

I HAD A DREAM ABOUT YOU

All the cows were falling out of the sky and landing in the mud.
You were drinking sangria and I was throwing oranges at you,
but it didn't matter.

I said my arms are very long and your head's on fire.
I said kiss me here and here and here
and you did.

Then you wanted pasta,
so we trampled out into the tomatoes and rolled around to make the sauce.
You were very beautiful.

You went to wash up for the party.
I was wearing a gold lamé suit and you had a very long cigarette holder,
the fingers of a reptile,
and you had the heat cranked up too high.
We were all sitting cross-legged on the carpet,
debating how many clowns could fit in a clown car,
when your boss came over and said
So, what have you been doing lately?
and you said *We're writing the book of love,*
and he said *Oh, well, everyone's read that already,* and you said *No, I mean*
we're writing another one.
And then we couldn't stop laughing.

Come to bed, you say, but I'm trying to write the book of love.
I wish I had the courage to tell you what I really dream of.

There was a show on the television about buried treasure.
You were trying to convince me that we should buy shovels
and go out into the yard
and I was trying to convince you that I was a vampire.
On the way to the hardware store I kept biting your arm while you were driving
and you said if I really was a vampire I would be biting your neck,
so I started biting your neck
and you said *Cut it out!*
and you bought me an ice cream, and then we saw the UFO.

That's a nice one—can't even tell you're sick, or at least it doesn't matter.

We were sitting in the Chinese restaurant that your mom owned
and your lips were all greasy from the fried chicken
and they kept shining and flashing in the light
from the paper lanterns.
Soon enough, we realized that everyone was transmitting secret
information through kisses,
so we went around kissing everyone.
You are still sleeping and I want to kiss you everywhere.

These are the dreams we should be having. I shouldn't have to
clean them up like this.

We were in the donut factory but we weren't working,
we were fooling around in the broom closet.
Your jumpsuit was unzipped all the way to your navel and my jumpsuit
was around my ankles and we were both covered with powdered sugar and
somebody was knocking at the door but you said
Ignore them.

We were in the Safeway parking lot. I couldn't find my cigarettes.
You said *Hurry up!* but I was worried there would be a hold-up
and we would be stuck in a hostage situation, hiding behind
the frozen meats, with nothing to smoke, for hours.
You said *Don't be silly,*
so I followed you into the store.
We were thumping the melons when I heard somebody say *Nobody move!*
I leaned over and whispered in your ear *I told you so.*

We were swimming in the ocean because someone had swallowed
your alarm clock. I said something like
Be careful, or you'll end up with both eyes on the same side of your head!
and you told me to mind my own B-U-S-I-N-E-S-S
but I couldn't hear you
over the guitar music. You were really cranky so I swam into the sewers
and climbed out of someone's toilet and walked to the hospital to get you
some uranium.
I mean I walked to the buildings that were not the hospital.
I shouldn't have mentioned the hospital.

I had a sort of x-ray vision.

I could look inside everyone's body and see what was in there.
It was raining and you had lined-up all these martini glasses on the lawn
because you liked the sound it made.

Your hair was slick with rain and it clung to your head like leaves.

I came up behind you, my feet squishing in the mud,
and I put my arms around you.

There were all these black dots swimming around inside you,
even more than before, but you said

Ignore them.

Yes, I know—I'm trying to ignore them but it isn't helping.

In the dream I don't tell anyone, you put your head in my lap.
Let's say you're driving down the road with your eyes closed
but my eyes are also closed.

Let's say that one of us is peeking.

No, let's not. I don't have to tell you anything.

You're by the side of the road.

You're by the side of the road and you're doing all the talking
while I stare at my shoes.

They're nice shoes, brown and comfortable, and I like your voice.

In the dream I don't tell anyone, I'm afraid to wake you up.

The monsters kept turning off the cooler
and reprogramming the VCR so that we never got to watch our favorite shows
when we got home.

Right, like that's what we're really worried about.

You rigged a trap with chicken sandwiches and wire and a flashlight
but I got mad at you and drove my car into a tree, and there were all these rats
everywhere

and I had amnesia, so I moved to Georgia and opened a video store
and I didn't have to watch you die,

I didn't have to think about it.

You were lying in the middle of the empty highway.

The sky was red and the sand was red and you were wearing a brown coat.
There were flecks of foam in the corners of your mouth.
The birds were watching you.
Your eyes were closed and you were listening to the road and I could
hear you breathing, I could hear your heart beating.
I carried you to the car and drove you home but you
weren't making any sense.
I took a shower and tried to catch my breath.
You were lying on top of the bedspread
in boxer shorts, watching cartoons and laughing but not making any sound.
Your skin looked blue in the television light.
Your teeth looked yellow.
Still wet, I lay down next to you. Your arms, your legs, your naked chest,
your ribs delineated like a junkyard dog's.
There's nowhere to go, I thought. *There's nowhere to go*.

Something came crawling up the marble steps. We could clearly see
its heart was beating.
You ran to get the garden rake but while you were gone
I put the thing in my mouth.

You were sitting in a bathtub at the hospital and you were crying.
You said it hurt.

I don't think I can take this much longer.

In these dreams it's always you:
the boy in the sweatshirt,
the boy on the bridge, the boy who always keeps me
from jumping off the bridge.
Oh, the things we invent when we are scared
and want to be rescued.
Your jeep. Your teeth. The coffee that you bought me.
The sandwich cut in half on the plate.
I woke up and ate ice cream in the dark,
hunched over on the wooden chair in the kitchen,
listening to the rain.
I borrowed your shoes and didn't put them away.

We were in the hospital, I mean the library, and we were
looking up recipes.

Bats with red eyes were flying through the stacks. You fell asleep
so I walked up and down the reference section pretending to be you.

I was looking for a book that the nurses said they didn't have
shit, I mean the librarians
and I found the book and it had the antidote that you wanted
fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck

Sorry, I'm trying.

How many days do you think we actually have left?

We were in a rocket ship, picking up signals from a star.
You said *We are pioneers now, for something lying ahead!*

but we couldn't get the ship moving.

You went crawling around beneath the pipes and said you couldn't find
anything wrong,

but the smoke kept pouring out from somewhere
and then everything was too hot to touch.

You were crying and eating rice in the stairwell.

I said *Let's take that vacation anyway.*

The surface of the water was still and bright.

We went on a tour of the glass factory, eating pretzels out of the bag
instead of a hot lunch.

You said *Kiss me, before I turn into a photograph.*

Your feet were burning so I put my hands on them, but my hands
were burning too.

You had a bottle of pills but I wouldn't let you swallow them.

You said *Will you love me even more when I'm dead?*

and I said *No*, and I threw the pills on the sand.

Look at them, you said. *They look like emeralds.*

I put you in a cage with the lizards. I was trying to fatten you up
with sausages and bacon.

Somehow you escaped and climbed up the branches of a pear tree.
I chopped it down but there was nobody in it.

I went to the riverbed to wait for you to show up.

You didn't show up.

I kept waiting.