

400. IN CELEBRATION

I want to explore you
And laugh stupid with you
Be wacky-silly with you
I want to grow my intelligence
In yours, so fertile
I want you to mother my child
And I want him to love you
As I do
I want you to sell chocolates in the choir
Forever
In those tight, sexy sarongs
I want to cherish your fragility
Nourish your strength
I want to stop writing poems
And start living them
I want to seduce you
With the trembling excitement
Of our first tipsy kiss
I want to give it my best shot
Then double the effort
I want to teach you whistle
And play kick-ass Irish reels with you
I want to play chess with you
Until you kick my butt each time
I want you to laugh
As I fall off my first horse
I want you to feast on my love
And pour it over you dripping
Like chocolate
I only want to drink French champagne with you
I want to be in Ireland with you
And visit Lord Howe Island with you
I want to fulfill every dream I've shared with you
I want this poem to be read out loud
Each sacred celebration we choose
All of this I dream to cherish
And if it's sadly not to be
I hope one day to have them anyway
In your honour

31/3/2000

401. BEG ME TO STOP

I love you
I am going to say it
Again and again
I love you
Until one day
You will beg me to stop
Saying it
You will no longer need to hear it
Because every cell
Every corpuscle
In your wondrous body
Will resonate
With that
Sweet knowledge

1/4/2000

402. DOUBT

I love you
And you have every reason
To doubt it
Or if you once believed it
To doubt it can last
Or could be good for you
I'm smiling now
Because I know how wrong
That's gonna be!

1/4/2000

403. DISAPPOINTMENT

What disappoints me
Is that you could commit to the good times
But not the difficult times
That if I have been distant or troubled
It is not because I ceased loving you
But because that was my reality
In that moment
For better or worse
I thought I had time you see
The time to slowly unfold me
Not just the jolly me
The consummate performer
But the darker hues too
I'm not a torturer
But we each have to sit awhile
With each other's suffering

I believed in the endurance of us
I trusted we could attempt to be honest
Find calm
Be comfortable and safe
That I could both laugh and cry in you
You got scared I guess
That my black dog would be on going
Even forever
And retreated to your restlessness
And feelings of dissatisfaction
With your life and love
That slow burn of bitterness
I had witnessed in story
Now percolated through you
To me
I saw it in your exquisite eyes
I tried to make a little room in me
For that bitterness
Accept it
And trust it could be exorcised
In time through our project
I was wrong, sadly
It roared at me these last weeks
As I once told you (jokingly) it would

Darling
What gives my life a little meaning
And some tenuous calm
Is all the product of slow, beautiful time
My child, my few friends, my music, the choir, my family
This is what I hoped you had joined
Only with the pride of place given to a lover
We called this 'the promise of us' once

A slow knowing
A growing together
An acceptance through time
A washing away of anxieties
A love from a past generation
Without the compulsion

You got scared
I know that road well
But to love
Someday that fear has to be tackled
What disappoints me
And makes me so sad
Is that something beautiful
With a kernel of meaning is lost
We must begin again
You must begin again
I must begin again
A track we've both been on
Many times before
A circle game I thought we had purged
Through us finally

I love you and
This is an irresistible truth
You cannot betray

14/4/2000

404. JOURNAL OF GRIEF

This is my journal of grief
And weird hope
It is my pain
I own it
In ink
And my healing
It is for me mostly
And for you secretly
One day
Hopefully

17/4/2000

405. LITTLE AND BIG

I remember the little things
Sharing cigarettes
The perfume of you
Playing piggy-in-the-middle with B

The good red wine (you snob!)
And the great champagne
Holding you close
Licking eyelashes
Cooking for you
Timing my bath for when you
Returned from work to soak with you
Feeding Kaia and witnessing
You gentle disapproving glance
Soften into a smile
Talking to you about American Beauty
Watching you dress for work
That ritual transformation
From private to public
Making Earl Grey tea
And sitting in bed
Waiting for it to cool
Poached eggs
Melting under your fingers
Snuggling close into your back
Covering your breasts
Listening to you take those hesitant steps
On the tin whistle
Watching you in choir
Emanating love
Sitting next to you on the plane
Pleasuring you
Swimming with you at Noosa
In that depthless pool
Playing my flute for you
At Wilson's Prom as the
Sun set salaciously
Reading your email in Geneva
And missing you
Climbing into bed with you
Jetlagged on my return
Talking to you about B
And my adoration of him
Laughing with you and C
While sharing a 'Kennett' on Lake Geneva
Seeing you hold up my 'funny hat' photo
With stupid pride
Loving me
Loving you
It's the big things I remember

April 2000

406. THREE PILLARS

Love is not quite enough
Too late (this time)
I now understand
A functional relationship
Needs other things too
To circle the love and grow it
It needs loving effort
To develop skills
Good communication
To address occurring conflicts
In mutually beneficial ways
It needs a willingness to take risks
To keep it interesting
By suggesting, responding and doing
Things together
It needs sex
In all its glorious vanity
To buttress the three fluted pillars
Intimacy, passion and commitment

21/4/2000

407. RESOLUTIONS

Take some risks
That is
Ask a few people out
Just for the fun of it
Forget about rejection
Jettison the fear
Accept it as a part of life
(After all B's rejection is as bad as it gets!)

Go slow in the beginning
Don't stake all on love blinkered by passion
Rather take time to get to know
And grow the flower slow
Work on communication
This is B's take-home message
Give, give, give
You never killed anyone with kindness
Give up the fags
Toxic morning breath
And libido
Don't mix!

22/4/2000

408. SOLID

The things that are solid
In my life
Are still
While fragility
And broken dreams
Make ripples in my heart
My child
Family, friends
Music, honour
Home
All still solid
Yet momentarily
Empty of meaning
As my sense of self
Flounders for control

24/4/2000

409. FRESH START

I can make a fresh start
And not only
Find eventual fulfillment
But also atone
For all the baggage broken
This fresh start
Will honour me
And be in remembrance
Of others
And the trials endured
Through your devotion
To me

24/4/2000

410. FORTIETH

It is raining
On my fortieth
Those contradictory
Tears of grief
And I thankyou B
For my wake-up call
Delivered hard and sharp
Exposing a cruel comfort zone
I had habituated out of habit

It's raining on my fortieth
But life begins today!
And I wait with patience
For the most difficult
Moment of all

24/4/2000

411. DESERVE

It is bittersweet
To see B happy and in love
With Z
Who seems so together
So clear
So resolved
I want that too!
But my troubled brain
Has again played saboteur

Down in demon-land
I never believe I deserve it
Or can do it
So I am left to pretend
A faux-smile until
The grin looks thin and wild
Then I run a mile
To that gloomy cellar
That deadens all
With safe pall

APRIL 2000

412. WATER

You were dead right B
I neglected to water
And the roots and leaves
Dried out
Slowly at first
(We hardly noticed)
As I sought to avoid
My coming drought
Then cataclysmic
Me
(A dried and dead twig)
As the fertile rains
Of another
Quench you
But sere me
Cyclonically

APRIL 2000

413. FIRST TIME

It is positive
This first time
Feeling the sadness
Of loss
It is a cruelty
I have not really known
Since B
When too young
I repressed all
To save my life
But now I'm stronger
Wiser, older
They say

It is positive
And the future is a promise
That this burn
Is a purge
And my viral scourge
Is at last purified
Through fire

24/4/2000

414. SUFFER BABY!

Thankyou B
For your kindness
And embrace
You owe me nothing
And have ample evidence
(No doubt)
To convict me
Or simply say
With lifted chin
'Suffer baby!'
But you gave compassion
And spoke hope
Showed tact
Without cause
That is human
In essence
Thankyou

24/4/2000

415. ANNUS

Two years today
Not long really
In the scheme of things
But a ridge of loss
Blots all else

25/4/2000

416. COMFORT

Cruel sleep
Deceiving dreams
And cold comfort
The night offers respite
From the mind's continual loop
Seeking the definitive answer

Sometimes with its own
Sneering pain
I awake
Fooled for a trifle by sleep
Into a past peace
A séance serenity
Only to awaken
With a jolt
Back to the racetrack reality
Of consciousness

25/4/2000

417. MIDLIFE CRISIS

Could the perplexed pageant
That today passes for life
The creeping conical void
Be a midlife crisis?
I am old enough
For that luxury today
The silver bulletted youth
Departs and with it
I reluctantly shed the superhero

Man in the middle
Sobbing for memory
A cumulative grief
Balled up and foetal
Now not to be denied

25/4/2000

418. THE PUSH

Lets be friends
You say
As you push me away
B does it with her lovers
All the time
You tell me
And I think of the many varied ways
You had to chastise her
For her chaotic love-life
So now the irony
Brands me
As you hold up her actions
As an example for us
She who boiled your blood
To speak of her
She who drained you of compassion
And left you with a dry jealous spit

You show me about the same compassion
As you did her
As if to love you
Is to be sacrificed eventually
'The bitch from hell'
You called yourself
In better days
Yes lets be friends, lets
I concur
A self-destruct desperado
Convincing myself for a moment
That this isn't just a get-out clause
I have employed myself time over

Lets be friends
What a noble idea
But what do we talk about?
Your new lover?
Umm, hardly!
The boy?
I doubt it
Our separate plans?
Could be dangerous
What we once had?
Yeah sure!

25/4/2000

419. ANALYSIS

Knowing why
Is small comfort
Your stunted sense of self
Your desperation
Your fear of loneliness
And of old age
Your restless impatience
Your wasting body clock
Your fairytale fantasy – soul mate!
Your simmering pain
Your terror of rejection that perhaps
Led you to get in first
And escape the possibility
Of suffering
What is now mine
To endure

25/4/2000

420. BROTH

The piquant chowder
Warms me now
And its goodness
Enters me
Once cooked for you
It is returning home
With a smile

25/4/2000

421. SON

Son

That small boy – the big

Of me, in me

Teacher of a pure love

And distilled joy

Playful innocence

Healer of broken hearts

Giggling through life

Holding hands

An oasis

When all around

Turned to sand

I love you

Always

29/4/2000

422. FAVOURS

The double-cross of you staggers me
God, all that pseudo-love
Vanished in an instant
Poof!
Like a termite ridden log
Collapsing to dust
From an inquisitive snout

And you accused me of withdrawing!
Huh!
Now we see that if I gave a little
At least it was real
And had some meaning
Providing scant scaffolding
Upon which to build

I owned up to fear
You never did
Rather you acted it out
With cruel malice
Now your love feels like
So much mad mythology
A kind of imaginary tale
Something programmed
Or simulated
Designed but unreal

Thank God I trusted my guts
And argued for time
Protecting myself and him
From the doom
Of an insecure pregnancy
That was an act of bravery
And love
Inconceivable for you
B is right
You have done me a favour

29/4/2000

423. NASTY RESIDUE

Smoking is something you do
Introduced to me
From you
It is a symbol
Of us
Now a nasty residue
A killer
A tortured reminder
A metaphor
Of the struggle to rid
The nicotine of you
The narcotic of you
From my flimsy cells
One by one
As I take this drag
It's 4:30 am
And the smoke pushes
Towards a mackerel sky

30/4/2000

424. THE PRICE

This pained moment
Teaches me
The price
Of human connection
Live it
That one day
We all may find release
From pain

*(After James Baldwin: *Tell Me How Long The Train's Been Gone*)*

May 2000

425. PLAN B

What is so devastating
And bewildering
Is the sense of failure
Again
I do not like to fail!
But fail I have
Repeating mistakes
Well practiced from the past
What I must remember
Is that this is part of the story
Only
B too shares responsibility
The failure belongs to us both
Her past also haunts her
Still

How to move on healthily?
Take responsibility
Acknowledge the failure
Anticipate a better future
Know the fault is not all mine
Find compassion and forgiveness
Like me, she did her best
With broken instruments
And was trammelled by her fear

4/5/2000

426. EROTICISM AND INTIMACY

'Perhaps eroticism has a right to live without intimacy and may in fact be most itself, most free in that state'

Camille Paglia: *Sex, Art and American Culture*

Yes this is part of the story
Every story
The attraction of falling in love
The romantic deception and delight
That first explosive flush of foreplay and passion
Is eroticism freed from intimacy

Intimacy is a slow burner
A warts-and-all commitment
Accepting some warts takes a shit-load of time!
And can dampen passion's burn to boot

It is so lovely
But unwise none-the-less
To mistake all that early self-disclosure
For intimacy
At best it is potential
It is part of the Eros dance
And the rock of high expectation
That dashes so many

4/5/2000

427. NOT YOU

Accept all of me
The paradoxical me
The naughty
The erotic
The fantasy
The puritan
The political
The secret me
The dogmatic
The loyal
The intimate
The moody
Silent
Thoughtful
Probing
Intelligent
Questioning
Questing
Rejecting
Loving me
The distinctive me
Smiling
Hurtful
Caring
Patient me
Accept all of me
Ever changing me
Not you darling
Me!

4/5/2000

428. INVESTMENTS

I stop to wonder
Why on earth I invested
So much emotional energy
In our relationship?

It is both like and unlike me
Sometimes I think I was simply sucked in
I swallowed your full-on behaviour
Mistook it for commitment
After all, you never expressed
One single doubt
Cast one slippery shadow
Uttered a single sentence
To suggest
You weren't in this
For the long haul
Until that dreadful phone call
When you sullenly
Ditched me
And executed summarily
A truckload of dues

6/5/2000

429. ICY CORE

The core of you
Is hardness
Cold steel
Dry ice
The core of me
Is softness
Sagging
Soppy
Wet

7/5/2000

430. SAD COIN

It amazes me
That with a heartbeat
I can swing
From frantically seeking replacement
(Sweet revenge!)
To never wanting
Another again
(Pathetic self-pity)
Two sides
Of the same
Sad coin

7/5/2000

431. JOURNEY

Now that love has become pain
I wait for pain
To become pity
For how else can I ultimately
Relate to you?

To turn so maniacally from devotion
(‘He’s the one’ you so recently said to B
Buying those ridiculous Guinness slippers)
To castration
Is an act of profound sickness
I can only pity

All my instincts were correct
But faith healer I am not
I hope the new lover is a
Doctor, saint and therapist
And for your sake, also hot!

8/5/2000

432. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Your family
Your friends
Should have supported our relationship
After all they know you too well
And should have seen the familiar writing
On the wall
Instead, cowed
They acquiesced to the slaughter
Watching, encouraging
As you mapped the logistics
Of my demise
And the other's entrée
Not technically a betrayal
No rules broken there!

Yes they know you
And were perhaps fearful
Of the ruthlessness
Your Lady Macbeth act
They had seen it before
No doubt
To resist takes spleen
But we all crumbled
In the wake of your
Dynamite

8/5/2000

433. SILVER SPOON

So many failed couplings
And you always
'Deserve something better'
The silver spoon defense!
The student of yoga on
The road to selflessness
Thinks only of herself!

How little you have travelled
Down that bumpy path, my dear
If you are ever to get something better
The first step, me thinks
Is to stop worrying about it

8/5/2000

434. WRONG WATERING

Relationships need watering
You moralised
And I went dry
But you watered
With poison

So a little moral medicine
In reply
A drought needs patience
And care
Not a scorched earth policy

You failed us B
My sad beloved

8/5/2000

435. NEW AGEISM

Strange
Unconscious
Consulted like an oracle
As if there, lay a truth
Mysterious
And beyond reach

What rubbish
You have convinced
Yourself of B
To rationalise betrayal

Simply put
You've cloaked in
New Age mystification
Your inability
To work at our union
And the ease with which
You traded me in
For some
Fresh coriander

8/5/2000

436. OF ME

These are of me
But rightly
Belong to you
File them away
In your hard place
That one day
You may soften
And understand

8/5/2000

437. ONE THOUSAND GOODBYES

A minute has many days
And you will never
Age for me
Of fade
Or die
Goodbye my love
One thousand
Goodbyes

After Romeo and Juliet

8/5/2000

438. RESPONSE TO 437

If a sonnet
Could sing
What melodies
Would it bring?
To heal
What should
Never be broken
What rhythms
To undo
Time itself
And right
Past hurts
What textures?
And sonorities
To keep you
In my fingertips
Forever

8/5/2000

439. TRAVEL GUIDE

Everything takes time
No need for desperate acts
Fuelled by a panicky despair
I have been happier
But seldom
Less at peace
In this quiet
Melancholy
Slowly I return home
Within myself
Alone
Contemplative
Reflective
Wise
Slowly
As if from a lovely holiday
I read the travel guide
And remember fondly
Where I have been

10/5/2000

440. UNANSWERABLES

What seduced you?
And put out your eyes
My lover
To our promised adventure
The soft dove cooing
Of another's dulcet voice?
Soothing
Adding balm
To an aching heart
Struggling to breakthrough
To a deeper place?
A voice born of therapy
Tuned to your soft centre
An unreal voice
With another agenda?

Or was it seeing
That new couple
In the first buds of passion
Throwing caution windward
Making babies
Did you think to yourself
'It's so easy over there
Why is it complicated here?'

Or was it your new friend B
Falling in love (again)
And saying to you
In that uncontained and tactless way
As new lovers do
'I've never felt like this before'
Tempting you with a sweet
Just as you begin to feel
The sameness of every love match
Similarities born of you
The only constant
In all your love affairs

Or was it the masseuse
Doling approval
Of your New Age me-ism
Lending ideological scaffolding
For the escape ladder
You imagined

Or was it really just me
Falling a caress too short
A simple word
Unsaid
Spooking the unbridled

In you
Until restless and snorting
Sad, powerful, sweat-crazed
You bolted in a twitch
(Expletive deleted)

10/5/2000

441. POWERFUL

The power you now
Hold over me
Is knowing
A large part of me
(And it will diminish
This I must believe)
Would have you back
In a terrifying instant
Diseased
Soiled
Pregnant
A selfless grace
Or twisted selfishness
Can't say
But did I ever
Hold that power
Over you?

10/5/2000

442. THING POWER

This home we chose
Still so full of you
Aches for your absence

Pepper grinder
Multi-coloured, happy
Crying
Cushions
Murmur your name
Bed and doona
Empty, unmade, restless
Towel all blue with emotion
Tablecloth
Plastic checks
Limp

A Swiss clock ticks
A sentimental heartbeat
An Indian board game
Smiles a plaintive smile
A book
A photo
A spoon
Black goo
All bewildered
A shampoo bottle
A green rag
A memory card
A tyranny of things

10/5/2000

443. COCKROACH

And with one
Spring clean
You removed me
Like a twitching, capsized
Cockroach
From your life

10/5/2000

444. PHOTOGRAPHY

I don't recall
Seeing one photo
Of B, your ex
Before me
And you
A self-confessed lover
Of photography

Visually annihilated
Extinct
Yet his spectre
Hung over us
And in the end
His gaunt
And ghostly grin
Was palpable
A prophet
Of infection
Beyond control
Dominating
Every antibiotic

10/5/2000

445. MUTE

These mute poems
Like migrating swallows
Ever receding
To the south
Feel like
The one durable
Proof
Of us

10/5/2000

446. HOPELESS HOPE

Every ring of the phone
Is you
Every knock at the door
Is you
Every car slowing
Is you
Every street voice
Every text message
Every junk email
Every night scratch
Every whimper
How long
Does this
Delicious agony
Last?

12/5/2000

447. SECRET REALM

You have entered my
Secret realm of fantasy
At last
Banished and degraded
Boiled down to the following:
Sex
Hot in the shower
Sex
Risky on soft sand
Sex
Violent with kitchen tools
Sex
Furtive fumbling
Sex
Quick in the lift
Sex
Languorous with wood fire crackling
Sex
Mouthily at Hanging Rock
Sex
Oily in renovated spa
Sex
Dangerous, 'no rubbers 'let's just go for it' you said
Sex
Angry with arms pinned
Sex
Loving and licking
Sex
Fearful, tearing t-shirt

Sex
Knee trembling on picnic bench
Sex
Vulnerable with impotence
Sex
Bountiful for months
Sex
Intimate early mornings in your bed
Sex
Fun watching you strain for orgasm
Sex
Exploratory orifice games
Sex
Surprising golden showers
Sex
Joyous as you cook shanks
Sex
Postponed watching Betty Blue
Sex
Sultry hot summer Straddie nights
Sex

11/5/2000

448. SINGLE

Fragile
Shaky
Melancholy
Empty
Confused
Impotent
Sad
Bewildered
Weak
Sleepless
Forsaken
Lonely
Miserable
Weepy
Shattered
Hungerless
Fragile

12/5/2000

449. GLORIOUS

It is a glorious day
Unbelievable May
Minute by minute
I battle to remake
The me I had
Before I met you
What was I then?
What attracted you to me?
I think I was
Among other tasties
Self-reliant
Happy
Confident
Content

Chimera-like
That ancient me
Shimmers
Dancing just beyond
Memory
I lunge
It dodges
I parry
It feigns defeat
I relax
It settles
Just out of reach

The change in me
Baffles and buffers
I search for a lost key
But today
I am just happy
That the sunshine is free

12/5/2000