

Poetry Series

Elizabeth Shield
- poems -

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Elizabeth Shield(1995)

I am young. I believe in God, love, and human kindness. I am enraptured by nature and enamoured by culture. I am quiet. I am brave. I love secrets and the ticklish feeling that they give to my mind. I am fleet of foot, and sound of heart. I am privately dramatic and outwardly eclectic. I have traveled the world. I am a writer. I relish sleep and cherish dreams. I am a scientist. I am a Christian.

Please comment so that I may improve my writing style. However, I am unlikely to edit my older works as they serve as a record of the development of my thoughts and emotions over the years. Thank you.

A Bike Ride Through The Countryside

The grass flickers, as the
Wind pushes it down, in
A gentle but determined
Motion, sweeping upwards to
Swirl the blue-grey clouds
Around the radio tower, before
Dissipating into the milky
Sky, which at this moment
Is the lightest shade of
Blue, an open innocent shade
Of blue, like an angelic birthday
Cake, the pinker clouds, whose
Graceful tendrils embrace the
Air, and dancing twirl across the
Peaceful summer skyscape

Down below them, the
Emerald stalks of corn stand,
Silent sentinels, awaiting the
Coming of the dawn, they too
Feel the pushing of the wind, but
Brush it off, over their shoulders,
And continue their silent watching
On the sloping sides of the hill, the
Growling pines, resplendent in their
Glimmering needles, reflect the fading
Light, off the clouds, as the sun sinks,
Beneath the horizon, and I watch them
Silently on my bike, the only thing
I can hear, is the swish of the wind,
And the hum and whirring of the
Pedals, as my bike and I, we glide up
The hill, and down the hill, and
Around the posts that are meant
To keep the cars from disturbing, this
Peaceful walking path

A while later, we crest a hill, now
Having passed the town, I see the work

Of the persistent wind, the clouds
Now whipped into a curling wave,
Of pink and blue-black, spilling
Over the horizon, behind the red-roofed
Country houses, which are strangely
Reminiscent of those old, red, barns
Which would sit abandoned in
Fields of perpetual wheat, and,
Through the turning of the seasons,
Would rot away into timbers, with
No one left to remember, what
They were, or why they remain

Now we have ridden in a loop, my
Bike clicks as I change gears, to
Crest a hill and coast down, at high
Speed, between the guard rails and
The road, with the wind kicking
Up behind me and whisking an
Upcoming tree in to a fluttery
Flurry of leaves and branches, while
Below a stream cuts a field, and,
Skirting a pen, passes by a pinto
Pony, I think it was, that was just
Standing there, as we rode past,
Onto the cobblestones and around
A bend, the group splits, some going
A different route, but I want to come
Back the way I came, and I ride
Beside the highway, listening to
The chirp of the crickets and the
Hum of the wheels against the
Cold, pavement, while up the hill
The verdant pines bob their boughs,
Up and down, waving, waving,
The cresting blue-black wave has
Rolled, on past the tower now, it
Is crashing down over the silent
Sentinels, and I watch quietly as
The wind rolls down the hill, and
Whirls some leaves, making the
Grass flicker in the setting sun.

Elizabeth Shield

A Journey Of Thousand Steps

I say I am trying, walking this road
And I do try, but I don't always try hard
A hilly road
A treacherous road
I climb to the summit, only to find
That I've only gone a single step
A single step, on a staircase
Of a thousand glittering stairs,
One step
The journey seems so long

I cry sometimes, along the way
I mostly walk alone
You wouldn't understand, how it is for me
To have life put within your grasp
And while reaching, being assaulted by your doubts
Until your arm is too heavy to lift
And when the goal is just out of reach, it falls

A journey of a thousand steps
and I don't know, if I've even walked ten
Or five
Or three

...
Those great wise guys say, that a journey like this
Starts with a single step,
They also say, that it's about the journey
Not, the destination
As if I knew where I was going anyway

The things they teach us confuse me
Who are we anyway?
Why do we act this way, killing people?
Leaving people, hoarding possessions
Like an angry mother bear, we protect what's ours
But is it ours?
And if not, who does it belong to?
Who do I belong to? And why am I here?
The questions are as empty as the wind,

It sweeps up dust in my path, blowing it off the mountain
And into the air

The air is clear up here, wind buffets the path
We are up so high, and I am scared
Such a way to fall, the ground isn't even visible
You can't hug the cliffs though, sharp
Like cactuses they cling to you
They suck you in and never let you go
Two forces pulling at me
The cliffs or the wind
Is a leap of faith the medicine I need to take?

The ground is far, I keep the path
The world has told me, that yes,
This way is better
Ah, but I doubt it,
Bitter hell is waiting at a promised end
They tell me it will be pretty, but the wind carries a different tale
Whispering in my ears, the nagging doubts grow stronger

Frustration, I scream it out
Grrr, It hurts
I'm being falsely led, the end will never come
Hope springs eternal, but I think mine dried up
The path is wider now, suffering is imminent
I look up at the hills, yep, this is going to suck
My hair flips, those pesky winds
Doubt is creeping up again, on little cat feet
Less visible than the fog, more tangible than the air
I kick at it, but it wants to pull me in

A bright light! The sun!
The path seems so much shorter now; I'll run the final mile
For sure, five steps into a thousand isn't much
But I see the next oasis
Water flows freely there, and I shall have rest
I walk on, the clouds grow up, and I leap down
The path has ended, a new one awaits me
Silly doubts they cannot follow
I fall faster than sound
The ground is soft now, but rocky up ahead

This is not the easy way out

I know I can make it, another step, another lap, another mile
Someday I shall grow wings, and then
A great wind will spring up and fly me to my destination
Because, always now I know
The wings of faith, rise up and over the seas of doubt,
And the foolish delusions cannot touch me
When I'm flying in the air

Elizabeth Shield

A Literary Passing

'Kill me now! ' the writer said, his fountain pen in hand
the crimson stain upon the page had marked it like a brand
his rheumy eyes and matted hair suggested age and disrepair
he had no pride left to wear, and said glibly with distant stare
'f I could but die upon my books, now wouldn't that be grand? '

'Wishes, wonder, work, and worry - that's all my life has been
And how fitting it would be, as all great works, to end it with a pen? '
the ink rained down upon the page, as the lauded author staged
a death - to free him from his cage; a fitting ending to an age
'Better to die at a good time, then always wonder when.'

Elizabeth Shield

A Lying Word

A lying word,
is something somber
Like an ink drop,
in a pool of water.
It poisons all the fishes,
that swum safely below.

Elizabeth Shield

A Poem I Had Forgotten

A carefree autumn breeze
blows nimbly through golden fields
and dandelion stalks
sweeping white puffs to cerulean skies

I sit at the edge
of summer and fall
in a green, sheep filled pasture
awaiting the seasonal changing of tide

Honking fills streets
as grey geese flock over
our peaceful town
on an amber sunlight breeze

My salty tears meet leaves
and mingle with raindrops
the air fresh with dampness
as water falls from above

Warm sun kisses my letters
as im writing you one
my words form graceful patterns
like fall's leaves in autumns air

Elizabeth Shield

A Poem Of Night And Fall

I thank you for the moon at night
and also for the stars that shine
and basking in it heavenly light
I wish the universe were mine

A midnight breeze
tosses my hair
and blows the leaves
of hidden trees
into fall air

a silver light
shines on the grass
a rabbits flight
then safe at last
at home tonight

a silver silence
speaks its presence
to the world
and in the fading, evening light
the dew drifts down
behold, the night

We see the shadows running past
and in the corners of our minds
we count the summer days till last
and the beginning is fall's time
the scarlet leaves are mine

Elizabeth Shield

A Small Nonsense

March madness is devoid of hares
But hibernation's full of bears
And beavers in their palisades
While away the winter hours
With charades

Elizabeth Shield

A Spark

The cavernous maw of shadows twirled around me
And in the dark my lonely candle flickered
Twisting softly in the deafening night
All the demons stayed at bay
My work incased in a radius of safety
All silent for the scratching of my pen
The angry howls of looming darkness
Fell upon my tender ears

In fear I had a strange deficiency
And that's what made the end of me, perhaps
When I stepped out to breathe
My disbelief was ended
And I was apprehended by shadows
A light snuffed out by night

I Had feared not the shadows for the light
But when alone fell quickly to the gloom
Died to the dark
Please, save me soon
I only need a spark

Elizabeth Shield

A Wish For Someone Hurting

And if you wish,
Then take me too,
Were it was I,
Instead of you,
Still sitting there,
Within your pain,
I wish you to
Walk free again.

Elizabeth Shield

Abide

The looks are telling, and they reach
across the distance. From me to you.
You haven't a clue, that I am
magnetized.

But,
I am afraid. If I love too lightly
you will slip away. I see
other hands reaching out to you,
touching you, taking you from me
But you aren't mine, and I fear
If I love you too strongly, you will flee

The waiting game is its toll
taking. And deep inside my
fragile soul, is breaking.

Oh that God, in his mercy,
would satisfy, the sighs that
buffet, and the tears that pool,
as my heart cries for you. It takes
all my sense to smother, this flame in me,
yet still the embers glow.

And you - a man of mystery - flit
in enigmatic shadows far from me.

The gap is far too wide. And yet, in this,
I know I must abide.

Elizabeth Shield

Adagio

Can you hear the rain?
Outside these stone walls, in stormy refrain
it beats against the panes. But you,
continue with the ivory keys,
aiming to please. You complete
marvellous melodies with each additional note.
You don't even need to speak a word.

You cast your gaze outside, into
the wide continuous cascade, and
cold water meets focus
in the reflection, in your eyes.

Thin fingers and slim form, bent,
hunched in concentration. Lips
firmly pressed. But do not fret,
if you mess up, I will not like you less.
I must confess, I like the rain though
it may leave me cold
and wet.

It's not conditional. Just let me fall,
into your music, into the tune,
and maybe soon into your arms.
It isn't far.

This autumn, when the cold rain
drips off the leaves, grant me
a brief reprieve, from my busy mind
and weave, me a succulent song,
until the time comes. Until
the setting of the sun,
be mine.

Elizabeth Shield

At First Sight

In the sound, there was silence.
The space between breaths
yawned wide like eternity,
when first our eyes met.

When the wind passed me,
carrying your sweet scent,
I reached out for you.
Could you tell what I meant?

Then time resumed, and
we kept on walking, but...
I looked over my shoulder,
into your beautiful eyes

Elizabeth Shield

At The Station

We both caught love at the midnight train
Standing by the stations doors
Looking at the other
Separated only by glass
The seconds passed
Until with a whirring noise, and brisk announcement
The train took me with it, and left us
Staring backwards through the doors
Mouths slightly opened
Bags slipping from our fingers
The sound the wheels made as they roll'd along the tracks
Matched the palpitating of our hearts
And the clink of the coins through our fingers
As we attempt to calculate
How much it would cost us
To meet again

Elizabeth Shield

Beloved Hourglass

This moment won't last forever
I know it well. I feel it fading.
It rushes through my fingers like grains of sand;
But, I enjoy the sensation.

A beginning cannot be celebrated
without an end, and
A life cannot be cherished,
unless it it lived.

That is why I treasure them.
This moment, and,
all the moments we have together.

I don't think I would love you as much
without the setting of a thousand hours,
hours we spent with one another,
hanging like a starry backdrop,
behind your head.

All this time, has embossed you onto my heart.
Pressed down like a stamp, gradual but essential.
Now, you are part of who I am.

And so is this time, together, right now.

I know this moment wont last forever, but-
That is what makes it special.

Elizabeth Shield

Brilliant Warm Light

Brilliant warm light, a summer day
Daisies bobbing up and down on a summer breeze
Green grass so smooth and fresh
Lovely sunshine
From inside me

It springs forth in my smile
My eyes, half open
Still heavy from sleep
Are blissfully calm
They are smiling too

The sun, shines through window
It lights up my hair
Hanging over my shoulders
Soft and warm
Like a feathery cloak

I want to run
To sing and dance
To lay in the sunshine
To feel the wind over my skin
I'm just so happy to be me right now

Inside me is a bright spring day
Though outside remains the winters chill
And falls leaves still dust the ground
Soon it will be Valentines Day
Spring is coming

Brilliant warm light, a summer day
Bursting forth from my heart
I want to hug the ones I love
And laugh until I cry
And run until my cheeks are pink with the cold

Elizabeth Shield

Burgundy

burgundy, the color of wine
and cashmere
a noble stain, sweet and dark
like old music, enchanting yet haunting
or pages in a history book
deep purplish red, like old France
when the Louie's were Kings
with deep capes of ermine and
coats of serious, glorious, burgundy
like time passing
things ripening with age
roughness becoming soft
and smooth, burgundy
like old memories
sweet and cherished, a bitter fragrance
all its own
a rich man's bedsheets, made of silk
dark and comforting, or
a noblewoman's rogue, daring
and the color on her lips, emphasizing white teeth
burgundy
a tall chair by the fire
an honored usage, glowing in the light

Elizabeth Shield

Childhood Friends

The window's light was bright, yet dim.
You called my name; I entered in.
Into your old bedroom I went,
air thick with afternoons well spent,
and blocks were scattered on the floor;
our cheerful childhood now no more.

Kneeling upon the light brown wood
we spoke as if we understood:
the years that passed had come again,
and we were young carefree children.

You, who I had long forgot,
and I who you remember not-
were gifted moments long since gone;
fair-weathered freedom lingered on

But time a fickle mistress is.
And youth, so fleeting, disappears.

You stood and motioned me to come
I came; you held me in your arms
The year had come forward again,
for suddenly, you were a man
And tight you pressed me to your chest
in truth, a feeling I love best
And I had never felt more free,
as you leant down and carried me

You opened up your bedroom door;
into the world we went once more.

Elizabeth Shield

Dear

Let me be your diary
And tell me all the things you see
Your musings and your restless dreams
Feelings that flow like hidden streams
Thoughts that pool behind your eyes
Desires and hopes and fears and lies
Let me be your hiding place
And free the smile to fill your face

Let me be your comfort zone
And you won't ever be alone
The world, once big, will now seem small
The unknown won't be hard at all
You can embrace the coming change
For, in the end, I will remain
Let me be your reason why
And bring the joy into your eyes

Elizabeth Shield

Denial

Denial is a hungry feeling
Towering like a tidal wave
Its sharpened claws can send you reeling
Will power is the force to save

It claws your belly like a tiger
It bites you like an angered snake
Your sense of wanting grows e'er higher
You feel it's more than you can take

It taunts you with it's sickly sweetness
Beguiles you with saccharine dreams
You're lost within its sweet caress□
You find you're on the losing team

Eventually the hammer falls
And nothing's left of you at all.

Elizabeth Shield

Destined

if I wrote you a letter
my dreams and my fears
reduced to mere words
and phrases
if my voice was yours alone to hear
could I give you my burdens to bear
would you reply?

if I sent you a dream
my love and my hate
such bold-faced feelings
shared
if you could possibly relate
circumstance begot by fate
could you cherish it?

if I gave you a key
my future, my life
carefully kept secrets
gentle hopes
if you could keep me
and you would love me
would you use it?

if I knew your name
how you like and dislike
oh, precious personality
a dear friend
if it was what God ordained
and our feelings be the same
would you be mine?

Elizabeth Shield

Detrimental

Is this pointless
This charade
Think of all the time we'll save
If I just cut this short right now
And cut you off
And out
A severed limb,
And maybe you'll re-grow again

Detrimental
This sodden game
we've both been very brave, but
I think I fold
My feet got cold
You seem confused
I just don't want you to be used

You seem saddened
I proclaim
You are free from all the blame
I was the one at fault for this
You should go now
Please leave
Or I'll just go
You can start again you know

This is my fault
But I digress
I am so full of restlessness
Please understand
Its for the best
I think I messed
It up real bad
So please don't go on being sad

Elizabeth Shield

Doubt

The sun will rise
but you say I
will set beneath
the cool grey hills

The tide comes in
but I'll go out
beneath the breaking
of the waves

The storm clouds clear
but I will break
just like a
summer storm

You say its true
but you're afraid
that love wont
keep you warm

Elizabeth Shield

Empty School In Summer

The children rush in hasty hordes
Freed from desks and chairs of knowledge
They crowd the gates, and tan paved walkways
Hugging old friends goodbye they race to their busses
Or run down the street, headed to the PX
Or the movie theater, they will haunt the public areas
Long after the teachers have gone, they will run about
Downtown, in the big round mall, by the Hauptbahnhof
They walk in pairs, they run in crowds, until
The scuffed up floors are empty now, the lockers clean
The windows shut, the doors all locked, everyone
Is at home, or far away, and still the building sits
Empty and alone, gates locked, deserted
They look at it a laugh
"We shall not return to you again! " they proudly say
and saunter off, heads held high, in the company of friends
they do not hear the quiet answer, it comes later, when all
the streets are empty, the building answers, a dusty echo
"I will see you in September"
But they don't look back.

Elizabeth Shield

Eveningsong

Though soon we broke above the dismal grey
and came out of the dim-lit sullen sea
which lapped around our toes and would not stay
I lagged behind, the water calling me.

An amber orb dissolved in ebony
The birds traded their day-song for their best
a briny breeze blew in the twinkling twilight
as all around embraced the peace and rest

Resting above, the mountains made of air
the world had cleared beyond the purple haze
and glowing sparks revolving brightly there
sang softly, never ceasing to amaze

'twas with no sorrow, day to dusk returned
I vowed I'd not forget what I had learned

Elizabeth Shield

Faring Well

Now begin the parting graces:
Tearful hearts with smiling faces
And many words that fall between
What is said and what is seen
Till what is left is nothing more
Than all that was spoken before
But still, we smile, embrace, and stay
To make the most of one last day

Elizabeth Shield

Filled Vessel

My heart is a stoneware vessel,
That is filled right up to the brim
From an icy and rushing river
Of nameless fear that flows within

But Your Spirit is a steadfast flame
That burns quiet within my chest
Challenging the anxious waters
That never allow me to rest

Each day I take up my vessel
To decide with what it will fill
Blazing joy or chilling worry
I know what would be your will

Yet somehow I am distracted
Or tricked by my own wayward heart
And instead, I quench the Spirit
This river it tears me apart!

How I long to be in your presence
To be by your hearth in my soul
But I'm looking for love in dry cisterns
And ice-water swallows me whole

Please come and take my vessel
Drain it of ice and fear
Let your spirit be a fire within me
And help me, in my weakness, draw near

My heart is a stoneware vessel
That is filled so it overflows
With the joy of a loving father
Whose Spirit is fire in my soul

Elizabeth Shield

Firmament

The field I was lying in felt like the vertical surface of a cliff
I swore I could see the stars moving from where I lay
It was infinitesimal, but it was there
I tried to synchronize my breathing with the rushing of the wind over me
And I placed myself on that cliff before the universe so effectively
That vertigo pulled at my stomach, when I glanced at my feet.
So I tied a knot around my waist
And connected it to Polaris
Hanging from the center I watched the rotation
And felt it in my mind

A solar wind blew my hair around my face
And whipped the grass of my upright field
I didn't realize how deeply I had fallen
Until it was too late
I could not love another but the heavens
The symphony of deep space was captivating
It drew me in, until earth became a memory
Until I was not myself
But a twinkling in the firmament

Elizabeth Shield

Frank

He is like a shard of glass;
sharp and transparent
When I am with him I see him - and
Both see myself and see through me.
When he speaks it cuts me to the core.
Expectations shattered

I am like not yet molded clay
And the fingers of other's thoughts
Touch me and change me
After their fashion
He is harsh like a knife
When I am with him, I separate from
Myself and what I always knew
And truth fades out like a candle flame,
Guttering

He is like a lightning strike; power and show
Brilliant, marvelous execution
He electrifies me and then passes on
Leaving flickering ashes of impression, his goal achieved
His purpose triumphing once again
His fire burning in many minds

Elizabeth Shield

Freed

The morning was cold, but the sun was bright
on that decisive day when wild delight
twinkled in the fallen snow as fateful
footsteps falling know, from whence
they come, to where they go.

Up the old temple steps I went
brimming with nervous hesitation
to see if gods of ivory and gold
would look on me with smiling eyes
and give me warmth and purpose
But you I forgot, I turned my back
I dropped your hand, returning
to those idols cold, that burned my
skin with ancient fury and filled
my heart with feverish, fiery passion.

How fallen am I? How of the world? How lost?
That I returned to rusted chains to bind me,
and thus sustained further damage by them.
That I preferred slavery to true joy and freedom,
and let old masters continually define me.
That I let them lead me astray and welcomed
deep cuts and dark impurities.

I bled and instantly regretted, what I was
and what I had become. But you negated,
all the debts I'd left unpaid, and dug me from
the cavernous depths, that were my grave.
The slate was clean, how could it be? And
even more, that you loved me; we knocked
the idols from tainted altars and
departed.

The afternoon was golden and crisp and clear
on that fateful day when rampant fear
took hold again. But thankful, I am, that
fateful footsteps follow you, into
the bright and yonder spaces, into the blue.

Rescuer, who made me free again.

Elizabeth Shield

Gatsby

If I had to bring you a story, to your grave
To this rain-beaten stone
I would bring you a story of the pool you died in
Needlessly, killed by repercussions of withered dreams
On that summer day, with the fading heat and gentle sunshine
Neither of which you felt, for the throbbing of your heart
And the distant urging of a God you never heard to fix your life
That pool with fiery sunset leaves drifting by your toes
The result of bad deals and perfidious fortune
Floating in the cerulean water,
Languishing in the personification of your wealth
That pool, you know, sits empty now
Full of weeds and the dust of ages
But you should have known the consequences
If you could have been considered knowledgeable in business,
In sadness, in waiting, you should have known
What this corrupted dream would bring you,
And your ignorant tenacity was comparable to rock

Before the shot was fired, while you were still floating
In that one last great puddle of optimism,
Thinking of her, the only one you ever really loved
You were suited for each other in naïveté
It drained slowly, a watery rug pulled out from beneath your feet
When the shot was fired you were still falling from the clouds,
Into the treacherous beauty of the water
You and your dreams both drowning

This pool was your downfall; you left yourself out in the open
This love was your five-year ending,
You left your whole existence in a careless pair of hands

Elizabeth Shield

Grey Sweater

did I mention how I love grey woollen sweaters?
but not on me
I always picture them on you
in the autumn, streets wet from rain
yet sunny
you smile dazzlingly, opening your arms
and pulling me near
in the cool fall air
always, I imagine us in London
where it is always raining
but at that moment, it is shining
because you are there
hugging me close, to your grey sweated chest

Elizabeth Shield

Growing Pains

The saddest sigh I ever was to see
Accompanied closely by selfish thought
The one thing that I couldn't have with me
By another's side unlike he ought

I find my thoughts unto this are most cruel
Not mine to own nor is he mine to guide
Resistance did not keep me safe from you
And so I'm forced to keep feelings inside

You left me here, abandoned to my fate
Sometimes I wish I'd never seen your face
To stop the flood I now must shut the gate
It will all end when I last leave this place

This is the saddest portion of my year
You will not bring me happiness I fear

Elizabeth Shield

Gryphons

Sometimes we are lions in the park
Regally relaxing between the benches
Lounging on the fountains and
Chasing pigeons over cobblestones
What fun to be a lion, careless, powerful,
And muscled like a well-carved statue

Sometimes we are doves on the windowsill
Pecking prettily amongst the boxed petunias
Soaring over corbelled rooftops and
Nesting gently under the eaves
What fun to be a dove, delicate, beautiful,
And symbolic as a strong declaration of peace

But could we be the gryphon?
The sleek, elegant, fearsome, and graceful
The epitome of strength and beauty
Could we be exquisite gryphons,
And leave our faults behind?

Elizabeth Shield

Having Traveled, Having Seen

The furry pines flow down the mountain
Fur on an untamable beast
While green hills rest timid at the slopes
and roads drip off the sides
a cement necklace against the emerald grass

the blue sky surrenders to the blackness
crisscrossed with contrails
and the jeweled sun falls behind the hills
like a bead, a pendant
it slips down the drain as night throws out her coat

apparant beauty, reflected on earth

Elizabeth Shield

Heartland

I loved you in the sunlight
An open-faced land, bright and beautiful.
In the golden hours you allured me.
Cool breezes, pine boughs, and fragrant petals
were your offering.
I lay down in the cool of your earth,
and woke to the dulcet sound of bells.
Your streets welcomed me,
and there I roamed...
many precious hours in contentment spent.
Now I watch you fly away.
Your rivers glisten like golden ribbons
in the afterglow of the day.
Sheathed in clouds, I catch only glimpses.
But I can still remember how you taste;
like nectar and strength.
In my minds eye you are there,
beckoning.

Call me back to you and I will come.
I will not hesitate, beloved land,
I will fairly fly.
Until then: goodbye.

Elizabeth Shield

Hope For Men

Slowly now the fiery eyes
Open beneath that iron brow
And gradually he starts to rise
No more the sleeping giant lies
No time for convalescence now

Will truthful light uncloud his sight,
Who, lulled to sleep by lesser men,
Forsook his duty and his might
Answering only the call of night
Might he soon stand free again?

Elizabeth Shield

How I Do Love Thee

With the dawning of each day,
as rays caress each tender leaf,
secure in your embrace, am I.

You lift me up, and, when there is nothing
to soothe, you are always enough.
The relentless pounding of waves,
upon the sandy shoreline, could not wear away
my love for you.

Each day, I seek your face - you are brighter
than the sun - and you are never far away.
We walk together, you and I,
down this winding trail of life.
And I abide in you, and you are
my light in the dark.

This is unconditional. This is irrevocable.
As I am undeserving, you are unrelenting,
in your love for me. And you make me,
better than I could ever otherwise be;
a masterpiece.

What is love other than this?
You are warmer than heat,
stronger than strength, and closer
than my own heart to me.
Without you I am nothing;
weakness itself.

I do not lack,
when you are with me. I neither
hunger nor thirst. You give me
every good thing.

A candle flame flickers, but you have
never wavered. Like a strong tower,
protecting and watching over, are
you to me.

When the wind blows, and
the seas are stormy, I see you.
And I am not afraid of what
is to come. When you are here,
terrible things become beautiful.

What is life without your presence?
I am directionless and undone. You are
the air I breathe, you are
my daily bread. So essential to me,
I cannot be without you.

Through the long days, in drought,
in war, in famine, in sickness
and in health. You sustain me
and living is such a joy.
I tell everyone I know.

And dusk, when it comes,
will be welcome. Even then,
I am yours - held in your arms.

Elizabeth Shield

I Shall Miss You When We Go

I shall miss you when we go
The morning sky of lightest blue
The yellow rays cast from the sun
Reflecting on the clouds anew

The bite of frosty morning air
Brushing up against dead trees
The quiet whisper of the wind
Tossing leaves like orange seas

A speckled matting of birds in flight
Framed against the dawning sun
And morning clouds of pearly cream
Alighting on cables that run

A solitary toy left out
To frost and freeze in winters fields
Piles of sugar beets in mounds
Remaining from the harvest yields

And I stand here in my window
Watching this scene as hushed as snow
And one thing quite clear in my mind
How I shall miss this when we go

Elizabeth Shield

In My Mind

In my mind, there is a room
Who's color scheme and
Mod designs are
Usually just for me and
Sometimes if a caller comes
I let them in
If we are friends I
Let them stay awhile, because
Its lonely in my perfect room, and
All the best times are when you
Decide to stop in and to stay
Here with me, and
Since I care for you
A lot, when you are tired
You can sleep, on my bed.
My perfect bed has room
For two, and when you
Sleep I watch you breath
And wish I could lie
Next to you, but you
Aren't mine, so I will stay
Here, waiting for you to
Wake up, for you
To make me laugh again

Once in a while, if
I am tired, I will
Imagine you are too, and
That you come in to my room
And see me sleeping, but
Instead of leaving you
Lie by my side and
Hug me close so
When I wake I am warm
And I hug you back before
I fall back asleep again

I love you when
You hug me in my room

The one that is
In my head, with all the
Pretty colors, and soft
Blankets, we wrap ourselves in
Sleeping with a head and hand
On your chest, with you
Hugging me close, and
Breathing into my hair,
Making it flutter back
And forth against my ear
Until evening comes, and
I get up to watch the
Sun set slowly, through
The window with you
At my side, and hearing the
Birds calling their sweet
Farewells outside my room
Where cool mountain air moves
Through the trees and carries
The milkweed fluff up into
The marsh-mellow pink sky
With cotton candy clouds,
And an early moon
Hanging like a necklace
Above us, in my head
I have everything,
Because you are there
With me, and the
Boundaries that show up
In normal circumstances
Aren't there anymore

But then...

I wake up and I
Know that my dream
Will never become a
Reality, and all I can
Do is watch from
Afar and wish I could
Walk up and hug
You and that you
Would feel the same

Way as me, because
I like you and, its
Awful to be the
Only one left wanting
I hope that you
Are left wanting
Too, since then you
Might try harder and
Then it wont feel so
Bad to be me, all
Alone in my room
Watching the sun set
And standing alone
In the cold mountain
Breeze and hearing the
Birds call sweet farewells
With no one to say
Farewell to but
The eternal orange sun

Elizabeth Shield

In Sickness

We were alone, you and I.

Though I did not ask questions,
I wondered with my eyes
As you took my temperature
and listened to my sighs.
When you brought me dinner
and you went the extra mile
I fell in love with your fingertips,
relished your kind smile,
and wished that you could stay,
if only for a while.

It hurt me more than sickness
when at last you let me go.
I had finally recovered,
but that didn't matter - no;
Teasing you was sunlight
in which my stunted heart could grow.
I wished that I could tell you,
but now you'll never know.

Oh, and I went back to see you
for any reason I procured
But though I had recovered,
I had not yet been cured
Longing for you to like me,
I could not rest assured.

Those days, they passed so quickly
and now our time has gone
But I was glad to meet you,
for in mem'ry you live on

In the quarantine I lay,
your careful eyes upon me

We were alone, you and I.

In The Silence Of The Night

In the silence of the night
There is a certain sort of song
Like currents in the air, so slight
Whisking the flaming candle light
Making me sleep before too long.

Elizabeth Shield

It Is November

It is November
And all the leaves face my way
Overlapping tussocks of grass
Like long forgotten hills
Dwelling in the overhang of fall

It is November
Orange ribbons hand in tatters
Patched up yellow cloaks are draped
And whisking in the wind
Then drifting to the earth
And becoming winters pillow

It is November
And there stands a lonely tower
Base adorned with red bushes
Flags no longer flying
Crouched and crippled by the frost

It is November
My feet bear down on acorns
A thousand fold
All left and forgotten
Even to the squirrels
Just a layer `neath my feet

It is November
The solitary pines stand solid
Near the ivy covered wall
Their boughs raise and hail the heavens
And their needles fall
As the autumn wind dances a mournful dance

It is November
Bare branches rake the cloudy skies
And scratch out their heartfelt pleas
Against cold glass windows
Seeking what they have lost and will not find

It is November
An old gate stands ajar
Beckoning to no one
Standing solidly open
Despite the cruel fall wind

It is November
Trees make colored circles
A fading gold on fading green
A fireworks display
Now falling to the ground

It is November
Cold air fills my body
Cruel wind tosses my hair
I seek a shelter from autumn
My door is open
Now I am home

Elizabeth Shield

It's Almost Fall Again

'It's almost fall again, ' I say
'summer is almost over.' we
only have a few weeks left, but
I can't think of what to do
Whoever came up with
this stupid schedule should
have given us a few more weeks

'The harvest moon is up! ' I yell
'Come see, Come see! ! ' She runs
outside, but alas, the trees are
in the way, and all there is
to see is an orange halo, it's
beautiful, and a harbinger
of fall, and then after fall
will come my birthday

'The best time of year, ' I announce
'to me, is fall.' My mom asks
why that is so, and I can only
tell her about the red and
orange and yellow leaves
and the azure skies and
the white cottony clouds,
she understands, I know

'Aaaghh! Nooo! ' I scream
'Don't steal my inner tube! '
We are swimming at the pool,
because it's still summer, I think,
Fall starts on September 23,
or at least, thats what google and
the I.A.U. told me, even though
to me fall should start in August

'August, It seems so...' I think
'Orange, August is an orange word.'
When I hear August, I think orange
Then I think leaves, and then I think

pumpkins, but Augustus makes me
think of cold marble pillars, in
dusty art galleries, dont get me
wrong, I love art, but Augustus
is a cold, polished white pillar
in a dust old art gallery, somewhere

'October, reminds me...' I'm on a roll now
'Of the ideal fall days, and cold nights.'
Do you know what the ideal fall day is?
Of course not! Its a windy day, where
the leaves are blowing around on the
ground, and the sky is blue blue blue
with puffy white clouds, and the sun
crowns the glory with a warm, dappled
light, ahhh october, you are truly blest

'Oops! ' I think I skipped one,
'September is schooltime.'
A joy and a sadness, a blessing
and a curse, that september, it's
very bipolar, but who doesn't love,
the first few days of school? You
see your friends again, and meet
some new people, and quickly,
you learn which teachers NOT
to have, and you get lost, most
likely, you get lost, that's what
school is all about, and September,
as it happens, is mostly about school

'November...' I sigh this one
'Is about birthdays and rain.'
November is a rather dreary month,
I shouldn't say that, but I KNOW,
Happily, though, it has a lot of breaks,
from school that is, and it also has some
ideal october days, but mostly, what it
has are ideal November days, which are
cold and rainy and force you to stay,
inside, warm and cosy, in front of a
fire, playing board games with friends

As for the birthdays, there are two that
I remember, those being mine, yay,
and my freind's, I turn 16 this year,
I'm hoping for a wonderful birthday

'December...' Another sigh
'Marks the end of fall.' But not
until the month is almost through,
strangely enough, winter starts on
the 21st, but that really makes no
sense to me, since, it will most
likely start snowing long before then,
really, I wonder who comes up with these
things, but I guess winter always comes
early here, and I can't say I hate that,
there are so many things to anticipate,
like skiing and christmas markets,
school gets out, you know how it is
winter truly is a wonderful season

' I would continue ' I trail off
' But I have no reason.' I have
no great love of Spring and Summer
Spring, yess, and before that New Years,
and after that spring break, and then
comes summer with the stifling heat
and the release of school, even though
here, you dont get out until June, which
is crazy in itself, as if we would concentrate
after the month of May, its outrageous
even to consider it, so no, I will not
bother with summer and spring

'Who cares, ' I say happily
'It's almost fall again.' I smile
Every other season bows to Fall
I think that's almost an oxymoron,
I'm hilarious, I know it, I really try,
but fall really is the best and
I think I'll stop my rant now, I'll be
quite busy you know, preparing for
school and waiting for Fall, because

I really, REALLY love Fall

Elizabeth Shield

It's Winter Again

The falling clouds
the rising boughs
of winters snow
in winds that blow

a single flake
a frosty leaf
upon my nose
beneath my feet

a mournful sighing
a hearty crackle
whisked in my ears
all round me near

a misty cloak
a sharp cold bite
draped round my neck
upon my face

a frosty kiss
an icy sting
from old Jack Frost
and cold North Wind

My lips are blue
It's winter again

Elizabeth Shield

Lapsed

You are a man grown, but afraid
Of the future and its billows
Of what steps to take
You oscillate
Between your many choices,
Between action and inaction,
And then subside.

No choice is still a choice.
You know it but pretend not to see.

You are fledged and feathered,
But not yet flown.
You are faded and worn,
Yet you've never left home.
The world is yours, yet you aren't free.
It burdens you, it bends your shoulders down.
Gentle and retiring,
I see the struggle dying in your eyes.

What is youth if it's reduced to this?

You were the one: tall and talented;
We had no doubt of your success.
You charmed our hearts with
Wit and confidence.
Where are you now?
You've halted in the making,
you cannot find the path.

A once sturdy jar has crumbled,
And now must be recast.

Elizabeth Shield

Library

Shelves for books and shelves for thoughts
Boxes, leaflets and brochures
Wrought iron ends the paper lineup
Silken characters thread old scrolls
Tape recorders, card catalogues
Mental and physical meet in mahogany
Curl upon couches, dance `mongst the dust.
American typewriter; the scribe of yore
Mingling, the past with the present
Macintosh holds the blinking future
Or does it?
Fingers still sliding with silky pleasure
Through a worn tome; minds trawl
Still searching for treasure; still
Discovering truth

Elizabeth Shield

Life Of Clouds

I lift my eyes, to raining skies
And chance to see a single cloud
Halfway between heaven and earth
Racing across the dove gray space
Chasing the light that lingers there

It is a race too close to call
Between the cloud and still blue sky
Though the wind is picking up
Its clear to me, there soon will be
A single cloud in endless night

Though the gap is very small
Between the cloud and sunny blue
It seems the destination is like
The opposite shore, to a sinking ship
Too close to miss, too far to reach

I understand, the cloud, like me
Is standing on, some forgotten shore
Out of reach to all it loves
Straining for the promised land
And always falling far to short

The treasure, as always, is hidden away
I don't have a map to find it with
I'm always running, reaching out
For a prize I cannot win
To fill a need I cannot fill

The dove gray cloud, has crossed the sky
I know not if it won or lost
Its race to catch the dying sun
And yet I stand here thinking aloud
Are we, in some ways, like that cloud?

Elizabeth Shield

Light Trap

Your eyes are like starlight,
scattered constellations and I am all agog
and I am lost, because
I cannot tell Orion from the Pleiades,
and Mercury's a mystery to me

Tell me what it means,
when you look at me, when I
fall under the tender beam of your gaze.
When you stay with me, instead of
orbiting onward,
Is this gravity? or tragedy?

You are my clarity,
I just wish it were more clear to me,
what I am to you.
Any indication would do.

I think I might be
In love with you

Elizabeth Shield

Mandarin Orange

Mandarin orange, sunset gleam
Across the slowly painted hills
A fire is dying in the sky
Upon the wire the crows alight
Night is called into existence
Once more the twinkling stars cry out
A thousand screams of piercing light
Frames the moons silent, silver glow
Ancient air, moving quietly
The nightingale rustles its wings
The fading blue heralds the dark
Blue jeans dripping from the day sky
White clouds abandoned skyward
Like sandals in the fresh cut grass
Waiting patiently for a wind
Homeward bound, they fade away slow
A thousand years of agony
Erosion in the slowest sense
And for what? They are forgotten
A lost toy, left in the town park
A homework assignment, thrown out
They crumple up and blow away

Dust of the earth, how will you die?
Will the rains wet you with their dew?
Or do you remain, blown by winds?
A thousand tired tales you tell us
The things you have seen, and have lost
You shout your story to the sky!
Until you are naught but a whisper
Spread over the earth, the people know
They know but they can't remember
Until the last day, they forget
But then the sun sets below them
Bright orange, then they remember
A brilliant tale of earths first birth
How life sprang up from the blackness
At the call of a mighty word
They remember, they hear the call

They lift their heads to the heavens
They fly up into the sunset
Wings of silver, reflected light
The moon becomes their reflection
Dark black outlines against the stars
A spirit dying in the sky
A bright, shimmering moonlit night
The ancient air calls up a song
Now the dawn, Mandarin orange

Elizabeth Shield

Morning In November

Silken halos round the lights
Wreathing unfamiliar nights
Dawn is still to far to say
I wish it were another day

Dew drops hanging in the air
Jack Frost hugs the windows there
Pinker streaks now tinge the night
The first rays of the morning's light

...

A quick ride doen the icy street
A heater warms my frozen feet
My head cold gives me quite a chill
Remaining scarfless even still

Hark! The sun has cleared the tor
Oh, how I long to see it more
The golden beams sift through the dawn
And give me warmth to linger on

But when the last bell rings, they say
You will be free another day
The sun's warmth now is mine to keep
Until the last, when I will sleep

Elizabeth Shield

My Greatest Weakness

It was like a desert filled with sound, and barren of all else
Meaningless, and all the more painful for it
With large carnivorous words that dove and bit and clawed me
Bleeding, but never seeing that I bled, I ran
The endless halls were full of gnawing unknown sayings
I escaped from the things that plagued me
The things I did not understand
The ground rose up and swallowed me whole
I fell

Darkness became my newest fear,
Intensified by the ever present thoughts that whispered
Just beyond the range of interpretation,
Fighting my deadened sight and muffled hearing
My vertigo was ended as the minutes stretched
And I still remained suspended,
Still I could not see
Gravity was my only observation
Was this the next prison?

Reaching my hands out to the sides
I touched the darkness, like smooth ribbon
A tangible slipstream, dark and dangerous
Sliding as I fell
When I pulled it wrapped around my arms
Flying became my greatest joy,
Sight was never needed in this vacuum
This beloved endless hole of matter invisible and unknowable
And the words became the whisper of the night

My cuts were healed by mysterious satin
And at my weakest, my passion was grasped
Laughter fueled from airless, breathless wonder
Stricken by good fortune,
I was in love with the unnamable thing
Which held me up

Elizabeth Shield

My Love The Sea

Diamond surf between my toes
Like wedding rings
Satin seaweed's soft caress
A humble dress

By any other name the sea
Would hold me just the same
With salt-peppered grains the shore
Can look on naught with shame

Fingertips arranged in ridgy lines
Record the time
While worries and perceptions glide
Out like the tide

The Maker with his ocean eyes
Loved me when he made the sea

Elizabeth Shield

My Method

So see the poetry and shine
Your words make you as bright as stars
About you is a graceful air
While concentration fills your face
Seeking though, and never finding
Your letters fill your waking hours
When graceful eyelashes meet your cheeks
To slumber you give in again
With soft hands curled around your face
And bitten fingers loosely clenched
Sighing softly, the words are there
Still sparkling in your unconscious
Painting a lovely picture of
The one you love most, or writing
Words of truth for your eyes alone
Your stuttering attempts to share
Are easily misunderstood
Your soul shines out beneath your words
Like bright rays of the glinting sun
Cresting over the green welsh hills
Kissing the dewy pasture grass
And running along the fencepost.
Glowing like a firefly in summer
Floating on the breeze, words hold you,
Words carry you and drop you down,
Into a hidden copse, where fears
And dreams are realized, where words
Flow freely, and reality
Is far away enough to be
A distant memory in your mind
You go there, and in the quiet
You sit there, in the warm silence
There is where, forever after,
you make art

Elizabeth Shield

Pairs Of Four

I'm always hurt,
because of you

Your selfish words,
And laughing smile
I know it isn't
Worth my while
But you keep going
So insincere
And your true feelings
Never made clear

I used to think
That you cared too
But now I'm not
Sure if it's true
I wonder if
You ever care
Or if you heart
Just isn't there

Your eyes are always
Black as night
I doubt they ever
See the light
Your smile is always
Left half drawn
A happy face
Just painted on

Sometimes I cry
Because of you
I don't know why
Just that it's true
You never care
You never feel
I know you never
Are for real

Just like a dream
Not gone my way
Just like the rain
On Saturday
You seem to never
Go my way
I wish you'd go
I wish you'd stay

I miss you when
You have to go
But when you come
Gah! I don't know
You aggravate me
With your lies
But when we hug
There is surprise

I think I like you
More than a friend
But this friendship
Seems to never end
I wonder if
You like me too
And maybe what
I am to you

If you care
Why do you lie
So insincere
You make me cry
What about me
Is so different
My body or
Is it my mind?

I doubt its form
I hate my looks
Not pretty like
Those girls in books
My mind is not
As fast as yours

I don't compare
Of that I'm sure

Why do I think
Of you this way
You didn't treat
Me well today
I wonder if
We'll ever change
Or if we'll simply
Stay the same

I hum a song
And think of you
It leaves my heart
All cold and blue
I hope someday
Your mask is gone
And that I won't
Have to wait long

Tomorrow is
A brand new day
Maybe you'll have
New things to say
Something that's kind
Like a real friend
I hope THAT day
Will never end

Elizabeth Shield

Perennial Friendship

It's so sad when friendships die
And you do not know the reason
Slowly slipping from their mind
Falling leaves turning the season.

All the time you spend is there
Floating out in nether space
And loneliness your ghostly shadow
As you go from place to place.

When you see them again by chance
If you try to meet their eye
Perhaps they see your hopeful look
Maybe they too would like to try...

For friendships blossom and they fade
Like flowers through the changing days
And like the bulbs after spring thaw
We'll bloom once more: friends after all.

Elizabeth Shield

Perfect

She danced a dance no living heart had seen
And only angels rivaled all her grace
Yet even as the pure white swans will preen
She smooths her long black hair from round her face

She, in her wisdom, ran the longest mile
Not listening to any harker's cry
And kept her values with her all the while
If she were any faster she would fly

This one, you think, hasn't a single flaw
With every move, of this you wold be sure
Only to find, she's broke the natural law
And gravity wont hold her to this earth

But even as the bonds that held her here,
Were loosed, she ran on bravely with no fear

Elizabeth Shield

Piano Player

Piano player take my by the hand
And tell me how galaxies revolve
With starry arms and nebulous fingers
Etched in your mind
Piano player play for me
The music of the planets turning
And songs of solar flares
With cosmic voices between each ivory key
Play just for me

And tell me about Einstein and his laws
Whom you admire
Speak of gravity and magnetism
Hold me in the palms of your hands
Tell me of beginnings and of ends
Piano player bring me to gentle tears
When raw emotion flows
And your eyes close
Strong fingers telling tales of glorious things
Why are you so big and yet so small
So mindful of the larger things
And simple in your ways

Piano player tell me why you love
The universe and all her shining children
How you travel there and back again
But never leave
And how your music melts me
It's so like you piano player
To take me by surprise
Piano player open up my eyes
Teach me to play and to amaze
So when I meet your gaze
Mine will be as deep
And as starry as yours

Step forth, piano player
Yours will be greatness
Unfathomable songs of lights

A strong, warm-handed love
And destiny
Oh, piano player,
Take me by the hand
And seat me at your side
Play just for me
And love me with your mind

Elizabeth Shield

Planning Ahead

They say what we've accomplished now,
is all the fruit of all we've wrought
how beautiful it is, they say
ignoring how one-sided this
this vision that they keep declaring
painting a future bright and clear
but what they overlook is fear
and the stress and strain, its wearing
us down, you think, what did I miss
and all of this? we will soon pay,
so dont forget, though they forgot
that each tomorrow starts with now

Elizabeth Shield

Poems At Midnight

A book, a pen, and a light,
are keeping me awake tonight,
I sit here, forced to write,
These words hold me in their sight.

Elizabeth Shield

Poisoned Wishes

If mountains are immovable, yet crumble
Under the oppression of time, who are we
To stand, and strive for and demand
A legacy that lasts beyond the borders
Of our limited temporal sphere - hazy
And unclear - while up above the fates
Hover with scissors above gossamer
Strands, and whisper "Be careful
What you wish for."

Elizabeth Shield

Proof Of Our Existence

The lake was a silent ring of ice in the predawn cold
Wind in the trees became a staccato percussion
To us;
Chilled and frostbitten we danced metallically
Across the frozen expanse
Sharp metal blades hungering to cut the ice.
We carved up the opaque oval with our silvery flight
A dozen circles overlapped behind us
There was a sort of rhythm in our existence there
The clattering branches became our heartbeats
Excited, straining, whirling in the dark
There was no purpose in our swift and winding motion
But still the chandelier of stars hung over us
Until the sunlight melted it away
Still, our dance lingered
Past the coming of the light
And past our departure.
Daytime wept icy tears upon them
Our graceful grooves, a shining diamond necklace
A beautiful creation, a proof of our existence

Elizabeth Shield

Rapid Eye Movement

Somewhere between reality and REM state, I met you again
And your sweet scent made me more senseless
Than I already was
Within myself, I wished that it could never end
But life has snatched you away
And only God and fate can return you to me
So I'll pray for that eventuality
And that the feelings remain
Somewhere between reality and REM state, I found you
And I loved you more there, in one moment
One embrace
Than you'll likely ever know

Elizabeth Shield

Reclaimed

Old idols of silver and gold
called me back to past practices
bid me bend my knees and bow my head
and worship at their tarnished altar
black with blood and dark with rust
the dust of human souls covered the floor.

Offerings of thousands, heedless, in pursuit
of what metal manmade gods could never give.
Why did I too feel their pull, and draw near?
I looked them in the eyes and saw them leer
but no more did I feel fear than rapture
- as I had often before.
I left them in their stead and passed on
from that place; stained dark with regret
and desires of impure nature.

I quit the temple, left the lies,
and shook off the plaguing shadows
of their dominion, all that harried
and harangued. All that lead to death
I banished far away, climbed out of
that cavernous maw of darkness and
shook off its cloying scent.

Glorious, then, I beheld the dawn,
and by its light a narrow road,
small and straight, my future waits
along its winding way, beyond
the glad horizon; to the mountains
or down to the sea, I know not where
I travel, but, I know it is the only path
to victory.

Elizabeth Shield

Sitting Here In The Sun

Sitting here in the sun
Thinking of you
Watching the world turn
And the hours pass me by

There are still times when,
Even now, I doubt your sincerity
And others when,
It is concrete in my mind

To others, I am certain,
It has been blatantly obvious for weeks now
And I'm wondering
Why it is, that we keep deluding ourselves

Because I know
And I know you know
But this friendship
It is very important to me

I never want to let it go
Until you are sure
Until we are sure
That we won't be overwhelmed by it all

The flood of emotions
Is normal by now
But it can still catch you by surprise
And it can be cruel

I know that you too
Cry alone sometimes
And that you too wish, as we all wish,
That someone was there to hold you

I see you too, being a jerk
And probably, the part I can't see
Regrets it later
Because everyone does

But I wonder, also
If that mask you wear, is glued to your face
Mine isn't, but I only take it off for me
When I can't stand to lie to myself anymore

I hope someday, that we all remove ours
And let whatever passion we have
Shine on through, because
In the end, that is all we have that's ours

A passion, and a love
Like a fuel that keeps on burning,
For a thousand years, and never dies
Because when we die, someone passes it on

And I know that you aren't the only one
And I am not the only one
There will be others maybe hundreds of them
But right now, at this moment, you are for me

And I hope that, I am for you
Though my feelings may change
I hope, for this time, I'm yours
And hope is all I have

So now, there it is, on these papers
A piece of my soul rests
Here, and you may take it and read it
But it will always be mine

And, it will always be yours

So here I am, sitting here in the sun
Thinking of you
And your hug
And your smile
I smile a happy smile
And keep dreaming of us

Elizabeth Shield

So Then It Happened

So then it happened
And I stood there, a tidal wave of questions
Looming over me like a thundercloud
And I felt a sharp breath of air enter my lungs

I couldn't believe, just couldn't
After all this time, all those good times
That our friendship would be so altered
Perhaps, as a butterfly emerges from its cocoon

Papery wings brush the air by my ear
But its not a butterfly, floating by
Its coarse black hair, wavy black hair
And my hair is not black but brown

And I sigh and agree
Relief is not my only feeling,
And as the butterflies fly away
I lean into your hug, and

Feeling your hands on my back
Let myself be swung round in circles
Because we are so happy
We never want to break away

But we do and then,
The tidal wave is gone
But the questions remain
Bobbing 'bout my head

I brush them away
And we walk down the hall
All doubt suspended
With your hand in mine

So then it happened
And I stand here, hugging you
Knowing as my mind sings
That wherever this may go

The future looks bright

Elizabeth Shield

Speak

your accent is like, cherry-caramel to my ears
my favourite flavour, and it kills
me when you stop talking, to ask if I am
listening; I hear your tones more than your
words, my dear
keep talking

Elizabeth Shield

Speechless

feather light, paper thin,
but deep as the night is dark
your words sinking in, and down
through my skin, beginning in
and coming out, what did I say
was my reply, quite hasty or
did i forget to speak at all
this is your fault, your
silly words, they stop me dead,
and steal my very breath away,
the blame is yours, and never
mine, the weakness here is,
in the mind, or maybe lying deeper,
in the heart, they crept in fast,
and left me quite immobile
so whisper soft, i, like a child,
am dazed and wondering
let my eyes ask everything,
and let my hands, say everything
here in your arms

Elizabeth Shield

Still Young

You are azure, like the sky and,
at one point, I thought that I
could fly,
up into the wide expanse
of your embrace,
but alas, my feathers
are not yet grown,
I am a fledgling still
too weak to try, and you,
are unreachable

And all my efforts, all
my attempts, have been in vain.
And many others have caught
your grace, and felt
the shining of your eyes.
While I remain,
grounded here, in youth
and innocence.
Perhaps that is my place.

Down here, I watch you from
afar, broad and beautiful...
and not for me.
Unequal; that is what we are.
And so my strivings cease -
I'll leave some time to grow -
make peace with stunted feathers,
dreams unrealized.
Maybe later, I will find
my wings.

Elizabeth Shield

Superhuman Existence

The subway pulsed through the pneumatic tubes
A creature of light, breathing recycled air through ventilators
Rushing like blood from the heartbeats of the condemned
Exciting, exhilarating
Carelessly, daring the sheer speed to end me
I stood at the nose of the train, once again
Conducting the currents of suffocating air
Noisome, they howled like children
But bent beneath my fingertips

What silly people sat back,
In those comfortable compartments
Believing that tube travel was the work of science
That each new burst of speed was machine efficiency
Not my impressive control

It writhed like a snake in the pouring air
So hard to control, barely breathing
I struggled with the enormous pressure
Of guiding it
And another pressure on my soul
Every moment a new decision
To fight or let go
Docking at the next station, or being crushed
Tremendous velocity; my first love

This work, I don't do it for the passengers
I do it for myself
This speed has brought me to new heights:
I move like light itself

Elizabeth Shield

The Aftermath

To while away the waning hours
beneath the scarlet, sunlit leaves
Now or never, say the flowers
they are dying as you grieve

the wind will pick their ashen petals
and fling them upwards, to the sky
to be brought back by icy showers
as the heavens start to cry

when the silky, sunlit sadness
slips, slowly from your folded frame
rise and brush off all your regrets
you'll play the game another day

Elizabeth Shield

The August Hush

Bars of light across my legs
As daylight dies and summer fades
And wistful wind goes whistling where
Green leaves rake the sky so bare
And leave an etching on the blue,
White condensation trailing through,
While we beneath stir up the dust
And pass through gates covered in rust.
The creek will go on laughing there
No matter who is here to care.

Now I go trailing down the halls,
While all around the evening calls.
Bathing me in slanting light
Invited out into the night.
Where glowing thousands fill the sky
Twinkling stars and fireflies.
As gossamer hands lay liquid jewels
Upon the winsome spider's spools.
And all the time the crickets sing
Vibrant and sweet, of endings.

Soon, at last, all will depart
Except, a fragment of my heart,
Which has grown in amongst the trees
And thus can never fade or leave.
Though I grow old and go my way,
A piece of me will always stay.
In this knowledge I am content
Effects of a summer well spent.

Elizabeth Shield

The Created

In humble days we ambled long upon your slopes
Handmade, just like us
Watered by the dew, and downtrodden
Yet resilient, reaching heavenward
Glory-full in spite of all

Wreathed in smiling expectation
Breathless in awe, were we
At what grand structures lay
In cumulus and citrus,
Far above
Glistening with a weight of glory,
Upheld by your grace

Elizabeth Shield

The Dance Was Slow

The dance was slow
Your hands were soft
As we twirl in the half-light
We speak of the most
Trivial things, and I wonder
If those were the things
You were thinking of?

I didn't think
That you cared much
And to be honest
I didn't think of you
At all, until that is
You asked to dance
My heart fluttered
A bird caught in a trap
And I said yes

I do not know
Just how you feel, about
The dances that you got
Or whether there was any
Feeling behind the question
I know that I am torn between
Thinking of you as a friend
And maybe something more

Elizabeth Shield

The Dream

Ascending raindrops, lilies bloomed
And there we stood so clear
And yet so indistinct, the background lay
Twining softly, limbs and boughs
Twisting, brushing leafy fingertips

Arisen with the dawn of morning
Awoken with butterfly kisses
Aligned along the bleak horizon
Turning ahead to meet your face
Tumbling into this dreamscape

Breathless, Speechless, Thoughtless
Emotions like hurricanes, burned into my mind

Elizabeth Shield

The Effect

You say that you had left asunder
Now all my teardrops hanging under
Neath my chin they drip and fall
I wonder if you would care at all

Elizabeth Shield

The Final Phase

I felt the waning of our love predictably
Just at the moment when I desired the most
When you were the deepest dream to me,
You began to fade in my sight
Despite how I fought it,
You slipped through my fingers, poisoning me as you went
And when the phase was complete you disappeared
I should have seen it coming
You went out of my life like the tide, predictably
Leaving me alone on the sands
Wiping the gritty, messy residue of our love off my heart
Please don't come back now
I can see you considering, but I beg you
Fade wholly and completely
Drift off dramatically, become the stormy wandering dust
Scattering misguided feeling at each oasis
Let all our past affection be just that,
I sent my love for you to sea in exchange for peace of mind
Now, you can't come back

Elizabeth Shield

The Last Flower

When did we ever say it, that we would always be together
Naïvely thinking, the world was ours, taking it at our leisure
The harsh facts, life is ephemeral, fleeting swiftly on hinds feet
We deigned to forget our troubles, and doused ourselves in pleasure

Never thinking, only doing, we now see, oh how wrong we were
The time remaining is short and even now we are unsure
Remaining stunned, but grasping tightly to a future we could see
Only the myriad seconds passing, the time left passing in a blur

How hard I cried, fingertip to fingertip, the oceans of my soul
Dried out their loss upon the rocky shores and barren shoals
Crashing up high waves with deep longing and stronger emotion
Pleading to God, that he not put asunder, but keep us whole

Oh, that the glassy panes and starry skies were weak or untrue
That I would never have cause to forget, among all things, you
And that our days apart, however they be, be numbered
With all this, and more the same, flowing from your soul and heart too

For the long hours of night, and passing slower, dreamt of things
For all the pain, the heartfelt longing, and tears my torn heart brings
And for all fear, as separation dulls past, and the doubting
Let my sodden heart be turned anew, and hope a flow'r in spring

Elizabeth Shield

The Present

Clear and crisp, the night that hovered, seeped into my soul.
The distant glittering host descended, near and soft, and light.
I stood, ankle-deep in salt water, neck deep in ambient atmosphere,
Eyes singing, in the starlight, a sound beyond all words,
Heavenly, ethereal darkness, what love you speak to me.
I see sweet traces in the sparkling milky way
And in the gently swirling foam.

Oh, yes.
He must have known, in the beginning,
how I'd love him in the way he made the world.

Elizabeth Shield

The Price Of Freedom

We - glorious we -
revel in our freedom
illusion though it is
and cling to it
above all else.

We have burned many
bridges, scorched many souls
that we might have our,
heart's desires, each moment
as they come.

We burn as if on fire,
and our flames consume
any restriction
any objection
any compulsion.
These, we cannot understand.

Who would contain us?
Those who love us?
Scarred they are,
by our desire,
blackened by our need
destroyed by our wants
- selfish feelings claiming
every moment.
We exceed every attempt
to hold us back.

A generation drowning
in itself, and calling that a right.
The pleasures of asphyxiation
outweigh the cost,
and death stalks in darkness
round the corners of our
minds, and bids us come,
closer, into its electric embrace.

We draw nearer, like moths,
to the flame of our passions,
and burn out upon the altar
of our greed.

Us and all who love us,
offered up, and left behind:
charred and singed,
unrecognizable.

Why was restraint
ever something to be feared?
When was enough not enough?
How could such excess and
caprice, breed so successfully
in our minds and hearts?
When did giving become evil
and equal exchange grow
unsustainable?
How can love only go in
one direction?

It cannot. We burn -
wild and insatiable -
but it is not love that burns us.
We feast, but it is not consideration
that we choose as food.
We envelop each other,
and consume.

We want, and think not of consequences.
We take, and think not of results.
And screams of pain mix with pleasure.
Ours is the pleasure, theirs is the pain.
But when 'we' become 'they',
how will we find our methods?

Our right: freedom, yes,
and its close companions: suffering,
grief, pain.
The need for the freedom
to do anything, I fear,
is a kind of shackle in itself:

To require freedom is to not be free at all.

We are not free.

Enslaved, we are, to ourselves.

We have never been free.

We - glorious we -
wear chains of gold,
and bleed.

Elizabeth Shield

The Sum Of Their Parts

Indecision

For a moment, makes you think
About occurrences
They may or may not happen
But before that instant, you never would
Have thought of them or wished
For them to happen, because if you
Dream of it then, does it count as a wish?

Uncertainty

Counts for a lot in a dangerous moment
But when your are just confused, about
Normal everyday things, or maybe even
Teenage things, what does it matter
If you speak, it doesn't make sense anyway
Important questions are answered, but bluntly
Hacked apart they lie and bleed
But you didn't mean it that way

Questioning

You ask yourself many questions, but
The answers don't come, always
Forced to make decisions prematurely,
Making a mess of things, wondering
If this is what it will always be like, and
Hopefully someday, soon, you'll get a grip
And answer truthfully

Running

From your fears, does not solve the problem
And maybe you know that, but
You still do, because, it seemed easier and better,
At the time, and now you wonder
Surely they wont be able to catch you, you think
And you run away in vain, troubled thoughts
Cloud your judgment further, and
You know this, but ignore it

Age

Is not always an obstacle, sometimes
It could be a tool, wielded to create
The greatest advantage, and often coming
Around, to bite you in the rear, but lucky ones
You cant start over, aging each only once
You hold a one way ticket, and to drop it
Would mean death, though sometimes
You wish it were both ways

Dreams

They are a glimpse of heaven and perfection,
But the answer is not always they, shining in the
Light, your life may take a different road, and
Dreams will lift you up at night, and also bring you
Down in to the darkness of insomnia, when you
Realize that they are irrational or immoral, or un-freaking-reasonable
You see them anyway, against your will, you dream

Words

Sounds of joy and comfort can also hurt
A double-edged sword, giving and taking away
Drawing emotional blood, yet giving life, you
Wield it in great faith; always knowing it would hurt you
Never knowing what day, the day is, that you would trip
And stab yourself, or be stabbed with it
You will learn from the scars, they will fade,
But the pain lasts forever

Friends

Real are always there, but often unknown
Sometimes unidentifiable, you guess at which exist
The friends, who were always at your side, may
Turn out to be imposters, leeching off you,
While real friends go unnoticed, and hidden
You may not find them till the end, or you may
Hate them wrongfully, not knowing,
How they truly are

Life

A constant battle, a worthwhile struggle
And a one-way train trip to heaven, or hell
You wonder if its worth it, but it always is

You are here for a reason, however
Seemingly insignificant it is, you fulfill it, and then
You accomplish your goal, though unknown
You can do great things, witness great things
Be a great person

Love

Always, and forever, never ending
Remember the good times, forget
The bad times, laugh when possible
Cry when necessary, hug them tightly,
Kiss them softly and pray for them daily
Because they will always, ALWAYS, be worth it

Elizabeth Shield

The Teacher

Wizened, like the mountain ridges in the west,
you gazed across the desk at me, rheumy eyes unblinking,
and asked me what I wanted from life

When I answered, the blue opacity of your gaze seemed to sharpen
and pierce my soul
you clasped your hands comfortably, and rolled your ancient shoulders back
- trees rippled in the ridges of your crisply pressed shirt -
and you told me, with your well-worn voice, that you would exert every effort
to give me all the tools I needed to succeed

as you blinked, our conference ended, like the sun had gone down
I was free to leave, but lingered
your short white hair crested your brow like a fresh snowcap, you
had ravines beside your eyes, and smiled like a canyon
so I turned to go

And it occurred to me, as I left the inclines of your presence for
the flat horizons of my daily life, that I
would like to have the same peace that flowed
through your being,
it would be a healthy rain to the desert of my soul.

I longed to have the verdancy that you had - you,
forty years my senior; you put my youth to shame
but soon you would be my teacher, and
you would not let me go to waste

Elizabeth Shield

The Third Season: Autumn

With a general whirl of fading warmth and sunny breezes, she dons her many colored coat which trails along the ground.

Ephemeral, she passes slowly, and all the trees liken to her form, spreading colored circles on the ground.

She is the herald of her sister, with bright color fading and warm hues falling to the earth, she announced the coming snows and cold weather
'Dance with me' she calls, she clothes herself in leaves and cool breezes and hangs her fiery banners on the trees.

Very hesitant, she tiptoes away again, when her time is done, her sister winter blows through after her and freezes all her leaves.

Asleep, she remains in cold caves and secluded forests, she will return to dance again and again.

Eternal as she is fleeting, she dances ever in my thoughts.

Elizabeth Shield

The Verse Left Over

We laugh as we run by
the pale golden cornstalks
we keep turning left
and get lost in corn mazes

Elizabeth Shield

Through The Silent Eveningtide

Lying softly,
on the breeze
gentle air, stirring
the trees
and all is waiting
wistful, watchful
through the silent
eveningtide

Elizabeth Shield

Transition State

I felt the music die in me
Going slowly by degrees
Now in its place the figures whirl
And lists of numbers stand unfurled
All this cycles through my head
The songs that once were there are dead

I felt the rhythm fade away
Much slower than the end of day
And all that moved me once lay still
Now nothing brings my heart a thrill
Yes, now I think and use my head
And all the melodies are dead

Have my emotions petered out?
I neither cry, nor laugh, nor shout
As regularly as before,
But when I do I love it more

When will the reason come to me
As sudden as a summer breeze
That sweeps the ling'ring clouds away
And gives my doubts no cause to stay
Can I not have both heart and head?
Or is my spice of life now dead?

Elizabeth Shield

Twilit

All our hours have turned to hues
And golden tinted evening blues
While each and every lovely sound
Has gathered in the air around
And glass reflects the radiant light
But also hails the coming night
Which seeps across the dampened sky
And blankets all with silver sighs
All our hours are wrapped in rays
And silence brings the end of days

Elizabeth Shield

Water Cycle

Raindrops pool in azure skies
Yellow boots now flying through
Sparkling drops lift off, take flight
To come to rest on emerald leaves
And view the rising of the night
Glowing in the setting sun
Breeze bobbing them like fireflies
They slither down to dot the pane
And at a glance appears like rain
But with dawns first kiss, its trail is clear
First winters frost has now been here
He leaves a snaking snowflake web
Across the cold clear glass

Elizabeth Shield

What I'M Waiting For

The yellow leaves on my chair press into my back with a crackling murmur
What lovely fall this is, a paradigm of cool and restful beauty,
Sleep is peeping just beyond the next page of the book I read
And the throw blanket keeps me warm against the pleasant chill
A nap in fall air while waiting for grander things to happen
While waiting for you to appear
A pleasant option for a dreamer like me
Perhaps while I am sleeping the cure for cancer will be found
But I'll leave you a note, I'll stick it to my shoulder
"Hey, Romeo, what took you? " It says
"I've departed to a coniferous Narnian wood.
Please, wake me with a kiss."
That way I know I won't wake up until something wonderful occurs
You are the epitome of tall, dark, and handsome
And yet you are not cliché, I love you that way
Maybe I'll dream of you too, while the yellow leaves pile up at my feet
A modern Rip van Sleeping Beauty
But I already know what I'm waiting for

Elizabeth Shield

Where You Left Me

You abandoned me
In the quiet of my mind
In a forest of dark pines
And you called yourself my friend

Through the rushes lions prowled
In the shadows dread wolves howled
But all inside me was cowed
Because you were my best friend

This – a shell of me – you see
What's inside has been broken
A thousand pearls that might have been
Have left their voice unspoken

Not a word of it you said
Your face a mask of solid stone
And I was grieving all alone
The vicious doubt no longer dead

The wolves are peering through the pines
And shining teeth the lions bare
At me whose tragic shattered mind
Can scarce the near comeuppance bear

Footsteps – all that I have walked
And thoughts that I have spoken
With you were left, you turned away
Your striding gait unbroken

We were best friends from childhood on
But gone are those young carefree days
Forgiveness I can grant you now
It's not too late to change your ways

I can no longer feel the pain
The rain has drowned out all the growls
Your betrayal left a crimson stain
My mind with welcome numbness fills

Elizabeth Shield

Why And Summer Ending?

When summer ends
at first i feel
like i have been
left alone and
all my friends could
care less about
me, because they
have had their own
adventures, and
I dont really see
quite where we
fit in anymore

They all laugh
about jokes im
not part of and
i feel as if I
had moved away
again, and again,
because I'm a
selfish person, and
I dont want to
share these precious
friends, with anyone
else, I'm mad too
at myself, for
believing, that this
could ever work,
selfish people dont
get what they want,
but what they
deserve, and I think,
sometimes that if
I got what I deserved
that it would be
about time, since
I always manage to
slither out of
punishment anyway

Its a bad habit
and i know it,
most times, I would
play innocent, and
I wish I were still
innocent, but I,
like you, have been
poisoned to a certain
degree, and even
though I try to stop
it, the poison keeps
on coming, a whole
world full of poison,
coming at me, and
I am ashamed to
say that I dont think
I have enough faith
or endurance, or
even hope, to stop it.

That still selfish, I
know, it seems like
one of those movies,
the kind that make you
feel good when you
watch them, and there
is always a lesson to
be learned, and in
this case the lesson
would be something
like 'Share the burden,
Good friends are there
for you! ', but how do
you know? And who
do you choose to
share your burden with?

Dear God, I dont
ever thank you, so
when bad times come,
I feel bad about asking

you to help, and I
know I really dont
deserve it, but sometimes
I find it hard to believe
that you are willing
to help anyone, no
matter how many times
they have forgotton
you or denied you
or hidden you or
lost you, I could
go on, but even so
I dont know how
to ask, and then
believe whole-heartely
that it will come true,
I know how not to worry,
but not really how to
hold faith.

So, now summer is
ending, and I want to
cry because I am
not part of the memories
of my friends, selfishness
again, and I wonder
where it comes from,
the selfishness, why
am I so selfish, why
am I so jealous? If
the reason why is
that I care to much,
then why do I care?
And why dont they
care back, and
why cant I share the
burden, when there
are people all around
who I could share it with?
WHY?

Wind In The Trees

Wind in the trees
Pollen in the air
Water from the garden hose
Dripping from my hair

Tiny flowers in the grass
Stone swan by the gate
Sunlight slanting into rays
Only 15 past eight

Green grass in itchy clippings
Wire fence still barbed and sharp
A lonely tower standing
It's gate padlocked and dark

The wind a graceful dancer
She sweeps me off my feet
We smell like golden sunlight
As we twirl beneath the leaves

The sun is on the hillside
It's light has left the lawn
The time for dusk is starting now
The streetlamps flicker on

I lie down on the asphalt
So smooth and black and warm
Watching clouds on the horizon
Our first summer thunderstorm

A tidal wave of daffodils
The wind has hit the flower bed
The storm clouds pile up higher
A frightening thunderhead

Raindrops dot the sidewalk
The sun bids me adieu
I leap over the front step
And kick the front door too

The curtains flap and flutter
The wind chimes loud and clear
I mount the stairs at high speed
Pulling the covers past my ear

Sleeping summer thunderstorms
Sweet as bliss can be
The only thing that I could add
Is you, here next to me

Elizabeth Shield

Windswept Dreamers

melancholy
midsummer's dreamers
passing sunny days and clear blue skies
and missing the rain
like fragile flowers
poppies amongst the golden wheat
divided
and the winds of destiny blow
their seeds, to far off places
the dreamers go, leaving their bodies behind,
they yearn by the poolside
whilst the hot sun beats blindingly down
separate from their peers
in repose
in thought
in wonder
the mass of humanity flows unbidden
the arcing sun, the waning day, the passing time
irrelevant
others return home
but always,
there are dreamers, with hearts far away

Elizabeth Shield

Words That Linger

History, Mythology,
Words on paper that I see,
tease me, prod me, trick my eyes,
Then they take me by surprise.
I arrange them to report,
but they in restless clusters, sort,

In my head they quickly swim,
But when I search, I'm lacking them,
Still this mystery grows e'er deep,
These words haunt me when I sleep,

When I read and when I write,
And even on the darkest night,
I see these words where e'er I go,
This great torrent never slows!

Let heaven assent, I ne'er forsook,
My words written in this book.

Elizabeth Shield

Yours

Fingers on ivory buttons, mirrored.
The light of a single lamp settles
on porcelain-pale skin, and veins-
shoulder blades and long brown hair.
For your eyes alone, unveiled, revealed.

All of me, thin, light and yet young
Pointed toes and delicate stretches,
All that was concealed, kept back, covered
Stripped back and laid bare, in thin air.
For you, who are now also me and mine
Receive me, with your eyes and arms,
untouched and pure.

Likewise, I shall do for you.
I am yours.

Take what I have kept apart, and
into your heart, please draw me in.
Hold me and hear my voice in your ear,
sweetly singing songs just for you,
whispering secrets never shared, and
showing things yet unseen.

Curves and edges, ocean eyes and
shadowed lashes. Delicate fingers and
lingering gaze. You amaze me with the fact,
that you are mine. That I was your choice.
Tie me to yourself, encircle me and never
let me go.

Likewise, I shall do for you.
I am yours.

- - -

Let age be just a number, time
but a line, and death the only separation.
Love me with every love, and show me

all kindness and light.

Likewise, I shall do for you.

I am yours.

Elizabeth Shield