

# *The Bone of Fragments*

*FINAL ASSIGNMENT: POETRY*

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## *Exegesis*

In *The Poetry of The Present*, D.H. Lawrence suggests, 'But there is another kind of poetry: the poetry of that which is at hand: the immediate present' <sup>1</sup>. Lawrence's essay was influential in my preparation toward my final assignment, prompting me to consider the process of writing about the immediate present through metaphor, line and poetic techniques. Inspired by D.H. Lawrence's essay as well as Emily Dickinson's poem 'A narrow Fellow in the Grass', I began my final project with themes *sun, sand and sea* in mind. However, poetic ideas developed to include reflections on mundane experiences and objects. As a completed project, it was my intention to look everyday objects and experiences in different ways, using parataxis, sonic resonance, enjambment, line and symmetry to enhance the detail of the present.

During the writing process I asked, what is the 'ideal' of a poetic work in relation to writing about the present? Lawrence suggests that writing about the present is 'A figment. A [static] abstraction....abstracted from life....a fragment of the before or the after.... a crystallized aspiration [or] remembrance.' <sup>1</sup> I use enjambment and parataxis to jump between ideas and phrases without

many connecting ideas or words, which serve to create sense of the fragmented, disjointed nature of the present moment. Furthermore, I utilise sonic resonance, enjambment and cumulative sentences to move between ideas and phrases without many connecting ideas or words to enhance the fragmented nature of the present, such as in my poem *Emissions* in lines 1-2:

Sun-burning, churning  
fragments of watering surface  
chaffed into ambivalence, as if to carry

In my poem *Rinsing*, the repetition of ‘sun, sand, sea’ in lines 11 and 15 allude to symmetry inspired by Lawrence suggestion: ‘The perfect symmetry, the rhythm which returns upon itself like a dance where the hands link and loosen and link for the supreme moment of the end’<sup>2</sup>. In the poem *Rinsing*, I begin with only two lines in the first stanza; and I use three lines in the second stanza, four in the third etc. and repeat. These incremental refrains utilise both symmetry, sonic resonance and syntactical ambiguities and represent the cyclical but progressive nature of thoughts, reflecting themes of emotion, water and exhaustion in the poem. In the poem *Emissions*, initially I had no space between the lines. However, during the re-drafting process I created more space between lines to represent breath becoming stretched and distanced to reflect the speaker who has fallen into the water and is drowning.

A significant influence during writing and redrafting was ‘A Narrow Fellow in the Grass’<sup>3</sup> by Emily Dickinson. I was fascinated by how Dickinson enables her readers to mistake one word for another; given the poem is partially about how one thing is mistaken for another, this technique is utilised well — ‘upbraiding’ instead of ‘unbraiding’; rather than ‘stopping to secure it’, she uses ‘stooping’, which invites readers to pause and reconsider, to unravel and secure new meaning. Additionally the word ‘Whip lash’ provides space for the readers - ‘lash’ is part of a whip, the sudden action, similar to the experience of the snake itself ‘its notice sudden is’. An example of of inspiration from Dickinson, I use ‘wisps’ alluding to ‘whispers’ in my poem *Migration of Air*.

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence, D. H. "The Poetry Of The Present By D. H. Lawrence". *Poetry Foundation*, 2009, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69403/the-poetry-of-the-present>.

Accessed 11 June 2019.

The final section of my work includes poems written on the side of the assignment, hence why they are in a different text and format. I decided to title my work 'The Bone of Fragments' — reflecting my desire to explore the core of the present (fragmented) moment. And in doing so, not to seek moments of 'grandeur' but instead to unravel the mundane moments and, as Lawrence suggests, to 'not ask for the qualities of the unfading timeless gems. Ask for the whiteness which is the seethe of mud, ask for that incipient putrescence which is the skies falling, ask for the never-pausing, never-ceasing life itself.'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Lawrence, D. H. "The Poetry Of The Present By D. H. Lawrence". *Poetry Foundation*, 2009, <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69403/the-poetry-of-the-present>. Accessed 11 June 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Dickinson, Emily. *The Collected Poems Of Emily Dickinson*. Lerner Publishing Group, 2016.

# *Emissions*

Sun-burning churning  
fragments of watering surface  
chaffed into ambivalence, as if to carry  
sharpening blows, being made to water  
swallowing the broken mist, these red shells  
clenching release, forging dense forgiveness  
having been fractured into the wave,  
into the crushing.

To fall into  
the emission  
of swollen waves —

A breath and plunge

slice the surface

Twist and knot  
the water's edge, another

afternoon used  
to be swollen

(swallowed)

carrying you into its surface.

## *53 degrees of jarring*

In the burnt humidity of midnight, reading.

My head falls on my arm and I

forget the door and the window

charcoal air blows dark in

*mosquito lands on a whisper of hair.*

My body is slathered with heat

you are aching and burnt as an

afternoon born from the blinding

of 53 degree slammed heat

# Understood

I want to be a sliced glass bottle  
on the edge of the sand, washed up. I want  
to be sharp, to be cut, to be pulled

From the sand bed. I want to be smooth, mauve  
green. I want to be bright, to be zested with the carving  
of salt and the ocean's rhythm and ware

I want you to say you understand me  
like the word: glass. Pick me  
up and smooth me with the tip of your finger.

I want to be glass marked with the knowledge  
of the ocean's shape, the sWaY of the waves,  
almost convex and soft, misunderstood, yet  
desired by your touch.

## rinsing

Wind-chimes on the porch

Wood, light, roses.

Ribbon across blinding vibrations

white sky, yellow traffic

to dip into Vivonne Bay

And-now-the-parking-lot

sand pails abandoned and the laughing—

those waves,

mindlessly knowing the way

the low whisper from the glow of

sun, sand, sea

I am exhausted by my excuses.

Rinsing my soul with

the low whisper from the glow of

sun, sand, sea

I can almost hear the sand pining

rinse my soul, rinse

## *Pull*

Pallid rocks and blue sky  
breathless from patterns of rushing waves,  
I was not ready for you to distance between.

Your entrance, your accented scent —

Those waves chose  
its fingers pulled you in.



## *You, Soured Dough*

Your spoiled, groaning notion  
it never knows when  
something is pleased, it is retained

As though wanting (but not wanting) to—  
choking on phrases—

My curled notion (un)spoken  
fell into your mouth that naked crust  
moved as twists of dough  
raising, shuffling, pressing  
on a soft wooden board your thought

This holy unshaping, crushed and moulded  
to birth

That surfacing scent  
curling and falling  
against your throat, this sourdough  
slather in oil but don't expect loose breathing.

# *Bathe*

A stream folds light into its breathing,  
touching this naked dust, growing  
bleached by shimmered fragments

Sky collects voices and absence  
it forges cloud and holds sun, bathes itself in rain

Your blackened timber needs the river,  
you hunger for marigolds, spooned like summer  
across unwritten light

Across the pain in your hands  
shaking your soul and your chest

You are folding thoughts to unfold  
to know but un-know

A stream folds light into its breathing,  
your blackened thought needs the river.

## Recipe: Glazed

We decided you were

1/2 tsp Prismatic

1 tsp Curated

2 tbsp Dismal

Don't be bland

We will slather your socks until

*Silly serious strange drips*

b r e a t h e

For more prismatic, add:

Soft unwritten light

swerves like

hunger across summer's spoon

For less dismal, remove 1tbsp cold:

Injure that migrating season, water it

Thin and stretched.

For less curation and more fecundity, add 1 tsp:

A clash and a cause, catalogued

Caught like syrup dripping

And you and I shall be glazed

Exhale exhaustion

inhale change

### **Migration of Air**

It was injured, and was absent —

The migration of light and dark,

I carry, and wisps of the night —

I feel for myself a harmony

Of thin and stretched

Water inside

But you never understood the

Intended, attended

Stretched rhythms

Of the air, of the rise

Migrating

Hiding

Sending

## ***prisoner.***

If there is freedom,  
today it rushes past.  
Clinging—  
You smell cigarette on clothing.  
Everyone is holding on.  
Always discontent.

The past is a figment—  
imagination is the future—  
now is pressure.

I am a prisoner  
To the present

I might want to break out, or maybe  
I remain captive but then?

I can't do that, with the future, looming in.  
That's the point about freedom

The present holds me  
captive.

## **Waiting to become**

Crimson and yellow, shifts, as  
golden fields open heat in solitude

This touch fails to linger  
but the fields are there, waiting  
my expectation is expectation  
undone by my doing

Crimson and yellow, shifts, as  
repressed longings open in solitude

This nest fails to last  
but desire is there, waiting  
my trembling is merely trembling  
made into by consideration

Crimson and yellow, shifts,  
a sun-shower swollen in stillness

These windows fail to protect  
but the rush is there, waiting.  
The planting is the blooming  
made into by waiting.

## **first supper**

together  
our first supper

shards of speech  
a fort was made  
from blankets  
we crept in

side of the matter is

your skin spilt against  
my leg  
your breath on  
my arm  
your heavy hand  
my mind  
the rise the air

and i fell  
heavy we did *not* touch

the fort collapsed  
shards of speech  
pooled

your voice saturated  
my hands held  
the sheets  
are paper  
write it

within