

Poetry Series

Donna Dolorical
- poems -

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Donna Dolorical(September 25,1989)

Aleka's Vendetta

Remember, remember the 31st of October
The evil powder and pot
I know of no reason
Why his death by poison
Should ever be forgot

.~*~.

You, inside a cold box
Is the one picture I really ought to mount
Morbid, but it's an anchor to reality
You're never coming back; I'm just sick-sorry
The hurting never stops, and the disbelief
Hands in my brain keep groping about
Desperate to catch even just a wisp.
And when I read your life
The penult always leaves me holding my breath
Half-expecting, half-hoping
There's gonna be a twist in the end
But always, the nightmare delivers
Leaves me feeling angry and cheated.
Over a decade past, still the tragedy hasn't paled
Still people ask, the what ifs, what could've beens
Every now and then the mind indulges, pretends
No poison was spilled, the river doesn't run empty
No, you're just in another continent
Far and away from your 'big, bad city.'
And yes, the delusion, the temporary suspension
Would hold till the next time I behold
That grim picture of you, cold inside a box

...

Tonight though, I lean against your wall
I haven't the heart to mount your photo
So instead, I listen to others talk
Of time machines and butterflies
The past, the future, and the fates
I say you should've lived
Some say you could've lived
Still others say, wishing so is just pure greed

Too soon or not makes no matter at all
You were here once
and once should be enough, after all

Donna Dolorical

As Soon As There Is Life, There Is Danger

Take me someplace else I've never been
I crave to see something I've never seen
Push me, trounce me, give me a bit of strife
Hurt me, tear me, make me risk a little life
Let pain wash over me, let no one take the blame
Raze me, burn me, let no one kill the flame
Skin me, bleed me from the slenderest of cuts
Slight me, insult me, let me bear the brunts
Stifle me, choke me, take away my air
Plunge me, drown me, spare me no despair
Destroy me, off me, kill me, slay me
Revive me, resuscitate me, reawaken me
Into a brand new life

Donna Dolorical

Burn And Churn

The other day I chose to crash and burn
And last night I chose to flip and turn
As one good sonnet did starve Lizzie's love dry
Mine, I killed with one wooden block's sigh
Wood once burdened by a decade's worth of paint and paper
Which I scraped clean and covered anew last winter
For a worthwhile new life in another one's life
To where it's now gone, in my turnaround last night;
Yes, last night I walked away, didn't twist and look back
This dawn I search my heart's meanders, I wonder will I crack?
And as I stare at the empty space beneath the bed
The empty spaces seem to grow inside my head
Some part of me feels compelled to worry
A bigger part recalls my crash and burn theory
Though the danger is real for something so hollow to cave in
Something tells me, 'empty' means less to lose and more to gain

Donna Dolorical

Color Of The Dawn

Gaping windows of a weary soul
Raven vastness does enthrall
A dropp of tear, a trickle of thought
From frailty, courage be wrought

Careful you, who from the light absconds
Put no faith in futile rondes
Solaced oblivion is naught but blight
Oh life lost unto the night

Donna Dolorical

Concrete

The sand has been poured in
The water helped harden it
Struggling to break through
She tried bashing her way in and it's hurting

Now she's just tired
There's little left to be desired
And she won't wallow in despair
After all, she knows she can make her own way

The challenge now is to leave in grace
Here even the buoyant sways
Her self-possession goes a long way
But once she goes, mightn't the donkeys bray?

Alas, circumstance has conspired
Ready to take flight, only, the sky is a bit mired
Sighing and resigned, she resolves to bide her time
She has endured this much, would it kill her to endure more tripe?

For now, she no longer bashes herself against their tide
Let them walk with eyes and ears closed, so what?
She'll keep silent, ripen her yarns on the inside

At the end of the day, real listeners will flock to her anyway

Donna Dolorical

Deadlock

Beware the dream that takes its time
That eats you up and burns like fire
That drags aimless, with you in chains
Fools you to thinking life can wait

One stealthy hand laid, it's considered sold
A mistake of youth is getting old
When the things you hide are those of worth
You pay in kind, a debt of sorts

One gift, to be unwrapped and revealed
By coward's pride, warped and concealed
That selfish breath you took to hold
Now one sad yarn you yearn be told

For when the heart's throat is gagged
Beats are smothered and warm blood trapped
The feelings do curdle, in time they rot
And fleeting are the spoken;
deadly, those which are not

Donna Dolorical

Fish

I keep looking for things that'd let me off the hook
But at every turn you're dangling worms at me-
Darned, but it's not like I'm a pet that needs feeding.

Yes, everytime I swim away you start dangling worms at me
And I always end up taking bait and getting fried.
I've been frying for the last six years.
Hello, do you actually intend to eat me?
Or are you only burning me to a char?

Donna Dolorical

Half Life

Them half-formed thoughts
Uncertain words
Run through my mind
Around and 'round
Oh half-formed, yes
And nevertheless,
They never run out

Donna Dolorical

Heartflung

It's why it's called a fling:
You climb,
You soar
Towards some greater height
And from that new summit
You jump,
Hurl,
Fling
Yourself Earthwards
With all intent and
With all the confidence in the world
That neither you
Nor the ground you are about to hit

Shall get hurt.

Donna Dolorical

Indigo

In the middle of the night
By the middle of the room
Midway 'long the darkened floor
Veiled by the half-light of the moon
Stands a girl a-waltzing with her pillow
One arm raised in half an embrace
The other clutching at half a heart
Willing it to break with grace

Donna Dolorical

Look Up, Look Down

And all the good are dead,
Smiling from behind the veil
I can still see in their ghost eyes
The old shimmer of a twinkle
And they call out to me
With voices like chocolate,
Downy eyelashes that shake
The very foundation of me
I wish I could talk to them
Ask a question or two
I'd care not if they answer in riddles
Deathly vagueness shall do
But look now, they're crying
'We weren't made sunbeams'
I shout back, 'that's ridiculous,
'watch how I drown in the Shining! '

Donna Dolorical

Lost

Weightiest is the lost page, stark white and blank
Most deafening is the silence of verses unrecalled
More crushing are the spaces, the void so unwalled
Heaviest be the heart that swelling secrets have sunk

Donna Dolorical

Mad

So.

This is it huh.

The end of the rainbow

and not a pot in sight.

I don't want to be bitter

but really

There's a chip on my shoulder

and it's a chip I've always had

But you want to know something?

I'll tell you the truth:

You stopped writing

And I stopped listening

And really

That's why we stopped needing

Each other.

Donna Dolorical

Mongrel Drivel

I'm shedding dreams one by one
Whether or not they were begun
I'm dropping pieces, crumb by crumb
This weary back leaves room only for one

Tomorrow I'll be cutting off my hair
My head should breathe polluted air
I need to leave my raw sores bare
Let them sting unbalmed-perhaps then I'd care

But fulgid Sylvia shall never give me rest
Salt and mud I've swum at her behest
Till sanity from sanity, zest from jest
My salty, muddy vices did divest

And the day after tomorrow will see me bent
Palms and soles upon eggshells; evenly flattened
Raking among the brittleness, my hands shall collect
And in the remains of the fallen, I shall cathect

Donna Dolorical

My Ghost

Remember the nights
When I'd hidden in plain sight?
You wouldn't, of course
That's the point,
Your eyes were always open wide.
Well tonight mine's closing
I'm just really tired
I can still see you there
But actually, you've turned into air
And if I stare too long
I tend to wonder
Maybe the pain was all in my head
Which isn't any better, I guess
Flesh and blood may be cumbersome
But ghosts are terribly heavy to carry
So air is never fine.
And it's not, really.

Donna Dolorical

My Own Private Loolaloo

Call me a prude
But consider,
Within a week
I'd watched you
Shoot up then wither

Eleven to three-and-twenty
Saw pictures of a baby,
And one of a coffin

So even though
You went before
My time of prime

And even though
I'm still younger
Than you were
In '93

When I saw you
Sitting, splayed
Head thrown back
Eyeballs a-rolling
Behind their lids
In criminal bliss

I felt like a mother
In woeful wonder
Was your life ever, ever
Ever screwed up like this?
Were you ever, ever
Ever messed up like this?
Could we ever, ever
Ever have saved you from this?

Donna Dolorical

No Man's Land

Because this is war and in order to survive I should first be lost.

I need to take down the mirrors and let go of reflections, whether real, imagined, or desired.

I need to clap on the side-blinds to keep from blank papers that steal away time. And what I lose, I cannot borrow from other people's words, or songs, or thoughts.

I'm going to have to stop.

Here, take this crate which contains all of me, and all that I need lost and forgotten for the moment.

Then I'm going to have to slave away my youth, even if already I feel old and invalid.

Because this is a war that I have to get through alive even if by the end of it, my dreams may have died.

It's just, you don't have to let me know right away, you won't have to send me a widow's telegram.

That way I can go on wearing my hope along with my dog tags.

Donna Dolorical

Pessoan

I am taking you for never granted
but before I walk away
Spare me a glance,
look very closely
My guises now are frayed
Go on, cut me open
I'll spill my darkest blood
Cup your hands
Bring them to your lips
Tell me what flows crimson
that I never could understand
Tell it to me before I burn
this last skin that I wear
Because the first chance that I get
Shall mean the first cut 'cross my chest
And thenceforth only guilty last words
will fall out in whispers
but they will fall straight onto paper
whose first few folds
shall be borne of
my last few hand motions

Donna Dolorical

Quickspark

A trickle
A chuckle
Am I laughing?
Am I crying?
Over something
That's got nothing
To do with me
It's ridiculously
Absurd, even futile
And at the same time
It makes perfect sense to me
Yes, I know, isn't it crazy?
But, hey, mind your own boat
I've got mine to float
And I choose to ride
The melancholy tide
Of the river that ends
Where dust with life blends
Where time holds still
Where walls keep vigil
To stretch the siren wail
Across the decades' swell
Because damned if it isn't
One hell of a wail
We tend to keep missing
The sound of a crime
Generations keep repeating
Sure I know it gets confusing
When Life keeps imitating
Art, keeps imitating
Life, sometimes it's blinding
Is it still a human being
Or a dog-biscuit mannequin
That's gracing the screen?
And you know, I guess
One can only brandish
So much gift and beauty
Beyond which quantity
Comes the point of insanity

Where all the awe, the admiration
The sighs, never-ending questions
Will shove the Art to self-destruction
And all because those who get touched
Just have to have more than a touch
And so they rub, pinch, tear away, and crush
They bleed the light out of the brightest
Bleed the life out of the fledgling finest
Till what's fine and what's bright
End up burning out the quickest

Donna Dolorical

Rare Lightness Of Being

I want lights, incandescent and warm
Let them hang from every ceiling I stand under
And I want sunshine, bright and cheery
Let its rays stream in through every seam, every crack
Give me air, free and breathtaking
Give me flowers, dried and everlasting
Give me trees, gnarled and comforting
Give me water, alive and whispering
Give me the ocean, salty and roaring
Give me color, vivid and liquid
Give me paper, clean and waiting
Give me heartbreak, true and searing
Give me clouds soft and strong
Enough for my far-fetched dreams to float on

Donna Dolorical

Roped

I saw him from the distance
I saw a foe.
I kept my distance.

I thought him condescending
I condemned him in silence.
I kept my distance.

He saw me distant,
he thought me indifferent.
He kept his distance
and then observed.

He perceived me unfriendly
then reproached me candidly.
And kept his distance.

But distance forsook us.
Distance was bridged.
Silence was breached,
Outlooks were changed.

I look closer
I see a foe no more.
I see a friend.

I look even closer
I feel a connection.
I find myself.

I find myself
but I am scared.
I thought I had been alone.

In solitude I'd been inured
then distance had me disowned.
Now I'd dared to cross the tightrope bridge
to myself from the unknown.

The rope has me grappling
I went by hand, not foot.
I'm falling.

From where I hang I look up
he went by foot, not hand.
He escapes the fall.

I contemplate the choices
I, against my own self.
I gaze at him, sure-footed
and I-

I let go.

Donna Dolorical

Saltine

Eyes closed
Dreams unfold
Chasing ashes
Taken for gold

Numb awakenings
Blinking away dust
And scraping away rust
Borne of saltine swillings

Donna Dolorical

Scarlet State

Look at me
flesh drying up,
curling upon itself.
Limbs and fingertips
decomposing into nothing
but skin and sticks.
Eyes closed,
I breathe in
the cold
the stale.
Willing the music
to seep in
and make me
soft and
light again.
But the breath
turns into heave,
and suddenly
I'm falling, falling.
Heavier than ever,
heavy with
inedible thoughts
and undigested emotions.
They rise, up and up.
Catching at my throat.
Crushing the residual
crystals of lucidity.
Till hairs turn into shards
stubbornly pricking
at my confused innards.
So I bleed, bleed.
Scarlet songs
and scarlet words.
Till all I can see
is one scarlet field
and a blade against the red

Donna Dolorical

Second Floor Landing

Sitting on the stairs
By the second floor landing
Waiting for those tears
To stop leaking
Don't worry, she's happy
Just desperately holding
Onto a spell that's slowly breaking

Standing by the door
At the second floor landing
Finding it hard to go in
'Cause that would be telling
But stay she can't
Or she'd end up drowning
In full view
Of anyone passing

Walking into the room
On the second floor landing
Darkness greets her,
The quierier slumbering
Heaving a sigh of relief
She plops down on the bed
Thinking and replaying
Cheery little things inside her head

Donna Dolorical

Skinless Longganisa

And the hearts I skin have only been
Those of whom I've ever really loved
Because when I was growing up
The princesses and the lions
All told me love was supposed to hurt.
But now that I know that nerves lie deep,
That hearts beat skinless, and can quietly bleed
Even now, the scrapers I cannot but wield.
They are upon my teeth, embedded
In the very words I speak, or more often unspeak
I hurl them unconsciously along with acts I commit
Or more often, omit; and they are upon the soles of my feet
Doing the skinning whenever I run or hide away
When with every dropp of blood I taste or tread on
The fear grows that perhaps I am designed to be alone

Donna Dolorical

Smile

If you read her poems, I wonder will you smile?
When you discover at last
how a world was built
and made to revolve around you
without your permission,
will you smile?

When you finally realize
that a heart was supposedly yours,
but was desperately kept out of your reach,
will you still smile?

Like a birthday cake deliberately covered with grass,
that you may not eat it.
Like a candle lit within a concrete box,
that you may not see its light.
Like a long-awaited letter of good tidings,
sealed, stamped, and sent to yellow in the attic.

Will you smile to see the verses you have inspired?
And to hear the carefully selected songs
sung behind closed doors?
Will you smile if you knew
how often you grace someone's dreams at night?
How many conversations with you
are carried on inside someone's mind?
Will you smile to hear the words put into your mouth?
Will you?

Or will you be disgusted at the waste,
at the selfishness that has withheld from you
that which is yours, by rights, by privilege?
that which you should have been made to feel,
that which you should have been showered with
when you perhaps needed it the most
and least expected to find it?

That which you had asked for
in that cryptic language of yours

that she never has been able to comprehend fully.
Will you smile if you found out
how much hurt you have unwittingly and unwillingly caused?
How much and how often tears were shed.
How much someone let you hurt herself without your permission.

Will you smile, I wonder?
Will you smile the smiles that she cannot smile?

Donna Dolorical

Stray

Upon my word, I swear, this is how it feels:

It feels as if an integral part of myself is out there floating,
God knows where, laughing or crying about god knows what,
All on its own, with no certainty of it ever coming back to me.

If it does not ever come back, it will all be my fault.

And if it does, I shall never be able to hold it, to reign in it;
and I would still be at fault.

Donna Dolorical

The Epic And Long-Overdue Breakdown

There is a pattern to it all.
A pattern to my deceitful and quiet anarchy
A code of sorts, but easily breakable
If only anyone is watching me closely-
A code, secret and unwilling.
A reluctant, nay, defiant call for help.

The ultimate reason I let no one close.
The ultimate reason I flee from watchful eyes.

Help, somebody.
Anybody.
Help me not.

It's a vicious and highly obvious circle,
This seasonal cycle of
Opening and closing
Of letting in and shutting out
Of engaging and disengaging
Anyone staying long enough would notice it
But then.
I don't.
I never stay long enough.

I am dysfunctional.
Self-contained and self-destructing.
Pathologic.
Sometimes I think I need to be locked away.
Just not yet.
Not while they're still living.

Perhaps someday.
When they're gone.
Once my debts start dying unpaid.
Then I'll lock myself away.

And no one will have to care.
No one would give a damn.
And my patterns wouldn't have to be encrypted

Anymore.

Donna Dolorical

The Root Of The Root

I'm still here,
Still hanging

It would take so much
More than this distance
To make me forget

But you need not feel me;
I am in hiding,
Forever in hiding

Honesty is an adversary
I have yet to learn
To contend with

Until I can face you maskless
Until I can look you eye-to-eye
Until I can speak carelessly
I will be in hiding

My truths are no such beauties,
They are ugly and weighty
And none need know of them,
Least of all you

Oh I long,
Believe you me,
I do
I do yearn to confide in you

But in the end
To what end?
Pity? Sympathy? Company?

Comfort I can offer
But comfort, I cannot receive
I am solitary, absolutely
Alone from the beginning
Alone till the end

The end:
Yes, I think of it,
Many times in fact
The lure of it is tantalizing

Revenge and Peace
All in one brave motion
Of a properly bladed hand

But in the end
Not yet
Not yet the end

And I am back where I started

Hanging by the crook
Of my left littlest finger,
The weakest appendage I have

I hang for all the wrong reasons
Hanging for all the wrong

I am the wrong seed
Sown in the wrong climate
And the wrong earth

Never watered on time
I bloomed late in all the wrong places
All at the wrong time

I stand proud
For all the wrong reasons
Stand burdened
By all the wrong fruits

And beneath my wronged shades
Await all the wrong mouths, hanging open

Donna Dolorical

Unroped

I let go and clamber back up,
Ready to tread once more-
this time by foot.

I fail.
I fall.

Over and over I try,
Only to fall yet again
Ending up by hand, pendent.

I hang here now
vulnerable, weak.
Exhausted by futility.

And I gaze at the tumultuous waters below.
Unbridled, yes
and yet, crystalline.

I can feel fear
Of its depths
Of the unknown
Of drowning in the deep unknown!

Unbidden though, I recall
The invigorating cold
Accompanying every plunge

A refreshing mitigation
For my weary soul
For my wearied hands

The deep unknown beckons to me.
I am drawn despite my fears.
Constantly dreading, distantly yearning-utter irony!

Donna Dolorical

Untitled

Those eyes
Those deep, intoxicating eyes
that hold so much, yet disclose too little

That laughter
That crystal, ringing laughter
welling up from within that beautiful soul

Those beats
Those pulsing beats of the fingertips
music seeping into my skin, into my very core
drowning my will in their lethal cadence

What bitter existence and
what sweet, sweet death for this tortured soul

With every smile or every laugh
with every echo of a beat
or every ruffle of the eyes
I trip on my own girds
and betray my own heart
Bit by bit, I fall apart
breaking into a million confused pieces

Donna Dolorical

Veneer

Her own madding crowd consists of two
Far from it is where she needs to be
But that simply will not do
For the daughter is no longer
And in her stead is a black hole
Unto which is said things never before uttered
Things that would otherwise consume a mother
Who, likewise, is no longer just a mother
Because, the black hole now finds,
The august father was only ever a father

Donna Dolorical

Wanna

We've come from home, come dine with us

I don't wanna

Come with me, watch me get cut

I don't wanna

Come and sing, bid us goodbye

I don't wanna

Pick up, answer me, answer me

I don't wanna

Help me,

Help me not

I don't wanna

Wanna, wanna

Donna Dolorical

Was This Not The Woman Who Swore She Was Untouchable?

Was this not the woman who swore she was untouchable?
Watch now, she drowns in the unabatable
And was it not a man who brought on the flood?
Look around now, he cannot be found
Unless you look into the smallest corners of words
Words oft written, at times spoken behind closed doors
Even then, though he be heard, he cannot be held
And though sharp, he knows not what he has unweld

Donna Dolorical

Watermark

Feeling helpless but duty-bound
You struggled to heave the world
Onto your shoulders
When the great ball kept rolling off
What happened, did the guilt do you in?

Ever the consummate artist
You dared not cheat nor lie to your audience
When putting on the inevitable mask
You made sure it was transparent
Now look where it got you
Only supposed to read the lines
But you deliberately lived it

With a voice gently compelling
Purity and naiveté so disarming
You used your greenstick wisdom
To keep people from faltering
But you faltered too, only you hid it so well
Alas, those around you, they forgot
You were just a child, you needed help as well

You lived hard, tired out too fast
From trying to make a difference
In a world lost in its decadence
Melodies and rhymes were a consolation
But that night nothing was sufficient
When the devil came knocking
He was dressed up in a little vial
You acquiesced, never hesitating
Things were tough, you so brittle

People now recall, the night you called
Saying you were having trouble
Keeping your head above water
Well, wish they could've done something
Too late now, you're done drowning

Waterway Crossing

The river flowed
Serenely at first
Then turbulently
Before finally drying up
Still, his effervescence,
Not his evanescence
Is what wells up in my memory
For his waters, running,
Unleashed a dam in my soul
That the words stuck within
Now rush forth unrelenting
A whole decade's worth of words
I never knew how to speak before
So I am grateful to the river
For tapping gently at my core
Yet sadder all the same
To realize, that beautiful river far away
Had to stop flowing
Before the one inside of me
Could start pouring out at will
Nevertheless, my river shall go on
It shan't be kept silent
It shan't be quieted by sorrow
Perhaps one day it'll flow,
As all rivers eventually do,
Straight into the great big ocean
Where the first river had gone on to
And when our waters meet
He would not know me
He would not realize his feat
He would not greet me like a sister
And even so, the crossing would be sweet

Donna Dolorical

You In Peace; I In Pieces

I'm sorry.

I didn't mean for us to end up like this.

I'm sorry that I never did tell you

the things that you should have heard straight from my lips

I'm sorry that I worshipped you from behind your back

and then smiled reservedly to your face

I'm sorry if I ever made you feel so bound or beholden;

I never wanted you to feel that way

The guitar, the late night talks,

and everything else, were all yours by rights

because the truth is: I am the one who owes so much to you

In fact I'm still not paid-

because I haven't yet paid with my pride, my candor

And I know -god, but don't I know- if I couldn't be honest with you,

then I forfeit all rights to keep you,

forfeit all rights to be your friend.

So goodbye, ok?

You are my ghost and I was yours,

But I am leaving you in peace now.

Donna Dolorical