perhaps, that patience  
alone would melt away)  
and I lie hunched in the corner of a vast, green field  
free from my cage (for i had the patience to allow it to vanish) but pursued...  
RELENTLESSLY! ! ! ...by the masses of the discontent  
why argue over trivialities, i mutter, my hands clamped over my eardrums,  
gaping funnels vulnerable to all those violent screeches  
why be always complaining when life unfolds before you,  
like an orchid blooming beneath the sun's rays,  
when the cool breeze drifts through you...  
(let it take you away...let it spin your mind to foreign lands  
inhale the scent of time, relish it for tomorrow is already gone  
and today is fleeting, and the future may not even exist)  
why not dance, why not fling arms and legs wildly in exuberant display  
why not embrace, why not clasp hands  
and why not doubt the existence of those cages you struggle against,  
open your mind and watch as they vanish before your eyes, yellow  
melting into oh so many sunflowers blossoming before you  
why not cease your commotion (even that which spills from your pen  
cuts through my eyes, a complaint is a complaint no matter how poetic the  
housing)  
why not discover your own freedom, i cannot do it for you....  
but oh, behold, my eardrums are bleeding, red spilling onto the dissolving butter  
of my cage  
and i cannot contain my scream: 'Silence! '...  
but you merely pause, shrug your shoulders, exchange glances  
and continue in an even louder ruckus

Abby Koning

# Tarot

I-Ching ice cycle jagged water carrot  
melting salad- what coins are ice?  
what constitutes  
a chance slice of freez-  
ing wasted(wonder) land with  
Alice slipping along an iceberg  
perchance to dreamy winterings, sideways  
through silvery waves of the glass, floating  
in crystal where cubed ice giggles and  
clinks  
and sighs about the splinters  
of tea in the sides and the  
invading warmth  
of the old woman's tears  
(crumbling a fortune cookie in her palms)

Abby Koning

# The Purpose Of A White Crayon

find some godforsaken rock and sacrifice the bitterness of youth  
watch  
-close your eyes and see this—  
The coloring child brandishing her white crayon, trying to convince  
The devilish boys beside her  
To trade  
(for violent red, loathsome green, oozing black)  
But they only snicker behind  
Writhing hands

(such sorrow)  
Stumbling to the sandbox, she finds a pebble  
And scribbles in white  
[Mea culpa...]  
Snaps the crayon in two and grinds it beneath  
The heels of her tennis shoes  
[Mea culpa...If not, then who? ]

after the boys have gone,  
lonely on a bench  
She slowly licks an ice-cream cone  
And cries as the meltings defile her chin

Abby Koning

# The Soft-Spoken Witness

who-

a man with tinted-glass eyes  
and shuttered lids with black ledges  
and all the sadness of the world  
etched in the sagging  
lineaments  
of his tired countenance

what-

a senseless death, a cat  
rubbing its face against the man's  
hairy leg crisscrossed with veins pumping  
sluggishly  
or not at all  
meowing, meowing, purring,  
stretching, laying down  
closing out the night with its own shutters

when-

last night, this morning, today  
tomorrow, at dawn, at evening  
within time or outside the reach  
of the clock's hands  
lingering somewhere on the  
outskirts  
of existence

where-

an ancient porch, a rocking chair  
a ramshackle house  
a solitary location, a garden  
overgrown with weeds  
paint peeling, and boards covered  
with thick, ropey branches of wisteria

how-

an early morning waking up,  
a bed containing sheets rumpled  
but only in one corner, a blinking

into the garish sunlight  
a stretching, a scrambling of eggs and  
a drinking of coffee  
a glance at the newspaper, a retiring  
to a typewriter in a cluttered attic where  
light streamed through the windows, making  
dancing patterns before his eyes,  
(patterns that hinted at some unspoken  
unthought feeling, more substantial  
than he and all his dreams)  
a finishing of a manuscript,  
two words: The End  
scribbled in hasty lettering from a fountain  
of blue ink  
a private celebration, a toast that involved  
no clinking of glasses  
(...and what is the sound of one glass clinking?)  
from a dusty bottle of champagne  
later, a doing of dishes  
one lonely glass, drops of amber-colored liquid  
clinging to the inside  
one plate, sticky eggs holding tight to the ceramic  
(and isn't that all i am? a sticky egg on the plate of this earth?)  
bubbles washing out and in and out again  
water washing out and in and out  
his thoughts washing out and in and out  
a shattering of the glass, slipping wetly  
from shaking hand  
no broom to be found, a disaster  
of unmeasured proportions!  
a shard of glass in barefeet, leaving a thin  
red trail as he climbed the stairs to the attic  
where manuscript sat on the table  
title page up  
("A Tribute to Solitude")  
and glaring at him, mocking him  
a rereading of the final page  
followed by a quick trip of that very page  
through a paper shredder  
(for really, had i anything at all to say?  
and really, had i any talent to say it?)  
and the shreds through the fire

of his lighter  
a shortening stack of paper  
diminishing to nothing but ashes  
(a thought: even as i shall)  
a sprinting back to the kitchen  
a snapping in his mind  
as he stared at the one plate  
and the glittering fragments  
of the one glass  
a seizing of one particularly sharp  
fragment  
a stumbling to the rocking chair...  
a closing of the shutters.

why-  
nobody knows but the wisteria.

Abby Koning

# The Taste Of Cold Dregs

(a whisper reaches your ear:  
'nobody likes the taste of cold dregs...'  
and you attach no meaning to it)

you linger reposed beneath the sinking light  
the soft yellow glow that rightfully  
belongs  
to yesterday

and your face reflects  
in the thin sheet of glass  
behind which you remain  
separate  
from everybody you've met  
and everybody  
you've yet to meet

your fingertips resonate with your  
identity  
your mind resonates with  
nothing  
(it seems you've misplaced your identity)

emptiness  
and a pretentious cup of tea  
is all you're living for

and you are defined only  
by tea leaves and a herbal scent  
upon your breath

(and you've never seen the future  
in your tea leaves...  
you've never even looked)

your imprints defile  
a cracked cup  
splattered with fading  
flowers

and as the world passes by  
you remain on your stool  
(reflecting the soft yellow light)  
sipping and sipping and sipping  
your life away  
In tiny portions

leaving only the fingerprints on your cup  
and the cold, black dregs  
(which taste bitter on your tongue)  
to suggest  
that you were ever there...

Abby Koning

# The Withering Trees Quiver Silently...

the withering trees quiver silently  
a handless salute to the passersby  
acknowledging their presence with the creaking  
of an ungloved branch

an omniscient evening twists the clock  
until the two hands are clasped and pointing  
to someplace beyond time  
(their soft moist touch leaves imprints on the crystal)

somewhere a moon hangs in a cradle  
suspended above a gossamer field  
yet the cows, complaining throatily  
do not feel the weight of his gaze

the man in the moon has turned his back upon mankind  
and who could blame him  
(he who is without sin, cast the first stone...  
boulders are stacked to the heavens)

and you and i and i and you  
stroll impertinently through the shadows  
ordering them to part with a touch of our lips

...and the wind tosses my hair about  
as the man in the moon  
sneaking a peak over his shoulder  
laughs at my disarray

you tuck it back in its place with a gentle hand  
and so we venture on  
the shadows blushing at this unfamiliar display of affection

a coyote pours out its anguished racket  
the hairs bristles on our arms  
each individual strand pulling away from the other  
isolating themselves to shiver and squirm  
in solitude

and i wonder at the foolishness  
for who would care to face this night alone?

Abby Koning

# These Rain-Soaked Streets I Travel Alone

These tremulous footsteps  
Patter on and on.  
Remaining steady  
Like the rain  
Creating a rhythm of wetness  
And of lonely miles traveled.  
Yet the rain and the footsteps  
Are not completely one.

There will continue to be storms,  
Like the one that is even now  
Dampening my shoes and  
Forming puddles that  
My torn shoelaces  
Will float upon  
Whenever they become untied,  
Serving as a parody of exotic snakes  
Slithering through the Amazon.

There will always be storms  
For the storms are an ever-present force  
Broken only by the brief  
Periods in which  
The sun slants through the clouds  
In a glorious moment of relief.  
Yet the relief is short-lived,  
Destined to fade into gray  
Clouds.  
And rain will fall  
Now and forever

Yet my footsteps are not so.  
They are merely a vanishing presence  
Leaving an impermanent  
Imprint  
Upon this earth.

And in the future  
My footsteps will be erased

(possibly by the storms which even now  
Serve as a familiar companion)  
And will not be revived.  
For none have walked  
Where I am walking now  
And none will follow  
This trail which, even as I glance behind me now  
In sorrow,  
Begins to fade.

Abby Koning

# To Burn

The thick, heavy smoke in your head, in  
My head  
I cannot escape such clutching tendrils  
My lungs are blackened, my heart  
A charred slab of bleeding meat left too  
Long in the flames, reduced to  
Tasteless ash

Repulsing the mind  
Upsetting the stomach

(In short, as a meal I am unsatisfactory...  
Eat me if you must—  
I'll cure your shakes, but I'll make  
Your stomach churn.)

Do you hunger, my carnivore?  
My bloodthirsting, meatcraving friend?  
Continue your scorching, your poking about  
In my coals

There is nothing left for you to burn.

Abby Koning

# Undignified

Emotions stirring.  
Rising to the brim of the cup which is our souls  
And even over the brim  
Spilling into the laps of the fashionistas  
(oh, how they shriek)  
Staining their white designer dresses  
With our violent red  
Love.

I'll never forget how it came to this...

"Undignified, " they scorned  
With their noses in the air.  
"Look how they clash.  
Observe, how she glides,  
Walking upon the clouds  
With her head held high,  
Turning the heads  
Of everyone she meets.  
(Not to mention, that top is to DIE for) "

Not so for him.

"Look how he stumbles,  
A wall-flower if I've ever seen one.  
With his hair of passé length,  
Observe how he walks, with his eyes  
Fixed upon the latest floor tiling  
(that is just so in right now, everyone who's anyone has it) .  
Listen to us, darling. It's for your own good.  
People like him just don't belong in our world."

But what world is this?

The world where sorrows are wrapped up in black bows  
(for black is the new pink...or haven't you heard?)  
And concealed behind masks of fake smiles and teeth whiteners.  
Where emotion is just an embarrassing accessory  
That has gone hopelessly out of style,

Simply kept around to aid in manipulations.  
Love is money and money is love  
And nobody loves just for love any more  
(though they act offended when you call them 'gold diggers', the exchanging of  
money  
Stops their protests)  
And hidden behind every word from their lip-stick coated mouths  
(pink, not too dark to be whorish, just dark enough to see it's the same shade as  
everyone else's)  
Is a connotation, with an ulterior motive hidden behind even that.

But look at them now...

Covered from hat-donned head to high-heeled toe in our contagious love  
Which causes make-up to run and ruins dresses.  
(I hope the stains never come out!)  
They shriek, and cry (we're laughing in the corner)  
And their world of gossip, money and concealed sorrows comes crashing down  
upon them.  
And in their anger (or could it be jealousy?)  
They point at me and gasp, "You could've done so much better than him.  
You two are just so...undignified! "  
And I smile, with my arm around my "unfashionable" man  
(who, ironically, is the only one here that I love)  
And reply, "Yes. We are indeed undignified."

Abby Koning

# Whitewashed

Whitewashed dreamlands  
With houses built from no.2 pencils...  
My eyes are lead.

Abby Koning

# Words Are A Virus

Why I am never quite able to say  
Exactly what  
I mean?

These stupid words  
Escape through the cracks  
In my hands  
Which I've clasped  
Over my gaping mouth.

And the pain comes  
Like I knew it would.  
This is not the first time  
My careless words have  
Stained  
Your face.  
(and I'm sure it won't  
Be the last)

Could somebody tape  
This void in my face shut?  
And trap in the  
Bitter fumes  
That poison the ones I love  
And sour my good intentions?  
But I know  
Tape isn't strong enough.

So bury me.  
Alive, if you can.  
Dead, if you must.  
And if through the yards  
Of dirt and decay  
You can still hear my voice...  
(like a virus that cannot be destroyed)  
Dig deeper.

But be forewarned.  
Do not drink the water

That springs from this earth  
For I will have polluted it  
And the chronic venom will spread  
To you.  
And you will be the one  
Rendered inarticulate  
And you will be the one  
Occupying the ground  
At my side.

Unless you are unwilling to make  
Such a sacrifice  
As I have made.  
And choose instead to remain among the surface,  
Among those you loved.  
Who, I promise,  
will no longer love you.

And the virus will spread  
Hand to hand  
Mouth to mouth  
For now and for always...  
Until the world  
Collapses  
Beneath the weight  
Of misspoken  
And misunderstood  
Words.

Abby Koning