

Eating Dirt (2025)

try to understand

-zainab



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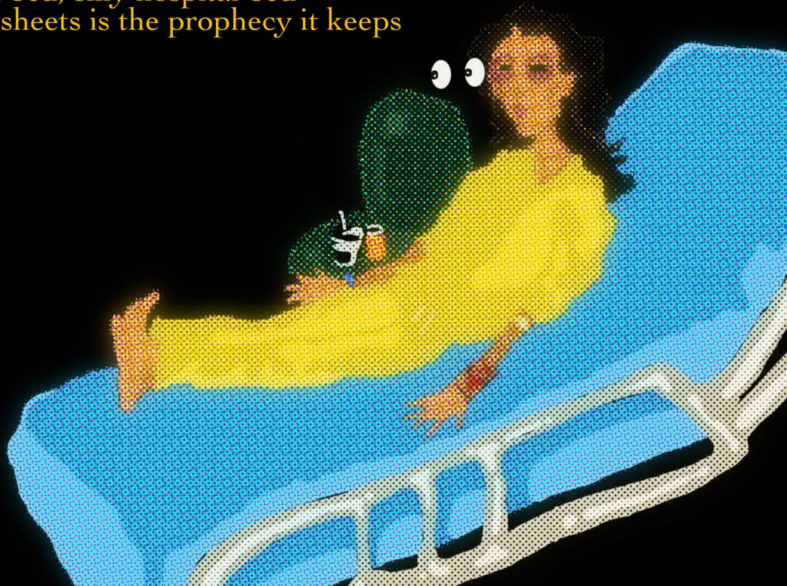
Page one

Take my knife and my cigarettes i can't stand myself
Carry me in a garbage bag slung over your shoulder
In the black plastic it will be dark

Take me to the woods to have it your way but please
Let me look out the window on the way
I am dirt waiting to dampen and rot
I want to see the trees for a while
Let me see the trees, I will become dirt faster than any other corpse

If i take a walk downtown in my jammies and flipflops
And piss the right man off after his nineteenth drink
Will he love me how i want? In some alley with his fists
Or the bottom of his shoe
His heel at my temple

And fuck the hospital bed, it wants me out
It wants me in my own bed
Where this all started anyway
Stupid hospital bed, silly hospital bed
Woven into its sheets is the prophecy it keeps
fulfilling



sorry for starting
this way, i promise it
gets better.... i think

R.B.



If the stories are true
Come see me in a dream
Show me something
Tell me what you thought of me
Not of my mother-
What did you think of me?
When i was sure about god i begged you to forgive me.
I keep hurting your kid by being like her
I can't help it.
Even now as i am unsure and delirious
I hope you can forgive me

I came from you i think
(I was inside the (womb in your (womb)))
It feels good to realise that.
I suppose we were close once.

I can't say that i miss you, I didn't know you
well enough.
They kept me from you.
But i **am** angry about it

Still, I feel i exist when i wear your anklets (inside out)

My favourite colour is green
I love pistachio ice cream
And white cotton garments
When i am wild, my hair forms ringlets around my face
And my skin has those pink spots you gave my mother.

And after your funeral i went to your bedroom, I saw you had hung up the
present i made you. It carries me.

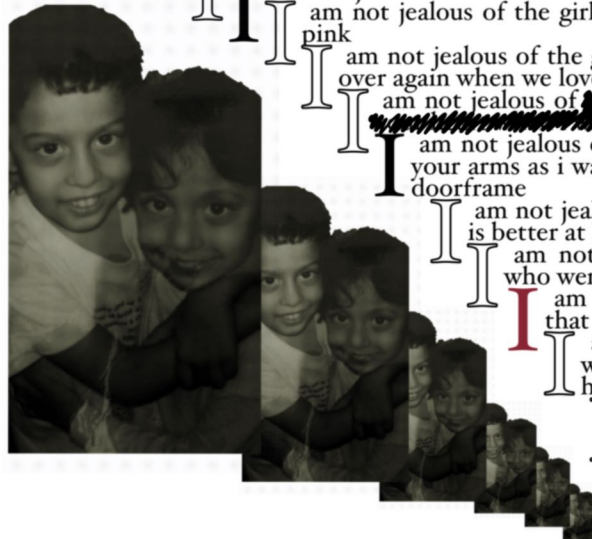


jelly, jelly, jelly in my grumbly belly

Jealous jealous jealous jealous! yes ma! i'm fucking jealous!
 I am jealous all the time. I am not jealous of the beloved
 I am not jealous of the blessed
 I am not jealous of the beautiful
 I am not jealous of the children tenderly tended to
 I am not jealous of the girls that make his cheeks
 pink
 I am not jealous of the girl she kissed over and
 over again when we loved each other silently
 I am not jealous of ~~the girl she kissed over and over again when we loved each other silently~~
 I am not jealous of the baby you held in
 your arms as i watched from behind the
 doorframe
 I am not jealous of my brother who
 is better at being good
 I am not jealous of my friends
 who went outside
 I am not jealous of the kid
 that had a smart mouth
 I am not jealous of the
 woman with a child in
 her arms
 I am not jealous of
 the funniest person
 i know
 I am not jealous
 of the kindest
 person i know
 but

I am jealous all the time.
 I am jealous of the sick
 I am jealous of the beaten down
 I am jealous of the man that managed to die
 I am jealous of the child that went missing
 I am jealous of everybody that bleeds or breaks

There is something wrong with my cup.
 It is half too full.



The ultrasound technician saw nothing wrong with my organs. I bore
 my aching insides to her

Like a hole in the ground

She looked down and in with a flashlight and emailed my doctor that
 everything looked good.

Some people hurt you real real bad
 I sat on the carpet and confessed I was sicker.

I emailed professor one two and three, wrote that I have left the
 building

they were kind to me.



I saw some forest today and realised that those trees were tall. Maybe i'm just small. but the trunks ran for miles up in the air. And i realised they will never be lonely; the trees live their lives out together, hundreds of years. And when a tree dies or falls it lands in the strong wooden arms of the others. Or on the floor where it lies forever. Dead, but still with his people. He will watch them in the spring and the fall. He will watch them resist the winter that killed him. Or he could feed them, or become something to somebody else. House some forest critter in his hollow.

My people will discard me. They will bury me in the dirt like a dead seed buried inside a dead fruit that never got eaten. I am not special in that sense, we do that to everybody. But that doesn't make it nice. Can't I spend the old ages of death with the living who live on. Why do I have to become separate. There is a belief that lives in me like an ancient truth. I should die. And i am not immune to foolishness, but knowing it doesn't change anything or convince me otherwise.

I remembered suddenly the name of the website. The last I heard of it was in 2010. I read your poem. I didn't know that this made you angry too. It made me smile. We are the same.

If I ate dirt like i said I would. Would that make you worry? Or would you get upset and concerned in that unbearable way where your love becomes of no use to me. You hurt. I want you to worry without hurting, but that is unreasonable because you love me so much. I won't deny you that truth again.

I confronted everybody and it got me nowhere. I just felt like a jerk afterwards. I don't accept your power over me, but that doesn't have to mean that you are wrong about things. it doesn't have to be embarrassing when i become how you wanted anyway . I am not obedient.

~~"I'm not gonna be what my daddy wants me to be. I wanna be what my body wants me to be."~~ (Mitski, 2014)

I will stop sandpapering beautiful people who mean the world to me. But when sharp, rough edges poke and scratch my elbows and legs that will still hurt a lot. I will have to find some way to save myself. It's hard because I'm not liquid. If I were water i would bend gently around you. Cool, thin. But i am a tree trunk. Fat and hard and rough, and twisting slowly. So it is hard.

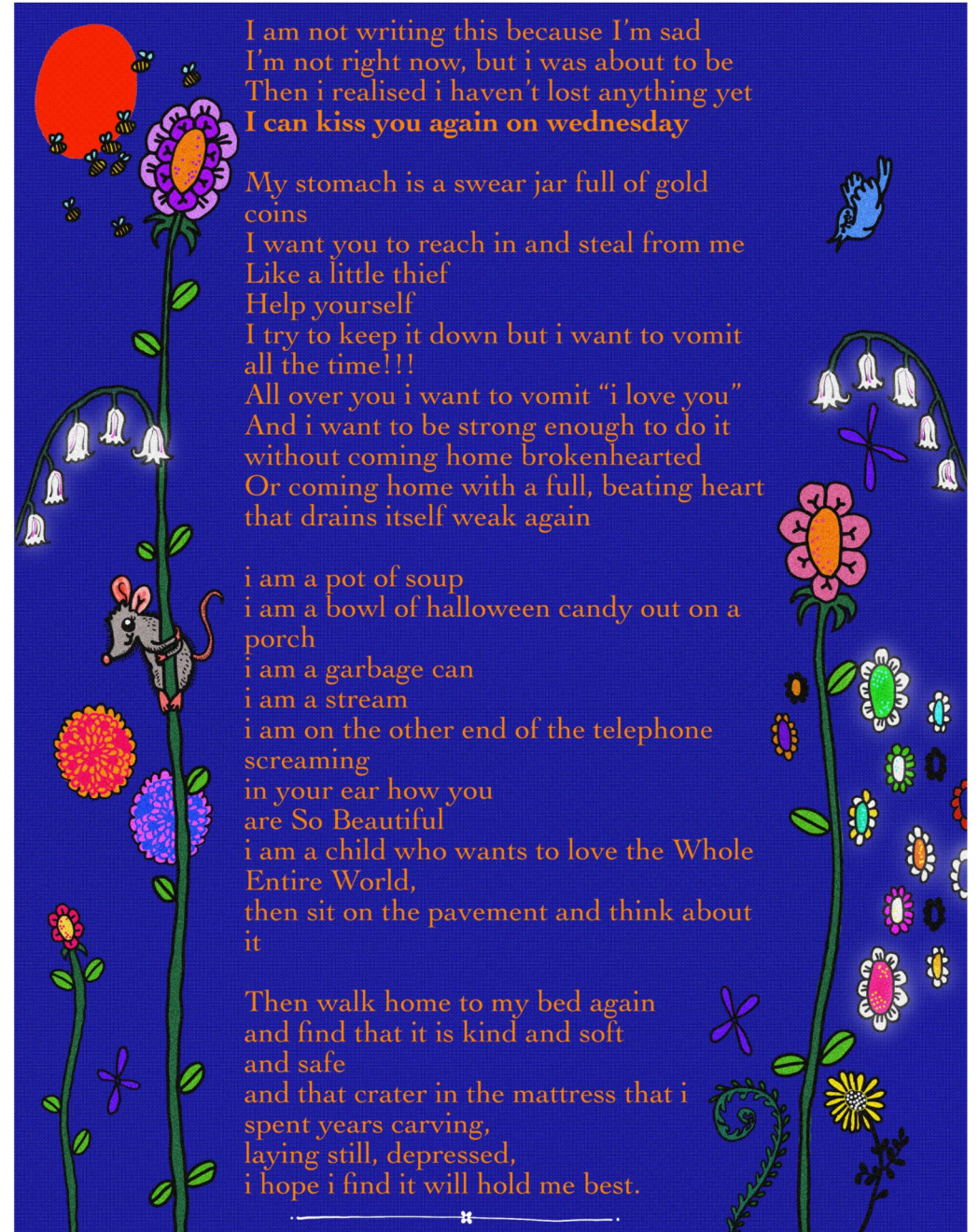


A Jar

if i went quiet now
for a year or a lifetime
Would my baby brother remember how i read dr. seuss to him?
How i did the grumpy voices for green eggs and ham
And made him cookies
He was only a baby
Would my mother remember how i held her when she cried
wailing and shaking and bent
in my thin arms
Would my father remember how i went back to him
Like a dog
Suffocating my dignity

I try to be giving
I'm not too good at it
When i come home and lie in
my bed it feels
like it's where i've been
the whole time
Like i never left
Like i never helped raise a
child
or made my friend laugh
or kissed your cheek
My body fits perfectly in its
impression on
this Shitty Mattress

My eyes fix on the vent again.



I am not writing this because I'm sad
I'm not right now, but i was about to be
Then i realised i haven't lost anything yet
I can kiss you again on wednesday

My stomach is a swear jar full of gold
coins
I want you to reach in and steal from me
Like a little thief
Help yourself
I try to keep it down but i want to vomit
all the time!!!
All over you i want to vomit "i love you"
And i want to be strong enough to do it
without coming home brokenhearted
Or coming home with a full, beating heart
that drains itself weak again

i am a pot of soup
i am a bowl of halloween candy out on a
porch
i am a garbage can
i am a stream
i am on the other end of the telephone
screaming
in your ear how you
are So Beautiful
i am a child who wants to love the Whole
Entire World,
then sit on the pavement and think about
it

Then walk home to my bed again
and find that it is kind and soft
and safe
and that crater in the mattress that i
spent years carving,
laying still, depressed,
i hope i find it will hold me best.

if you read this
Do not call me. I am somewhere, alive still, trying.

The end

