

Left Behind

Amanda Bleasdale

I have heard the wind whistling, calling out to me, pulling me to the edge. I have felt the icy ocean wash the sand from my toes. But I've never seen the sun mourn as it crashes down behind the dark blue horizon as I do now. *The sunset*. Oh, how it spurs on tears. Will I ever see such a sumptuous demise? My hands plummet to the depths of my back pockets. 'Close your eyes and maybe it will all just go away.' I should have seen the end coming racing toward me like a bullet. Who would have known it would hurt this bad. Leave all this behind. I can't possibly. This isn't real.



Dreamer by: Amanda Bleasdale

Shouldn't I find this sunset beautiful? Shouldn't I find all this – this life – beautiful? I just slammed the door shut on it, too. I find it best to hide away from even the safest places. After escaping the unwanted world, I find myself in a bigger prison cell. Maybe I won't look at everything immersed in murky waters or maybe I'll find it in me to keep an overt heart, an overt mind, an overt soul; only then will vultures find a way to disarray my already mangled and tangled life.

Goodbye, sun. Till next time.

Till next time. Now to find the strength to tell all my loved ones 'till next time.' Hoping there will be a next time.

No not you, sun. Sometimes I wish you to never rise. Sometimes I wish you to rise quickly. Today, I hope you freeze at noon. I want to eschew the future by never having to meet up with it again.

A neophyte as I try working amongst the wise. Have I not learned what this world is all about? I should be an expert at controlling my life. Not some tyro who knows nothing about meandering around the board game of his own, her own, my own – life.

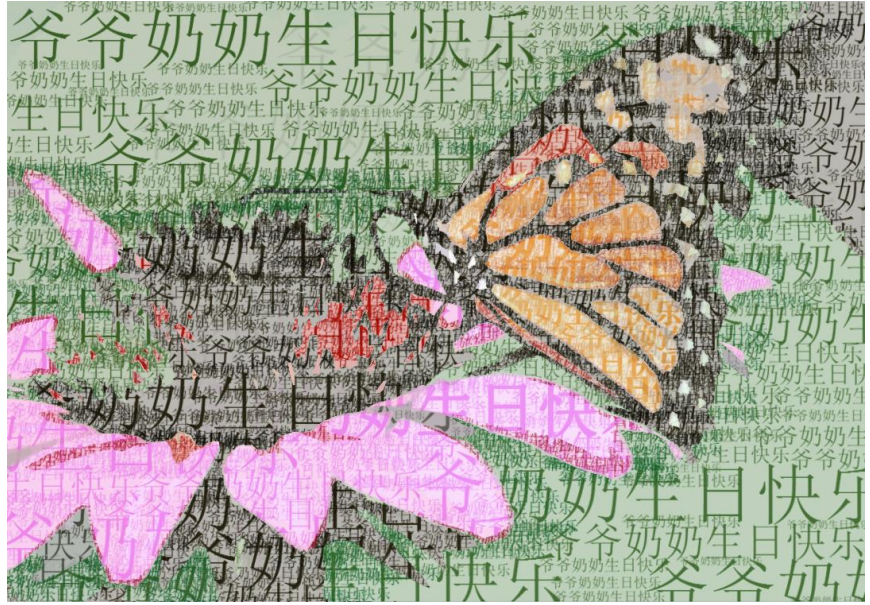
I see the future. Back in school wishing I was back here. The ubiquitous sun following me to Ohio. He will never make such a benign badinage with me as he does here. At least in the morning. Tonight his laconic speech ends short as his replacement hangs a gray portrait in the black, blank sky.

I wiggle my feet in sand now espouse to the California sun. My penchant now clings to the time you carry away. Do not sink in the Pacific tonight. Do not die. Not here. Not now. Not ever.

I will not leave you, if you do not leave me, *time*.

The wind pushes me back. I know it's almost time to go. My raiment dampens with every touch of the sea sticking to me wet and cold. But now my imperturbable soul looks only to you, dear California sun irreplaceable by the Ohio one.

The sun moves too fast taking time away from everyone. Every convivial moment sleeps in the back of my mind, our minds. This will not be the last time. I hope. I pray.



Birthday Butterfly by: Colleen Tan

In sunny California my family stays and plays. My grandfather, aunts, uncles, cousins. Sometimes when I visit I still feel miles away. Only a couple of weeks to spare from our busy lives. We can never have a break to truly understand and truly know. Sometimes the smallest animadversion ruins the moment and the biggest goes unnoticed. Even with the short visit, he, she, we deprecate each other. We aren't perfect. Rich or impecunious people, deep under the ocean we love each other and we never want to leave. We want to understand and know, but the sun dictates our time together. One day will raze the moon and raise the sun forever. The moon's absence will only be an exigency to the ocean's curreant. I will not care for time – time will diminish and not rule me.

My askance eyes glare at the dark sky. The sun will see me again tomorrow, but so will the moon. And so will the airport. And so will the plane and the sky and Ohio.

And as I board that plane, I find this life germane. I leave California, a derelict, until next time.

Under Water Burned the Fire

By: Amanda Bleasdale

Buried deep in the ocean, she found her fire.

Buried deep in the sea, she shined bright.

Buried deep in the big blue, her fire burned under water.

Buried deep under the crashing waves, she swam to shore.

Buried deep under the crushing voices, she won strength.

Buried deep under those who didn't believe, her fire burned under water.