

An Apology on Behalf of Insecurity
Mikey Garrett

Ode for the Hatred I Have for Those Closest to Me

And one way of looking at it, a more popular way these days is that I'm setting new boundaries rather than building walls. Within this new boundary is my new best mate, my buddy-old-pal, that one who never lets me down. His name is Hatred. He seems like an angel fallen from God's pompous elect rather than Lucifer's right-hand man. He doesn't lie to me like the others do, the heroes and those that pretended to cozy up. He shoots me straight, and for that I keep him around. He caught my wrist with knife in hand, and shushed me back to sanity. He pulled down their masks to reveal selfish little children playing in their own shit, too numb to realize. Oh, dependable Hatred, he will never leave my side, I can always count on him even when the task seems unimportant. I raise and I exalt him within my own self. I will paint him over every thought, replacing the candy and glitter that will lie to your face for this feared thing that aids you even when the ones that are closest to you forget how these were the jobs that they had signed up for.

To the Friend Who is What I Wish to be,

once I met a boy who was a myth to me
one who had been spoken of with have-
you-ever-met's and you-would-love's
maybe my bar for friendship is too low
except that's the metaphor that angered
an old lover maybe it's a window that's
too large one that should be shrunk in the
name of preventing future cynicism a
climbing harness now hangs idle against
the door to my closet and those ballet
shoes built for a predetermined wall sit
sticky collecting dust in the deep drawer
of my desk they say never meet your
heroes but they never say to avoid
becoming their best friend or to keep
from passing them your storied past
rolled up like a poorly wrapped joint
or like a smudgy fingerprint painting
why do I try to be you when you are
the base to the poisonous bile in me
you once met a boy who wasn't ready
for his hero but that myth dissolved to
reveal a bar that's maybe a bit too low

To the One That Should Know Me Better,

Or should I say dear Adam Trask

because at times I feel like a Charles

ready to beat you purple and yellow

over the love and affection received

from your proverbial pocketknife

gift to the world that is you

while my pup goes unappreciated whelping

for love howling for a glance

this poison inside of me is of mine

own concoction and its base is one part aged brotherly love

and topped off with plenty of

my own insanity it's a recipe that

does not paint you in a good light

and that is not your fault

it bubbles and festers pops and whistles

when you are around so while

you are my brother I must say goodbye to you

I thought we saw the same in each other

but I am an anchor too heavy for your ship

who knew that in 1951 Steinbeck

would capture so perfectly this feeling I have towards you

you called me to recommend I move it up

on my reading list suntanning with a toolbelt

you taught me how to hate you but it's not

your chest that's been painted purple and yellow

from a beating one can only hope to forget about.

To the Friend Without Sympathy,

Do you remember when we used to toy with
the prettiest girl in school? We both could've
used a makeover but we felt like kings because
of our influence. Let's do something tonight
you say, and I say let's do it. One minute later
let's do something tonight, to which I give the
same reply. I bought a bike because of you but
it now sits in the back, treading in a pile of
leaves. In fact, I bought two. I told you of my
plan to paint these bikes and you fought me
violently, letting the truth fly. Your blood rises
when I am the same as you. For that reason
I must forget how we grew up. When your sister
and I dated it was dreams of you and I on trips
together playing like schoolchildren till our
noses and ears grew too large for our faces

that kept me asking her on date after date.

Those three large sand dollars found in limbo

by the pier at the witching hour with

Beelzebub's finest floating in our minds kept

me coming back for more. I could've gone

backpacking alone for spring break of 2022

you know, but now I look in that catch dish

given to me by a friendly Muslim man across

the pond and I find a sand dollar with a

hairline fracture that points to a bike lock that's
never been used.

To the Girl Who I Keep Myself from Loving,

I promised you a child if we're both unmarried by 30. You didn't speak to me for five months because Julia Louis-Dreyfus does not look like you. No, she looks like your mother. The color green now wraps around two people, they are you and my father both happy with such an odd obsession. Now I ask you to paint me your color because that is how I might find peace. Yes I might be a coward an envious, greedy sickling but I'm an honest one. I might as well look the part. When I asked you this, you said no. You were the hand that steadied the rocking vessel. You were the one to scrape away the bile, hardened after years. There is one philosophical dilemma but apparently Mr. Camus already solved the problem for us. It wasn't his words on Sisyphus that helped me. At .07% I spilled the beans. Ones that no one had ever seen for fear of a report—you got on your knees, on the floor sticky with booze and vomit. Tracking down every last sour and violent one you placed them back where they belong, but not before shushing them to sleep, singing them a lullaby with an angel's voice. You tucked them in with eyes unclouded and heart that's just. Please paint me green but before you do, let me get on my knees and just say thank you.