

## Loud and Bright

Reverberating | lemon yellow laugh  
I'm not good enough | teasing and joking  
Citrus-burning in my throat | talking all the space, my words fill every surface  
I thought I saw them wince | All my opinions about everything  
as i walked up | razor-sharp lace of sarcasm | but it's a joke; I'll look up  
relieved as I leave, they'll take a vote | Again, I rush to say a fact, leave no space for reply, just in case  
she is mean | rude | over the top | I must be right  
my armpits wet | I'm out of place | to all my skills and talents I point  
show | prove yourself | loud and bright,  
Offense is etched in every face | Be fearless, aloof  
Fuck, I knew it [it's fine] | Bright and loud  
I am unwanted | Everything is fine, everything's alright

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Fatigue is like glue

It holds on to every crevice

And spreads

(still, you know, I work and sing while you watch

proudly

pointing out my wins)

Fatigue is like peanut butter

Sticking to fingers, and, hours later

Leaving smudges

Even after it's forgotten

(still, I remember to say I'm grateful,

giving you appropriate praise)

Fatigue is like mist

Sticking to bare skin

imperceptible, at first,

But, icy damp skin  
Numbs all the same  
(you don't notice that I hide  
the truth because I sense what you want to find)

Fatigue is heavy bag  
the bulk pressed down- between  
The shoulders  
when I should  
be boldly standing tall  
I find you like my torso curling in  
At its edges  
(you want to bear my burden, but,  
Don't go on for ages  
Because: negativity lets you down)

Fatigue is like half-truths  
Steaming up above the pot, deadly,  
in the thundering night  
(those little lies devotion  
of pressure to Please  
Set a course through darkness  
You could not foresee  
The tempest  
Waiting for ME  
Because: you want assurance that you are the best)

Oh, so we'll all agree,  
leaving out the lie

I

Am better for it

The struggle and the grief

(I can't)

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don't embarrass me!

I didn't want to cause that clench of the spine

The Shame

I'm SO sorry. But. It. Didn't matter

(I) Made a

M I S T A K E

As big as the stretch of the heavens

my shame sits high and heavy (on my head, I watch you write "untrustworthy")

and you are right.

I (don't) know why. Apologies don't erase and they don't undo

Yet

(I) Blame Myself

For the sadness in which we sit, together in the dirty blue kiddie plastic pool

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Vulner(ability)

What is this thing that sets us in steely, icy sweat?

be, be, be

transparency is -not- the same

on the sur(face) I face my problems

i know,

we try, try, and try again

to peel back the words like bark, but

the tongue won't chisel the tr-u-th like it should

and we sit, sit, sit in circles

FAT

tellings of -no**th**ing and- all the whil**e**, the truth sits

In the spaces between the nothings that we -don't- show

I DO NOT LIKE THIS

chafe:

the knowing that you know, you won't like what I -don't- show

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Creative quench

Anxiety: tight-fisted with my thoughts

Dreaming sucks into waking, but waking is a dream

Trudge (all the way) to lunch

Keep from being out of sorts

Spiralling: slipping, down the seam

of anxious thoughts

Dark earth, immovable, impervious

The chipping at petrified patterns, deep

Deep down

In the

Labour of being full-grown

Keep

my heart, the pious

Oh, I do not know myself at all

Mine out the anxiety

Frantic, quick

With arms weakened and sick

Reflect and be good, for society

More. More, before I lose it all

Quench this all, creatively

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It didn't matter to me (of-course, I saw it coming) and  
We set it down to laughing  
off, the disquiet

awkwardly, we lend a hand  
and chuckling  
just try it

Even so (even though) smiling at the wrong doesn't make it right

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Like a leaf that flutters to the ground,

Like a spinning top, wooden and chipped

Like a hosepipe spurting and spewing; writhing under the water's pressure

Like a fish flailing on a hook...

Like flag flapping in the mighty wind

Like bubbles in a fizzy drink

Like the eddy in the sink, above the drain

There is a blur in the space around me. Faint to my knowing

I am aware, the edges of my vision catch on the edges of the world

The world

Is

Stationary.

Its only me who spins and flails, and flaps and bubbles, and eddies round

Round And Round

Round and Round and into my circles I go

I can't focus on the stable world- it is then

that I feel dizzy

Dizzy, and, my head pounds

My eyes can't see what doesn't move

What stays,

What is still,

struggling with shapes diffuse -

The river is slow and silent and the drink is flat and the flag hangs limp and the fish lies still and the wooden top has rolled in under the couch and the leaf is half crunched up and forgotten ...