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Gabriel Athens



Make Us Laugh

October 24, 1998

do you remember
when we stayed at the hotel
and you took a picture
of me while I was jumping on the bed
you gave me one of the pictures
I'm sure you still have one of those too

remember when we'd go to a bar
and pick a drink,
"the drink of choice"
and we'd order the same drink
but just because we had a different
kind of drink it made us laugh
it gave us something to
talk about

there are certain people
you might know them well,
but sometimes you can't feel
comfortable in front of them

that's what most friendships are like





remember when you and a friend
were waiting in the line of the cash station
a cop got in line right behind you,
and the friend said, "Maybe the cop wants cash"
I think you almost fell over laughing
when he said that

there are a ton of stories like that
we had a knack for making stupid jokes
and laughing and laughing about them

Does that mean I'm supposed to have the right
attitude
well, I'm just me
and that should work out
just fine





Make Things Better

October 13, 1998

you can be the one that is expected to give bad news
maybe you need help in dealing with this,
maybe just need to be held
because you don't know what else to do
you don't understand what they feel
and they don't understand what you feel

we can't know everything
and understand at the snap of our fingers

other people have pain too
maybe their pain could be completely different
maybe they'll appreciate the effort you make
to try to make things better





Men Are Dogs Is True

December 31, 1998

It was nice that you made the effort
for such a short term
if I didn't know any better
I would have fallen for it





Making Sense Out Of The Insane

December 23, 1998

I can't see the silver lining around the clouds
I see the dripping blood from poorly cut wounds
they haven't healed, I tell you

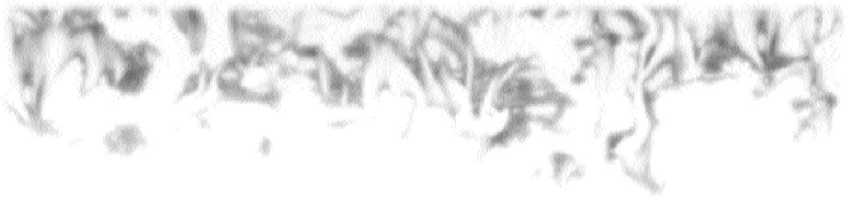
that's modern life, there is no happy ending
look and look, but you can't find it

making sense out of the insane is pointless
the insane starts to make sense
bottle up all the hate to understand

change all the goals in life
change them all
after a while that has an effect on you
after a while you start to feel like a prisoner
with the life kicked out of you
by a bunch of other prisoners
while the guards are paid to look away
it's funny how the prisoners get the coin
to pay all the good guys off

When you start to see that
And when you start to feel like that
the line between sanity and insanity is blurred





My Height Any Longer

November 19, 1998

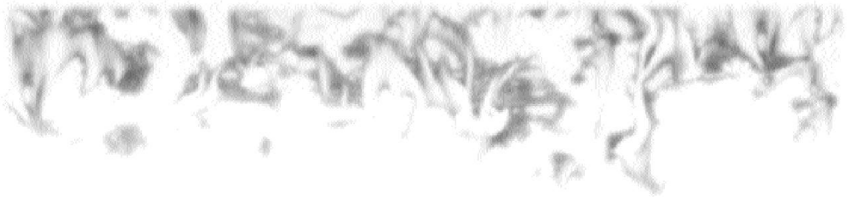
I won't make this an essay about how men look at women's hooters first
and how men think women are stupid because, well, they're girls

well, I'm smarter than you
whether or not you choose to believe it

but I've been told more than once from men that I can't be tall
may they think that because I'm a girl

but I am taller
so just find me a tall man
and let's not talk about my height any longer





prepared for the worst

October 13, 1998

I was fully prepared for the worst when I thought it was going to happen. I had to be the strong one, I had to show everyone that they could count on me.

but I never thought about someone close to me dying, someone I just thought would always be around, someone that would live to their old age.

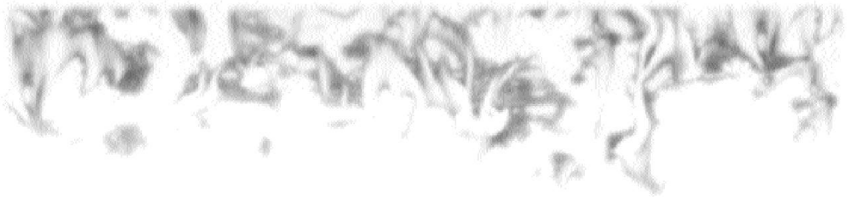
were you that close to me in the first place? did i think of what it would mean to me if you were out of MY life forever? no, i had to be there for others right now.

I planned on sticking around, I proved myself to all the doctors and the nurses and all the technicians, and even the cardiologists. they don't remember me now, why would they.

I wondered if I would even get the chance to see the corpse, depending on when we got to the hospital. But I'm usually not at the hospital while death is happening.

But I knew I'd have to be ready for this and I might have to be prepared for this, in case it happened.
people never learn how to stop drinking, did they





never learn how to solve their own problems or did they
never want to deal with a problem. How do you prepare yourself
for all this? I was busy preparing myself for the worst,

so I wouldn't fall apart when the bad news came

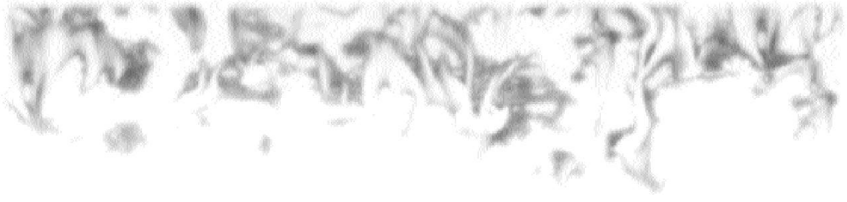
am I supposed to be the strong one and be prepared?
this was something I had to do and I'd deal with death personally,
maybe today, maybe later

I got there and there was no bad news, no one was
dead or dying, and everything was normal.
normal in a hospital. I visited people and talked a little in the

hospital, and everyone wanted me to talk to prove
to everyone that I was normal and I was fine.
"And this could happen to you," I said,

"And you have to want to be and make yourself better."
I didn't know what else I was supposed to say. but somehow
I was temporarily prepared. just in case.





Not Getting Better

October 24, 1998

everyone thinks I'm getting better

but no one knows what it's like
the pain I still go through
I've been fighting but I don't see the signs
that anything is getting better

I still have to wait
it's already past due

I still can't see
I come up with a way in my
head to make it better
no one can see the difference.
but i still feel it





Pressure On Me Again

November 28, 1998

Man, you put a lot of pressure on me
I'm so sick of not being in control of everything
I'm tired of defining how everything goes

I define my own life
how do I make all the changes
I'm all alone on this one
and have to do these things myself

I have to define my own life
I need to take a magic marker
a big black bold marker
and create the path that defines who I am

I need to make my own choices
and color them in
and make sure that I don't go past the lines
so it looks like I did a bad job
because no one can put that pressure on me again





short-term advice

October 13, 1998

why do people take sides on politics,
when no politicians do anything for their country

the politicians are usually crooks, or cheaters
better political leaders manage to hide their “bad” side
they have a bunch of people paid to write their speeches
so they don’t ever have to save face

I need to learn how to save face for what I do wrong
politicians use the same lines over and over again
until people forget that they aren’t told about the problem

How do you find someone honest
when you’re used to cheaters and liars
don’t look in politics, that’s the best short-
term advice I can even give you





Seasons 1998

the entity of Earth lives
attacked by its denizens
Spring follows winter

Winter fire burns bright
Warmth flows over my brick hearth
Summer fire is shunned

Grandchildren bring joy,
vigor, love, fun, liveliness
With age comes calm, peace, knowledge

Soft loose wrinkled skin,
white coarse bristly chin whiskers
mark the wise woman

Limbs etched against sky,
full white clouds gathered in close
foretell winter's snow





Slow Painful Death

December 29, 1998

it is funny how hindsight is twenty twenty

but you were are liar
and still are one

I was not immune to your violence

you gave me good memories

they are clouded by your anger
rage, insolence, and idiocy

I can not do it this time
I have to write about things that matter to me
I could write about how I
want you to go through a
slow painful death

but you know I think that
and I do not need to go into that at length





Someone Give Me the Answers

September 7, 1998

my dictionary is older than my schooling
my encyclopedia set is older than I am

I've been looking for answers to what
I thought were simple questions and the
people who are supposed to be smart
never have the answers

I can't even finish a sentence with people
and I'm expecting finished sentences and sense
and answers from all of the people I've already
lost so much faith in

when I regained consciousness,
I was given the same meal three times a day
I was physically strapped to my bed
the answers haven't come to me for quite a while
not since my hospital visits
or my school days
or my friendships

someone give me the answers
I don't know where the answers are





Sometimes It's Not

December 13, 1998

sometimes I wish I could
turn back the hands of time
but maybe I might still think
that I could live forever then

we have our hopes and our dreams
and usually we don't think about them
and we try to avoid them





Supposed To Be Done

October 28, 1998

I was ten when they buried you

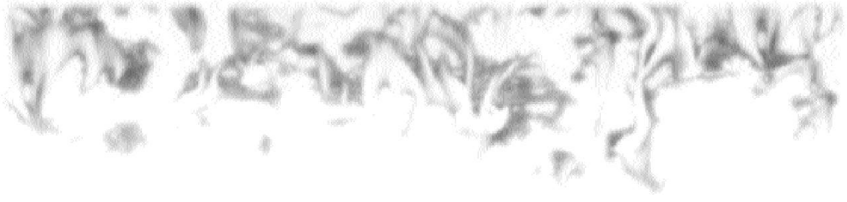
At twenty-eight, I tried to die

At twenty-eight, I tried to die
And get back, back, back to you

I thought even the bones would do

isn't that how it's
supposed to be done





take it all away

September 19, 1998

I found out weeks after I was in the hospital
it was then that I found out details
what the doctor did to me
while I was in there, unconscious

whether or not
they were helping me or hurting me
I didn't know
and don't know

they put a piece of metal in my leg
to stop blood clots
to my heart, or lungs, or brain

do I need a piece of metal
in my body for the rest of my life,
I needed to know this after it
had already happened

X-rays were taken of me
a ventilator was on me for 6 days
All I knew at the time was
most of my rights were being taken from me





what if one day something went
wrong in your body and your
heart just stopped beating

what would happen to you
if you heart just
went out
and you made it in an instant
and people were worrying about
you and they thought you might
not make it and they had to think
that you may be gone and they
had to come to terms with that

would you clean up your room
would you try to be nicer
It answers so many questions



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