

Something Special

Sometimes we stop the car wherever we are
and just sit and talk and waste away.
Tonight, you're wearing cheap lipstick,
but I like the way the 99-cent cosmetics
compliment your porcelain face.
I take the pack from the glove compartment
as we promise not to make it a habit,
and you produce a hidden flame
while cursing my empty pockets;
thank God – I'm always out of fire or ink
when I need them most.

Can't have the seats smell,
and rolling down the windows
of a parked car never works;
we ditch these wheels for shoes.
I still taste the casual cigarette
long after we've circled our high school
for the second time tonight.
Why don't we go for walks more often?
It could be special –
something we do every Sunday
instead of going to church.

The Homewrecker's Handbook by Justin Davis

the magician's secret

these are my friends: smoke and mirrors.
and you can bet this act is well-rehearsed;
not even mother's eye can see through
to the trap doors and rusty latches.
this blood is disguised as scarves and roses,
and, although these are clever sleeves,

i'm bound to run dry.

but there's the spotlight once again!
the Crowd is waiting ... impatiently ... waiting;
what's just one more Show?
with the flick of a switch,
they'll never know the man beneath the stage
from his reflection in the rafters ...

and mother never stops smiling.

The Homewrecker's Handbook by Justin Davis

Bad Habits

Teeth hidden behind
lips of a nervous mouth

rip skin and nail
from tender fingers;

a subtle pool
ebbs from the edges,

flowing downward
through the night.

The victimized hand
grasps the rim

of a tall glass
filled with golden bitterness.

The paper of cigarettes
is stained red,

and the empty crystal
becomes a makeshift ashtray.

Redhead

She is the chaos-party,
and she'll hold your dick
while you piss
just for a laugh,

and blood and beer
and spills and stains
and smoke and salt
and pills and pride

fill her
eyes.

One Helluva Celebration

The New Year is an hour old,
and we finish
the few cold beers
we have left.

Your sister has work
in the morning,
so she says goodnight
and heads downstairs.

We talk loosely, awkwardly,
about superheroes and school
and have moved on
to drinking warm beer.

New thoughts fly
through my fluid mind,
helping me
realize

there is never
a "right moment"
for us,
for this

situation.
I lean on
your shoulder,
urges building and boiling

until my veins are filled
with crimson steam.
The pressure pulses,
and I explode

like the thousands
of landmines
laid in empty streets
by lovers longing

for something more.
I press my lips
onto yours
mid-

The Homewrecker's Handbook by Justin Davis

sentence,
and we are
tongue tied.
I make sure to leave half

an hour
before your sister is up,
and she'll never know
you're the better kisser.

The Homewrecker's Handbook by Justin Davis

The Critic

I walk down the streets
of a bright city
with a pen in my pocket
and my heart in my hand.

A gray business building
rises from the corner,
just beyond the hotdog cart
manned by José.

I knock on a series of deaf doors,
and no one passing by
asks if they can help me
before going to make copies.

I almost give up hope
when suddenly a fat man
dressed in slacks and suspenders
answers with feigned interest.

He leads me into the office
by my green necktie,
and from behind a mahogany desk,
cushioned in the safety of a leather chair,

he tramples my dreams
without uncrossing his legs;
his thin lips are laced boots
with mother-of-pearl cleats.

The Woman Waiting for Words

This pile of pieces has no tongue;
it can't tell us what has lay in ruins
on the banks of a stream that ran
through the distant days of childhood.
But that doesn't matter –
you're here holding me close
on top of busted concrete,
giving me eyes that just beg
for my lips to break.
“It's a warm day for winter,” I say,
and I know these aren't the words
you've been waiting to hear. The sun
slowly sets behind trees turned
into starving arms, and lovers
stroll along paths cut into the hills,
hand in hand, in step, complete.
Still in sight, they sit and kiss like us,
but do they feel new beginnings
rising from scattered rocks?
Do they, too, lack blessings
from thinking with their chests?
“What color do you want it to be?” I ask,
and curiosity throws itself
upon you, lingering in
your furrowed brow, tracing
lengths of your wild hair.
“The minivan,” I say,
and don't I feel oh so clever
joking about commitment
and far-off years we couldn't begin
to imagine. But everything must start
somewhere, and later tonight
your ears will twitch in bliss
as the falling temperature
outside goes unnoticed
and we tangle ourselves together,
sweaty and spent, caught.

Tiny, Black Ants

They keep getting in

through cracks and holes
and spaces between lines:
these tiny, black ants.

They find their way
into my pockets,
into my poems.
Scavengers. Prying
motherfuckers crawling
up and over and in and out
of everything. I watch helplessly

as they deconstruct it all
and fall into rank-and-file,
marching away with my words,
my voice reduced to nothing.
I lay here,
stripped of my blood,
stripped of my bones,
bottled up
with their canned laughter;
and I can't stop them.

They keep getting in.

The Homewrecker's Handbook by Justin Davis

The Motel

Sixty some odd dollars
for a night's stay –
a pretty penny for privacy,
but it's a chance to feel

your skin.

The first key didn't work,
and neither did the next one;
what luck. The woman gave us
another room, one with a door

left wide open,

inviting in winter air
to freeze flowers
sewn into green sheets.
Then, sitting there, too cold to fuck,

we cursed that old bitch.

A Poem for the Public

I could tell you
about my dreams
in which my teeth
find new ways
of falling out
each night.

I could tell you
about these two
crazy sisters
I've kissed
and love
I've found.

I could tell you
about my conversations
with brick walls
at five in the morning
while pretending
to be a smoker.

I could tell you
about many things
that might entertain you,
but even if I filled in
every last space
with every little secret,
it wouldn't be enough.

You still wouldn't care.