

late at night

i spent the weekend alone
sat on the floor of my room
heard the voices outside my window
and remembered everything i didn't know

i don't know
how to drive alone on a highway or
what i'll be doing a year from now or
how to start paying student loans or
why i pick at my fingers until they bleed.

i don't know
what the world looks like through your eyes or
how to control how i'm perceived or
what kind of writing is "poetic" or
what the world wants from me.

i don't know
why people like to hate pop music or
why they give up on each other or
how to act around you now or
why we can't talk about it.

Falling Out

They don't know what it's like to watch her smile
To watch her slowly melt into the couch
To envy her happiness and think to myself
"I want to feel the same way that she does right now"

To know she's unaware of how I really feel
To see the smile disappear from her face
To help her wipe the makeup off her cheeks
So there wasn't evidence when she came home that she cried

Sitting there, she said "you're hurting me"
Even though we weren't touching
What would she say to me now?
"Look at what you've done to me"?
Or just "I'm sorry"?

When I realized that the love left
I hid away for days
Letting the knot in my stomach tear me apart
Until finally I had to conquer it

And now she'll carry me with her
Weighing down on her shoulders
She doesn't know she can just push it off
That's what I'd do, at least

She walks hunched over
Her face towards the ground
Heavy step by heavy step
Hands plunged deep in her pockets

I don't want to see it
I don't *need* to see it
I'll walk the other way
And place a roadblock behind me

There's bravery in saying this:
I'm not hers
I'm everyone else's
Better yet, I'm my own

Imposter Syndrome

Nostalgia has become a crutch
Even though reality was flawed
Things tend to look better in the frame
Where I placed my memory in the first place

Are the pictures and writings what I'll remember?
Are my own memories being manufactured?
Editing the honesty out and attaching fake sentiment?
Will they restore my memory, or will I know it already?

As I sit in the moment I think to myself,
"You need to remember this"
My mind draws a camera, looks for the prettiest angle
Prepares to filter out the imperfections

The next day I turn to my phone
Staring and listening to us until I memorize the night
My camera roll serving as evidence I was alive
That I've left an artifact to be discovered

The next day I rush to a notebook
Transferring my thoughts into ink in a secret script
Jotting down every memory to create a primary source
Telling myself "if I put it into writing, it becomes real"

love is in the smallest details

how he kisses the tip of each finger on my hand
knows what song to play as i settle into the passenger seat
notices the smallest change in my makeup
and keeps our photos by his nightstand

how she knows what my drink order is
iced chai with oat milk after a hard day
how she calls me by my nickname from high school
and talks about old days together

how my mother knocks quietly on my door
always waiting first for me to answer and
still standing there like she would when i was a child
to sing 'you are my sunshine' before i fall asleep

how my father sends me pictures of his painting
no text attached, just a photo to look at
no need to comment, just a sense of normality
that he knows is slowly fading as i grow older

the small facts we memorize about each other
the way we want to gather every piece of knowledge
to wrap it up gently and keep it safe in our pockets

and when we think they need it, we can take it out
show them in the hopes that they'll notice
the small piece of paper around it
that states the truth of the matter