

1000 Ways to Write

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|----|--|-----|--|
| #1 | One
Word
At
A
Time | #10 | This road always
Unwinds the same
Always bends homeward
No matter the turns I take
Trying to be lost |
| #2 | Pain
=
Scars
=
Armor | #11 | 3 lines
When the boss isn't
Looking--why
Waste the day
On work |
| #3 | Life
Is a canvas
Breathing
Is an
Art | #12 | I wonder if birds
Covet my hands
As much
As I covet
Their wings |
| #4 | Write
Your name
With every
Crayon
In the box | #13 | These
Pages
Are
Not
Feathers |
| #5 | All my life
Has been
Leading
To this
Moment | #14 | Ditch snake and
Ancient wurm
Taste and
Carve
The same dust |
| #6 | I
Will not
Be like
My
Father | #15 | Bullet
Chambered in my heart
Sharpen my eyes
Haven't yet
Tasted blood |
| #7 | 2 A.M. driving
On the parkway
The world reduced
To the length
Of my headlights | #16 | Look at him
In his red shirt
He thinks he's so great
My father said
And closed the curtains |
| #8 | In darkness
I'm willing
To believe
What sunlight casts
As foolish | #17 | How many skies
Have gone unrecorded
Lost
Like this hour
Like this hour |
| #9 | I want strange lights
In the sky eyes
Burning in the forest
Shake me awake
Frighten me alive | #18 | There should be a man
Who films
Every sunset
Then I could catch up
Between now and the next |

#19	Has anyone seen every Day of his Life end Or do they die Without our notice	#28	I can't Remember Which of Us Ran Away
#20	Breathing Its final asking For you You missed The best part	#29	When he bit My hand He never Stopped wagging His tail
#21	He said my words Were almost poetic I smiled, flattered And thought almost Almost	#30	We All Touched Him As he died
#22	I'm still trying To regain at least One thing the boy I used to be Lost	#31	I hope Whitman Was right About Death
#23	I'm too old to name My possessions I still talk to them But I don't know Their names	#32	Stay Awake You Useless Fool
#24	The rain today Washed the trees And fed the river And soaked into The soles of my shoes	#33	I've Been Away Too Long
#25	Do you remember The name of that one Guy at school Shaved half his head He never knew you	#34	I want To go to bed And let These 5 lines Be enough
#26	My mom spent half A minute locked In a freezer And eight hours that night In my father's bed	#35	How many nights Have passed Without writing You don't get them back And you can't catch up
#27	I've Missed You My Friend	#36	Now I'm trying To coax 5 more Lines about My father before I fall to sleep

#37	This night is a Set of clothes Inked into my skin A mask Around my eyes	#46	I think it Was when I Picked up the bat Intent on Breaking his arms
#38	Today I saw A man who Broke his neck Stand up From his wheelchair	#47	I could see The bridge From here If the blinds Were open
#39	And children sang With their voices And with their hands And I Nearly wept	#48	Enough Tomorrow Something Brighter Promise
#40	Now I Wish I Had	#49	I helped A kitten Find Its mother's Milk
#41	In the apartment Below me A man's tv Is loudly Beating him to death	#50	There You See Promise Fulfilled
#42	I wish I was as Funny As Douglas Adams	#51	I remember her Across the room Unknown Speaking shadows With her eyes
#43	I wish I was as Angry As Henry Rollins	#52	I remember her A green blur Unshaded Reading rocks Between her toes
#44	I wish I was as Driven As Stephen King	#53	I remember her A bent laugh Unguarded Shaping daises In her hair
#45	Someday Maybe Someday Maybe Now	#54	I remember her Watching me Unhidden Something fisted In her heart

#73	He crawled into my lap And I talked in the same Hushed tones I used With her	#82	I tried to sell the shell To a homeless slug Low mileage Only one owner He wasn't buying
#74	That was The moment She Began to Hate me	#83	Stopped at the dirt pile In a vacant lot To dig a tunnel Wish I had A GI Joe to bury
#75	The moon Is a Pale Brass Bullet	#84	She lives On the other side Of my kitchen wall With a cat And a pink light
#76	That night My mother took A beating Because I wanted My bear and my bed	#85	I stood outside And wished the cat Goodnight Hoping she Would come to the window
#77	I'm afraid I'm unhappy I'm restless I'm lonely Just like you	#86	That night my innocence Died I stuffed a blanket Down its throat Until it stopped moving
#78	My brother Says he's not Sick And throws Away his medicine	#87	She Is Every Raging River
#79	I swear I'm Doing fine And buy one More game I'll never play	#88	She Is Every Silent Pool
#80	That burning sensation On the back of your neck That Was me Judging you	#89	She Is Every Angry Cloud
#81	Around the block tonight Barefoot in the wet grass I found an empty Snail shell Escape is possible	#90	She Is Every Healing Rain

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|-----|---|------|---|
| #91 | Every
River
Is
My
River | #100 | I listened
To the insect
Bells
Chiming
For Church |
| #92 | The
Ocean
Knows
My
Name | #101 | Every
Wound
Is the bloom
Of
Another poem |
| #93 | I woke up
With an erection
But I can't
Remember
The dream | #102 | Every Poem
An antiseptic kiss
Upon
My
Fractured Waters |
| #94 | She hides
In my poems
The empty space
Around
A rose | #103 | My brother
Gave me a bullet
And told me
When he needed it
He'd call |
| #95 | When I
Was young
I had faith
In a great
Many things | #104 | I hope
I never
Hear from
Him
Again |
| #96 | All my dandelions
All my stars
Wasted
On the same
Wish | #105 | Go till it hurts
Then keep
Going
Till it doesn't
Hurt anymore |
| #97 | I stopped
And let the shadow
Of a tree
Fold around
Me | #106 | My father
Never hit me
With his hands
Still every night
I took my beating |
| #98 | Stepped
Into
The rattle
Of a bamboo
Grove | #107 | I can't
Get angry
So I listen
To angry
Songs |
| #99 | The night's
Perfume
Was faint
And
Fleeting | #108 | This is how
I heal
She said
And made
The music louder |

#109	To rest And dream Upon Winded Waters	#118	Quickly Loudly With rage With hunger And with spite
#110	To Be Only here Only now Only this	#119	Softly Slowly Like a feather Like a sigh Like a blinking eye
#111	To release The waxwork Of what I Ought to be	#120	But when she comes Always listen Always be ready And never turn Your back on her
#112	The tree branch above me Drips its darkness Into my eyes I am filled with empty Hollowed out by moonlight	#121	When my body Wants to rest It gives me dreams To entice me Back into sleep
#113	A row of sprinklers Waters the sidewalk Which in summer Will sprout beercan bushes And cigarette trees	#122	I'm writing a book That frightens me With its insistence That I be its Father
#114	One must end When another begins End Begin End	#123	Who wrote these Previous stanzas Was it really Me Then who am I now
#115	We Can Always Use more Butterflies	#124	Does it matter if Other people like What I do As long As it makes me happy
#116	My father The junkie Taught every kid In my neighborhood To ride a bicycle	#125	Sometimes just Finishing something Anything Like these 5 lines Calms the waters within
#117	I wake up sometimes Poems restless Beneath my skin In another room Whispering to no one	#126	My father tells My brother What he wants to hear That's why He loves our father more

#127	How can I Not write On the first Day of Spring	#136	I guess I owe More than One story To my father
#128	How can a heart Beat for years Without stopping And not be expected To break	#137	Sometimes I'm a camera Watching myself In a movie That has No ending
#129	How did one god Rise so far Above others Who were all so much More interesting	#138	Two cars crumple Glass captured in flight Change flies From my Pocket
#130	Why am I Always Afraid To Write	#139	Sudden rush of sound As the radio changes Stations and the steering Wheel Greets me
#131	Why do I Sometimes Want to go All day Without speaking	#140	In the ambulance The EMT worries That my heart is too slow It's always like this I say when I'm writing
#132	Are there really Other people In the world Or am I Only imagining them	#141	I'd flip the driver A quarter But I left all my change On the floorboard Of my car
#133	I've stopped Wondering where The stories Come From	#142	The first ride's free He says And shows me his teeth And one's missing There in the back
#134	I fear instead That they'll Die if I Don't Help them across	#143	They look inside me I am filled with weather And rivers and stones There are fingerprints On my bones
#135	Or worse Find someone Else Who Will	#144	No good Story Ever Truly Ends

- #145 One
Should
Always
Applaud
Fireworks
- #146 Fathers are not
Necessary
Ditch yours
As soon
As possible
- #147 Good
Art
Should
Offend
Someone
- #148 Sex is
Not a trophy
Nor a weapon
Nor a band-aid
Nor the end to your search
- #149 If you say
I love you
To someone
You owe that person
At least a poem
- #150 You
Are
Immortal
At least
For a while
- #151 Just in case
You need to know
To a cat
An open jigsaw box
Looks just like a toilet
- #152 Don't listen to bad music
Or watch bad television
Or read boring books
But bad movies are okay
If viewed with a friend
- #153 Never
Pray
To anything
You can't
See
- #154 A person can
Be smart
But people
Are usually
Dumb
- #155 Jump out of a tree
Scrape your knees
Laugh at foolish people
Risk looking
Foolish yourself
- #156 There are no
Good fathers in
My stories
And no good
Sons either
- #157 I looked down
From the plane
And saw
The handprint
Of god
- #158 But inside
The cloud was only
Blind nothingness
And god's signature
Disappeared
- #159 Beneath, I saw
The shapings
Of a million
Smaller
Hands
- #160 Highways
Like
The veins
Of a crippled
Leaf
- #161 And houses
All alike
Like the tick
Marks
On a thermometer
- #162 Tractor
Trailers
Scattered
Like sticks
Of chalk

#163	All These Were Beautiful Too	#172	I owned a werewolf Made of plaster A coin slot In the part Of his perfect hair
#164	Then we landed And all this Beauty Swallowed me in And disappeared	#173	He guarded My fortune Behind His Fangs
#165	When I don't Write, all The stories I've Begun begin To die	#174	One day he fell Shattered Spewed Copper moons Across the floor
#166	I asked Charlie Chaplin's Tramp to be my dad I can't, he said I'm a fictional character That's ok, I said, so am I	#175	I couldn't Spend One Single Cent
#167	We'll take turns Forgetting Our anniversary, she said Next year Will be your turn	#176	Henry Rollins refused To beat up my dad He said to me The best revenge Is to live better than him
#168	Occasionally I'm stunned by my own Words and I stare in Wonder, fixated, which is Just as bad as quitting	#177	My brother is back home He can do Anything he wants He just doesn't know What he wants
#169	I am a thimble Attempting To capture The Ocean	#178	We talked Video games And let the big Things be big And trusted small words
#170	I was the only one On the plane Stilled By the miracle Of sitting in the sky	#179	He said I was mad in the hospital And I said I know And that was it
#171	Work is something I do While Thinking Of something to write	#180	I bought him a video game Saved it for Christmas But Cindy said to send it Before he sells this Player like the last three

#181	Self Doubt Is My Enemy	#190	I want to die Being eaten by an Endangered animal And have it choke To death on my bones
#182	Stillness Is My New Hell	#191	It's odd To learn My hero Has heroes Of his own
#183	I raised these Walls Trained this Fire I am my own Devil	#192	Sadness is The default We all return to When other emotions exit Our orbits like comets
#184	Can I put these Prescriptions on Credit she asked And smiled A new gold tooth	#193	My head is on fire My limbs would like To fall off Think I'll try To write in bed
#185	It's important That I get her Pills he told me And unfolded one Of four prescriptions	#194	Pain spreads like A blanket And we ask others To lie with us Beneath
#186	I asked if Walt Whitman would be my dad I already am he said And bit into an apple And curled his toes	#195	Go hungry Force yourself to stay Awake and tremble Stretch the barbs of Your spine
#187	So far no one's asked Me to do A commercial So I can Righteously refuse	#196	Forget it, kid Harlan Ellison said When I asked him Now get your writing done Before I hafta hit ya
#188	I'm high right now On Rollins and caffeine And my thoughts are loud Enough to wake the Neighbors	#197	Cat: Touch me please Eew what are you doing Get away from me Where did you go
#189	It was a small Adventure But it was mine And I was loud For a while	#198	For some reason I love you Is Never Enough

#199	We're all Equipped with thorns To snag And capture An uncautious heart	#208	I boiled My own urine Trying To make Phosphorous
#200	Everything Is a Clock Winding Down	#209	To make my brother's Glow-in-the-dark Toy super bright I left it On a light bulb
#201	Her Breasts Were Perfectly Conical	#210	There are A few things I've learned Never To do again
#202	Her shirt High enough To reveal A half-inch Strap of skin	#211	The weather Doesn't care If it Kills You
#203	You remember Her lips painted Black as if the shadows Had smeared when she Kissed them	#212	Snakes However-- They Hate You
#204	And the jangle of chain And the lighter flick The smell of cloves And a tightness In your chest	#213	One day Your body Will resent Your abuse And revolt
#205	This is what you feel At night Under the heaviness of now And the lonely Whisper of why	#214	One day The universe Will blink And wipe us From the corner of its eye
#206	Kurt Vonnegut said Take all that anger you Aim at your father Distill it down to whisky Get drunk and write	#215	But that's a long Time from now So take your vitamins And an umbrella And watch out for snakes
#207	On the top bunk I raised my legs And punched my feet Through the ceiling Of our trailer	#216	Of course I'll be your Father Ray Bradbury said And we looked up at stars Fat enough to fall Like fruit

#217	At most Sam will have 13 years of life I wish there was Someone to blame	#226	Happy birthday Dad I'd give you something But you owe Too much
#218	Before he learned That such things Were impossible He wanted to Be a Muppet	#227	Adults don't know Anything They're just better At pretending They do
#219	A few years later If you asked what he Wanted to be when He grew up He'd say a superhero	#228	There was a girl In college who Sucked her thumb Everyone make fun of her But me
#220	He waited for the Lightning For the chemical glow Of his true Destiny	#229	I still Remember The time she Hugged me For no reason
#221	But every Day was As normal As a day Could be	#230	No one blessed me At work When I sneezed Now I'm full Of demons
#222	He gave in And stopped Wearing his Cape and mask To school	#231	There was this time I picked up a penny And it was tails-side Up and I know that's where It all went wrong
#223	He learned numbers And 5 paragraphs He told time Diagramed sentences And dissected frogs	#232	The dandelion seeds All went up in one Breath And I'm still waiting For that pony
#224	He learned That most of the things He dreamt Were childish And silly	#233	I had my fingers Crossed the whole time So why Are you Mad at me
#225	Reality is Kryptonite For The Soul	#234	My time Is almost Paid On that mirror I broke

#235	I live with a black cat Who hunts spirits And shakes the rain From behind Her ears	#244	Everyone should get A tube of lubricant Every year Along with Their tax forms
#236	Don't you Wish Sidewalk cracks Worked On the other parent	#245	This Fire Burns Away Weakness
#237	A man died today Last month I got one opportunity To be Kind to him	#246	I can't thing of one Thing my father Taught me to do Except break things He was good at that
#238	I didn't really Make his life any better But At least I did No harm	#247	No one remembers Your victories But your defeats They laser Those in stone
#239	We Should Use Poems As currency	#248	I want to leave Something behind To let everyone Know I was here
#240	Your total Comes to One limerick And two couplets Sir	#249	You are A machine This is Your instruction manual There is no warranty
#241	Got Change For A Sonnet	#250	On every atom Of your structure There is a plate Bearing the name Of your manufacturer
#242	Instead We pay For everything With small and large Amounts of pain	#251	For further Assistance Please consult your Handbook entitled Leaves of Grass
#243	Here's your check Thanks boss And your kick in the Crotch Thank you sir	#252	There are other guides But they are Inferior And should not be Trusted

- #253 Yeah I know Pink Floyd
He's great
The boy told me
I got all
His ringtones
- #254 Drink poetry like
A tall glass of ice
Water after a long
Pounding
Run uphill
- #255 Whenever the paper towels
Give out my mom must bonk
The nearest person on the
Head with the empty tube
It makes her happy
- #256 Well he did
Teach me to ride a bike
And how to keep going
Even with two scraped
And graveled knees
- #257 She grew beyond
The boundary of her body
And I tried to stay
Compact
And live in a corner
- #258 Somehow a grocery
List
Snuck into
My little notebook
Of poems
- #259 I don't know if it's
Trying to diminish
My dreamings with its
Structured, cautious
Normality
- #260 Or if my poetry
Slipped off its pedestal
And is adding metaphor to
The unsure part of me
That needs to make lists
- #261 Ever notice
That wanting to be with
Someone forever
Is the perfect way to
Drive her off
- #262 Sadness means
You were
Once happy
That's a small
Comfort
- #263 All I can
Do is
Write
That
Seems to be it
- #264 There's a man whose heart
Won't work on its own
And a woman with one eye
And one breast
So quit your bitching
- #265 My mom and I
Would record songs
From the radio
Play them back
And wonder at that magic
- #266 He also taught me to fish
To dig worms bait a hook
And to pack and run
When the snakes
Get too thick
- #267 Eyes are mouths
That can only drink
They can sometimes
However
Gasp
- #268 A poem slowly
Slips a knife
Into the reader's gut
And ends with a twist
Of the blade
- #269 Cummings
Could
Murder
Most
Sweetly
- #270 Even with a body
Warming the other
Side of the bed
We all sleep
Alone

#271	We all Have friends We let drift Or drove Away	#280	I began to doubt The church When the preacher Denounced The smurfs
#272	There's always Something We can't forget So we laugh At instead	#281	What harm can a smurf Do being only three Apples high Aren't there other enemies To point your finger at
#273	The endless nights The tedious blood the urge To run back to better days I know I know	#282	I fell asleep in church My head on the pew In front of me And awoke to find Strangers praying over me
#274	My Hands Are As bloody As yours	#283	After a moment Of confusion I joined their prayer I didn't want them To be disappointed
#275	We All Dig Our own Graves	#284	I wondered what god Had against comic books Or cartoons Since he made me With the need to make them
#276	At some Point Our parents Became Human	#285	God didn't want my mom To wear makeup or earrings But she couldn't take off The ring my father Made her buy
#277	The moment You let yourself Give less Than your best You lose yourself	#286	They told her not To leave my father So she left Their church Instead
#278	This job is killing me He said as he tightened His tie And went in Early	#287	She only wants To go home but Her daughters Sold her trailer Last year
#279	One day I'm gonna leave Him she said As she fried his steak Bloody as he liked it	#288	She kept Falling And would lie For hours on the floor Without complaint

#289	Now she sits in A tiny room kept Company by The scent of her Own decay	#298	The city Still Sings Without Me
#290	She doesn't Know The growth On her face Is cancer	#299	The kingdom Can do without One more Maudlin Jester
#291	She let me drink Coffee And eat butter And cream Straight from a spoon	#300	And the ocean Will always Make room For one more Draft of tears
#292	She once beat A snake to death With a garden rake Scaring me more Than the snake	#301	You don't get To make the story Up you Only get to transcribe The words
#293	She'll finish her life In a room that isn't hers And leave it To the next Dying soul	#302	But what A godlike Feeling it Is To be chosen
#294	She kept a box of toys And taught me peek-a-boo I see you Grandma Now I don't	#303	In the beginning There was The word Remember nothing New is ever written
#295	Hating someone Only Makes Him Stronger	#304	You find the words Buried like bones In the earth Or in the air Like ashes
#296	You'll Get no Strength From me Dad	#305	Hold your Breath When They speak To you
#297	Leaves Are falling On the mountains Even though I'm not there	#306	I only found out After he left That My dad was In the hospital

#307	I proclaim myself To be Holy And every day Sacred to me	#316	I wanted to feel Fear Or at least concern That he'd made it Through the operation
#308	As soon as I am God I see all that is Mine Slowly die	#317	There are times When safety And familiarity Are the most Frightening things known
#309	How simple The needs Of every human And how often They go unmet	#318	When you need the alien Chill Of unknown Winds whispering At the open window
#310	How frightened They are Of the talents Given Them	#319	Other than this Usual Opium haze Of every Day
#311	How eager They are To pay For what never Had a price	#320	Still Every Day Ends In darkness
#312	How clumsy They see Themselves In thoughtless Flight	#321	You will always Be ugly In someone's Ugly Eyes
#313	Miracles crushed Daily Like the bulb of a tulip Under A boot	#322	There will Always be Someone Happy To hate you
#314	Tears have Given me more Poems Than Laughter	#323	Let them And know That anger Is a wine That sours with age
#315	The world should Learn to bend To fit Around You	#324	What fiends Immortals Be Preying on Our prayers

- #325 The best
We can hope
Is that our trespasses
Aren't being
Tallied
- #326 It was like I read it
In the paper
Local man has back surgery
Recovering
On lots of pain pills
- #327 At the open mic you threw
Back your red hair
Swayed your tattooed hips
Chanted an Ani
Difranco song
- #328 And I fell
In fascination
Which is larger than lust
And as you can see
Lives longer
- #329 We were both
Into girls
Which gave us
Nothing
In common
- #330 Yet somehow we
Ended one evening together
And I confessed
You made me love
That song
- #331 And my fascination
Which I still carry
In my
Pocket
Like a penny
- #332 I remember
You said
You always
Found me
Fascinating too
- #333 If my memory
Lies
I will let it
Be a
Liar
- #334 Don't believe
For a second that any
Amount of suffering you
Endure will reap
You any reward
- #335 Think twice
Before shouldering
Anyone's
Home-whittled
Cross
- #336 I have his eyes
That's all
I'm willing
To
Admit
- #337 The river full of
Copperheads and alligator
Gar would sometimes
Rise and lick
The front porch steps
- #338 Sometimes dwindled
To a trickle
Of stones
Drowning
In the air
- #339 Often stank of fish
Liquefying
Under the sun
Wasting
To a smear of bone
- #340 Broke from its
Bank and
Followed me
Into
The mountains
- #341 Fell from the sky
And gripped the
Trees and shook
The doubt
From my eyes
- #342 Sharpen your tongue
Poison your eyes
And point your
Profanity
At the proper enemy

#343	A nemesis Need not Be mad Or armored In flame	#352	Joe's amp Beneath a blanket Of electric fuzz And spitting sparks At every attempt to unplug
#344	With plans To cleave The world or Bend it to His will	#353	My own amp Dwarfed And washed out By the echoing Roar
#345	Call the boring Pinkly scrubbed And harmless Your enemies and lock them From your life	#354	We shattered the sleep Of every owl In the woods around Our island of garage light And kerosene warmth
#346	And His Crooked Broken Smile	#355	I still hold this Music made of sweat And sleepless desperate Youth As my anthem
#347	I can Hear The traffic From My chair	#356	I kept Half his name Because I've gotten Used To the damned thing
#348	Rain in my head Reflects Crimson Brake Lights	#357	I once dreamed my best Friend and I were taking A bath together And he shrank And washed down the drain
#349	Thoughts Collide And Scatter And scream	#358	In another dream I let my friend Get bitten by a rat When I failed to shoot it With a bb gun
#350	A blue light Swirls In my skull Like a prayer For the broken	#359	Even in Sleep I let Everyone Down
#351	Rick's drums More duct tape Than skin The splash cymbal A jagged weapon	#360	We all took Trays from the cafeteria And slid down The snow-covered hills Of the campus

#361	We left Angels In the Parking Lots	#370	The same crazy thought Born into both Our heads at once Bob and I laughed Out loud in private
#362	Afterward Robin Broke the ice From My beard	#371	Cindy arched An eyebrow I returned a reddening Grin and shifted In my chair
#363	That's What I Remember Most	#372	I'd much Rather Enjoy the shame Of a shared Secret sin
#364	Why Such distance And time Before anything Can mean something	#373	This poem Must Be Every Thing
#365	Let this book Be born Walk straight and speak With all its senses Among those better than it	#374	All of life Is burnt As offering On the altar Of art
#366	And the anger And random Destructive needs Let's not forget Those lovely legacies	#375	Paint An animal face Over Your own With the ashes
#367	It's Nice To be Envied By someone	#376	I'd hate him More If I wasn't So much Like him
#368	To hear about His rewarding job All the wonderful Toys He affords himself	#377	At my funeral Light candles And walk as a river Of flame Through the mountains
#369	And to know My mst3k Collection Brings him Begging to borrow	#378	Collide your fires Into a huge Crackling Heart Of kindling

- #379 Fly kites
From the treetops
And shape
Handfuls of dirt
Into castle walls
- #380 Everybody play
An instrument
Everybody play
A different song
Bring toys everybody play
- #381 Dance around
A central whisper
Add
Your pulse
To the rhythm
- #382 Read Whitman
Dylan
Open your hymnals
Cup water
In your hands
- #383 Remember my faults
As much as my merits
And know I fought
Bravely
With them all
- #384 Everyone write
A poem
Folded with a kiss
And let them tumble
Like leaves into my grave
- #385 Then lower me
Into earth
Cover me with soil
And wait
For my return
- #386 I'm not saying you can't
Love your father
It's just not something
I can
Relate to
- #387 Remove the rings
From your eyebrows
Comb the wildness
Out of your hair
It's time for work
- #388 Scrub the doubts
Of death
And accusations of evil
From your brain
It's time for war
- #389 Bottle your questions
Put a pin through your
Mind's eye
Settle
It's time for school
- #390 Box away
Your dreams
Sell
Your innocence
It's time to grow up
- #391 The scrabble of dog feet
And the rush of kisses
To greet me
At the door
Of granny's house
- #392 Always freezie pops
And a bowl of hard
Candy melted
Into one sticky
Lump
- #393 The scent
Of cigarettes
Exhaled
Into
Everything
- #394 The hallway closet
With its spy entrance
In the back
I was safe
With a puppy or two
- #395 Granny and poppa
Got to drinking
And forgot I
Was
Their favorite
- #396 This is
Where
My father
Learned
It

#397	Comic books on one side Of the attic Playboys on the other I always made the Good choice	#406	My father called Me at college So I'd talk him Out Of killing himself
#398	There was A history On the walls But it wasn't one I could read	#407	Life Is a game And if you quit early You'll be ridiculed Like that wimp Hemmingway
#399	Poppa's typewriter Granny's dictionary The greatest Toys They could provide	#408	Roll the dice To determine Your parents Place of origin And starting health
#400	When granny Left him Poppa Filled the house With hate	#409	In your first few turns You'll manipulate Others into caring for you You have two skills to Start: cute and guilt
#401	The pecan tree In the back Planted by my great Grandfather Cut to splinters	#410	You will develop New powers of observation Use them To learn The game board
#402	When poppa Died The family Looted The house	#411	Remember Other Players Can Bluff
#403	I took his desk chair Scrubbed the smoke out Wheeled it up to my desk And wrote A fine memorial	#412	Things that may cause you To lose a turn: Talent shows Churches--mirrors Family reunions
#404	They sold the house Voices soaked Into the wood Memories Long ago packed	#413	During the game you'll Belong to many teams Remain loyal Even after The membership ends
#405	Now it's just A house On a patch of lawn In a town Smaller than it used to be	#414	Don't curse The dice They are fair Though often Unkind

#415	If you draw a goal card or Receive one from another Player You may draw another At any time	#424	I know I didn't Imagine This world I can do better than this
#416	Sacrifice An abusive parent To move ahead Three spaces And gain two extra turns	#425	What if the christians are Right or the jews or the Muslims atheists wiccans And everyone else is wrong Including me
#417	If you give One of your turns To another player You will not Get your turn back	#426	Not Everything Is about or because Of my father Goddamn it
#418	Keep your own Score Assign Victory points As you see fit	#427	I started Writing this When all these Emotions were raw And exposed
#419	When Your game Is over Roll A new character	#428	I peeled Away The wounds And put them On paper
#420	If you wish to reuse Your old character you may Keep 1 level of experience For every game That character has played	#429	I'd see my face ghosted In the passenger glass Sliding over fields of ice And darkness and feel Unlimited possibilities
#421	What if there's No judge And evil and good Alike Are sorted the same	#430	The stars Spoke Of Wonders To come
#422	What if heaven's A wal-mart Salvation on sale Mass produced By starving children	#431	Houses dressed Their windows In warm Soft Light
#423	What if everything In existence is a product Of my imagination What if I'm A product of yours	#432	My forehead cold Against the glass The car breathed Heat Into my flesh

#433	I Saw And felt And contained All things	#442	I called one teacher An idiot Under my breath He asked me what I said I said he was an idiot
#434	The silence said To me All This For you	#443	My brother Acted out worse Smoked Got kicked out Of school
#435	Now that I Drive Noise and light Blind and drown My dreaming	#444	When we came back I reunited With my friends Made a couple New ones
#436	When my mom Fled my father We pulled up roots And drifted West	#445	My brother dropped Out of school Went crazier than me Punched holes in the wall And through his heart
#437	I had my teachers All sign A sheet releasing Me from school One refused	#446	I would scream too And throw And break things The way We'd been taught
#438	Another Said next year She'd miss me And all the arguments We'd most likely have	#447	I argued with all My teachers Even if I was wrong Other students hated me Which always made me right
#439	My friends were shocked I hadn't been Allowed to tell Them We were leaving	#448	Cindy says She likes this poem These poems Which means I have to finish it
#440	I gave Joe back His video game I hadn't had Much time To play it	#449	Behind Every Pair of eyes Is a Foreign country
#441	At the new school I acted weird Weirder than usual To attract Anyone's attention	#450	Every fist An army Every Smile A treaty

#451	My first possession Was a wristband With my Name on it I still have it	#460	We carry out phantom Conversations between Fictional characters Sometimes in different Voices
#452	I used to cry over Lost toys Not because they were gone But because people Had given them to me	#461	There we are Talking to ourselves Occasionally answering Driving away All potential company
#453	I'd keep everything And hold them one by one And remember that person And the life I shared Closely long ago	#462	Yet we Fully expect Millions To read every Word we write
#454	From day one People gave me things And with those things They gave me Themselves	#463	I miss the snow I miss coming in From the snow And seeing my tracks Across the empty
#455	Life should give You a reason To write Not an excuse To avoid it	#464	I miss Watching the world Change And affecting that Change in me
#456	Am I healing letting All the anger and hurt go Or am I just running Out of things To say about him	#465	Flowers tucked into sleep Trees unburdened For the winter And I wrote songs In the lengthening night
#457	Writers spend Most of their time alone Writing preparing To write finding Reasons not to write	#466	If my father hadn't abused And stolen from And terrorized us My mother would never Have taken us to Tennessee
#458	Being Alone Is a most troublesome Convention To sunder	#467	Every kid should Have a small tight space In which to hide And pretend To be important
#459	We also Like to demonstrate Our Mastery Of language	#468	Below the house Under the bed Under a blanket Draped Over a table

#469	Remembering When Your universe Was This size	#478	Bob wouldn't have Introduced me to Rush I have found them myself But it wouldn't have been As momentous
#470	Before the world Unfolded Wide and tall And shoved you From its center	#479	I wouldn't have bowled Or played Cosmic with Bob Or broken the couch Wrestling With Tony
#471	Don't be afraid to write The words will always Be there They need you as much As you need them	#480	I wouldn't have the memory Of climbing up to Tony and Tammy's balcony To weird out his Visitors
#472	Everything you'll ever Write Has already been Written But not by anyone else	#481	Those crazy schemes Tony and I spun As I grew older And he slowly Let go of his youth
#473	The stories sit Fully formed Beneath what you can see Waiting For you to reach in	#482	My basement room Shadowed and quiet I wrote about the dead Men my father Knew
#474	I carried poems In every pocket Of my trusted Jacket Like armor	#483	The songs and stories About sons without Dads Or dads without Souls
#475	I still write my fears Into words Making them easier To carry Or to drop	#484	Playing games with Bob When sleep Was a drug I could say No to
#476	I never Would have met Tony and Tammy And my great friend And kindred spirit Bob	#485	Our lives are still Bonded by weird Alien radio Over miles And through years
#477	I would have fallen In love and broken My heart No matter Where I ended up	#486	So thank you father For the pain The fear and disquiet The anger and the void That built me

#487	And mom is finally Happy Stronger through The crucible Of you	#496	I'm letting You go Father Just don't Expect forgiveness
#488	My brother is Shaking off The fingerprints You pressed Into him	#497	I am conformity And structured Predictability I hate Michael
#489	When you unraveled I built a wall And left him Under the arrows Of your influence	#498	I am top 40 Mediocre Manufactured cool Michael Is killing me
#490	I remember trying to Change him with teenage Wisdom But he was drunk On yours	#499	I am the unfettered Bird that wings A winding tune I love Michael
#491	He figured He had to choose You or mom And you had The loudest voice	#500	I am a random Ragged Uneven song That sings itself Michael is my friend
#492	Now He knows He can Choose Himself	#501	When the world breathes Fire and bares Its beastly fangs Make yourself A monster
#493	We're larger Older Now And we know How not to live	#502	With eyes accustomed To staring into the Florescent sterility Of corporate Dungeons
#494	We lived Through you Found ourselves On the Other side	#503	Shoulders Broad To bear the weight Of silent Censure
#495	The flash burned off Our eyes and our Souls sharpened Lean and hungry For a better reality	#504	Talons Sharpened To Pierce And cling To dignity

#505 Heart
Armored against
The arrows
Of common
Spite

#506

Broken toys
Pink plastic
Scattered
Across the breakdown
Lane of the bridge

The old
Man's fingers
Dark and dry
And weathered
Like firewood

My own voice
Against my
Favorite song
Straining
To match

She wheeled
Her oxygen tank
Past the altar
Paused to bow
To the crucified christ

There are some people
Poetry cannot touch
Don't let
Those people
Touch you

Don't read the backs of books
Or jacket flaps
Let the book unfold like a map
To an unknown
Undiscovered country

Bad music
Moves slowly
Through your
Brain
Laying its eggs