



J. Lynn Hazelton

From the Archives

a collection of poetry

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Contents

I Part One

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| 1 Canyon Song (2003) | 3 |
| 2 Canyon Song Revised (2023) | 4 |

II Part Two

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| 3 Sex (2003) | 7 |
| 4 Poem #45 (revised, 2023) | 9 |
| 5 Tango for the Blameless (2003) | 11 |

III Part Three

- | | |
|--|----|
| 6 His Lady Fair (revised, 2023) | 15 |
| 7 State of Affairs at 12am (revised, 2023) | 17 |
| 8 Sydney (2003) | 19 |

IV Part Four

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| 9 Lanterns in the Night (2003) | 23 |
| 10 El Fuego (2003) | 24 |
| 11 Untitled (2003) | 25 |
| 12 Ode (2003) | 28 |

V Part Five

13	Scaredy Cat (2003)	31
14	Hollywood Love (2003)	33
15	A Truthful Letter to Santa (2003)	35
	<i>About the Author</i>	37

I

Part One

Then vs. now. Ideas are the same, but execution differs.

1

Canyon Song (2003)

Stratified rock slants sharply,
Carving into air.
Reaching to the canyon bottom,
Brilliant splashes of red, orange, yellow
Paint the rock face.
Crisp blue sky comes down to kiss the Earth
And dance at the canyon rim.
A winding snake-sriver lies at the base,
Its green-blue waters licking at the sand.
Eroding rock.
Moving through immoveable landscape.
Meeting rock layers at their origins.
Carving into the Earth.
Bathing rock.

Canyon Song Revised (2023)

Carved from the Earth, deep fractures from a history of slow
change crack across the landscape.

Stratified projections rise sharply toward an endless, cloudless
azure sky.

Brilliant slashes of rust, orange, and yellow find anchor at the
edges of a winding liquid snake, rippling in shades of blue and
green.

Deep chocolate eyes squint and scan the horizon, breathing deep.
A minute blemish on the edge of the world.

II

Part Two

*I am an angsty college student obsessed with things I
know nothing about.*

3

Sex (2003)

Deep, loud

Husky, heavy breathing

Caressing, shouting, hot madness

Sweet, sticky, and soulful

Fast pounding

Slow melting

Pawing

Tempting

Sinful

Blissful chaos

Magic lightnes

Tangled revenge

Apology

Content whispers

Angry cries

Fire, quivering, shaking, moaning

Flaunted

Hidden

Primal urging

Needy sustenance

Intimate conversation

4

Poem #45 (revised, 2023)

I love the way you nuzzle the soft hollow of my neck.

The dark amber of your cologne reminds me of urgent kisses exchanged in the last minutes of twilight before the world goes dark.

Warm arms encircling my back, pulling me so close that my skin meets your soul. I melt into your solid chest, gripping tight to fuse us together.

Behind fluttering white curtains, surrounded by faint moonlight and the sounds of a city fighting off sleep, I let myself fall.

Everything coalesces. The calls of the world outside the window fade into the sound of your breath in my hair. Your steady heartbeat in my ear.

My own heart beats a rapid flutter, and our bodies sway in a silent dance.

My eyes blink open to the repeated calls of an insistent alarm. Squinting at the time, the glowing numbers stare back at me. 9am.

I am starfished across an otherwise empty bed.

My head turns to bury itself back into the pillow, chasing wisps of an aching dream.

Tango for the Blameless (2003)

*Te quiero amor grande, imposible
Con todo su corazon y toda mi vida
Pero no es posible
Estamos muertos
Es tu culpa*

It's your fault that we're over
Finished before we began
A handful of cliches all that remains

So simple an action
Or lack thereof
The absence of words spoke loudly in the silence
(see, it has become an oxymoron)

You could have said something
To make up for all the words that I did speak into life
You could have
But didn't

I wanted to take back the words
Catch them from the humid air that invaded the car
And stop their movement to your ears

“I don’t think this will work... us... we aren’t right... in this way...”

I wanted to swallow the sounds, choke on the phrases
And say something else
Less offensive
Less demanding

Maybe then the silence would not have mattered
Or maybe it would

We’ll never know now, because...
Because I couldn’t wait
Didn’t know how to stop my lips from forming
Into the death of our being

I killed us that day
And it’s your fault

Es tu culpa

III

Part Three

*Musings on life. From the perspective of someone
with more questions than answers and very little
practical knowledge.*

6

His Lady Fair (revised, 2023)

The table is laden with a feast
Chairs circling around, sitting tall
Waiting for the lords and ladies to arrive

She ran around the kitchen in heels too tall for walking
Hair pinned in place
Not a strand falling free
June Cleaver was only missing her pearls

Tension seized her shoulders as the front door whined

Ancient hinges announcing his entrance like an off-key church
bell shouting the victorious return home of men from war

He shed his armor and dropped his sword onto the floor
Kicked his boots off without a care

“Honey, I’m home”

A tight hug was gifted from his lady fair
Who had waited for this moment all day
Like a child waits to be called to the principal's office

Her conqueror had returned

State of Affairs at 12am (revised, 2023)

Methodical madness

 If that's even possible

When can compulsive action seem normal?

Is chaos good or evil, and why should I care?

In the night spirits roam

 Haunting, caressing,

 Calming mortal beasts

Immortal, immovable, incomprehensible

 Inconvenienced

Darkness flows

 From an elusive origin

 How can it be so cold

 If in the heart there is fire?

Supported by dreams

On precarious ground

Anything can topple the safety

Only fear of falling keeps both feet on the floor

Sydney (2003)

Cars speed along,
streaming life through asphalt veins.

The heart of the city glows.
Tall rods of light pierce into the ink-black sky.
Office buildings cast a golden sheen onto
the black-blue waters of the harbor
where boats rock in a lifeless current.

Walking the sidewalks,
breathing in the vapors of takeaway Indian food and car
exhaust,
stepping from the curb, hand outstretched, waving for a cab,
jumping back onto the curb to avoid a splash of muddy water
from the tires.

Slipping into the ebb and flow,
moving in and out of shops
laden with tourist junk and cheap thrills.

looking for something substantial to carry with me
back home
to describe my travels and encapsulate the city
in a single object.

Drinking in a blazing skyline and city landscape,
opera house and bridge,
Bondi Beach,
sidewalk cafes with those cute little umbrella tables that
overlook blue-gray water,
and cars that insist on driving on the wrong side of the road.

IV

Part Four

Playing with format. Simple ideas, some made more complicated than they need to be.

Lanterns in the Night (2003)

fire

crackling

flaming red

sparks into night

sky

sky

dark black

canvas dome

covered with light

stars

stars

twinkling

sharp pinpoints

flicker bright like

fire

El Fuego (2003)

Flickering flames flitting orange-yellow flounce into a star-studded night

where finicky children furiously search for fine-point spears
in the faint moonlight.

Ferocious shouts of glee fly through the air

as the snap! pop! crack! of the fire chars the proffered food.

Flaming white sugar cools as it is sandwiched

between crumbling crackers and melting chocolate.

Gooey fingers of marshmallow insides ooze out onto sticky
hands.

Untitled (2003)

Clear, glowing yellow almonds
Smoothly floating
Through the dusky twilight.

Lighting the way
To the early dawn
When dew still dresses the carpet of grass.

And the feline form is fluid, leonine,
Perched high above the ground,
Ready to fly out of the tree in an arc of blue-gray

At a slight rustle in the undergrowth.
After breakfast, she stretches out paws,
Splaying across the ground

Before curling up in the shade
Of his perching tree,
Napping away the morning,

Dreaming of his ancestors,
Those regal cats that once ruled Egypt.
Bastet the protector, lover, goddess

Held an empire under her spell.
No wonder the eyes are so captivating —
It is in the blood.

In the afternoon she is Sher Kahn,
The fierce hunter with a tiger heart.
Claws at the ready

To tear into prey
Before sliding back into their padded sheaths,
Silencing the paws.

Sensitive whiskers
Aware of the slightest pressure
Make a good barometer

To go with night vision
And stealth movement —
A four-legged tactical unit with fur.

The better to surprise you with, my dear,
Since this feline has no roar,
Only a deceptively soothing purr

He has to rely on a saber-toothed reputation
To keep unwanted visitors at bay.
Curiosity didn't kill the cat,

The cat killed curiosity
With a Cheshire grin
When it came too close to marked territory.

Underneath the cautious exterior
Lies the soul of Bagheera,
Wise, watchful, balancing the tendencies

To scratch and maim.
A dichotomy of god-like flaws
Only an ailurophile could love.

12

Ode (2003)

The Sandman's evil twin
Dressed in General Electric black plastic
With red digital numbers and a radio dial.

A silent time bomb,
When it goes off a jolting
"BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!"
Explodes in the head, yanking you from dream to reality.

The giver of early morning panic attacks
And many a bruised palm.

V

Part Five

*Youth as seen through the eyes of a
twenty-something.*

Scaredy Cat (2003)

Ghosts, wizards, football players,
Snow White and Elvis singing
All crowded on the sidewalk, passing by
With buckets full of sugary confections swinging.

I, myself, was a “50’s” girl
With a pink poodle skirt and hair a-twirled.
Saddle shoes clacking down the street,
Voices echo behind me in cries of “Trick-or-Treat!”

Up to a house we walked,
The pathway lit by porch light.
My hand reached for the doorbell
And it rang into the night.

The door was opened by a witch...
Pointy black hat, warts,
And spiders on her fingers that made my nerves twitch.
“Hello my sweet child,”

But I didn't hear a word,
My focus on her cauldron, bubbling wild.

Backwards I ran, grabbing onto my mother's hand.
Shivers of fear ran through me...
Why weren't my parents scared?
Couldn't they see?

Into the night we walked away.
I couldn't wait to forget the haggard crone.
It was time to leave this place
And eat candy safe at home.

Since then, on the night of All Hallows Eve
I've avoided stumbling into witches...
At least that's what I believe.

Hollywood Love (2003)

Celluloid images flash and freeze in front of me.

I can see that Romeo died for Juliet.

Benny stayed with June, and even Bridget Jones found a dashing bloke.

Love, actually, is not all around.

It managed to skip my block in its desire to unite Harry and Sally,

And to give some sleep to those two lovers in Seattle.

My love has gone with the wind, never to return.

A titanic mess that I had made long ago

Can no longer be fixed.

Now, all I can think of is someone like you.

But I no longer have a brave heart, nor can I find the courage
To say “down with love!”

Because I do love. I love too much.

I love too quickly, too strongly, too forever.

I love completely, but with much regret.

For me love is like oxygen, it lifts me up.

If all you need is love, I am in need.

In need of someone to put this woman on top.

A Truthful Letter to Santa (2003)

Dear Santa,

I have been

Good

Wonderfully nice

Exceptionally perfect

An outstanding example of moral character

A decent human being

A great person

A shining star of home and school

A credit to the family name

The picture-perfect lady

The sweet, caring friend

A paragon of virtue and valor

Oh, forget that nonsense...

I have been OK this year.

I was a lazy couch potato.

A whining, unsatisfied student.
Not really a good listener unless it was my own problem.
Self-absorbed.
Uber-opinionated.

And for all this I deserve acclaim and glory.
Because I was uncompromising
And had a hell of a year.
So give me presents,
Or else I'll take over your operation and put you out on the
streets.
Don't think that I'm joking...
This isn't April Fools Day.



About the Author

J. Lynn Hazelton is an “Elder Millennial” California girl at heart who has found herself living in the South. She is a proud parent of pets and loves reading, hiking, drinking coffee, and wandering around bookstores. She would much rather live as a hermit in the woods but has yet to make that dream happen.

