

# The August Heartbreak Suite of Sorrow's Poems

*by* Heather Fowler

Tell Me Another One About the Pond

I am still angry,  
though I do not want to be,  
that I now continue to write  
love poems to the you,  
to the silvered fibers  
of your soul-- continue to weep--  
in the style of a sobbing  
willow, green, verdant,  
bent into

the water I feed,

(whose mass I create)  
which seems a lake below me,  
my reflection, a pool  
of tears spent for you,  
a storm's worth,  
a lake's weight,  
creating my own reflection--  
so I may see me still

in love with you,  
who is not present--

engender all self-

same ripples  
on my blurring water,  
confuse my  
standing order,  
with spills or  
self-perception,  
with my every stooping act

of new devotion.

---

Incontinence

What's the difference in another hour?  
A year will pass with little to no change.  
There you are in your imagination's ripped  
Stockings. There I am, mending them by stitch.

Do I kneel now, for your affection? Did I  
Ever? I regret your tears do not move me  
Nearly so much as your smiles. Crying is  
An art of which you have perfected

Your practice, involuntary participation, remediation,  
Yet should you smile, this is new, this is fresh—  
This is desired. I will know how you love me

By how you smile. Other women live always

In your tears, but they are not with me.  
And they are not this now.

---

### Shock Wakes Up the Heart

My heart hurts as I miss you here.  
This was your intention, I know.  
And nor is my reaction unique.

You train women this way,  
to love you and lose you  
this gracefully. I wish I had

just one presence of fist  
to partake in just one punch  
to your solar plexus,

to your nose,  
to your heart-- like  
spiking electronic

equipment

used in ambulances.

Technician: If you feel no pain,

why should I?

Why should I

place the paddles

so gently, my love,

like a trained professional

on Salvation Road,

saying: Are we clear? No?

Clear? (Hit him again.)

No? Thought not.

Flatlines-----playing borrowed time,

to the tune of your next widow's

atonal silent weep.

\* \* \*

No One Can

No one can convince us we are pretty  
when the object of our desires does not dote.

Commend us to your next of kin, spread the  
flesh feast of gorgeous on a laden viewer's table,

provide those who will follow our words like clocks,  
provide the admiration of strangers, the distraction

of afternoon comparison. One who wants can give  
and give and give--yet we seek that one soft word,

one telling glance, from the one who withholds  
or unmans us from our strapping selfhood,

whose neglect spurs such ranges of self-hatred or love.  
We live consumed by need for more. Or less.

Mutter: Yes. Please, please. Only to you  
do we listen: Fail to speak to us again.

\* \* \*

### On the Necessary Absence of Cake

Let's pretend for one moment  
that we don't want cake: white cake,  
yellow cake, red velvet cake, cake with  
carob or chips, cake in cups, cake in  
to-go boxes with cream-cheese frosting  
licked or saved on these hard edges of  
cardboard. What we want is bread and  
water, lukewarm water, stale bread,  
because then we can dream of cake  
without needing to possess it  
with habit. And if cake is like men,  
the bread will not fool us. And if manna is like

water, the love will not catch us, and if  
we get used to this cakeless, mannaless

situation for long enough, we can be  
free to decide cake does not exist, happy  
to go it alone, gumming the barely edible  
yeast, mixed hydrogen--because bread and  
water are not those addictive personalities  
we are--and our greed that can't be filled is the soul's  
impending cavity, piercing sinus near the brain.  
Tight forehead. Plaque to the heart.

I want no cake.  
I want no manna, no love.  
I want not to want these things long enough that  
I, balling my bread in small palatable pieces,  
forget full-well what they are  
or that I may taste in them  
some sweet difference.

This is the only way: Pass the irons.  
Pass the water. Pass no sugar.  
Pass, no exit. Pass my time  
as a mercy, then  
like the fondest baker  
in this prison's kitchen,

in this world,  
and for no reason,  
let me wear the bland  
uniform of unseen:  
Let me by you,  
delicately, while I sob-- love,  
let me pass.

---

All I Wanted

Was to stop being  
That sad girl  
With too much memory.  
Life obliged  
With repetitions  
Of crying shames  
In shapes of men.

Guess I should have listened  
To mother's endless  
Recitations: Can't squeeze  
Water  
From those rocks,  
Or granite  
From your sponge.

How did I go so wrong,  
Confusing  
Those wet things  
With hard things;  
Guess I'll never know  
What's what--with  
What. Ignore me.

I'm a savage with  
Want's hard desires,

Willing them soft  
Where will will  
Invariably fail--  
Some one heart's  
Impossible delusions.

---

### A Simple Second Singer Relates

No one else matters.  
Let's make that clear.  
From the night to the day  
There is simply one light  
Or one absence, yours—same from  
    The moon or the stars,  
The sun or your table lamp.  
How can it be so  
Ill-advisedly shut off  
As I miss you, in this  
    Warm dark curtain of  
Mental black? Yes, it is, Leonard  
Cohen, the cracks,  
The fissures,  
Where my light comes in,

Abundant where  
You are or have been. But you,  
Let's be honest,  
You are just singing  
Your generic love song

As I am weeping mine,



The post-traumatic dirge,  
Sent forth from numb  
Vocal chords, as your own  
benign accompaniment.

---

