

i should have changed
that stupid lock

poems and poems by
K WEBER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

disconnect	4	All the petals	28
the waiting	5	i'm aging, beautifully	29
Slate Blue	6	Eyebright	31
while they wait for you to drown	7	Shit.	32
As long	9	dirty laundry	33
Unplugged	10	Don't move	34
The maddening	11	April	35
Are you dead or are you sleeping?	12	I won't survive	37
What Comes After	13	breath	39
Don't forget	15	<i>ABOUT i should have changed that stupid lock</i>	41
nostalgia	17	BIO	42
My Side	18	THANKS	43
Sway	19		
Paillette and nonpareil	20		
Because	21		
It hits and it hurts	22		
I am still here	23		
How I walk	25		
Beat	26		
you cannot possibly love anyone as much as i love someone who doesn't love me	27		

disconnect

you want me to program
the next disco
but i can't
am all knots
with the cords
around my feet

in a high-pitch squeal
there is collision
of blip to beep
as i roll my chair
and leave the door
a very wide mouth, yawning

let's do this easy
because it's fun
when my hands are free
and the music
doesn't take long
and you promise to leave

the waiting

i am waiting in my underthings
so that i can get over things.

i sit the edge of the bed
and contemplate my black toe.

i check my phone and the mail
and then i take a photo of my neck and one bra strap.

the days get lonelier when i wait.
the days are lonelier when i tell you that i will wait.

i hold on tight to the indefinite
and refuse to let go.

if waiting is the worst part of this
then you are the best of every breathing body i have ever known.

and i will eventually get over things
and climb comfortably out of my underthings.

and i will slide skin beside you
and sleep better than i have in 14 years.

Slate Blue

Sometimes my eyes
but often the cooling

What I want on my skin
after the arch of orgasm

How I love the sky playing
against orange autumn leaf

When is the scrolled design
on the pool liner

Chlorine trapped in my teeth
and want grey, long sleeves

Hint and hue because family
with the grandmother, father

Warm before the cloud
where thigh on your thigh

while they wait for you to drown

the scene was never so vivid
and then this year
wanting to die
but not wanting to do anything about it
everything else would slowly kill me
as i would see myself waving
for oxygen from a green lake
while all the other children
on the pier drink soda pop
and are fishing from sticks
with their rolled jeans
and scraped knees
but they never see me
and they can't hear my arms

reminds me of the new year
2000 was about to render us
without enough water
so everyone was laughing liquor in our apartment
and we photographed the evidence of a good time
and then i went in the bathroom
and there was a razor
and my face was wet and red
and i wanted to end the pain that was slicing through a fantastic night
but just sat on the toilet quietly
until i remembered i was alive and might be okay
in a new century
and then i drank and drank again for ten more years

all the people smiling in the sun
and i am on the grass or underwater
or obscured by the daylight
and many times i have to fight for a hug
or scream for love

and i have to defend myself
against abusive conversations
every year or maybe month
but none of it ever works

i am not sure what i am
and how my life ended up this way
or how i keep living
wishing it would stop
and wishing it wouldn't just so i can see the look
on the faces of everyone
when they actually listen to me
and stop seeing through
the skin i'm in

As long

The same love
as long as I don't say it

When do I sleep
in the same room

Your chest is a furnace
and the engine

Whole days
dotted with conversation

I used to crave music
and wait and want to drive towards it

Now I wait to get to you
and that kiss as we idle the parking lot

Unplugged

The television is wrong.
A television filled with gasoline.
Put a quarter in the television.
The television is a vending machine.
Candy and cigarette stations.
Satellite reception in long-stemmed flowers.
Tonight is channel 17 and channel 2,613.
I lost my children in the aisles of the shopping network.
This static is pissed at my balloon.
The television is the sun while I eat a ham sandwich.
The television is the moon lighting my sleeping pills.
We are lost in the remote.

The maddening

Bull black
Bull brown
Pull your face around
The carnival color
The circus fabric
An elephant in a tiara cries
A ringmaster spills his eggplant parmigiana
No one wants this shit
Another whip
The bloody lips
The dirtied tickets
The littered candies
A monkey grabs his own crotch
No one to tame the lying

Are you dead or are you sleeping?

enough of this
dismissal: pretty
soon this
pretty
doormat
is sweeping
you
right under

i want to stop
by and see
if you are
still breathing
but fear you're
curled inside
yourself, wearing
your shoes
on the couch

but as history
proves, i assume
you've found
someone
with better
skin
than me

the best
friend line
as second
prize
won't work
anymore; it's been
undone before
and just a cute
way of saying
"i am long
gone"

What Comes After

The reality of neurosurgery
is my ass hanging
from a gurney and a scar
the doctor keeps
reopening so he can climb back inside

I try to tell my psychiatrist
how I am falling through her couch
and my desk chair at work
with lumbar support
and she hands me medication #12

In the mirror my face is swollen
with youth and my grey hair
intends to strangle my neck, silvery
and I can't move my body out of spasm
but I can think and think again

I am losing my understanding
of what I am looking at beyond
periphery: trees have thick, disgusting
arms and streets invite the knife
and my legs burn running from these nerves

Sometimes I know my head
will roll off and they will laugh
at the teeth I didn't replace
and when the bones lock in a painful place
I feel stranded with no one to tow me home in heels

In the middle of anything
I stop because I forget where I am
and have to sit still and hum to myself
a fake hymn until the blank space fades
and I remember that I just wanted tomato soup

You look at me as if eyes could taste
the space from my throat to my belly button
and I want to let your mouth research me
then we exist as friends who watch films
and have Thai food and eat music

There is a world where I sink my muscles
and press my whole self against you
while you kiss me and let me use my hand
and there are entire stories like this
and we wrote them all from the memory of lips and fingers

Don't forget

Don't forget the Leonid meteor shower.
Don't forget to shower again.
Like you did last night.
I am not sure how long I will last.
Not without your hands on my face.
Warm and wet.

Want you.
Red mouth on my eyelid.
Inner wrist on tongue.
Your ear against my ear.

I don't know how this works.
The mechanics of you and me.
Best understood geometrically.
You'd know better than I.
And you say you don't know much at all.
Nothing valuable.
I say you are wrong.

You know there is a meteor shower.
You know where the music went.
You placed it gently in my palm.
I placed it up to my ear and smiled.
I say I need you.
For some reason, this doesn't scare you.

You pull to me like a magnet.
A strong magnet in a junkyard.
You found me and I was in pieces.
I was ridiculous.
For some reason, you don't run away.

We met and it was good.
We met and it is still good.

Three months and you don't upset me.
Might be a world record.
In my little world.

A world with you and records.
The fake trees and legs like Legos.
Plastic green grass like Easter melted.
All my eggs are hidden.
You still found me.

I was sitting inside a treble clef.
I slid down to meet you.
You slid your words inside of me.
I don't want to let them out.

You make me feel like I am just me.
And you are you and I feel the need to tell you.
I tell you that you are handsome.
You feel ugly and laugh.
I feel ugly and laugh.
You make me feel ten thousand emotions.
Most of them are twirling and skipping.

My face is warm.
My hands crave other skin.
We could put our hands together.
We could see what might happen.
If we don't keep our hands in our pockets.

nostalgia

on the days of sun
and hair
through the fingers
and palms
of an open window
i feel like i know
the answers of myself
and how i was so beautiful
and confident
and funny
for so many years
between accidents
and collapsing
nerves everywhere
and all knees

in the dark
i take a calculator
and a piece of paper
and an ink pen
and i write it all down
to find that really
i was only carefree
and academic
and a heart beaming
four colors of light
and dancing while smiling
in the direction
of someone charming
for a total
of 39 minutes

My Side

The fresh boys
make music from they cave
of studio and soundwave

Beats like drums from God
with samples from the attic
of a grandmother who gave an ear

My hips want to collide
with a brother who knows better
and spits rhymes on my body

A groove for his needle
while the wax slides
and the track fades

Sway

My body
is the hammock
as we lie
down as too
warm bodies
and swing deep
and my self
lowers us
to the earth
where we are heavy
again
and must return
to glide as cupped
in a netted sway
and I think tonight
is how we kiss
as though the first
and how we hang
together easily

Paillette and nonpareil

These candy triggers
make me shake
shake shake my hips
and sequins swing
and the backside
is a rhythmic donkey
with festival longings

Shine like chocolate
wrapper to wrapping
with long arms of skin
about the waist
and wasting time
rolling the stomach
while beads of sweat
are tiny, edible dots

Because

If the car breaks down
it's because I was a virgin so long

If I run out of money
it's because I don't want children

If my medication isn't working
it's because I didn't go for a walk

If I want you to listen
it's because I have no more to say

It hits and it hurts

I think we broke up in Chili's.

Seven years and all I could focus on was lightly buttered squash.

Remember how a 30-minute gardening show taped over most of our wedding and reception video?

You walked me everywhere on a college campus; let me play video games on the floor of your apartment when I wasn't well.

We went through hell, too. You squeezed my hand like the pulse of life that doesn't and shouldn't quit.

I should have worked harder. I didn't care then. My brain was so high. I wanted to fly out of our window and past the porch swing.

You left and it still didn't register.

I went places and forgot you.

Someone told me I would miss you sometime even if took until the moment of my last moment.

It took about ten years. And now the feeling doesn't seem to end.

I should always count my mistakes before I make them and sit back down on the couch.

I am still here

I am firm-
believing in sleep; in stereo
cures.

These days, blankets
and sheets of paper
twist in my bed, umbilically.

I am in the womb
of my room, calmly nourished
by the night-light.

The door aches or I broke
the sky; I excused myself
from living today.

Yesterday: the same,
but tomorrow
I promise to crawl out.

Later these words
will find me smiling
over coffee steam.

I will be brushing long hair with flecks
of recollection: on the road
to somewhere, high as hell

Tonight I hold my breath:
in, the air—
out, every demon.

I count up then down
again before I dream
in sound.

Rhythm keeps me
here with voices
and movement.

Touch finds me
alive and she hums
sweetly.

And I say don't worry
(oh no, no no)
with my ear to the speaker.

I am still here, under
the covers and wild
with goodnight.

How I walk

I was asleep
before stitches
and still wonder
how many men
were inside me.

The center
of my Tootsie Pop
is barely there
but I imagine
at least three.

One to taste
the outer disc
with a latex glove
while one cleanly
inspected the jelly.

That last doctor
went right for the nougat
and all the ache
pressing my nerves
was eased with a lick

of sterile instruments.

One...

Two...

Three...

Three.

Beat

The more the more the more
I know that you know but I can't
my heart just heart goes bump
Bump and telephone and bang
until you will love anxious mouth to love me
The air lost and fogged and check breath
My hands shed tears slip bang
as I fumble bang beside you
and fall into the cracks snap and pop
When I am near you I am near you
You can count my sweat
while I panic fumble heat on the inside

**you cannot possibly love anyone as much as i love someone who
doesn't love me**

you can't say it
to their ear anymore:
falls deaf, blind
and ignored as mute does

if you let it happen
you can squirm
and giggle and mix up
your skin together

just don't fucking say
i adore your fur
and how i can talk to you
about Five Alive

keep music
and knot our tongues
but don't spend the night
and put away the dictionary

All the petals

You sent me Om
while I was home, wondering
how much copper
hides inside your eyes.

I was driving through Indiana
in October, thought of you and got lost
just moments after sunset; every color
of the irises of all the men I've loved.

You arrive by mail
and I am dazed in your swirl
and the shine of pinks and blues
that rest on all the petals.

I need you and you need me
and everything else is just an obstacle
until I can get to you, pull at your shirt
and love you in person.

i'm aging, beautifully

every time i find
a grey hair
it's like uncovering
a quarter

and then i want the whole
arcade to ourselves; currency
sprouting platinum
from my root, your temple

shiny secrets grow
from the untilled garden
of my scalp; slowly as we kiss
against the last known q-bert machine

i have wanted you
to run yourself
through my silver until we
are both so tired

we may never emerge
like that one, stuck pinball
or we might just wait with fingers
below the flipper and coil for a refund

we go home with our skin
surviving and i tease
you by saying we should braid
our ages together

in the evening, there's a bed
and the landscapes of our skulls
are threaded with tinsel
and it's not yet christmas

i could love you old and new
and forever with reverse
i beg you for infinity and more lips
but talking almost always means exhaustion

later we are just
as the keys and change
in the little bowl
no one wants to think about at the end of the day

Eyebright

As a child the sun
is always in your eyes
as though two pools
exist below the lids.

As a teenager the sun
is deflected by cool
sunglasses and small
clothes in warm creases.

As an adult the sun
has a violent pang
before the car crash
and the deceased windshield.

When you are old the sun
is a bright thing outside
while you long to walk
but no one calls.

Shit.

That scrape.
Screeching metal so familiar.

This is the sound effect
of starting over

when you've been
run-the-fuck over.

You'll have to do it
from long-nailed scratch.

Goddamn, this is going
to involve a tire pump

right in the navel.
Then you can begin again.

You can even have
McDonald's for lunch.

dirty laundry

in the room full of dirty
laundry, i slept for 15
hours. i catnapped
by the broken
lamplight. i sweat
the dreams
that held me, shape-
less.

today my eyes
were drenched. you'd
think my body
was burned. there is not
much left for me. i whisper
comfort to myself;
no one to hold me
except these words.

sometimes i open
up to find that it might
be time to go. my skin
doesn't fit
right anymore. This
is a shame, but it is all
my fault. hopeless.

it's a sign
that it might be
tonight that i shuffle
myself to the fluorescent
hospital. this is where
i will eat my weight
and scream my sin
until they let me back
into the sun.

Don't move

It's bad enough my palms sweat
and you're only an hour away

New Jersey
is not Ohio and a drawing table

I'm sure can be anywhere

The same direction is the sun
but I need your pockets

I need to climb
my hands inside them

Ohio is not New Jersey

You can only taste my teeth
simply stepping over this state line

Too many states
and I can't get to you

by hopscotch on a foldout map

April

Last night I dreamed
about someone else
after two years
of being in love
with you: he kissed me
and didn't leave
and held me where his hair
itched my neck
and the skin turned
blue-black from the stain
then we sweat
and dark grey dew
slid down my body

I have only thought
about you once today
for the first time
in two years and I
can breathe but admit
I want to call someone
else and invite him
to my floor with knees
for a film and a pillow
and play the record
he gave me in 2008
when I went away
and I haven't seen
his broken sweatshirt
since

The cruelest month
ends, but rewards me
thoughts that distract

from my own heartache
and make me wonder if someone
else has hair so ink-drenched
it only looks like dye
or dying but I just want
to sit in the part
and write him free verse
and blow jazz as easily
as bubble gum snaps

I'd mute his trumpet
because these matters
are mostly moot: in this season
I made friends whose
heartstrings pluck
in tones of poems
that bend themselves
as notes into one
thousand shapes of April
writing

I won't survive

Who will?

I just know that asking
others if they ever jumped
off the suspension bridge
into the icy Ohio
and survived
is not popular.

I have had it up to months
clutching pills that destroyed me
and I fought to live.

The voice says you need
to be dead because you
are not loved
and your head's wrong
while someone you know
says you'd be most likely
to kill your own children.

It's not pretty
when it's written down
and it breathes on paper
and is seen with eyes
and people know
what I know.

It's been in my head
and stomach
with all the other horrible things
for years and decades.

Why I don't just die
and die one more time
is because this kind of dying

is too easy
and I don't like heights or blood
or guns or knives.

I'm just wind
in lungs
and winking
while I wait to stop
surviving the currents
of water and electricity
and allow them
to shock me.

breath

i just want to know
what it feels like
to hold hands; to clench
the pulse of day
without talking.

your hat on my head
and all these years piled up
into minutes, quickly i observe
the color in your eye; the lilt
of your hair.

moments are uncatchable
and most days i write you off
and send you as a letter. but
for now i want to hold you
and hold on.

ABOUT *I should have changed that stupid lock*

This book just needed to happen. Too many words went running out of my head this year. Too many poems were left over from the past and they wanted to feel some light.

I made *ishctsl* available in digital PDF format with an audio MP3 version in November 2014. While I miss the days of proofing bound books and even laboring over stapled, shadowed copies of my writing, this tends to be extremely affordable for me and I enjoy the process of putting it all together. It also allows me to make this all available for free and I don't have to ship a damn thing.

There's not much to say about *ishctsl* that isn't already contained in these 29 poems. I am content with readership, thrilled if someone relates to something I have said or has kind constructive criticism. One day I would like to print this book and my previous one f'real.

The audio version of these poems can be found at <http://midwesternskirt.moonfruit.com/poetry> and that is where you can check out details on my other writing, too.

This year has been probably the worst of mine. Do me a favor and educate yourself on mental health issues. Even the most basic stigma-fighting things. Tiny bits of understanding and information and listening can make enormous differences. There are just too many of us becoming characters in my "I won't survive" piece.

Thanks for reading. Enjoy if you must.
k weber

THANK YOU

Keeping things short and simple this time.

If you're my friend or family, thank you for being my friend or family. Seriously, it is difficult to fill this space with all the names of people in my life I would like to personally recognize for helping me or pushing me along in putting this book together! I get carried away and have listed people twice in the past and even thanked everything including sinus decongestants. Hopefully I've said thank you in person or shown my appreciation in person where it applies!

Many extra thanks to Stephanie Benton, Jon Bottorff, Daniel Ellcey, Greg Lawhun, Carla Marchal, Jamie Way and Patrick Whited for being great friends in extremely difficult times as much as the okay times.

I also want to thank two new friends who have been major sources of inspiration to me whether they realize it or not... Aria-Blair Elysse and Linda Goin...thanks so much for your kindness and your art!

To Lauren Eversole and Beth Amber Hervey: your perseverance and grace in the face of the most trying times has provided so many of us with the strength to carry on when it hurts the most. Thank you for sharing your outlook on loss and life with others, with honesty.

Thanks to anyone who has taken the time to read *i should have changed that stupid lock*!

AUTHOR BIO KINDA

i live in covington, kentucky. i never grew up in dayton, ohio, and refuse to grow up in kentucky as well. *i should have changed that stupid lock* is my 3rd book of poetry. i self-published the digital and audio version of my 2nd collection, *bluest grey*, in 2012. my 1st little volume of poetry was self-published in 2003 and is titled *midwestern skirt*.



i graduated from miami university in 1999 with a BA in creative writing. i have been working mostly in information technology since then but have had other career adventures such as working in a record store for a few years. i do a monthly-ish podcast called *the midwestern skirt podcast* which features sleepy music, poems, found sounds, me messing around with electronic music and other such experiments.

you can find out more about my projects, more or less, at <http://midwesternskirt.moonfruit.com> and i can be reached via email at midwesternskirt@gmail.com



i should have changed that stupid lock

©2014