

# From The Heart

a collection of poems and threads

-joshua

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true north  
cardinal direction  
the path with a heart  
knowledge alone has no compass

love knows the way

connect to body as a bridge to mind  
in tune with self, tune with purpose  
singing the soul alive  
from the heart

welcome ... whatever brings you here today and in this  
moment, thank you for being here ... and, thank yourself  
you made it to today and despite every obstacle, you are here

take just a moment...

“to thank all the people who have loved you into being”

i believe the lessons we need to integrate are found in what we  
ignore, push off or have come to do automatically by habit  
... the intention of these writings is to bring awareness around  
forgiveness and gratitude, what it means to love... so that your  
path may be a little easier... may these words be your medicine  
and may my open heart open yours

start on a new moon, read one page everyday for all 28 phases

coming undone as a becoming yet to witness

i am a story yet to be written

you are my muse

for a life once lost

thank you for giving me rest

now in your heart i am found

the mystery unfolding

the spaces between hold the meaning

cherish the waiting

a wrong worth correcting

is time well spent

walk me home

now and forever

until i have nothing left

but Love

the first voice is your heart

the next is doubt

i worry that if i protect myself too firmly i will push away the goodness

“your feelings will kill you but if you don't feel then you're already dead”

sink or swim

you can't bury the ocean

but i've been treading water all my life

sink or... fly

or maybe going slowly enough we can go on forever

middle... water

somewhere between rain and a fountain

emotional bloodletting

pouring out my cup a thousand times and a thousand times more

determined to die empty

am i afraid of falling for you ...

or am i afraid to be happy because i expect disappointment?

is despair comfortable because it is familiar...

or am i talking myself out of something special?

i did not choose to be an artist  
grief is love that has nowhere to go  
i have to pour myself out before my life explodes

if everything was predictable would i still live it...

or would i choose the great mystery?

and i refuse to be crushed  
so will write a poem  
as if moving every word like a boulder

is the magic in making it...

or allowing it to happen?

how can i be open to love...

without being overwhelmed by pain?

should i have pressed harder?

how much farther can i let you go before you're gone?

love is not possession

but i'm still figuring it out

from the heart

is no walls of text

a flexible boundary

giving spaces to breathe

or letting you go

they don't know what love is

sometimes a poem

is dressed in plain clothes

like guarding wisdom for only the most persistently curious

every wrinkle contains multitudes

there's constellations in your mind

people are only boring if your eye's wide shut

dig deep

and, a poem is a messy collection

like looking inside a jewelry box at hard won gems

oh the mountains i've had to climb just to write one sentence

and i will only give myself to someone who's ready to behold

you wouldn't water a garden in winter would you?

the shadows point to the light  
like scars in sand traced back to the hand  
"they can only meet you as deeply as they've met themselves"

pulling punches, words can do the most damage  
tell me the truth, i swear i can handle it  
why is judgement easier than acceptance?

heart of glass, take a look in the mirror  
and give it back  
accepting the difference is connection

imagination is giving the benefit of the doubt  
universal blues, walk two moons in their shoes  
endless excuses for contradictions  
to assume the best intentions  
build each other up  
and see what happens

accepting the sky for the clouds  
for pulling weeds destroys the wheat  
and children of the sun  
must live and let live, coexist  
no idols only horizons  
no idols only... land  
is our connection, inter-dependence

perfect is the mirage  
holding contradictions with endless mercy  
i'm sorry i put you on a pedestal and deceived us both  
the shadows face the sun  
like wounds  
and in the end (if you don't say it now then when?)  
all is forgiven

and i accept you for your messiness  
for the mess pales in comparison to your completeness

maybe i am already my best self  
maybe i need others to become the best version of myself  
the space between  
the layers of becoming  
secure  
i am learning to cherish uncertainty

and i've been waiting my whole live long life  
just to be strong enough to have the self-acceptance  
to be held accountable to all the things i have done  
and failed to do  
and to those i love:  
have pity on me  
i am only human  
and i am searching

for

the ultimate surrender  
i could give you everything, i seek to be delivered  
as sacrament  
what else is sacred anymore?  
what higher art is there than worshipping eros?

my eyes have rested too long  
glazed over by mirages  
of the sun's reflection  
even one minute on the surface  
is an eternity lost in the holy moment  
betrayed by gold

yearning for return  
a safe harbor  
is where the heart is  
sanctuary  
my beating chest  
sounding yours

a million second chances

grace and mercy

thankfulness

what a miracle it is to even exist

is any life a life of abundance?

or is gratitude just easier with a full stomach?

savouring what it's like to be out of survival mode

yet longing for restoration, like the earth after us

i was willing to end all life within me just to find peace

what is satisfaction?

teach me a thank you song

will we ever stop developing?

what kind of creativity is self destruction?

how many times must we be born again?

before we realize the greatest gift

nature was here

still found in each other thru ghost and ash

speaking in tongues and footsteps

kiss the feet of the outcasts

ashes in your mouth

forgiveness and resurrection:

superpowers, super-natural

no matter the damage done

nature will be there

and you are never too dirty to be loved

“forgiveness is the secret to peace”

most of my life i am far less than proud of  
and the shame could ration till the end of my days  
yet deep in my heart i hunger and long for  
sharing the humble reasons i have been allowed to live  
cleanse and nourish  
cleanse and nourish  
together we mend  
somehow we belong to each other but don't owe anything  
may the best of our days far outweigh all the hurt that has ever been

the body keeps the score  
but nobody wins  
ain't getting out of this life alive  
the blues run the game  
the only way to win is not to play  
but i'd rather dance in the moonlight with reckless abandon than go dim  
just be true  
and maybe what's meant for you  
won't be so fucking hard

i refuse to be a victim  
i've come too far to fold  
blaming gives away my power  
and love is accountability  
no matter how much you hurt me  
i will still find the strength to apologize

how can i calm the waters of my heart?

when the wind is blowing and the moon is pulling me from deep within

i think our chapter has been coming to an end

i just hope the world is kind to you

because y'know it's a tough time for dreamers

take me down to the river i'll go

just to wash my feet

and cleanse my soul

rinse away all the dirt and grime

that's been weighing me down

how can i remain open to love?

without being overwhelmed by pain

if i am numb to sadness i am numb to joy

and i wish to be strong enough to feel it all

take me down to the river i'll go

just to wash my feet

and cleanse my soul

and even though this water don't mix with your oil, no

i still love you so

i just want to bring some joy into your life

the spark is a lie  
only a slow burn endures thru time  
passion is just the icing on a cake built by curiosity, sweat and devotion  
teach me about you  
fill me with your secrets  
hopes and fears i can hold equally  
walk with me  
through your inner cities and cathedrals  
hidden forests and all the places you hide yourself  
you can have me  
like no one else can  
only you

but you have to meet me halfway  
mutual pursuit, no chase  
moratorium my peace to explore the mystery unfolding  
just for the chance  
to know your smell without protection  
what's a question someone never asks you but wish they would?  
curiosity is an invitation not a challenge  
somewhere between the opening of a flower and unlocking iron gates  
i promise the moon and the stars  
and first sweep the floor, do the dishes and clean the car  
i got a ticket to anywhere  
maybe we can make a deal  
maybe together we can get somewhere  
mask off, nothing to lose and nothing to prove  
"the greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return"

*whalesong*

i was once an angel looking for chaos  
now i am just a demon seeking eternal peace

and i think i found myself in you  
you're one in a billion, once in a lifetime

having a conscience is such a burden  
i can't help but look a little deeper  
i can't help but be pulled down  
pulled down

can i change who i am?  
if i learn to fly will i lose myself?  
will the music inside me die?  
when is it time to let go... or hold on?

i can try to meet you at the surface  
so i can stay inside your nature  
the depths keep pulling me down

but i will be patient with you  
i have seen much, much worse  
ain't gonna scare me now  
so hold on...

imperfectly improving like rivers finding the way  
patiently moving mountains into the sea  
searching for what we once knew  
calling out into the deep blue

*underwater*

have you been underwater?  
has your life been all too much?  
i tell ya i'm here not to fix ya  
just be real steady and keep ya warm

and i trust, trust in time  
all the parts of yourself  
you once thought lost and were broken  
return to you like tears in rain

and how i think, think about you  
with the memory of water clear  
does not forget, yeah and i remember  
just as fresh as the day we met

if you came back i'd accept you  
in all your truest forms  
for the ocean refuses no river  
when ya find your way back home

*just breathe*

is friendship the highest form of intimacy?

the foundation:

different people hold different keys to parts of yourself

the deepest joy

the unexpected gifts or reliable ones

the softest touch

parallel play and the deepest laughter

a helper not a fixer

the gentlest smile, encouraging your direction

a spell of words

back dimples and that one freckle on your nose

a reminder message

knowing who you were, how far you've come

your favorite breakfast

bringing you homemade chicken soup

without having to ask

deep ears that are glad to listen to the storyteller in you

someone willing to try pickles

and knowing your favorite color is the magenta that appears on  
the clouds after the sun actually sets and most people have left

but i remembered

and i will stay with you

holding up a mirror to who you are  
unlocked and reflected back to you

“my heart is glad to be known by you”

for Mom and Dad

dear Dad did i ever tell you i still remember going to car shows  
with you all those years ago?

seeing a Buick Skyliner for the first time - it was candy apple  
red with ivory accents and the convertible top still worked

later that day, we would get caramel apples and look at purple  
Barracudas, green Shelby mustangs and all sorts of shiny  
beasts staged in the field on a perfect summer's day

thank you for these cherished memories, the time you made  
just for us to make a day special

you're the most hardworking and loyal person i've ever known

you could have given up, become an alcoholic when we almost  
lost the house but you didn't – all the hurt aside, i appreciate  
your commitment to joy and special days like these

i wonder what Mom and my sisters were doing meanwhile?

dear Mom, did i ever tell you i still remember all your home  
cooked meals from years ago?

...the apricot glazed pork chops, the creamy chicken over rice  
and the delicious meatloaf that made me actually want to eat  
something with ketchup – i wonder which meals you learned to  
make just for us

our dinner plates changed as we grew and the partitioned  
plates with drawings of fruit to help us learn our numbers were  
traded for ceramics

i deeply respect your consistent effort to make a house a home

i hope you felt appreciated for all this hard work and if you were  
not appreciated enough back then i hope you feel so now

Mom, you're the most resilient person i've ever known – thank  
you for inspiring in me humility, for if insecurities are loud then  
safety is calm and consistent like your love

there are many pathways to the heart but through the stomach  
there is a highway

*warm heart for a cold shouldered world*

(on unconditional love)

cardinals always remind me of my grandma Helen.  
i would visit her weekly sometimes twice a week and especially  
as a surprise. she is one of the only people to ever love me  
unconditionally. no matter how i showed up she would accept  
me for who i was with no unsolicited advice, and show me love.  
we'd play gin rummy and watch her boyfriend, Joey Votto play  
for the Reds. eventually i even started playing music for her and  
i always felt safe to express my truest self.

...even as bombs fall today, remember the people that have  
loved and accepted you this way and those cherished  
memories can't ever be taken from you.

would you know it if you lost part of yourself?

or does someone need to tell you?

will you walk me home?

interdependence as virtue

no one person holds all the cards

who else will fill my cup when my well runs dry?

where else will i pour mine?

what better aspiration is there than to be compassionate?

healing is not linear, be patient with yourself

break open the wound, be brave

clean out the hurt

purify the worry or it worsens

apathy is infectious

it's been too long since i've had a good cry

people break apart in funny shapes

a comedy of errors

can't find the right answer

i want to know you deeply and forever

the memory of water does not forget

and always forgives

i'm not healing to handle trauma, i am healing to accept joy

therapy is going back in time to hold the hand of your inner child

be brave

"i am good enough"

"i am restored"

"i am worthy of love"

breathe

"the best things in my life haven't happened to me yet"

i don't know if ignorance is bliss but innocence is

how to die well:

-forgive everyone for everything

-tell untold stories, in person, in journals

-follow dreams fully, die empty

-say how you really feel, love freely

do this every day

"...under the present brutal and primitive conditions on this planet, every person you meet should be regarded as one of the walking wounded. We have never seen a man or woman not slightly deranged by either anxiety or grief. We have never seen a totally sane human being."

-Robert Anton Wilson

"Life will break you. Nobody can protect you from that, and being alone won't either, for solitude will also break you with its yearning. You have to love. You have to feel. It is the reason you are here on earth. You have to risk your heart. You are here to be swallowed up. And when it happens that you are broken, or betrayed, or left, or hurt, or death brushes too near, let yourself sit by an apple tree and listen to the apples falling all around you in heaps, wasting their sweetness. Tell yourself that you tasted as many as you could."

-Louise Erdrich

"Your teachers are all around you. All that you perceive... All that you experience... All that is given to you or taken from you... All that you love or hate, need or fear will teach you, if you will learn. God is your first and your last teacher. God is your harshest teacher: subtle, demanding. Learn or die."

-Octavia E. Butler

"The silence of the spheres is the music of a wedding feast. The more we persist in misunderstanding the phenomena of life, the more we analyze them out into strange finalities and complex purposes of our own, the more we involve ourselves in sadness. But it does not matter much because no despair of ours can alter the reality of things, or stain the joy of the cosmic dance which is always there."

-Thomas Merton

"

unable to perceive the shape of you  
i find you all around me  
your presence fills my eyes  
with your love  
i am humbled  
for you are everywhere

"

if you won't be surprised you can't be let down

but people can change

if you don't tell them they can't

does fondness require distance?

come back

and show me how beautiful you've become

i love you