

One Year Gone:

A Collection of Poems

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Basket in the Sky

Sunlight begins to dim over the horizon as night approaches.

Carnival rides and ringing bells create a cacophony of sound.

The sound becomes more distant as the basket rises.

It's peaceful in this metal basket.

As one source of light dims, a more colorful source of light brightens below.

One by one, bulbs of red, green, blue, and yellow erupt in a spectrum of color.

The basket continues to round to the top.

Just like the lights below, you are not alone in this basket.

As the basket reaches the apex of its loop, you begin to feel anxious.

Your friends take in the sights and sounds of the county fair.

Each of them point out details from below that intrigue them, except you.

You want to tell her how you feel, that you want to be closer than you are inside of this cold metal basket in the night sky.

Now isn't the right time though, not when the others are here.

The basket has stopped moving for now.

Suddenly, the night sky is illuminated in red, you can feel it in your chest.

A few seconds later, some more illuminations go off, lighting up the night sky.

The basket begins to move once more, returning you to the fair below.

The cacophony of sound becomes louder as you get closer to the ground.

You decide to ask her if the two of you could talk by yourselves later.

She doesn't turn her head.

Beachcomber

A man awakens on a shore,

Dazed and confused.

The sunlight burns his eyes,

The wind whips his face.

The man ponders what brought him here,

As the waves continue to cascade.

He begins to trek down the barren shore looking for answers,

Every step he takes in the sand leaves no imprint.

Further and further the man walks,

A chilling fog falls over the beach.

Sounds begin to echo out from the fog,

But the man can't remember where he has heard them before.

Out of the man's field of view,

Seagulls laugh at the lost soul below them.

The seagulls knew all too well where the man was,

Soon he would as well.

In the distance the man sees something sparkle in the sand,

He rushes towards this glimmer of hope.

Could it be a treasure?

Maybe it is a message in a bottle?

Residing in the sand lies a brown bottle,

Residing in the bottle lies a message.

The man retrieves the message to read:

Welcome to purgatory.

The man's heart skips a beat as a wave crashes,

Tears begin to stream down his face as the water rushes towards him.

He ponders what he did to deserve this fate,

Why me, what did I do?

The water surrounds the man as he lies on his hands and knees in the sand,

The gravity of the situation overwhelms him.

His tears fall into the sea as the water recedes,

The water takes him as well.

A man awakens on a shore.

The Sketch

The blank digital canvas lies before me,
My tiny digital tools lie off to the left of me in a neat little column.
Just like a piece of marble,
A work of “art” lies within.

So much potential on a digital canvas,
As many possibilities as there are stars in the night sky.
Once I have an idea I choose the pen tool,
Unfortunately I cannot draw to save my life.

I then click and drag with dread,
Connecting lines together like a sick game of Connect the Dots.
My hands clamming up as I precisely move my mouse,
Struggling to make lines curve in the way I imagine them to be.

Once the outlines have been etched onto the screen,
It is time to breathe some life into my sketch.
I pick out a nice spectrum of colors to use,
Thankfully I don’t have to struggle to paint in between the lines.

After hours of having aching wrists and sleeping legs caused from boredom,

My horrific creation emerges from the scolding hot screen.

I pray for mercy and forgiveness,

To those who will view my “masterpiece.”

The View From the Highlands

Near the northern tip of the Jersey Shore lies a place,

A place called the Highlands.

From atop the peak of Mount Mitchill,

You can see the steel and concrete jungle called New York City.

Twenty years gone by,

The view hasn't changed much.

The mountain peak on the other hand has,

A perched stone eagle now gazes to the south gripping twisted steel.

Twenty years since,

A clear tuesday morning atop Mount Mitchill.

It was from here you could see the black plume of smoke,

Like a bottle of black ink spilled onto a plain white canvas.

Twenty years since,

Twin pillars fell.

The eagle now rests atop Mount Mitchill,

As a reminder of that day.

The eagle's perch is wrapped in granite,
Names etched into it as a reminder.
Metal leaves rest on benches,
Each one unique in shape.

A spot surrounded in light and shade,
With a view of the past and present.
The view hasn't changed much,
Twenty years later.

Thoughts While on the Couch

Well, since I refuse to sleep tonight, I guess I can entertain my brain by taking all of the thoughts that are soaked up inside my mind and wring them out onto a text doc. I guess it would be a good start to state my current situation. For over a year now I have been trapped inside my home with my parents and dog. Their comfort and support makes these dark days brighter. However, after all of these months stuck inside, I have had the burning desire to find a break from the isolation. Today was the day that it had finally turned into a full-blown wildfire. I managed to escape from my isolation via car and have taken refuge on a lopsided couch in a house occupied by friends.

Every week I see the faces of my friends digitally and today was the first time in awhile I was able to see them face to face. When I am in their presence, it feels wrong, like I shouldn't be here. I stare at my friends in disbelief while I am standing six feet from them. I can't believe I am actually standing in front of someone who isn't my mom, or dad, or dog and having a conversation with them. My friends wish that I would stop by their off-campus house more often, so do I. I always enjoy the company of my friends and they are just another source of positivity for me. That is how I ended up on this tan lopsided couch at five in the morning.

For months I have gotten little sleep. I like to think that it is a side effect of too much isolation, but this has been partially self-inflicted. Countless nights I have stayed up late either working on schoolwork or trying to entertain myself through silicon screens. I keep telling myself I'll sleep earlier, but I feel the need to revolt. With all of my time during the day spent working on assignments and staring into a computer screen, I have no time to wind down and destress or catch up on what is happening in the world. There doesn't seem to be enough time in the day to do everything. It seems like a distant memory when I would accomplish so much in a day. Maybe my recent increased amount of procrastination and slacking off due to learning from home is the source of my lack of free time and sleep.

This next part is hard for me to say. It has been a feeling that I have had for a long time. I guess it has become stronger due to this severe isolation. The desire to find that special someone. I wish that I had someone that I could just open up to and care about as they would for me. It's like that old adage of every pot having a lid or a person finding their rock. I know that my rock is out there somewhere. Love always finds a way, even during tough times. I guess this hope is another source of energy that keeps me going.

To think that after the countless times I have rested on this distant lopsided couch, this would be the place I get all of my thoughts out. I guess the combination of isolation and procrastination seem to be the reason I have been feeling bummed out. Of course I'm not the only one who feels this way right now, there are probably other people in this world that have much bigger problems and are feeling much worse than me. I guess I can be thankful that I am not in their situation. In time things will get better, I know they will. Until then, I think I'm going to surrender and get some sleep.