

## **I stay with friends and feel like a nuisance**

Your car is puttering up a San Francisco hill and you will die one day

With your supply of expressions, version of smiles and wrinkles, no one would ever import your parts, ever respond to a limited time offer during daytime television to send a check or money order to Colorado Springs, Colorado

You want to kill pigeons. You want to live in a tree and only answer to the weather

You are open to the public

You're alone in the car, surrounded by deformed metal and someone tells you they're "gonna get you out of there" and the pain makes you embodied in a way you never were until now and if you break something, you won't be able to walk up that rocky hill somewhere in Berkeley where the rich people mark off their parking spots on the street and let their children wear angel wings to school because they are expressing themselves

There is a moat between reality and data and you hover around it hoping for attention. Data doesn't know you adore it because it doesn't know anything

You clear your mind like a calculator every time you feel the brick

You used to have so much room: in your home, in your car, between you and other people. Space is a lack you created and can fill by walking from here to there. Your eyes count perfect footsteps before you move

Your space gets smaller and you dream of pinups

You are Zen. You are above discomfort

## **To feel lonely seems redundant**

Your hands smell like the salad you ate for lunch. You lie in the sun, which seems to bleach you like a patio umbrella. You lift your shirt to see the color you used to be

You hear pigs grunt; this is Golden Gate Park

Men scratch their balls in their polyester shorts

The clouds get fat as hamsters while you watch—possibly an effort to tell yourself something about the sky's refusal to bake you properly

Whenever you try to be cheerful, you feel like you are speaking someone else's language, or rather, visiting another country, and talking in gibberish in the hopes that people there will think it's their native tongue

You would rather be inside but then you would be one of those people who stays in on a day like this

You hear pigs grunt; this is Central Park

The sun goes down and fireflies shed their glow—florescence nestles in the creases of your palm

The sky is electric gray

Walking down a city street is halfway between being indoors and outdoors

Incense pours from small storefronts, their gates almost closed for the evening

In your room, you wonder about all the private displays of public affection out there. There are pedestrians being coyly demonstrative at this very moment

You forget the code to get outside, stick your head out the window, figure the drop to the street.

You spread out to fall slower. You open if only to be closed. When you lay out, there's nothing cute about it. You're inappropriately spacious

Someone could drive a tractor through you. They could forget they weren't in the ballroom of a grand hotel

You drive to work on Monday. The sky is periwinkle in the window. The sun comes up sometime in the car. You search for a better song on the radio

## **I go to poetry readings and leave as soon as they're done**

Your mind has no embassy

Like a raccoon picking through a dumpster at noon. It might have rabies. Maybe it skipped lunch  
In the spring, you can't decide between hot and cold. You take socks for granted, look outside to  
the indecisive fog

It's July

Your body is heavier than hot air

You shiver and wait for fall

You wait for the UPS man to deliver your Seasonal Affective Disorder while the neighbors climb  
a tree to live in during the summer, boil soup from the bark. They hike where other people walk.

They meet the occasional raccoon and greet it in raccoon language

Even New York has been warm lately

You wait for hot magma to break through the concrete and make soup out of you

It's Tuesday

Your hair is cooking to an unnatural black. Your skin is more pasty than ever

It's Saturday

The garden is just floral wallpaper in the living room. The neighbors are not fooled

You multitask leisure time. The laundry is full and getting dirtier by the second

Seasonal Affective Disorder is looking for its biological clock in a place like San Francisco

It's October

You can't tell the morning from dinnertime

The trees hold thin needles from their branches like Grinch hands

It's May

Your date is from another country. Maybe you both can exchange notes on the weather. It's too  
early to tell if there will be breakfast

It's Friday

It's not the fall anymore

## **One of those very long, virtually unpublishable pieces get published**

It's 2 p.m.

It's about time you shit on the rug. You have no tail to lift you up by. You read too fast but are not furry or fuzzy

Being particularly mindful, you make sure your coffee colonics are fair trade

You want your bowels to be empty forever—still recovering from years held hostage by daytime TV commercials

When you were eight, you dramatically took a towel off your bleached hair and said, "I can bring home the bacon and fry it up in a pan"

You build artistic roofs with artificial home-store shrubbery

Motionless in your motionless car; the Altoid tin teases you. The traffic rushes by in a mocking fashion

Cars are sexier than helicopters. They hug the road. People ride in them. If you could do a reverse cowgirl in the driver's seat while speeding down one of those curvy mountain roads, it would be the perfect symmetry of red-hot loving and automotive ecstasy

You need your gas fix. We all need to be in practice sometimes

You tattooed makeup on your face; if it can't be removed then it must be authentic

You fit in black rubber, smile the way people smile when they belong somewhere. You practice with a riding crop on a barstool. It's frozen in fear

The work never runs out

The work never makes you love time

You persevere about crashing and car repairs and the failure implicit in not using gas anymore

You are like a hound bred to have a stubby tail and no knees. Your existence was purposeful

You look ahead to keep from dying, like you purchased a time-share in the future. The back of your throat is blocked

Making decisions was never your strong suit

**The soot from the street coats our marble front stairs and my roommate hoses them down.  
I don't even know where our hose is. I worry that the days all seem the same but the years  
are looking that way too**

You are unmoving in the place where I call you  
The Muni train is confused for an earthquake  
You wish you had an energy source for all the "missed connections" on that train  
You wish you had a slingshot and the ability to aim properly  
I hate to admit this  
I've known myself while remembering you  
You have hair that curls like a gondola on the pillow  
You're as ordinary as a breadbox, that a child decorated with puffy stickers  
You watch lovers act beautiful in public  
They don't see you staring  
When you hold my organs, it matters how far away you stand  
I hate to admit this  
There is implicit distance  
My wind whistles in your ear hollow  
Lovers try to fill in their holes and eventually resent each other for it  
You try to pretend you're knowledgeable enough to resent anyone  
The ground is wet and there's no place to sit  
Lovers take for granted that they will be annoyed on a constant basis  
There are two earths behind your lids  
I hate to admit this  
Your lips don't touch my fingers  
Your hepatitis heart  
Our tongues slither in the cave of our kiss  
I never know how to burn you

## **I avoid commitments of most kinds**

You tell me, “I hate to admit this, but I’m an almond!” A napkin sits in my ketchup, the waitress drops her order pad. I have no idea what you were talking about. “No one gets excited over an almond. No one rips off their clothes, constructs poetry, cries their eyes out for an almond. No one challenges an almond to an arm wrestle.” I look past you at the couple in the next booth, perhaps a pistachio and a walnut, sharing an order of fries. I try all the logic—how almonds are so popular and good for you and a good source of protein and high in manganese but I cannot retort when you point out that no one actually knows what manganese is. “I want to be a cashew.” Your hand strikes the table as you try to stop the tears from percolating in the corners of your eyes. “No one says, ‘Oh god I love an almond.’ But they do say that about a cashews. They do. I know you’ve heard them.”