

## **Behind My Fingers: Noise and Comparison**

4/17/13

Why can't this moment last?  
I smile and open my eyes to the garish shine  
of the back porch lights. How long have I been laying  
here?

Pat's cottage is something from a postcard:  
a picturesque New England lakefront cabin, humbled  
beneath a titanic Milky Way panorama.

"DESPERADO, WHY DON'T YOU COME TO YOUR SENSES?"

"YOU BEEN OUT RIDIN' FENCES FOR SO LONG NOWWW!!"

I can hear the others singing songs inside, but I just lay here.  
For being so noisy, it's silent here.  
As I remember, I hear myself volunteer,

"The fire is getting low. Where do you stack the firewood? I'll go,"  
get some for the fireplace.

Laying on my back outside,  
gazing up into the black night beyond,

My eyes close without my notice....

It's never a matter of intent, nor of will;  
It always seems as if I lack the energy  
When I tell myself, "I'll definitely do that..."

"Later..."

Procrastination tempts my attention  
With bait of an imminent future in which I'll be  
More interested and determined if only I  
Drag my feet just a little longer...

And on a good day,  
Mustering all of my inspiration, frustration,  
And introspection will only carry me so far  
Before I forget that I'm trying.

It's white noise.

There's a transparent rattling in my head  
That seems to drown out my attempts to  
Make sense of my own goals and desires.

It's a matter of mental clarity;  
The light gentleness of self that  
Humbly acts with practicality.

A basic understanding that  
This moment is the only one  
I can change.

I sit up and look around.  
Flakes of snow appear ceaselessly under the porch lights  
and descend gently to collect on the winter floor.  
The frigid winter of Maine is soaking my thin faded jeans  
and my bones shiver beneath my open leather jacket.  
I have no desire to move from this euphoric paralysis.

"DON'T YOUR FEET GET COLD IN THE WINTER TIME?  
"THE SKY WON'T SNOW AND THE SUN WON'T SHINE!"

I should go back inside, my friends might be looking  
for me.  
It's so tranquil and placid here, like this moment was meant only

I wish Kaelea were here this weekend,  
She'd find the beer-can pyramid majestic.

I try to think of what I was doing,  
but remember nothing.

Why am I laying here?

Trying too hard to remember my past intentions  
While distractedly putting off today's obligations,

I often make no progress at all.

Every moment is a moment too late--  
A lifetime spent chasing the moment-just-passed.

My mind churns faster than I can discern.  
And  
Every Thought Claims Precedence Over  
The babbling currents of conscious mind chatter The  
In front of me, and occasionally, I notice the sound. Last:  
It's some invisible cacophony of subtle suffering-  
An egocentric stream of imposing self-validation.

A shrill whisper from within that never planned on  
keeping quiet.  
That voice which demands attention but hastens to hinder it.

It's the churn-- it leaves reason one-step  
behind;  
Sentences search for their periods

In a sea of alphabet soup

- It's a task to tell when I know I'm in my head  
**Where does me start  
and where do I begin?**

*(For being so silent, it's deafening here)*  
But amidst the raucous noises of mindlessness,  
I wait patiently for the rare sound of calm .

I long for steady silence  
The kind that comes on a cold autumn night's breeze  
And leaves me still, alive, and at peace

I wonder... if it came, would I hear it  
Because I always seem to fill the spaces with  
My own voice...

...And thoughts . . .

It comes as the gentle caress of opening a window  
In a stale, warm room.  
A whispering reminder that fresh-air and insight  
Are the same thing.

As the evening wind sighs,  
The whisper of a red oak leaf  
Scraping along the surface of concrete  
Could make time hold its breath

When a cool breeze presses my skin and  
Street lamps cast their lights in the dark,  
Yellow hues draw shadows on the ground  
And I stand motionless, attentive to the moment.

Of infinite possibilities,  
Why do I find myself  
making the same choices?

I play peek-a-boo with reality,  
Appearing from behind my own hands  
To take in glimpses of truth,  
Quickly returning back to the sight of my own palms.

How can I learn to remember the truth  
That lies behind my fingers?

It's not a truth that can be taught,  
Like a date on a college history exam.

It's not a Post-It note stuck on  
The glass of my computer monitor.

It's the shadowed kiss between  
This moment and a constantly growing past;  
It's a silence that can only be understood  
Through noise and comparison.

It's the first line of these words  
Attempting to share space with the last.  
(Why I can't remember: this present moment is last in passing.)

And then the sweeping serenity of silence finds me,  
Whispering the weightless words:

Love.

Live.

Breathe.

Give.

Calm your mind.

Excite your soul.

Feel the earth beneath your feet.

Touch the wind with your skin.

Find the truth of the moment: The red and blue of a park bench,  
The frosty hue of thirsty grass,  
And the laughter of children.

**The moment is void of commentary.**

Warm sunlight and cool shade.  
A swing rattling quietly in the wind.

The world is calm outside your mind;

**All the NOISE in the universe is** SILENT

Next to a single *whispering* thought.

Time passes and all seems silent.

I see nothing, I hear nothing. How long have I been laying  
here?

I feel so perfect right .

I'm so blessed to be .

What am I doing ?!

A frozen crystal wind scratches at the heat of my body.

Damn it's cold outside, how did I not notice until now?

I quickly come to and make my way back to the cabin.

As I draw closer, the sound of laughter and music bleeds  
louder from the door. I open the door and step into the heat.

Jesse's face smiles a drunken smirk as he pats his pockets  
for a cigarette. I saw him finish the pack an hour earlier  
but watch with amusement as he expands his search  
under the old brown coffee table.

Just then, Pat looks up at me and begins to laugh, "Where's the firewood?"

And now, an hour later,

I remember: present is in passing.