

The Unbearable Lightness of Being

The German is *Es könnte auch anders sein*.

Which means, it just as easily could have been otherwise.

So fragile is the course of things and we're scared of tearing the butterfly wing.

She is part of a scandal

It is the habit of some men not to care when another person is in their company.

I take my shirt off. I light the carpet on fire with the matches you keep in your pillowcase.

Silence. Sirens on the street below. You're getting up for another day of leaving.

She remembers the beginning

She is dressed in silk organza. Her shoes are stolen from a museum display.

His father is a diplomat. His mother is someone beautiful.

They meet at 8pm, he says, "You look like a flower"

She feels like an animal.

It goes downhill from there.

Ghosts

There's a place on a planet far away where I never missed that text you sent. I was awake. And so we met up. We made it to the moon. We married.
We grew old together in two white rattan chairs.

Mathematics

Maybe when we dance in the doorway it's a fraction of what it was.
But you still make me laugh.
And I still make you take your pants off.
Fractions can be large numbers, you know.

Deja Vu

Thursday, I am awake and the A train smells like rain.
Do you know your doorman's daughter started Kindergarten—it's a zoo these days.
He lets me up and you are waiting with a spoon of honey.
I unlace my boots and drop them in your garbage
And we lay in bed like we have so many times before.
Your hand runs through my hair again.
My leg are touching your legs again.
So many questions, and no conversation
Again.

Multiple Choice

Seven years ago, I woke up two hours too late and missed a Yoga class.

Just last spring, I circled *C* instead of *B* on an exam.

What followed was I scored two points lower on the exam.

What followed, you can read in today's front-page news.

Confrontation

I want to confront you when I see you at the party.

The demands are written on a napkin in my shedding wool coat.

But I'm bad at confrontation.

Voices lost in the crevice of a red throat.

So instead I say, "The weather's colder in the winter than the summer, no?"

This is a brilliant thing to say.

A Scenario

She could not help thinking of him.

She often dreamt of this scenario:

They collide in the skating rink in the park.

At first, she believes it is a concussion.

But when her vision clears, it is just like that scene from the movies

Formalities, a free afternoon, wedding vows at the altar in his bedroom.

A Conversation

"What does it mean when we hold on to relationships that don't exist anymore?"

"We're scared."

"Or we loved them."

"We're conservative."

"Or we take care of things."

"Life is an act of letting go."

"Or life is an act of preservation."

My Little Cousin

When I was seven, I told my 3-year-old cousin that her drawing was ugly. When I got to her house, she took my hand and pulled me towards her room — she was so excited to show me the Tinker Bell she'd drawn and taped to her door. She was proud and beaming. I can't remember what I said, but I remember that after I said it, she tore it off the door and told me I was right, she hated the drawing too.

Mom

There exists the kind of regret that occupies negative space. They are the auxiliary verbs. They are breathless hypotheticals, painful in an indirect and self-inflicted way.

But I would take them all, take more everyday, if it meant,

I wouldn't have been miserable at karaoke.

Big Echo in Tokyo.

If it meant I wouldn't have said in the car, in a cul-de-sac, that we're not as close as other mothers and daughters.

If it meant I wouldn't have left you at dinner one September to go to a jungle party.

Apologies

Living a life I'm proud of means being very gentle and humane.

I'm walking seven miles a day and buying gloves for winter

And tortured by a memory of calling my little brother dumb

I love him a lot and I'm really sorry

I didn't mean it.

I didn't mean it at all.

My Ex-Boyfriend from CitiBank

I was in a relationship for five days in September. It began when I was bought three lychee martinis. It ended when he tried to hold my hand on 14th street which made me uncomfortable. Unfortunately, the circumstances required I send a text that said, “to be completely transparent” followed by a complete lie. But a few times, I’ve thought to myself, wow, we really could have been something. But then I think about how he tried to hold my hand and I feel very comfortable with my decision-making. My hands are for the piano and the people I love.

Old Friends

I have been bad at communicating with her and keeping in touch with everyone else. Life gets busy. I spend a lot of time daydreaming and being La La La and then a year goes by. Occasionally, I think of someone and text them I’ve been thinking of them. I hate catching-up, since explaining our lives is an impossible expectation, but it’s beautiful to have long-term friends who know a fuller, even if less detailed, picture. It’s special when we get to witness each other over the course of years. But it’s the day-in day-out work of friendship I can’t do for everyone and I wish I could.

Strangers Dying

I am on my knees sweeping the glass when the phone rings. Someone was in a car crash and I didn't know them. But it is my fault.

If we had met that morning, we would have learned to fly. Then, of course, they would never die.

The Woman of Your Life

The woman of your life is watching you chain smoke the chewing gum,

Waiting for you to call the car home,

Letting you kiss her head and make her cry.

Do better for her, this woman of your life. She comes once. She'll go away when she hears this is modernity.

Appreciation

There are all kinds of things we don't realize one person is responsible for until that person goes away and only then, do we recognize the things they did, the things we took for granted. For so long I was feeling like an idiot and then you went away and I began to feel fine. Please come back. Being an idiot was my favorite.

Ordering Food

Just this morning, I walked to the coffee shop for a cappuccino because I wanted a cappuccino. When I got to the front of the line for my cappuccino, the woman asked me what I wanted, so I ordered a mood-boosting Houjicha drink with nutmeg and mucuna. Upset by the turn of events, I conducted an analysis. The results revealed the following: When given the choice between something I know I like and something I'm curious about, I choose the latter. What follows is I cannot be trusted to order my own food.

Nietzsche

Eternal recurrence says that the time will come again. When we were little, catching ladybugs near the bushes on the playground. When we were older, drinking obscenely with the rock band in the chalet. The times we miss and mourn. The times we wish never happened.

I saw a group of boys playing soccer in Berlin and so I asked to play—I knew the time would come again.

I went inside the church and all the other old buildings—I knew the time would come again.

I told the cashier at Trader Joe's she was beautiful because I knew the time would come again, and if I did not say it, I would never say it for an eternity. And for an eternity, she would never know.