

Poetry Series

gina prettybrowneyes
- poems -

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gina prettybrowneyes()

Hello, and welcome to my bio. Thank you for taking the time to read some of my poems and I would love some ratings and comments to help me improve my writing. So a little bit about me: I live where it is cold, wet, and gray about 80% of the time and go to school where it is slightly less cold, wet, and gray.

Ironically, I love sunshine. :) I like going to the beach with my little brothers, reading a good book, and baking. My favorite colors are teal, purple, and anything that sparkles. My passions include music, psychology, justice and equality for all, poetry, and my family. Have a wonderful day!

Love, peace, and snickerdoodles,
Gina

P.S. if you're an predator, please don't email me. I know all your little tricks and it's very annoying to have to keep putting you all on my banned members list.

2 Voices In A Quiet Night

a tiny voice
(in a not so tiny night)

"er...hello? "

SILENCE
(as expansive as the darkness of night)

a braver voice
(in a night where brave knights fly)

"anybody out there? anybody at all?
for I've heard tell of a
God
a Yahweh
Allah, Gaia
a Higher Power
an Omnipotent Force
and I'd like to know what's out there"

I AM
(heard in places with no ears attached)

"you are what? "

I AM THE BEGINNING & THE END
CREATOR & DESTROYER
I KNOW ALL & SEE ALL
I AM IN EVERY TEAR DROP
& EVERY LAUGH;
IN EVERY HEART & MIND
I HAVE BEEN, AM, & WILL BE FOR EVER MORE
CALL ME WHAT YOU WILL,
I AM I

...
a voice begins, falters
trying to reach out into the great wilderness of sky
looking for this "I"

and what name shall be given?

then, with sudden clarity,
"I understand
you are who you are..."

...for 2, 000 years past for 2,000 years further
humans questioning and proclaiming and praising
and ever wondering
because that is how we survive
we have faith in something larger than ourselves and
we persist.
we cling to our Bibles, Korans, Torahs, our old words
as life rafts in a sea of lost souls
we say our God is greater than another's
we kill for our faith

but now I know
call it what we may, there is only one truth
there is no God
Allah
Yahweh
or Gaia
there is only
that 2nd voice in a quiet night
that elusive, immense, & powerful
"I AM I"
and I shall question no longer

a satisfied voice
(in a night that no longer seems so dark)

PEACE ON EARTH
(spoken in a sleepy, contented whisper; spoken
in places no human hearts beat,
in places no footprints lie:
and no eyes search the night...)

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A Bra Specialist's Worst Nightmare

I am...

A bra specialist's worst nightmare

I have been in this dingy stall for an eternity
One large finger-smudged mirror enlightens me to every
Fold,
Wrinkle,
And mole.

Piles of gloomy black bras silently mock me
Lying smugly on the floor where I had
Thrown them in frustration

I have discovered I am the wrong shape
The wrong size.
I do not fit (did I ever?)
Ever longing
To be average.

Betty, the woman strapped with the responsibility of dealing with me
My misguided body,
Frowns

Anxious, I self-consciously roll and lift my shoulders back
Hoping to lessen the burden on my ribs
Which now have permanent indents in them

I am....

Tired as hell. It's been over two hours.

Restless teens and a mother with young children
Have given up on using stall "A" today
They crowd 'round the remaining stall
Like vultures to a bloody feast

Betty is running out of ideas
(duct tape has yet to come up)
My patience is waning with my anomalous body

All this poking and prodding
Lacy cups and sharp-edged tags
Have worn me out.

Last one, I say.
My oxygen is being cut off
My sides itch
Shoulders ache
Stomach grumbles
Head pounds
Time to go.

I decide on one bra.
Three hours of labor, of
Staring at my tummy fat
Tugging at fabric
And too-loose straps
One bra is my reward

I am...
So ready to just let them be free
Burn my bras in protest
Boycott the lingerie industry
(wear lots of loose clothing)

Until then, I will
Continue to wear
Too- loose
Too- big
Too- small
Too- tight
Malicious
Arrogant

BRAS.

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A Declaration Of Character

they say hardships and tears and sweat built character
(it's mentioned at every closed opportunity and every stunning defeat)

you can build character by falling and climbing,
running and returning,
failing and never succeeding.
today,
I am officially over building character
I've got enough character to start my own third world country
I've built sky-scrappers of character
I've got my own bank and I invest character in the stock market
I'm going to start loaning it out to the character-deprived!
I'll learn how to knit and make character scarves to donate to
homeless shelters.

don't you understand?
I've got character seeping out my ears,
hiding under my bed.
and if I keep on building all this darn character,
soon I'll have no place to put it:
I'll have to start sending it to Mars via space rocket, or
making it into earth-friendly shoes

good grief world, do you get what I'm trying to tell you?
I'm THROUGH building character!
I'm THROUGH struggling and wishing and
wiping my red cheeks.
my character-run toyota hybrid will have to wait-
and character-land will have to disintegrate
because

I'm THROUGH building character.

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A Memoir To Childhood

light. strikes
a silver hand
outstretched
waving goodbye
to the sounds of life
to butterflies
and ice cream
frozen
in the moment
light.
creeps down
the gleaming figure
tracing childhood's
outline
every band-aid covered
elbow
kissing memories
goodbye

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A Peace; A Piece

there's a peace kept gently cupped in my hands
a tiny, living, breathing peace
a solitary, intrinsic peace
kept alive by my heartbeat and my hope

a piece of an as-of-yet untold tomorrow
a piece of sunshine and unfulfilled justice
that every man, woman, and child
holds cradled in their hands

a piece of a worldly, blood-weary peace

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A Woman Lies Dying In Mexico

Unnoticed by the rest of the world, she
Never held any real interest for you either
You passively accepted her as one among many of your mother's
Charity cases who spoke little English

She was merely a face- seen vacuuming your living room, holding your brothers,
or cooking your meals.

A face "we had to make sacrifices for" because
"she didn't have as much as we had and we shouldn't be selfish"

You grudgingly invited the woman's shy, awkward daughter
To your birthday party as per your mother's orders
You made stunted small talk with her and the other daughter while
The woman and your mother talked finances and job opportunities

She was just another Spanish-speaking, hard-working, kind face
That came and went through your pre-teen life
Unimportant and fleeting
You moved East. She stayed behind. Three years passed.

~

Today you learn she has terminal cancer
And is with her mother who is also dying
They wait together in Mexico

Your own mother walks up to you ghostlike and world-weary
She tells you and all who will listen
This woman's story:

She came to America to support her husband who was getting
His master's degree
He left her, forcing her to find a source of income for her two little girls

As all women in need seem to, she found your mother, who helped
find her a job, clothe her children, and keep her bills paid.

The daughters excelled in their studies and won a prestigious award
for their intelligence and high achievement in school

The family was given a house by Habitat for Humanity and she had found a job teaching.

Her story should have been read in Chicken Soup books and other inspirational texts.

Her children should have been accepted into fancy universities and written memoirs.

Instead their fate is being decided for them as they sit on a dirty floor
With their dying mother and grandmother

With their father gone and no other relatives in the US there is
little chance they will make it out of Mexico,
across the Texan border back into the land of opportunity

~

today a pulled-up-by-the-bootstraps,
sweat-and-tears type of
American Dream
Has prematurely ended

As one strong-willed, kind-souled woman
Lies dying someplace in Mexico

(and you wished you had paid closer attention and given greater respect to this
woman and her soon-to-be-orphaned shy, awkward daughters)

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An Ode To My Temp Job At Measured Progress

8: 00am Sunday.

MCAS Science and Technology Grade 5; all fields.

Last names: Sanchez, Hernandez, Fernandez, Vazquez,
Nguyen. Georgesuper.

First names: Promise, Li, Jaethan, Saab.

Upper and lower case,
Sophia or Sophla?

Erasure marks, sticky notes,
Dark scans that pick up dust, children
Who lack fine motor skills:

Writing in 'Ashley, '

The scanner readS 'A**XYR.'

Three of us standing around a monitor, musing,
Deciphering, hypothesizing.

15 min break at 10: 00am

Student Id, Student Labels: 6's bending into 9's,
8's blurring into 3's,
108403869251.

NO_VALUE_RECOGNIZED

70,000 faulty eighth grade bar codes
To be typed in by hand.

30 minute lunch at 12: 00pm

ScanEdit Station.

NECAP Math Grade 8:

Bubble. Bubble.

Circled. X-ed out.

Outlined. Check marked.

e.

15 min break at 2: 00pm.

Bubble.

Asterisk means more than one response;

Is A lighter than B? How much lighter?

Let's say the kid just has a very dark pencil,

Erased A, and meant B.

Light scans are a Where's Waldo game of find the circle
That is slightly darker than the other circles.

Write-in questions brighten the monotony:

How many apples does Jan have and how do you know?

'I don't understand the question.'

'Four. Because seven minus three is four.'

'-drawing of a robot-'

' Five. 'Cause it's the answer.'

'I hate you! '

Log out 4: 00pm, with the option of staying until 6: 00pm

One Monday they tell us there is no more work and we

Hand in our plastic badges on colored lanyards,

Push in our chairs,

Go.

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As We Fall

as we fall into the water
let us clasp our hands together

bright day is done,
black night has come

washing over our heads

an icy wind is blowing
grasp the liferaft we are throwing

we'll make it through, with one another
though our minds may start to sever

and float off into space

keep your head above black water
keep it steady, do not falter

we'll help you float, if you try to try
if we help each other, we cannot die

I know it seems absurd now

as we fall through frigid water
see the surf is getting harder

see the sad vield moon that is not glowing
if we must survive, we must keep rowing

through the murky water

shadowed creatures grap our legs
wieghing them down, sinking like kegs

gasping for a breath of air
splashing in the witch's lair

NO! keep your head above the water

the sandy shore is not in sight
a sky, and in it, no shining light

this world we must survive
stay together as we dive

into dark & murky waters

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Biker Mountains

see these mountains:

naked, they are

naked as a newly birthed baby

not covered in dainty green dresses or spiffy blue shawls

bare

gruff, crass, rough-edged

tattooed, beer-drinking

biker mountains

struttin' their craggy cliffs like fat old ladies at French beaches

baring their centuries-old scars for all of sun-burned humanity to see

naked, red-faced mountains

as hot and bold as the morning sun

'cause they just don't care

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Boston Back Bay.1: 40pm

He comes walking down the dark dusty cement platform
Black guitar on his back
Black amp in one hand
Shiny black shoes that flash as he moves

Over the crackling loudspeaker comes a list
Train 137's various destinations on the east coast
I know at once that his is New York City
Penn Station

The place where thousands of young artists, clutching worn twenties
In each sweaty hand
Begin their long and treacherous journey.
Reaching for what may end up to be fame, or shame

He's trying to "break into the music industry"
An eagle tattoo on his left bicep
Reveals his inner rebel

Baring his soul in rhythmic lyrics to strangers
He sets off
Taking only his tousled hair, his guitar and amp
Those gleaming black leather shoes that seem to say:

"Here I am to tame New York.
Here I am
Full of hope, determination, inspirations, and a beating heart.
Ready to face the music"

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Children's Hour

princes and princesses
sparkly silk dresses and long velvet capes
giggling as your makeshift crown
falls into your eyes
hair tangled and cheeks flushed
tripping over your too long tresses
knights fighting dragons
long wooden swords poke
into your stuffed visious 'dragon'
saving a damsel
her finger in her mouth
smiles as you rescue her from Mr. Puffy
wizards in tall clunky hats
spooni tralooni magicy goosey
tonka toys 'appear'
out of your magician's hat
mixing poisons to make potions
bubbling and fizzing
turns little sister into a rabbitt
hops away laughing
now fairies flitting from flower to flower
itchy wings and plastic wands
pink rose petals
tickle your nose and you
breathe in its scent
later you find
monsters in the basement
brave explorers brandishing brooms
ready to attack the whirring washing machine
then
a voice breaks through the fun-filled air
time to dissolve our make-believe lives
come back to reality
saftley tucking away
our props for playing
our imaginations for dreaming
in a gold covered treasure chest
until the next time we play

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Chillin' With Oakland Strike Team Four On A Thursday Night

Before the rioting, we'd made friends
With the firefighters sitting in their lawn chairs.
Vivianne tried on the pants, boots, jacket, helmet, wielding an ax
To run around the truck (that Bettina and I had sat in, ogling the buttons, levers,
gauges, codes)
We shared stories: college life, crazy vagrants, and protest marches.

A girl came by with her guitar and we rocked out
To Jewel's "You Were Meant for Me"
We waved goodbye. (They had orders to return to the fire station)
The Southern One, The Cute One,
The Lieutenant with The Funny Little Beard,
The One who Sang.

(A half hour later)
Outside my room: chaos, girls dashing for their cameras and ID's
Screaming to one other "You coming? You coming? Yeah I'm coming! "

At the street corner,
I watched as their truck, number twenty-eight, approached the fire set by the
anarchists,
Wearing the gear that Vivianne had just tried on, side-stepping
Police trucks roaring by.
I got it all on video, gasping in surprise, "Those are our firemen! "

Tracey's words of caution regarding the G-20 came back to me:
"Shit is gonna go down! "

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Comfort Food

I.

Driving down dark deserted city byway
Midnight. No one on the sidewalks but
The houseless and the club-goers
Passenger seat leaned back, heat blasting
Not driving, but being driven
Toward a home with a kitchen,
Couches, leftover cake,
People.

II.

Friday afternoon, no more classes
Lying pillow-propped, granola bar fed
On my bed. Watching Grey's Anatomy
On the purple laptop, wearing
Hoodie and fuzzy socks,
No commitments until the evening.

III.

Confirmation emails, your
Package has arrived, your
Textbooks have shipped, your
Bank transfer has been completed.

IV.

Freshly printed papers,
Stapled and slid in slick folders.
The last line of an 80-page chapter.

V.

Train rides, airplane flights, bus rides
Home, after finals

VI.

Shopping with a full bank account

VII.

Family photo albums

VIII.

Mango smoothies

IX.

Laughing long

X.

Hugs

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Executive Decision

I pull into the gravel driveway,
the stones bright with summer heat,
Climb the cat-dusted white cement steps
to the shade of the porch,
Turn the doorknob to enter the house.
I see my teenage daughter and her friend
Sprawled on the living room carpet
in shorts and tanks.
The futile whirring of a window air conditioner
Blurs with the delirious mutterings
coming from the floor,
' Now would be the best time for ninjas to come crashing through the window.'
A glance at their half-closed eyes,
pinked and tan sticky skin
Strengthens my resolve.
We Are Going To The Pool.

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Flying With A Cord Attached

eagle rising in the sky proclaiming to the land:
now is the time for flight
feet o'er the ragged ground
my prize forming in the mind's eye: only distance from here
then before me
cold steely-eyed horsemen
circling 'round me
I remember that I am
flying.
with a cord attached

wrenching me from my impossible dream
rusty metal cord
my lifeline and my prison
chaining me to a life of misery
where a sun rises in the east
and never reaches our sky
I sense sweet air of freedom
as it sweeps across my eyes and leaves
to a distant land where people there
can taste its gladness

its like flying with a cord attached
all I see everyday is rows and rows of green
to be churned into money
by our sweating hands
money watered by life-longing tears
money seasoned by air-starved blood
seeing others walk with the scent of freedom
trotting right behind them, eyes trained on dirt
and I remember
horsemen block my path:

like flying with a cord attached

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For A Youngest Brother

I want to break down the doors of his room
And call out "I am here! "

But I

Wait.

(Watch fish in a fish tank)

Wait...

Wishing to hold his thin pink hands
Kiss every corner of his tear speckled face
Wishing him safety, comfort, and all my love.

All I want is to have him in my arms again.

Six years later:

"Silvio! Be careful! "

I call out as he races up and down the street

On his bike with its training wheels

I watch his helmeted head pass parked cars,

Scanning the area for pick-up trucks, strangers, sticks in the road.

He rides over some loose gravel, topples.

I run to him, help him up,

Brush off his pants, inspect his knees for scratches.

"You ok, buddy? Good."

A kiss on the head sends him on his way.

And I think back to those minutes in an Illinois hospital hallway

It was a staph infection, not a bike fall

And I wasn't allowed to hold him.

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From

I am from Dr. Seuss books, from Shredded Oats and Jesus paintings.
I am from the orange kitchen, the library, vinyl siding,
Smell of pumpkin bread cooling.
I am from the dying Christmas plant from school concert, the arcing tree
Battered by boy feet, sewn with ropes and screws

I am from Nona's pound cake and loud mouths,
from Sylvia Amrod and Frank Smith.
I'm from stand up for what's right and love your neighbors
And from Sunday morning donuts after mass.
I'm from you have Jesus inside you and stop hitting your brother
And bye, bye miss American pie, drove my Chevy to the
levy but the levy was dry
I'm from bedtime saint stories and morning prayer songs

I'm from Urbana and Venice, Italy, lentils and rice and Shepard's pie
From kitchen fires: my churros, Dad's pie's, Marco's pizzas;
Amish rocking chair, quilts, carved Jesus on his cross.
My jewelry box on the bookshelf with baby teeth, Korean money,
Religious icons, Pennsylvania- deer-engraved jade
I'm from brown-eyed faces, worn front steps, and fresh rosemary

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Frosty On His Flag (Clementine Sweet)

frosty is lonely
he hangs from a winter blue flag by a pink-roofed house
being blown by a salt-sea breeze

he has no snow people to talk to
he ripples his cloth edges among the sky-high palm trees and
above the candy-green grass

frosty is an outcast
to contrast the deep blue of his flag lies the pale desert sky,
shot through with bright Cali sunshine

frosty is a picture of out-of-placement:
he hangs and he hangs
he sighs and he sighs
all the while homesick
all the while thinking
that sometimes, sometimes
irony is clementine sweet

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Having Lost My Words

Today

I doubt what I once knew:

"every minute of every hour, in my dreams and in my 'wakes-
words like dancing deer through the grasses and
shooting stars in the night, run through my head."

Now what run through my head are calculus formulas and music notes.

I remember the long-forgotten verses I penned in my stickered journal:

"words sustain my soul, like food and water sustain my body.

they leap from my pen to the page like

God's miracle to man."

But the words don't seem to leap so freely like before,

They slosh and gurgle in the mudslides of my mind.

At thirteen I proclaimed:

"I write to feel, to cry out, to teach. to be.

there is a rhyme, a rhythm, a song in my heart"

But is there a song in my heart?

Did I imagine it on a childhood whim

Or did it just fade like the pinstripes on my favorite

Pair of underwear?

I have no answers, no words, no confidence anymore

I only hope that I am a poet

And that a rhyme, a rhythm, a song

Still rest in my heart

***quoted lines taken from a poem I wrote in middle school titled "I Am."

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Heart Of Mine

there are some who are afraid to love
some who use it all up on one man, one lost cause
there are some who do not know how to
some who have loved ruined for them
I am not like that

I love too much, too soon
to tell
I love too many, too far
to work
I love too vast, too deep
to miss
there is just too much love, in this loving heart of mine

I want more than anything to love
to cherish and be cherished in return
to make use of all this love in me
these hugs and kisses and wishes
craving to be free

wanting not to be frozen, but chosen
by someone
wanting to be missed, to be mourned
by someone
wanting to be wanted, to be yearned
by someone
there are just too many wants, in this wanting heart of mine

in this
yearning
churning
burning

bright red heart of mine

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I Want To Be Sky

I want to be sky
cradle earth in my arms
watch the stars go by

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If You Don'T Use It, You Lose It

Here, I feel I am pretending to be somebody I'm not
(Faking my way through friendships and lovers)
I do not say what I would like to say
(I am twisting myself into these cramped tight spaces called "cliques"
And "stereotypes")
I do not act how I would like to act
(Out of fear, I conform, not wanting to be the one, the only one, who is
"Different")
There is not one rhythm here that beats in time with my heart
(My wishes are alone)
There is not one laugh here that echoes my own joy
(My happiness is alone)

Everyday I wake up and put on my mask
(I am losing myself)
"If you don't use it, you lose it"
(I am losing myself)

And it makes me so mad because I've once known contentment
And once you've seen the light
It's that much harder to go back into the darkness
I know what it is like to be able to BE.
I knew a sanctuary and I left it (I was forced to)
I knew kindred spirits and I left them (I did not want to)

Once a year I go back and I feel and I talk and I
Dance
To my own melody that miraculously harmonizes with their melodies
(Until I come back here,
Among the frequent twanging and out of tune notes
That my pretty melody becomes)

Is it too much to ask to just BE?

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In This Moment

Rain falls like a silver glass shimmer
Swishing, sweeping, slipping, sliding
Over bushes and onto roofs and splattering on
Heads

Lying in my driveway with my mouth open
I embrace the rain
The refreshing cold, the inescapable wet, the intoxicating reality
The only sound is that of the swaying trees
And the dripping and dribbling of rain
Covering everything in a dream-like sheen
Pampering my nose
The smell of freshly fallen rain
Like wine to taste
Engulfs the world

And in this moment
There is no world

There is only rain
Grass
Sky
Me

Lifting my hands in praise, in adoration
Letting the clear droplets fall in my
Eyes
Belly button
Mouth

And it tastes far more real, far more alive
Than anything I have ever tasted

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Lifeline

hold me, wrap me up all tight
squeeze the sadness from my eyes
these eyes, these eyes, cries and cries
hold me through the shadowed night
as darkness creeps along the walls
be there when my cover falls
hold me with your strength and might
shield me from my thoughts inside
lurking, hiding, the back of my mind
hold me 'till seeps through dawn light
pale light streaming through the curtains' holes
another day, and my lifeline still holds

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Light And Dark

it is not so much being in the dark that hurts
it is that I was once in the light,
and how I basked and reveled in it;
I thought I'd stay forever
(and before the light)
I had been born into darkness and knowing nothing else
I had been content.
now I know there's something better out there
if I turn quickly enough I can see it out of the corner of my eye

it's not so much the darkness that hurts,
but more the absence of light.

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Marigold Trace

i cry myself to sleep, and scream myself awake
ev'ry step is a mistake,
and ev'ry word does not seem right

weekdays I hide inside and stay, away from all the world's hate
weekends I close my eyes and skate
'round the nightmares in my head

refrain: lift the blackness from your face
the light of day shall peirce your eyes
see the beauty in the everlasting skies
the christmas lights on marigold trace
dancing in the pouring rain
this is joy I cant explain
a change of style, a change of pace

oh my oh my

nothin ever felt so
beautiful
wonderful
mysterious and
how I love it now

I've never looked right at the sun: glowing fire and its glory
oh it seems just like a story
that I heard when I was young

I've never seen all that surrounds me, too busy starin' at athe ground
too worried that it's upside down
I wish I could've seen it then

refrain: lift the blackness from your face
the light of day shall peirce your eyes
see the beauty in the everlasting skies
the christmas lights on marigold trace
dancing in the pouring rain
this is joy I cant explain
a change of style, a change of pace

oh my oh my

nothin ever felt so
beautiful
wonderful
mysterious and
how I love it now

this is how I want to live, not walking like I'm in a dream
not my alarmclock as a scream
and I feel so much happier

I'm gonna grin my biggest grin, turning cartwheels in the grass
taking bad things as they pass
this is how I want to live

refrain: lift the blackness from your face
the light of day shall peirce your eyes
see the beauty in the everlasting skies
the christmas lights on marigold trace
dancing in the pouring rain
this is joy I cant explain
a change of style, a change of pace

oh my oh my

nothin ever felt so
beautiful
wonderful
mysterious and
how I love it now

nothin ever felt so good before to me

final refrain:
refrain: lift the blackness from your face
the light of day shall peirce your eyes
see the beauty in the everlasting skies
the christmas lights on marigold trace
dancing in the pouring rain
this is joy I cant explain

a change of style, a change of pace

oh my oh my

nothin ever felt so
beautiful
wonderful
mysterious and
how I love it now

nothin ever felt so good before
and this is how i want to live
this is how I want to live

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Mascara

dab a brush of coal black color
unto your pale and fragile lashes
once you put it on. you become
giggling, twirling, oblivious
no thoughts inside this desert head
dark mascara blanketing
fearful thoughts. shielding
her worried soul

she is afraid. does not want to be
this girl who cries, doesn't understand
this girl who cannot find the exit sign
on her daytime nightmares

this new identity is safer, easier
to be.
blush
shields her tear-stained cheeks. mascara for
her red-rimmed eyes. eye shadow for
her shadowed eyelids

make-up hides the truth behind her eyes
she is out of control but no one needs to know
how in her bed at night she cannot sleep
in day she is a flickering smile
laughs on cue
rolls eyes when the right words said
see how easy it is?

to be one shrouded by mascara
to exist as though nothing is wrong
to pretend I'm not falling apart
scared.
my cover soon to dissolve
mascara cannot cloud forever

gina prettybrowneyes

Mickle

It's Mickle

his hazel eyes have laughed, sparkled
shone with joy, amusement, adoration
passion.

they have glistened with tears, flashed
in rage, desperation, stared wide-eyed
frightened.

his mouth has smiled, talked in fun, sang, shouted
praise, made promises. Puckered to kiss his
boyfriend

it has frowned, screamed for help, hung open
In horror, shock, how can they do this? why do they
do this

his name has been sweetly called, lovingly written
asked by teachers, squealed by his female friends
cherished

it has been shouted in disgust, hate, mocked loudly
sworn with. Its letters flung like sharp knives at his
fleeing back

Mickle.

Whose poem would have been so much shorter
If he were not of a certain sexual orientation

When we fight for gay rights, we are fighting for Mickle
And the millions of other Mickles in the world.

gina prettybrowneyes

Monday Mornings

Kitten perches on the table top to peer
At the lips on the goldfish
Puckering and grimacing as the fish swims in its
Bowl of sand and sink water.

Firefighter grabs kitten away from its hunt
To kiss and muss its head
And whisper into its face "Goodbye"

gina prettybrowneyes

Mother (Her Point Of View)

Take off your shoes, I just cleaned this floor;
Coats and backpacks go on hooks.
What do you mean what does it taste like, it tastes like food.
Just eat it;
Broccoli or no dessert.

Get in the car boys or we'll be late for school,
Karate, your dentist appointment, the band concert.
I'm getting you at 4pm, at 5pm, we're leaving at 5: 50pm.
Your track meet is where? how many of your team mates am I taking?
No kicking the seats!

Your hands are going to get frostbitten, I'm sending you
Waterproof gloves, a cutting board, your socks, mail.
We all miss you;
Share the pumpkin bread with your friends.

Let me clean it. Don't scratch. Stop whining.
Check the dryer, the laundry hamper, my bed.
Save some spaghetti and sauce for your brothers.
When will you be home? Your father needs the car at 4pm.
I left the porch light on for you.

gina prettybrowneyes

Mother (My Point Of View)

Sewing machine:

Jean patches,
Superman capes,
Dress hems 10pm,
Night before the concert.

Kitchen sink:

Baking-powder biscuits,
Crock pot beef stew,
Chicken with carrots and potatoes.
Not college food.

Minivan:

Shuttle the boys from school,
Aftercare, soccer, track,
Basketball, haircut, orthodontist's.
Buy printer ink, daddy bread,
Poster board for Elias's project due Tuesday.

College mail box:

Socks I forgot over Christmas,
Picture of the boys and I
With our gingerbread house.
Dad's pumpkin bread,
Waterproof gloves,
Cutting board.

Mother:

Band-aid, bathroom cleanser,
Dry clothes, spaghetti sauce.
Emergency contact.
Porch light on late nights.

gina prettybrowneyes

My Fairy Tale

sometimes I daydream, twirl my hair around my fingers and I
think about bedtime stories,
wishes come true,
and happily-ever-after's.

only this and nothing more
I want my fairy tale:
true love like in movies,
diamond rings, once upon a time,
kind of love.
the love that wakes princesses from their sleep and that transforms
great beasts to good men.

I want to know someone as to know their heart and soul
I want to be known in kind,
to love someone like Juliet loved Romeo, like Cleopatra
loved Caesar
I want to be loved in return.

I wait for my Prince Charming,
my knight in shining armor
my hero astride a white horse.

I wish I may, I wish I might,
one wish I give in the pre-dawn light
to the stars above and the spirits on high
one day I'll have

I'll have my fairy tale

gina prettybrowneyes

Night

* Hail our Savior's glorious Body
hail the blood, which, shed for sinners
did a broken world restore

hushed voices singing in pristine harmony
lips turned toward the black of night
regal words of old spill out into the air

* Pange lingua gloriosi
corporis mysterium
sanguinisque pretium

the heavy resounding tones of church bells
echoing through the world
touching ev'ry heart and mind

* Faith Gods' living word must head
faith alone may safely guide us
where the senses cannot lead

flashlights, beams of wavering light
piercing the shadows of nightfall
guiding the steps of lowly sinners

* Nobis datus, nobis natus
ex intacta Virgine
et in mundo conversatus

icy droplets of rain splatter on cement
frozen hands hold damp sheets of music
trembling with the quiet power of their words

* Sower, seed and word descends;
wondrous life of word incarnate
with his greatest wonder ends

a heavenly procession with Jesus in the lead
clouds of incense roll 'round the Sacred Body
from life to death, they will follow him

* In supremae nocte coenae
recumbens cum fratribus
observata lege plene

smiles on thier faces, feet trodding silently
eyes never straying from the gently swaying cross
hearts raised, they sing for their king

gina prettybrowneyes

No Title Needed

Up
on
tip-toes

(like a
young bride)

to reach
my mouth
to his

brown curls
edge down
my back

(to meet his
hands on
my waist)

as I
lift
my
chin

and
then

there is nothing left to say

except that
today
is the first day of spring

gina prettybrowneyes

Nothing

there is nothing to do, nothing to say
nothing like the nothingness of the cold
wind that blows across and about the way.
empty as the soup-filled lives of the old,

as silent as the soft white snow that falls
on the roofs of the houses and the tips
of the grass, and inside these old brick walls
the children's breath puffing like red steam ships

mimics the gray smoke of those who only
smoke when under stress or when there's nothing
else to do or say. The people, heat-lonely,
wait for the power, the light, everything

they can't live without. A knock at the door
brings good tidings: heat is here, hear its roar!

gina prettybrowneyes

Now

I do not know what will be
tomorrow morning
(how I'll feel, the events that'll have transpired)
this coming Thursday
(and certainly not)
next year

all I know, all I care about,
is this Now

lying in your arms and feeling my worries
just melt away

NOW

One split-second of

Nothing Hurting
Nothing Broken
Nothing Bad

and I don't want it to end

gina prettybrowneyes

O.K.

I'm messed up but
I'm o.k. and that's
o.k.

it's o.k. to feel, to fear
to want, to cry
to be

I'm o.k.
I've got my friends, my poetry, my music
my wonderful dysfunctional family, God
the sky above, my bed, and the cooling rain
rainbows and love and laughter

I'm messed up, but today
I look in the mirror while sprawled on my bed and I
like what I see
my hair's pulled back with a few stray strands framing my face
I'm wearing one of my favorite shirts in my favorite color
my capris
clothes I look good in and feel good in
my cow anklet still makes me smile
and when I close my eyes
I am content with what I see there too
I know I am 'loveable and capable'
and that I can
'move mountains'
I matter, I have worth, I can do anything

and I feel o.k.
like there's hope
like I can love myself
a light at the end
a reason to go on

and I know every day won't feel this good, won't be
like this, and quite possibly
by evening I'll have cried again

but right now, with this pen in my hand
blank page before me
barefoot and free

I'm messed up but
I'm o.k. and that's
o.k.

gina prettybrowneyes

On The Eve Of My High School Graduation

(written for my cousin Connor who graduated this spring. Congrats Connor!)

Today I am the I

I have written about:

'What I want to be when I grow up' essays,

'A meaningful experience'

Acrostic poems written with newly learned cursive.

Today I am the product of

Twelve years of schooling, of

Brow-furrowing, industrial-erasing,

Citing sources, raising my hand,

Carrying bathroom passes,

Wishing for Fridays.

Today I am free to explore,

Discover, learn, grow, create

the un-typed stories, the un-thought-of ideas.

I have the ability and the responsibility to bring change

To my world, nation, state, town, neighborhood.

Today

In my shined shoes and pleated pants,

I stand ready to take on my wildest aspirations.

gina prettybrowneyes

Once Upon A Beach

little piggies dressed in white
prance along the hidden night
dodging seashells left and right

salty waters wash upon the shores
sends the people coming in hoards
sandy feet grasping surfboards

the golden globe falls into the sea
where painted toes and seagulls can be
where footprints and jellyfish see

the magic that is the sea

gina prettybrowneyes

One Hot July Afternoon, I Got Down On My Knees And

Will

(Can I count on You? Is this definite? Will implies no substitutions, no turning back, no hesitations, no oscillations, no maybe's. Will is as immovable as the mountains. Will lasts forever.)

You

(God. Creator of the Universe. The All-Powerful, The Almighty, The Only One. You loved me before You even knew me and in Your gentle hands rest the power of the oceans, the majesty of the skies, and the infinity of the galaxies. You are my God.)

Catch

(a verb: to grasp, to seize, to save, to capture, to affect suddenly. to stop a deadly descent. To reach out Your encompassing arms and to overtake me.)

Me

(me, Gina: a girl, a body, and inside lies her soul. A soul: (noun) a massive tangle of aspirations and desperations, tied with silver ribbon and thorny twine, sprinkled with fairy dust and shards of glass. A bittersweet, robbing perseverance to survive.)

If

(such a tenuous, spider web word, like a dry dead leaf shaking in the autumn breeze. If. Possibly. When implies certainty. I don't want that certainty. I want hope. If implies hope. A chance for redemption.)

I

(I and no one else. This prayer is not for my family members or my friends, nor the fire-fighters down the street. I do not ask this for the starving children in Africa or the suicide-bomb victims of the Middle East. Right now, in this tiny hour, in this hot sweaty tent, I need this to be just You and me.)

Fall

(a verb: to slip like water from a fountain, to spill like milk from the glass; to stumble as if on rocky ground; to tumble like a race car down the track; my greatest fear: that I'll trip and I'll slip and I'll fall. And what happens after.)

?

(a question, a plea, a prayer, this one thing I ask, the last brick in a wall, the last check on the checklist. This one thing I need to know before I leap.)

...

(I wait for an answer, my very pores straining to hear)

YES.

(Unquestionably, Undoubtedly, and Indisputably. I Will Catch You If You Fall.)

So I reach out my hand and leap

But I don't fall

I fly

gina prettybrowneyes

One Kiss, My Lovely

one kiss, my lovely

on your tender, trembling cheek
as your life is placed in The Judges' cold hands
you, so young and innocent and bright
hoping hesitantly, you wait for a sign

The Judge will take your milk-white skin
and SLASH it with her red-hot knife
your weak cries falling on deaf ears
your body writhing in unending pain

She will judge your achievements, your hard works
without mercy, she will streak
your pure blessed skin with ruby red blood
marking you as one who has been Judged

your sweet blood will run, desperate screams
will echo, along Her desolate halls
Shameless, Brutal, Unaware of your pleas, She will strike
HER glory. HER triumph

all this awaits as I place you in Her hands
you will come back changed:
scarred beyond recognition, bled dry
and so one kiss, my lovely

until we meet again

im gonna tell you what this is about whether you want to know or not, cuz it amuses me and i want you to know. this is about a ritual i started this past year in math, of kissing my tests and quizzes right before I hand them in. ill bet you never would have guessed. >.<

gina prettybrowneyes

Pairs Of Eyes

walking through downtown, uptown,
Small town,
I always feel
Watched.
I always sense
ten or more pairs of eyes (brown and blue and all shades of lust)
following me,
when I walk down the street
Men.
Boys.
whatever you want to call them
sometimes making obscene faces, sometimes
yelling incomprehensible phrases
But always watching, just
Watching
like a butcher watches newly roasted pigs
coming hot off the rack
"Mmm...so beautiful, perfect for making fine
hams, bacons, or even quite fine of a girl."
like a small child at the candy shop, eyeing
the vast array of sweets and pastries
"Ooo I want this one and that one and
oh would you look at the legs on her."
Men.
Boys.
testosterone-filled and lookin' for a piece o' woman
their eyes never done
Roaming,
Measuring.
Enjoying
ev'ry girl who passes by

sometimes I wish I lived on
Deserted,
Unknown,
Un-male,
dusty country roads.
where I could walk somewhere, anywhere,
everywhere.

and only the chattering squirrels in the tall pine trees
and the flip-flapping birds in the wide open sky
would Watch.

gina prettybrowneyes

Phone Call To Little Brothers Far Away

Baby, I miss your handshakes
Hugs
Soccer balls
Screams at 8am
Saturday
Outside my door
Metal cars
I'd trip over

Baby, I miss the summers we spent on couches
At tables, in libraries, with flashcards,
The Bob books you hated so I
Wrote you my own.
Together we tackled all 26 letters
And their basic three-letter combinations:
The H's and W's, the's and bat's we worked especially on.
(By the end we had run out of words you knew that
Began with a "hhh" sound) .

Gina, we're bored. What are you doing?

I'd like to be bored with you, Baby.
Instead of essays, calculus, laundry,
Alarm clocks, have-to's, should-have's
I'd take a break from the real world
And sit in yours for a while.

We'd build Lego spaceships and fly them
In the woods,
Our greatest fear being spiders in the dirt,
We'd play Madlibs,
Eat pasta with parmesan cheese,
With no worries of calories or cholesterol,
Watch The Emperor's New Groove on the VCR
(Stay up past your bedtime on a school night
Because I want you with me as long as possible) .

gina prettybrowneyes

Revelations I Wished I'D Had Sooner

A Sunday night. Through my half-cracked door
I can overhear my eleven-year old brother
Wheezing into his nebulizer in my parent's
Room; my older brother is called from his girlfriend
To "make sure Elias is still breathing"
Elias taken care of, my mother calls 911
(sounding calmer than I ever could have)
While I sit with nothing to do, nothing to offer,
Just sitting on my parent's bed (next to a fast-asleep baby)
and watching Elias breathe

Within minutes, three tough, burly men with duffel bags come
Speeding through the front door and make camp
In the green-tiled kitchen where
Elias sits, shrouded in blankets, on a purple toddler-sized chair, shivering
Into his oxygen mask as it pumps him full of steroids

As Monday morning approaches, he is carried
Down our red wooden steps on a stretcher while my bare feet tap-dance
On the cold tile floor and my teeth chatter
I am suddenly realizing how much
I love my younger brother, how much I would never want harm to come to him

And how much I hate having that revelation here and now

gina prettybrowneyes

Seeing For The 1st Time

late morning (but it feels so early)
so hot, so humid, you can barely breathe
sitting in the soapy water mattress of my bathtub
holding the shower head at such an angle so that it
cascades down my back, over my head, cooling and
flowing away my worries and fears
I open my eyes and see
wet tanned legs, miles of them, filling the tub from end to end
a few coils of soaked black hair, dribbling water into my eyes
streams of crystal clear, sweet, lovely,
WET
pouring over my eyelashes
plastering them to my face
so that every time I open my eyes

it's like seeing for the 1st time

gina prettybrowneyes

Shaded

Summer photos recall smoothies and wrestling games:

July bodies all

In shades of Welsh's caramels, blurring together from sun ray kisses,

Beach tans contrasting the pure white in our eyes

Echoing Hershey sea pupils.

Birthday picture:

Four pairs of glasses, two women, one man, one man-child, two boys:

Sweaty foreheads in sun-streaming window

Peering from orange kitchen

Lit by six birthday candles.

Winter photos mark the arrival of the Alaskan brother;

He and Mom wear iced hazelnut coffee, a dash of milk

The man-child and older boy

Stains of chamomile tea dried overnight on white tablecloth

Youngest, Dad, and I glow like cream frosting on the gingerbread house.

Pizza picture:

Two sets of dreds: one set real, the other set felt strips on youngest's snow hat

Three boys: two in body, one in spirit

Hungry grinning cheeks,

glistening with dried tomato oil.

gina prettybrowneyes

Singer's High

the end is near.

(you can feel it from the tips of your toes to the hairs on your head)

the music quickening, the chords falling into place, the

intensity building higher and higher

(ain't a-that good news, ain't a-that good news, ain't a-that good news)

you see nothing but the director's hand, shaping the sound waves

cutting off notes and connecting phrases

there is no life nor death

there nothing but this song

the voices slow (higher and higher-up the scale we go)

then all at once it is here and the final note

breaks free from your throat

(a-ain't a-that good news lawd!)

so loud your ears ring and buzz as the decibals climb

your lungs workins so hard to sustain such a note,

your head going light from lack of oxygen

eyes never straying from her hand

the music concludes

(my lawd, a-ain't a-that good news! ! ! ! !)

and just when it seems you can give no more—

(a single hand motion)

/OFF/

the notes echo for a split-second, then—

it is over.

your breathing coming in great gasps, you watch the director's face

for that look in her eyes, that one look from a director to a singer -

it can only be described as pure magic

you can't help but smile in relief

an overwhelming surge of pride, of power, of purpose

rushes over you

the world has come back into focus

the audience clapping and shouting
your sweaty hands and aching feet register in your music-mad mind
your heart thumps in your ears

this is what you live for
this is what you would die for
and this is why you sing

a nod from the almighty director provides the new pitches
a new chord is being laid out, a new melody is about to be born
she turns to face you once again
her hand comes up
you breathe deeply, open your mouth, and—
(a single hand motion)

/SING/

gina prettybrowneyes

Skypaints

milky handprints in the sky

fingerpaints and orange dye
swirling colors a child's spy
splattered paints appease the eye

childs' prints make up the sky

gina prettybrowneyes

Sometimes I Sound Like An Accordion

There is no feeling quite as terrifying as not being able to breathe

You heave and choke for the oxygen that moments before
Sang sweetly down your throat;
Now catching in your closing airway
(Sea water against the walls of the city)
Always the dull ache behind your eyes, the world blurring before you

Remembering those speech therapy sessions you place one trembling hand
On the abdomen, guiding the air through your nose
(Hoping to slam open the ever-closing vocal cords)

You fight to be filled with the loose air floating around you,
you inhale
The bright hot pain of airless lungs trying to expand

□

There is no knowledge quite as terrifying as this:
You are the only one who can save you.

Short of tracheotomy,
No pills,
Men in white lab coats,
Or inhalers
Can make you breathe.

You are your own hero.
Sheets of breathing techniques, diagrams
Of the throat, vocal folds, diaphragm,
Lungs, rules: water, water, and more water
It's all in knowing your limits, trusting yourself
To breathe

It's the most terrible kind of independence.

(for more info on Vocal Cord Dysfunction visit
)

gina prettybrowneyes

Sylvia Plath Talks About Baking Cookies

Today the rain falls outside the window with a broken pane
The cold rises from the cellar into the floorboards
Where her feet leap to the nearest rug.

She bundles in her favorite red wool sweater, black striped socks
Glancing out to the driveway to see that Ted has taken the car for the day,
She resolves to bake chocolate-chip cookies

She gathers her orange tins, white Tupperware cases, blue cartons
On the old oak table; sleeves rolled, hair pinned,
She mashes together the ingredients as her mother once did

With glad taste in her mouth from a snuck morsel of dough
She pops the cookies into the eye-glass-steaming hot oven
And sits content in her rocking chair to wait

gina prettybrowneyes

The World Was Dark And Gray

when the world began it was dark and gray
not even the stars came out to play
so God took for Himself many buckets of paint
and bottles of rainbow spray
He colored the world as we know it today

He opened the first and found rolling plum-black ink
this was taken for the dark midnight sky
and the second He opened and He did spy
bright yummy yellow, for the morning sun

the third, and the fourth, much like the others
cool fresh green, for coloring the grasses
a topaz blue, so vibrant, amasses
a wide expanse of daytime sky, so clear

so God went on, giving life to the world
silver firecracker sparkles, the stars did own
warm, rich. golden orange, was sown
in every burning fire that blazed

the last He picked was like no paint He'd seen
a color, and in it, a thousand shades were shown
dancing in and out of view, they glowed
for this, He chose, to color our souls

gina prettybrowneyes

There Are

There are trees beneath the grinding asphalt
You see them as you stroll, clammy hands in your pockets
Those windows in to the other dimension
The world beneath all roads and sidewalks

There are large looming black trees
Standing out against the whitest blue sky
Fiery orange leaves like an exotic party dress
Adorn those gothic castles, those black trees

You look into that seemingly perfect world, through a
Gleaming rain-washed window
Wanting to bend over, to reach out and grab a leaf
Knowing it will taste of autumn

Hands sweep down and you dip your fingertips in
Finding not that pristine world you crave, but
Only cold stagnant rain water
Burning your fingertips with harsh reality

You rise, turn. disappointed, continue walking
Wiping the last remnants of Utopia
Off of your wrinkled digits
Onto chilled frayed blue jeans

And the next time it rains.
You will look for the trees beneath the street

gina prettybrowneyes

Today Is A Chocolate-Covered Raisin

Life is a candy shop.

Some days are like licorice- deceitful and foul-tasting:
Like that box of black licorice you bought because it looked like it tasted good
and there was a panda on the cover and you like pandas-
But you took one bite and promptly spat it out
The vile, bitter taste residing in your mouth until dinnertime.

Some days are like forbidden sweets- clandestine and therefore
more exciting:
The one stolen jelly bean, the yogurt-covered pretzel oh-so-innocently left on the
counter.
You shouldn't because it's technically wrong but you do
because you can.
Because it makes you feel more alive than ever.

Some days are like devil's food cake- so rich, so sweet, so delightful:
So good you keep eating and eating until you can't move and you feel sick inside.
Too much of a good thing (while still better than some of a bad thing)
In the end, hurts as well.

Some days are like French bonbons- exotic and fleeting:
The kind that tastes like heaven and summer time and laughter
and all else good
You've never tasted anything like it- but now they're all out
(they only had three)
They won't have any until next week
(one week feels like 48 sometimes) .

Some days are like chocolate-covered raisins- bittersweet:
You hate raisins; hate the taste, smell, texture, color-
But you'll eat them because they're covered in chocolate
The chocolate slightly makes up for the grainy raisin-
enough to make it eatable
Enough to keep you going in a world of raisins.

Some days are like unsalted peanuts- bland, blanched, and boring:
No roasting, no seasoning, no nothing, just peanuts.
Peanuts to fill in the gaps between the cakes and the cookies,

To make the weeks pass more slowly, to give you the strength
To get up another day.

Some days are like chocolate-flavored jelly beans-
nasty, unforgettable things:

They come in packages of 1,000,000 for economy's sake
(money's tight these days you know)

They stick in your teeth and flavor your food and enter your dreams unwelcomed
You eat them because there's nothing else to eat, because
What's the use fighting it anyway
And besides,
Your parents like them.

Some days are like golden eggs- meticulously crafted with an exquisite taste:
Twelve different artists spent days sculpting and flavoring these
mouth-watering delights.

You only had one- but you only need one.

One golden egg will quicken your step, brighten your smile, and gladden your
heart
(rechargable in 5 years) .

Life's a corner candy shop-
Run by a wrinkly old man

(or woman- no one's quite sure about that point)

Who smells like vanilla and loves you like there's no tomorrow
(because there isn't. there's only today.)

You can't choose what you get everyday

You just trust the old sage in the obscure corner candy shop-
And know in your heart that in the end it all works out.

gina prettybrowneyes

Untitled Sound

let me hear you dance

let me hear you step lightly
let me feel the music running in your veins
guiding you as you act out its message
let me hear the rose-scented air
being cut into shapes by your limber body

let me hear you twirl gently
let me see your tutu, fanning sunshine
that came through an open window
let me hear your softly sighing soul
as you move to notes far greater than mine

let us watch as your dancing troupe
brings life to music, brings music to sight
sweeping the mirrored stage with long musical arms
we stare in wonder and awe, chanting:

let us hear you dance

gina prettybrowneyes

Uterus Blues

Today begins with a small moan and a sigh
Of pain; head full of white noise,
I slide out of bed.
Every bone feels heavy,
As if dunked in molasses
My stomach spinning like
A trapeze artist at a circus.

I shuffle into the bathroom
Squinting at the bright white light reflecting off
Of the rows of toothpaste-smearred sinks and mirrors.
Searching through my mind for where I could
Have picked up the virus (dinner last night?)
I come upon a least favorite conclusion:

My cold has not been sandwiched by swine flu
And another flu- I have been deceived!
Duped! Deluded! Taken by surprise
By my ovaries and my uterus
Who have decided to unleash my
Unused egg on Monday.

gina prettybrowneyes

When I Can Breathe Freely, I Want:

To play tag with my two little brothers on sunny days
When they plead with that sweet dew-dropp look in their eyes

To chase them gleefully around the field
Without my breath coming in short little gasps within minutes

I want to play basketball and
Football and
Tennis and
Baseball and
Ultimate Frisbee
For a period of time longer than five minutes

To score in the court, in the field,
To have the ball passed to me because I can be trusted with it

I want to feel the wind in my hair,
To feel the ground falling away beneath my feet

I wait.
For doctor's appointments and speech therapy sessions.

I wait until I learn the breathing exercises and
Until I get my reflux that causes my breathing issue under control

I wait to breath freely for the first time in my remembered life;
I want to be able to live without bodily constraints.

~

For more info on Laryngopharyngeal Reflux visit

For more info on Vocal Cord Dysfunction vist

gina prettybrowneyes

Words: I Love You

weighted words, tossed like beach balls
from heart to broken heart
the true meaning is lost, but
we still speak its message

weighted words, eaten like french fries
too much speaking, not enough thinking
fading away from overuse
the true meaning is lost

gina prettybrowneyes