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TRINITY COLLEGE

SENIOR THESIS

Peace in the Pelagic

SUBMITTED BY

NICHOLAS F. ROLL – CLASS OF 2021

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

2021

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The water which has yet to pass is tomorrow, but it already exists upstream; and that which has passed is yesterday, but still exists, elsewhere, downstream.

Tiziano Terzani

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Foreword

Reflecting on a completed senior thesis is an abstract idea for me to comprehend. At the beginning of my college career, I never would've expected to find myself in this position. I am incredibly grateful to have found my community on campus, and to have fallen in love with writing along the way. My passion for writing grew immensely during my year away from Trinity College, following my first year of undergraduate studies. The journey I embarked on redefined my work ethic and, honestly, completely changed my approach to everything. The years to follow have reinforced my momentum and commitment to keep growth a priority. As an undergraduate at this institution, I have embraced a whole lot of change. My priorities shifted, I overcame fears, I embraced failure, and experienced the sensation of well-earned success. This manuscript is my story of growth during my collegiate years. There are the trials and tribulations with accepting, adapting, and overcoming any obstacle I am faced with, along with the reflective reality of understanding progress as someone who is fearful to accept it – afraid of the hidden curse of “jinxing” it.

When thinking about who or what inspired me to create this project, the support systems I have on and off campus come to mind. A huge part of me wants to present this manuscript as a way to show those who helped me the distance I have traveled, and how far I have made it. I do not want this to sound selfish, not in the slightest – I mean it as a thank you. I would not be able to share my journey of growth without the support of my family, friends, teammates, professors, peers, coaches, and everyone who helped push me for more.

I struggled at the beginning of this project because I couldn't decide how open I wanted to be with the page, and with my readers. There was a part of me that was, and still is, afraid of

sharing all of the details in my poetry. For a while I was afraid of being judged for the mistakes I have made. I believe I am at a point in my life where I am thankful for the mistakes that live in my past. I have learned so much from them, and I would not change a thing. I am comfortable with who I am now because of the mistakes. I had a very direct back-and-forth conversation with myself and realized that, in order to gain the most from this experience, I had to be more open with the page than ever before. I had to trust myself and tell the full story – the honest story.

The approach to this project was so exciting, and Professor Fisher and I made such a great team. We mapped everything out – the miniscule details, the overarching goals, the back-and-forth expansions on concepts. The most exciting part was executing on our plan every step of the way. Failure was simply not an option. The first task I faced was deciding on the progression of the pieces. The choices were narrowed down to thematic progression and time-line progression. I decided to choose the time-line option as I felt it presented my story in a more authentic and genuine way. It really came down to pushing myself so far out of my comfort zone, and accepting all of the “ups and downs” that have taken place over the years.

I am pleased with the progression as it stands, and I believe it carries a lot of weight. There is a combination of emotional themes, aligning with the time-line of events. I took a leap of faith and created haiku poems to serve as transitional pieces between the acts of the composition. I wanted to challenge myself to say something huge with the least number of words. I believe the haikus embody powerful shifts in my growth, and work as foreshadowing for the following act. My fifth and final act was a new form of poetry for me, and it challenged me in new ways. I had to interact with my present self in ways I did not expect, and a huge part

of this process was recognizing all of the growth I have made. I had spent countless days, weeks, and months living in my past where I was ashamed of myself. I have been building and strengthening my mindset ever since I realized a shift needed to be made, and have been driven to find comfort in the present. I believe a huge part of my collection's progression was offering myself forgiveness. I don't think I would have understood that need for forgiveness as clearly if it weren't for this project and the ability to create.

The time-line progression also allows the reader to interact with the stages of growth, and better understand the emotional impact of every obstacle along the way. If I were to have chosen the thematic progression, I believe the collection would have felt quite one-dimensional and would have come off as predictable and bland. I do not think my journey is predictable, but there is a sense of hope to understand change that drives the acts forward. I considered potentially including some future-tense poems, where I would try to predict the changes I make down the road. I decided against this idea because I realized I can't put myself in a position where my predictions would be accurate. The Nicholas four years ago would not have been able to comprehend the Nicholas I am today. I am hopeful that I can say the same in a few years, as I am eager to keep growing and learning more about myself.

One of my biggest struggles with writing is telling with too many words, instead of showing my readers with vivid imagery and moving language. I tend to "beat around the bush" and categorize the meaning with a whole lot of nonsense. I am going to continue to struggle with my "telling rather than showing" tendencies, but I have placed a spotlight in its face. I keep on catching myself when I start to slip, and I am proud to say that I challenged this struggle through my reworked creative process. I learned to embrace the word "prune" in new ways,

and started slashing through lines, stanzas, and even entire poems. I feel more comfortable with letting go than ever before.

I am thankful to have been able to create a collection of poetry. There was once a time, when I was oblivious of the desire to create, when I disliked poetry with a burning passion. I have come to love the creative power poetry carries, and am always excited to express myself in my most comfortable form. My relationship with poetry surely has blossomed, and it is crazy to consider the new and unknown interactions with poetry that are waiting for me after graduation. I have seen not only my voice but also my character change because of poetry, and I look forward to seeing what new changes poetry will present me.

Prologue

Broken Mirrors in a Crumbling Castle

Hate is a strong word – but I hate you.

I hate how you make every day a check-list:

 five thirty wake up, training, shower, update the parents, journal, class, training again,
 eat, meditate, sleep.

You make me want to jump into the cold current of the Connecticut.

You know I can't undo my past. Why do you always take me there?

People think you're quiet and calm, until they meet me.

I am the part of you that overthinks everything.

It's too easy to ruin your day, your week, your year. Remember how you thought you'd do well?

Because I knew you'd fail, again.

You make me feel alone in a crowded room.

Sometimes I want to cry, but I hide my emotions to suffocate yours.

The ones I trust know you exist.

You gnaw at that bond, like a neurotic dog.

You feel isolated because you are alone.

Pushing everyone away and blaming me hasn't gotten you anywhere.

The ones who hear you won't care, and the ones who don't will never know.

Keep "staying strong," though. We both know that's working wonders.

I wish I could rip you out of me, like a deep splinter under my ring finger.

For a while I accepted you, acknowledged we were kin.

I know you're nothing like me.

Take a look in the mirror –

What's there to see besides a broken boy, crumbling to his core?

Do you want my apology?

Or do you want to fight me, tell yourself you're strong, and say you're better off now?

Sounds like an excuse. You've always been good at coming up with those.

There's no hope for you.

You're shattered and in pieces.

I don't need you. Nobody does.

That's the difference.

Act I

Uncertain Expectations

Tempted by pure joy.
Wait – what do you mean I’m wrong?
Save me from myself.

An August Morning on Lake Winnepesaukee

At the crack of dawn, fresh-picked blueberries drown in their own sweet syrup.
Outside, the echo of a loon's call bounces between the trees.
The sunlight shimmers on the lake, inviting the day to rise.

I run to grab a towel,
dashing for the edge of the dock. The decaying wood creaks,
singing and shouting as I gain momentum.

And I splash.

While the wake swims from the mailboat towards the shore,
its waves rock the sailboat back and forth,
so it squeaks like the sole of a shoe.

The bottom steps of the ladder are slippery and slimy.
One wrong move and I'll sink.
Aunt Jill flings me my shirt and a battered book.

Wandering to the porch, where the only
visitors are humming-birds and fruit flies,
with their buzzes and hums spreading silence.

The books are piled on all sides, crowded
like a supermarket before a storm. There is
no escaping them.

Fresh-squeezed sweet tea bounces off my tongue.
I realize that, although I am sitting in silence,
this is still part of my story.

Passengers Heading Home

The dwellers daily hiding in shadows are all around you, living like pesky rats under the railroad tracks. Their whispers bounce around the dimly lit tunnel. The train screeches to a halt, and its gusts swing your hazel flannel back and forth – coordinated in rhythm with your efforts to find balance on the platform. You see the droplets of rain sticking to that one man's misshapen beard. Or that old woman's umbrella that couldn't quite seem to close. You see and decide to slip away as the double-doors slide open. *Disappear.*

The old woman doesn't see you, but you hear her asking about you. She wants to know why you didn't help. Reading her mumbling lips through the barrier glass. *What is he afraid of?* She is lurking, and others have joined in. The train has yet to move, and time is not your friend. The buckling brakes of the train at last release a hiss as the engine starts pulling you forward. Eyes closed. Thoughts off. *Restart.*

You can try and answer her question, but maybe you already know the answer. You didn't help because you didn't care. Her need wasn't enough. No more noise from mumbled accusations nor time wasted on wondering why they wait. Help more. Hurt less. *Live.*

Do You Hear the Police Cars Yet?

All I wanted to do was go for a run, but I couldn't run from this. The gut feeling of something terrible taking place, unraveling like a cassette tape. I remember peeking through the cracks in the blinds of my kitchen door window, seeing an ominous figure – lurking with determination to get into my neighbor's home.

Should I call the police? I should've asked him if he was hungry or cold, or if he needed a place to stay. Instead, I called.

The worst part was having to describe him. I tried so hard to focus on the details. Dark grey pants, sun-aged green wool jacket, wrinkly and battered white button-down shirt, and long grey hair. My description wasn't enough. The officer wanted more. I felt like I was committing a sin by telling the police the color of this man's skin. He's an elderly African-American male, I said.

That's when I knew it became something more to the officer on the other end of the line. I wanted to protect my neighbor's home. The officer wanted to hurt this man. I could tell by the tone of his voice. The way he told the approaching units of his new information. He said over the radio,

We've got a black.

What did I just do? Are they going to hurt him? Why aren't the officers here yet? The man just entered through their front door.

That's when the dispatcher said,

Do you hear the police cars yet?

All I heard was normal traffic and noisy birds, crowding the branches like bleachers. When I said "no," all the dispatcher had to say was,

Good. We're going to surprise him.

Act II

Where Is the Me I Need?

What is wrong with me?
Can't go back and change what's done.
Why can't I find me?

Sit Silently

Cramped between two strangers,
in an isolation tank above a vast grey sea.

Arms rub against one another
but there is no connection.

Time slows down up in the clouds
until it becomes painful.

One hour here feels like three there,
and it feels like I have another hundred to go.

Air current fluctuates.
Breathing becomes forced.

Loneliness grows in the cold;
my fear shivers to the core.

But I start to feel close to the strangers on the plane
even though we never share a word.

I disembark
and can't even ask for directions.

It's hard to feel comfortable
without a welcome.

Guard Rails

I'm tired of carrying guilt
like a freight train's cargo.

If I conducted the train
I would have derailed us by now.
Someone – please – help me make my path.

But I tend to stay on my direct route to –
where?

If I could reroute myself
I would.

But – I veer off track, increase the speed, and hope.
I hope to unhinge the cargo.
Move forward on the track.

The weight of guilt is behind me, waiting.
Time has come to reattach the cargo load.
Only this time, / chose the track.

Clockwise

In my world, the sun sleeps more than me.

Why do I do this to myself?

The obstacle is the way.

The restless moments are those of darkness
when the sun has yet to emerge.

Today is going to be unrelentingly gruesome.
I will execute regardless of how painful.

When days are hard,
one hopes for a nude answer.

The answer is always the same.
The change is me.

Here I am, stroking the canvas with my brush
as the sun lends its helping hand.

I splash the surface and create a
current that topples and meanders wherever it pleases.

I keep myself grounded like the horizon
to the sun during the dawn of day.

Act III

Will Home Be the Same?

Will they recognize
the person I am today?
Please accept my change.

Flawed and Forgotten

I turn the music off.
I do not want to hear that part of my past.

I was too foolish to believe in trust.
The way she looked at me, caught me, and released me
in a seemingly effortless attempt to amuse herself.

I get reminded of it every time I want to feel forgotten.

There was something exciting about trusting someone new,
as if the thought of being hurt was unable to attend the ceremony.

The one who trusts loses the most.

For a while I told myself I would wait – wait for her to change.
Somehow in a world unknown to me, I would forgive.
I have yet to find that world.

Watching in My Backyard

Ces re roams the yard like a lion hunting in tall grass.
I watch as he shifts from walk to run.
Then his body hugs the ground,
and he disappears into the depths of green silk.

Birds chirp at him from the trees – they tease him like a fool.
The wind whistles and howls like neighborhood dogs
at the crack of dawn.

My parents always look so proud when he brings them a gift;
in his own way he shares the message,
Look at what I did for you. Be proud of me.

Home

Rising fumes from the charcoal grill cover him.
Apple-wood crackling pellets and the smell of fresh pork,
roasting in garlic and thyme.

He places the Japanese Whiskey on the table,
and emerges through the fragrant smoke.

Hands covered in dry rub – he reaches for a hug.

I hold on.

Jazz music reverberates off the stone wall,
sounds and smells incubate the patio.

Dad takes a sip from his drink,
then licks his mustache,
grinning.

The sunrays shimmer through the tree branches
and form vibrant designs of shadows
on his black t-shirt.

His flowing curls wave with the jazz in the breeze,
dance to the tunes of trumpets and trombones.

The music fades into the background of his soft blue eyes.

Just for now, I am home.

Observing the Morning Mayhem

*Grant, where are you?
It's time for breakfast!*

I hear the floorboards creak as
I explode into the kitchen.

Sunny-side up eggs ooze onto the plate,
like spilled paint on a bare canvas.

The keen smells of smoked paprika and fresh basil
meet each other with peppery heat.

*Are you all set for school?
Come eat, quickly! We're going to be late.*

My mother's kitchen is filled with spice stained, timeworn,
decrepit cook books, some older than the Garnacha stacked by the stairwell.

Over the counter, a colossal clock sits mute,
eternally breathless from telling the time.

Dishes are always done, except for the steak knives.
Dad cleans those.

Already Mom is preparing the chicken for dinner.
Soon, flesh will sizzle in the skillet.

*The cast-iron skillet needs so much prep!
I sure do love you, kiddos.*

Olive oil and time – that's all it takes.

I Was Here

Just three letters of
Navy and Gold fading.

The Henley Royal Regatta (H.R.R.)

Tagged on the undercarriage of the founder's bridge,
a momentous sign of hope of what we strive for.

The rising river's murky streaks slice through the paint.
Different shades of green algae cycle
through life and death.

We are here, with our own colors now.
We are more than just a team.

Oar locks click into place under the bridge
and echo off of the cement support beams,
like a forced breath
in a hollow rib cage.

No waiting in the wake of our shell.
One goal. One mission. One ticket to punch.
Compete at – H.R.R.

I wonder where they went, where they are?
The crews that left their mark upon this bridge.

Crosswind

My mood, like the weather, changes every day.
The fluctuation disorients me
but adaptability is the only way to survive.

Some days there is sunshine, others there are clouds,
those blue skies giving over to the gray.

Blinded by the cloud of mist,
my preparation pivots.

Shifts in situations force me to overcome
that comfortable sense of stability.

The little things trip me up most.
I fail to understand why my thoughts
won't rest.

Old conversations trail me like ghosts,
haunting me over every word
I should have said instead.

I know the cloudy skies over my head will leave
and my days, like the sun, will begin to shine.

I just don't know how much longer I can wait.
The wind keeps pushing me further away.
Is it even worth fighting for?

The Lost Letter

Every afternoon I go to the dock
and wait patiently for the mail boat to arrive.

Did Dad actually not write me back?
I wrote my letter in the mist of morning moonlight.

My skin itches like an addict, craving the feeling of slicing
into an unopened letter.

A relapse of necessity.

The boat slowly drifts towards the shore
from behind the curves of the cove.

A familiar horn whistles from the stern
before it muffles to mute in the forest of green.

Carbonated bubbles fizz as I take a sip of cider.

The wind, playing with my hair like a puppeteer,
begins to shift from calm to calm-down.

I jump as the flag mast snaps into place.
The green and blue colors dance in the sky,
like an acrobat performing in a debut show.

Vacationing visitors smile and wave from the top deck of the boat.
I wave back.

The boat does not stop.

Davis Park

Sunrise strolls to the store
where breakfast calls us
like a flock of seagulls.

I love spending the day by the bay,
trying to find clams in the soft sand.
I remember being afraid of submerging
my hand into the depths of the unknown.

What if something bites me?

There are always mourning doves
perched on the electrical cables,
singing their song.

Ocean breeze blows the bamboo
in every which direction.

Naps on the porch to the white noise
of waves crashing on the sand dunes.

Sunbathing until dinner.
Wet wood dries in the baking heat.
Skin transitions from pale to cherry red.

There was always something sad about finishing the final drink
knowing that when the glass reaches the counter
it is time to go back over.

Bait

Hand creases and finger prints are scattered
across the double-layer, shock proof,
protective glass windows of the industrial
freezer metal door.

Bumps and grooves of lock and nut greet your
hand as you stroke the silver handle
of shifting surfaces.

Push – Don't pull away.

You see them locked and chained in cages,
being tested like lab rats.

The thought of their pain punishes you,
and your memories become their subject.
Testing turns to hurting, and then never yields to healing.

This moment is now memory,
and you're up next.

Act IV

The Never-Ending Sunset

Nobody hears me.
Fearful of change, I submit.
Victim of the truth.

Mid-Winter Misery

Streaks of glitter and shine coruscate at night,
when night is not quite day and day is dead.
Snow dances on sheets of ice in sparkling light.

Eyes slowly show themselves in the arctic light
with exhaustion leading the way. The red
streaks of glitter and shine coruscate at night,

making me want to hibernate, bear-like, with no end in sight.
Some moments freeze time as I seek to mend
while snow dances on sheets of ice in sparkling light.

The battle against it all makes me want to ignite,
watching ice melt from the shores and suspend.
Streaks of glitter and shine coruscate at night,

overwhelming me. With fear. I feel contrite.
You are oblivious to my thawing. Instead
snow dances on sheets of ice in sparkling light.

When you scream and shout, *everything should feel right!*
Only then will you understand why I do not leave my bed.
Streaks of glitter and shine coruscate at night,
snow dances on sheets of ice in sparkling light.

Moving to the Present

My empty carcass
stripped of joy, capturing none.
I realize it is time to rebuild.

Moments of the past must remain there.
My imagination wanders and fixates
on the dream of happiness.

I can't believe I told myself that I needed
someone else to make me happy.
That dream I wish to live starts from within.

It starts with me. Right here. Right now.

Drift

Doubt crosses the water
trailing us in the wake.
Branches as we rush past
snap.

Motors blaring, screams echoing, and screeches of cars
only act as distractions on this chaotic journey downstream.
Our voyage to find stability in silence presents pain.

The weather paints a mural
of dark hues and streaks of bright light.
Shifting currents and the stormy gusts
push us somewhere new.

What we thought was appropriate
only caused the turbulence of waves to rise.

I tried to keep us afloat and work together,
but we would have drowned.

Seagulls call directional cues from
the mound of sand that protects home.

Where we were and where we are do
not matter anymore.
We drift.

Microscopic Misfortune

Welcome to my home.
I'm sorry if it's too hot or too cold.
I like to live in the extremes.

My friends refer to me as *water bear*.
But, you can call me "T,"
short for Tardigrade.

I spend most nights traveling
to the darkest depths of the sea.
I like to get away from everything that
suffocates me.

You may think the pressure is mighty,
but I find it supportive and snug.
Like the moment someone wraps you
in an unexpected bear hug.

I was told you were searching for me
to find a way to relinquish the pressure built up by stress.

You may miss my microscopic size
as I surface from sea to land.
Instead of feeling bad or sorry or sad,
just know – I choose to roam alone.

You should consider doing the same.
Disregard the weight of pressure
restricting you in your world.

Let go and leave it behind.
When I find it gets to be too much,
I shut my eyes and sleep.

Dream of a world where you're free with us;
invisible to most, but recognizable in the
cloudy dust.

Drowning in Dust

I reach for the dust covered box on the top shelf of my linen closet.

I open the lid and release a familiar smell.
I picture waves crashing on the shores
hiding and then showing seashells in the sand.

The fading colors on the chest
crumble and crack
as I unfold the sweatshirt.

A wise man once told me,
Your past has shaped your present.
Your appearance will continue to shift.

I am reminded of these moments by two rusted rings,
torn like a pendant from a necklace.

We are no longer connected.
But nobody could understand
the changes you made me feel.

Creating Problems That Weren't Even There

When does telling the truth ever help anybody?
When you realize you've been dishonest with yourself.
You restrict yourself to the confines of a box,
frozen in time like a photograph.
You look within your soul and realize home hasn't followed you.
Look at me and tell me what you feel. Do you feel joy or pain?
I have mistakes all over my body.
I cover them, hide them, act as if they don't exist.
What makes your thoughts freeze like the second's hand on a nineteen forty's Omega?
Are you going to think I have left a lasting impact on you? That I've changed you?
Maybe in that moment when you saw me, you thought of home and how it's still there.
Preserve the moments of happiness. Don't try to change what's already been done. Create
something new from the base beneath you.
You will ask yourself about the mistakes on your body.
Just know I wouldn't be here without them.
You wouldn't be standing here without them.
We wouldn't be who we are without what we think.
Maybe start thinking for yourself.

Act V

White Noise

Gratitude for those
who helped me stand and reflect.
Know I am here.

Heat on a Sunny Day

The combination of whispering
tickling wind and gloomy gray skies
brings me to a shady summer day
in a cabana by the shore.

Drapes of niche corner stores
dance to the tunes of blaring
car horns and heckling lords
of the California corners.

There was a fire the other day that
destroyed a man's home; burning
in a blaze of black smoke, the wind
danced the same.

Cars drive over his limp belongings,
covered in crud and charcoal chips,
crowded around the very cart
he once called home.

If only he could escape this place
and travel to the cabana, where the
wind would be kind to him and the
whispering words would carry no worry.

Observing the aftermath of devastation,
he sees us making a wish –
dreaming about the whispering, tickling
wind being kind to him and his home.

The Unforeseeable Future

All was going to plan
until one day it appeared.

It was nothing at first.
Then it became something.
So overwhelming to the point
it's become everything.

It changed the way I live
and made me ask, why do I?
Private lives of sweet silence
have never been more personal.

Driving into the night alone
helps me escape
my new reality.

The friends I could once hold
can now only be reached
by phone.

Things shift.
Worlds collide. Worlds crumble.
People change. Society changed.
Was I ready for it?

I thought I was but
then that changed.
I was not prepared for it
like a flat tire alone at night.

One day it will go away,
something unknown will release from me.
Leaving it behind is all I can wish for,
but that day is not today.
I have adapted to,
changed for, and accepted
its presence.

Stratus Fog

Doubt crosses the water and fills my mind
like the fog trickling from the hills.
I turn and look but everything
seems identical.
Subtle hints of trees and boat masts
seem to guide us towards something that remains unknown.
I thought this was morning, but
the colors remind me of a funeral.

We're not going to make it back,
says my partner.

You have to trust like a pianist trusts his
hands – moving swiftly, softly, intentional.
What we thought was appropriate
only caused frustration.
The unforgiving sounds of bells
on buoys and whistling birds
throw us from point to point.
The shades of gray turn to black
and brown as sanctuary and security
emerge.

I think we made it, he shouts.

When Will We Know?

It has been almost a year since
we were sent home.
Unaware of what was to come,
and how little we'd understand.
Teammates, boatmates, brothers and all are silent
as we wait, mourn, cry and fight
the internal demons that keep us asking – *why?*

Brutal mornings where our only companions
were the birds, flying over us like clouds of dust
in a desert storm.
Privilege, protest, and pain projected
from our shells. This was more than a season
to compete; it was everything.

The lack of answers kept us thirsty,
begging for the next drop of news.

One after the next, brothers asking – *why?*

A stream as calm as day quickly shifted
into rapids, where obstacles were absorbed
by the strength under the surface.
We were tired of waiting.

When will we know?

Days, weeks, months, and a year have passed
and we still don't know.
Each waking moment has turned into silence,
like a prisoner waiting to be released.
He doesn't know when the day will come,
but that cell door will slide open one morning.

We are locked within our cells,
where water is scarce and answers are unsupported
claims of nothingness.
The strength of hope is wearing thin,
and our only resource is to trust within ourselves.
You learn a thing or two when all you have is family.

Now We Know

When one is surrounded by storms,
one's gut instinct is to seek shelter.

Wait and Hide. We'll be back soon.

Breathless words to helpless souls.
They built hope instead of finding a solution.

What happens when the storm doesn't pass?

Months have gone and we've adapted
to the confines of confusion.

Then a voice – a familiar tune, like the wind
whistling through the cracks of the walls.

*We've missed you, and help has returned.
Saying "sorry" isn't enough. Let us show you.*

One after the next, an extended family
emerges from the shelter, all surprised
to see a new world, recognizable to some.
We are conscious of the work that needs to be done.

Now we know what we've been waiting for.

Join Me

I aspire to embrace the moment
where silence is the only sound,
and regret disappears like sand in the sea.

If there was nobody there then explain
to me who this is that I see.
What better version of me is he?

Riddle me those thoughts and prayers
that were wasted time and time again,
when happiness was a figment of my imagination.

Inspire me to forgive and forget
the part where I felt safe, the person
who allowed me to recognize my
reality – a place I recommend for none.

Laugh with me as I rejoice the luck
I have to embrace today. To know you
will forever live is my past, like a wish
that would never come true.

The Original Script

Scraps of drafts crumple in the corners
of the shoe-box I call my living life.
The author appeared after hiding
for some time – ready to write the story of today.

Dirty dishes stacked in the sink.
Wet hair freezing in a blizzard.
Dry sockets sizzling in the sun.
Chaos.

Simplify the equation and solve.
Acknowledge the mistakes
and make new ones.
Fearful of none.

Curiosity once scared me.
Invitations to explore surround.
Delete the script and write the new one.
Nobody saw that coming.

Epilogue

My Way

If I had it my way there would be silence.
Soft waves would meet the sandy shores,
and trees would serenade the whistling wind,
like a child calling his dog for dinner.

If I had it my way there would be a sphere of mirrors.
Reflections joining one to the other,
like a school of fish swimming in unison.

If I had it my way I wouldn't have changed a thing.
Mute the whistle,
swim away from the school,
acknowledge the flaws of my reflection.
I saw it one way and made it my way.