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The poems included here deal in some way with failures to connect, whether they lie in the limitation of words ("Words Fail"), miscommunication in relationships ("Love Among the Ruins"), or withdrawal into dreams ("Retreats from Reality").

Words Fail

We speak of mundane things.
It's easier than the truth.
I don't even wait for an answer.
Every word becomes as clichéd as lips the color of roses.

It's easier than the truth,
Saying you are heartbroken.
Every word becomes as clichéd as lips the color of roses.
The truth hurts more than that overused image.

Saying you are heartbroken,
It doesn't begin to express love fading from someone's eyes.
The truth hurts more than that overused image.
You can paint words all night.

It doesn't begin to express love fading from someone's eyes.
Sometimes silence is the only explanation.
You can paint words all night.
Words once a salvation become as empty as the moon.

Sometimes silence is the only explanation.
We discuss everything and say nothing.
Words once a salvation become as empty as the moon.
Joy, frustration, pain, bliss - just sounds that you make.

We discuss everything and say nothing.
I don't even wait for an answer.
Joy, frustration, pain, bliss - just sounds that you make.
We speak of mundane things.



Love Among the Ruins

I watch him as his hands move
swiftly across the keyboard.
His red blonde hair touches his face.
The face that needs to see the sun.
I want to put my arms around him.
Instead I pick *Crime and Punishment*
off the cluttered floor.
Books have always connected us,
and have been what we hide behind.
Now he rambles disconnectedly about Duchamp, coffee, the death of
Rome, *The Simpsons*, deconstructing our disjointed
relationship, the decline of pop culture, the nature of the soul,
Apollo and Daphne, and dogs.
And I am mute with wonder.
With every word I retreat inside myself
like a wounded turtle.
He is oblivious, in love
with his ponderings and pronouncements.
I think of the voiceless little mermaid
fading to sea foam.
His musings roll over me,
but cannot heal the 40 foot gulf between us.
His eyes close. I watch his lips.
His voice becomes background noise.
I want to freeze this moment
in the cramped bedroom
with the heaps of papers and clinging vines.
I want to hold on to all that we once built—
four-hour phone calls and shared milkshakes—
but we are already lost in the labyrinths of our minds.



Retreats from Reality

I denied your name three times before the rooster crowed.
I knew they spoke of you,
but I said I didn't understand.
Really it's fitting.
Remember how you discarded that dear memory
onto the airport floor?
In one chilly moment you eagerly made four years disappear.
You weaved through the crowd,
never looking back to see
if you were watched.

The next day a man was dared to kill an ordinary fly.
He felt such guilt when he saw
the heart beating in the crushed body.
He put it in a cast and felt better.
Another man sent in food
right after he sent in bombs.
He felt better I guess.

Exactly two semesters ago on a Tuesday,
I kissed my folklore T.A.
It was a black and white swooping back movie kiss.
The kind you never forget.
Amazing since we never exchanged an opinion outside of class.
And his name escapes me.

A woman offered the meaning of life in a pill form.
The pill also made you lose all undesired weight.
The only side effect was a loss of childhood memories,
but no one cared.
What's the loss of a few memories in exchange for
looking like Jennifer Aniston?
I called the woman a charlatan—there had to be a catch.
What if the meaning of life can only be found
in the fantasies of childhood?

Once she grew a tail.
She didn't care.
She just draped it over her hand



and kept dancing.

Someone told me three months and two days later that it was me.

I don't dance.