

An abstract, high-contrast black and white image featuring a series of bright, diagonal light rays or lens flares that originate from the right side and fan out across a dark background. The rays create a sense of depth and movement, with some rays appearing sharper than others.

Paradox eyes

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Four into eight

the *silva* grail

POETS PREMISE

A middle aged man, having lived four of an expected eight decades, confronts his own emotional death. The inability to feel and experience as he did when younger. A mysterious, beautiful woman helps him rediscover the potential of life.

Four of eight decades rest in the past
So fortunate but how long can this last
I've romanced, loved and married
Living a life ever so harried

Raising a family, I've worked hard
A successful career achieved without fear
I've traveled the globe
Quenching the desire to probe
An unending river, I yearn to learn

I didn't seek to fail, yet when I did, there wasn't a wail
So much conflict, I could have done with less
I've hated and berated
Later feeling regret
I've stood painfully by as loved ones wait to die

I've known more than one vice
Yet four into eight I've not paid a high price

Most of all I've embraced hope and
A burning wish to leave behind
More smiles than frowns, I hope they find
My lifelong ploy is to bring more joy

Yet four into eight I see my fate
I burn bright and remain true to my dream
Yet things are no longer what they seem
Stripped of feeling
Have I reached the ceiling

Everything too familiar
Where is the adventure
Shriveling memories of a first kiss, holding hands
Never knowing where she stands

Remember staring longingly into each other's eyes
Wanting to know her thoughts, her lies

Stomach churns, heart aches, lips quiver
Yearning for experiences that once made me shiver

The thrill to compete
The challenge to overcome certain defeat

The adrenalin rush before a speech
Or in standing ready to teach
That biochemical cocktail streaming through a vein
I recall being addicted to this sort of pain

Feelings I no longer feel yet now I'm willing to steal
Four into eight and I fear it's too late

Sitting alone in a crowded Manhattan café
Mulling my plight with all my might

Late afternoon, entertaining and cheerful chatter
I check my watch, does anything matter
Another sip of green tea
Just moments before I flee
A withering hope the hot herbal tea will thaw the feelings
within me

There is but one open seat
I fantasize, hoping for a treat
She glides toward me, will I soon be free

Shocking beauty, commanding height
A less confident man would surely take flight

Mesmerized before hello
I wonder how she sees this fellow
Amber eyes framed by long locks of brown
Her face rarely darkened by a frown
Skin of olive, flaws fewer than light

She stands behind an energy
No less vast than an exploding nova
That brightens the path of everyone she's passed

The percussion of her presence is a welcome preamble
She is cool, distant and poised, well worth the gamble
A charming, confident and sovereign soul
Long and lean the *ultimum athleta* personifying self control
Not three into eight her abundant energy does captivate

Her name is Silva, a Balkan beauty
Sofia, Dubrovnik, Dubai and Jerusalem
Cape Town, Greece, London and New York
Her life epitomized by the metaphorical fork
She migrates west to become her best

Supremely confident, she has a plan
Inquisitive and independent, she is controlled by no man
Charming and beautiful, she can make her own way
Mysterious and elusive, its hard for her to stay

A long forgotten curiosity overcomes him
He longs to know more, yearning for her personal lore
She delays her trust, anticipation enhances his desire and lust

He's just four into eight mired in a mystifying debate
The Silva grail marks the trail enabling him to set sail
Oh, a good life, an honest life he may just derail
Her energy, beauty and zeal may allow him to feel
She's resurrected his yesterdays, yet how many tomorrow's
It's never too late, even four into eight

Четири в осем
Силва Граал

White suede wing tips

candy apple red laces

A young man leading a dull and lifeless life finds his personal change catalyst. In his case it's a small choice of stylish shoe that launches his personal transformation. This is a story of hope and messaging that each of us can be whomever we choose to be.

An ordinary young man in his twenties
Working by day, alone by night
Routine lulls him to feel forever serene

Never a new dream or fantasy
Living an obligation
Making his parents proud yet nothing causes him to become too loud

Drab clothes
Make him an easy target for his many foes
Friends don't know his name
Except for those who know him as Mr. Cello-phane

Multitudes cross his path yet all see right through
To ignore him is nothing new
He yearns for love yet learns the mundane
At times he cries in solitude, wailing profane

He's not funny
He can't dance
He wouldn't dare take a chance

Never a thought to take a risk
Fearing it may end with a police frisk

He has no vice
His purity will have to suffice
There is no vodka or casual sex
No gambling nor the audacity to bounce checks

Never a spontaneous trip or even a sarcastic quip
He won't even call in sick
His excuse could never be sufficiently slick
He's ever so wholesome which leaves him so lonesome

He won't smoke nor tell a funny a joke
When a gorgeous woman does pass
He wouldn't dare turn to check out her ass

He won't masturbate for fear of the guilt he would eventually subjugate
He's neither priest nor pastor
Not particularly religious or prodigious

His hair is straight and teeth are white
His clothes are neat yet invoke fright

He's not articulate nor original in thought
He's paralyzed by the fear of getting caught

Dull, lifeless and only in his twenties
He's nearly dead, living a life he would rather shed

Strolling in the Village heading east on Bank
Measuring his paces as if walking the plank
Now turning onto Bleeker, emotionally he's never felt meeker

A pause and a glance interrupts his trance
An unfamiliar energy encourages him to chance
In the shop window, white suede wing tips lure with magic
Spending his last dollar could be fatefully tragic

He dons the wing tips, they are so in vogue
Giving him an edge to become so rogue
Deliberately knotting the candy apple red laces
A surge of confidence he sees reflected in others faces

He strides through midtown, pacing toward Central Park
Noticing a difference in himself that's shockingly stark
His bold choice of shoe has led him to a personal breakthrough

Could it be that it was he
Living all this time without a shine
A living dead yet not a zombie
How could he have lived a life so glumly

He chooses not to look back with remorse
For today he has chosen an invigorating course

A simple catalyst thrust his status to protagonist
White suede wingtips with candy apple red laces
All his demons his new spirit chases

A small, seemingly innocuous purchase drains his sadness
Building fresh momentum, his fulcrum enabling brashness

Find your catalyst, small or large
And assume your role to take charge

For him it's white suede wing tips with candy apple red laces
For you, never surrender hope or eliminate its traces
You may find your trigger in the faces of unknown races

Don your white suede wing tips, gently kiss her lips, firmly grasp her hips then create a never ending stream of personal championships

White suede wing tips with *candy apple red laces*

Soldier Skye

POETS PREMISE

A truncated life story of my mother, who passed away recently and the agonizing decision we confronted to remove her from life support.

I am a soldier I cannot lie
I fight for our country, our way of life
I fight so others may never know strife

I don't engage in politics or seek to justify the public
rationale for our actions

I don't have the luxury to think too far ahead
For fear that while I may awaken, I would be dead

My focus is my mission, my brothers, my men
I think of them again and again
Those both alive and those now dead

When this is over I have hopes and fears
To be spared the jeers faced by my Vietnam war peers

Yet I worry my country will forget me in my time of
need
Leaving me too little even to feed
Or worse yet, left on its doorstep to bleed

I fight without question
I execute without suggestion
I fight to preserve American liberty and freedom
I'm a good soldier, a loyal soldier, an effective soldier
If I may, it is here I will stay

Yet at times I wish to run from the front lines
To flee when it feels as if I'm fighting only for me
I stuff those feelings deep under
And execute my next mission with shattering thunder

Ordered to secure a large city block
We leap into action with fear and shock
Feelings suppressed knowing we are the best

Missiles scream, shrapnel is seen searching for flesh
Automatic gunfire drums in my head filling me with
blood lust and dread

We advance, crouched chin nearly to knee
We are soldiers, no one thinks to flee
My brother takes a hit, ripping through his throat
His body jerks, pivots, slumping directly into me

Face to face, mouth near mouth
He expels his final breath, it's stale, just as I inhale
Taking in the final living part of him

On his last breath, I taste his death
I settle him gently to the ground then continue my mission,
feeling no contrition
I am Soldier Skye may god forgive and my country enable
me to live

I kill my fellow man, I readily admit
This is no cause to quit
I do so with a purpose I believe is right
For me, this justifies the fight

Yet in doing so we both must know
I act in partnership with my country
A battalion, regiment, platoon or squad – each determines
individual fate
But we are just men bound to each other and the American
state

I am Soldier Skye and I pray my country will not lie
Will America be there for me should I lose an eye
It is our contract
We both must comply

Don't forget me America when I return to your shore
Tell me America that for me there can be so much more

I have sacrificed for you and seen far too much gore
Now is your time America
To honor me and our brothers who are no more

I look to the sky in search of my lord
One who can provide me a crossing ford
When my end is near
I will approach hell's gate without fear

I trust I'll depart with pride
Believing my country could never have lied

But Soldier Skye is not one man
But all those who fight and die
All the faces, all the names
All the families who live in pain

Solider Skye is all that is right each time we fight
Right with our women
Right with our men
Right with our country

I can never die, for I am, Soldier Skye
I AM America

Naked at the bar

POETS PREMISE

A man whose dreams are invaded each night by a clouded image of a woman who seeks the meaning of their life together. Naked at the bar a euphemism for honesty

A woman not alone
Yet her world becomes progressively smaller
Cacooned involuntarily, she lives unhappily

She is my recurring dream
Each night a haunting theme

She's sitting naked at a bar
No one notices
It takes years for me to see
Everyone is naked but not in the literal way

Emotionally naked
Soul bare, vulnerable, yearning, wanting, asking
But for what
Do you know the answer
My lover, my wife, my friend

I awaken with a start
I feel her there, lying next to me
Sleeping comfortably
Her breasts press against me
Heaving gently
A furrow of anxiety emblazoned upon her brow

My eyes open wide with the realization
The angel in my recurring dream is you
My lover, my wife, my friend

She sleeps gently
I whisper softly
Why do you beckon me night after night
What do you seek, what is your plight

She sleeps yet reveals to me
Her purpose so that I too may see
She says to me without making a sound
Thoughts that rock me ever so profound

She says ... it's simple
It's your love
Yet so hard for you to render
Oh, if only our connection were more tender

I don't expect too much
But only that you know me
You appreciate me
You acknowledge what I bring to us
You honor me with your respect
Your time, your trust
Your energy and lust

Cherish me by participating, together
Praise me
Savor our brief time forever
For in a world's moment, we will both be gone

Our time is short, don't delay
We risk a withering love, I daresay

I too sit naked at the bar
If she were to ask me why, we won't stray too far
We can love the way we were meant to love
Naked at the bar

Youth n-Age-a

POETS PREMISE

A truncated life story of my mother, who passed away recently and the agonizing decision we confronted to remove her from life support.

A young dark haired girl playing jax upon a sidewalk
The Bronx, 1930's, oozing ethnicity and a strange sort of talk

Wrist cocked, jax spew, red ball bouncing, bouncing
If time stood still, we can see her rejoicing

What happens next is the only matter
No thought of anguish should Doris or Joyce choose to scatter

A young woman finds her man, her narrow purpose becomes clear
A family of four, suburbia, a job without a life, yet there is no fear

The tumultuous 60's see her blossom, wanting to flourish
Yet never discovering a path she could nourish

She enjoys friends, she gives love, she lives stress
Short of patience, delighting in ignorance, accepting of less

Yearning for more but with no clear vision
Accepting her destiny without derision

Her grandchildren revitalize, oh what treasure
Exceeding rewards felt from her own, by a measure

Years skip past, they never seem to last
Life advances at an increasing pace, carving long weary lines upon her face

In her son, she leaves a legacy of confidence, pride and hunger to achieve
All because it was her who did believe

She has earned our love
A gentle caress, never again to feel distress

As the end nears
Stripped of her dignity and her fears

She has our love, through any imperfection
At this moment of inflection, she should go
Each of us will pray, for your time is today
Youth n-Age-a

Jack Daniels and Mary Alice

POETS PREMISE

A sad story of addiction

Mary Alice loved her man, for him there was no bigger fan
There was nothing she didn't love about Jack
His shape, his taste, his smell
He swept her away like a bat outta hell
All of it made her warm, loose, even hot
He made her laugh with each shot
Joyful and happy when together, an impossible dream, an inseparable team

Her friends begged Mary Alice
They meant no malice
Leave him and leave soon
If you don't you may never see June

Mary Alice feels his passion, his allure, his attraction
On her knees, she looks up to him, she smiles coyly
Then guides Jack into her mouth
Deliberate and slow, swirling her tongue to savor his flavor

They found them both the next day because she let Jack stay
Dead on the couch, only heaven's pull could take her higher
Assaulted by the stench of whiskey wafting like smoke from fire
At once together and alone, Jack Daniels and Mary Alice

Becca's Beacon

POETS PREMISE

A beautiful young woman in search of her true purpose in life who's in desperate need of hope

I long for so much
Perhaps only a lovers compassionate touch
Yet, I cant seem to have any
I wish I understood why, even if it were only a lie

Insecure in my life's intention
Self doubt is the root of prevention
I don't deserve the happiness and peace others enjoy
I fear, to them, I've become only a toy
Submerging from the anchor of past abuse, experiences that are now my noose

Then sitting upon the hill one starry night
She sees a beacon from her lantern's light
It shines upon her choice
A bright light steering from all she's been fearing
Reborn before too forlorn

Empowered as never before
She will find her story achieving great glory
Surrounding herself with those who love her, discarding the rest
A new sense of clarity and purpose, forever guided anew
By Becca's beacon

Fedora party

POETS PREMISE

An impromptu party of young adults at their parents house

Impromptu gathering stuns with fun

Friends assemble one by one

Youthful energy oozes from the crowd

Youthful ignorance makes them loud

Adult supervision is all but lost

No one cares at what cost

Vodka flows freely to everyone's delight

Then a focal point comes to sight

Enter the fedora, donned by all

They appear suddenly without a call

A mood changer, the sexy fedora raises the noise

Young men cast as Bogart, their women Hepburn

Yesterday's forgotten, tomorrow's on hold

The moment is all that matters

To Fedora party mad-hatters

Eyes wide corpse

POETS PREMISE

A love story, the passing of a spouse, but their love is uninterrupted by death

Defying realness

Telling me still more

She's not what she appears to be, not now, not ever

Black, hollow portals to her self

I knew her

I loved her

I can still see her

Lying eyes wide on the white table

She still loves me

She will always star in my life's fable

In my purgatory of love, I will always remember her eyes
wide

Anguish I hope will subside

Eyes wide corpse

Blank white paper

POETS PREMISE

Dream of the possibilities to create and the risks, it all starts with nothing

Infinite hopefulness

An inspirational instrument

An artists canvas, the lawmakers device

And a lovers sentiment

So much to say, intimidated by its potential

Fearful to express my true self to you

Or to people exponential

Fear is a disease, a disease impeding me from being me

Blank white paper, a horrifying shrill to action

Blank white paper, a single teardrop of hope, let it all
begin

Summon the courage, others will follow

Blank white paper, let it begin

I'm bleeding right behind you

POETS PREMISE

A cry for help voiced in the midst of two lovers breaking up. A relationship in turmoil or perhaps the victim of an addiction pleading for help.

We've loved for so long
That can't ever change
My pain isn't obvious to you, I would never let it show
But clues I've left for you to know
I've tried but healing on my own, I'm just not that strong

I need you, I need you to see me
My shadow
My silhouette
Somehow you must know

Smile as I submerge and save me with a strong hand
Plant your feet so you make a strong stand

I'm right behind you
I'm bleeding right behind you
Won't you save me too?

Hyding from Jekyll

POETS PREMISE

The courage to embrace your changing self as we age and transform

There are multiple me's, all make me proud
Which one is dominant, I can't say very loud
My life is a stage, I'm so grateful
If done well, ever so tasteful
A stage to try, to fail and try again
To laugh and cry, oh what then

I'm not sick
I'm alive and learning me
Who I can be, how to be free
Why hyde from Jekyll?

I want to know Hyde, I wish he would come out
Moods, events, places and people each change me
I'm not one but many, my god I could shout
I see my future – Hyde no more! Jekyll I am

Blooming femme rose

POETS PREMISE

A tribute to women, their beauty, strength, complexity and compassion

Intricate folds open, exposing life nurturing moisture

Delicate, defying it's true gift

Strong, nurturing and life giving as a woman

Thorns deter those who would thief her nectar

A variety of rose's, blooming with life

The multiplicity of woman

Beautiful and elegant

An ear empathizes with others pain

Disarming vanity enables ideas to chain

Adoring with admiration

What is it like to be a she?

A blooming pink rose glowering in morning sun

Simple complexity admitting allure

A blooming, dew moistened yellow rose

Drinking sunshine, projecting enviable femininity

Blooming femme rose

Fame is futile

POETS PREMISE

Fame as a goal is meaningless and won't provide the fulfillment one perceives

Fame, a youthful affliction
Expecting so many to be a friend
An end-game with a surprisingly dead-end
Fool-hardy aspirations
Often lead to desperations
Once achieved, fame is futile

Legacies of impropriety
Identities so false
Accomplishments ring hollow
And those friends, they only bring me sorrow

Change your ambition
But there's no need for contrition
Every day, give others yourself, make them smile
Or beware, *fame is futile*

A forest of friends

POETS PREMISE

A shot at social media and its limitations in providing true, lasting connections among people

No depth, no intimacy

Some I don't really know

Quite often, I'm left feeling nothing but very low

Too many to influence

Too many to enjoy

Is this real or merely a toy?

Energy spent to find the next one, then again

And again

Disillusioned and lonely my life is too open

My visual storyboard, a modern cry for the love I hoped to have won

But a forest of friends have left me with none

None but *a barren forest of friends*

Your warmth is getting hot

POETS PREMISE

A relationship where one partner is particularly troubled and prone to disappointing. Forgiveness being their keystone for lasting love.

I've failed you

More than once

Should I continue to disappoint

I surely won't be the one you anoint

Your annoyance escalates to anger

Failing to change I risk being a stranger

I feel your heat on the morrow

And return in kind with such sorrow

Can you forgive, again, and again

And forever

A higher love nestled in your grace

Yet of it, I have no trace

Forgiveness is the fount of your stunning allure

Your compassion exceeds any love I've known before

Because of it, we survive

Coexisting, your anger and your love

Even more pure than the white dove

Your warmth is getting hot

Immune to the scorpion

POETS PREMISE

The lethal scorpion as metaphor for life's tough blows – even if all seems lost, therein lies an opportunity for growth, unknown outcomes. This is a story of hope.

Life will scar you with its barbs

Or cripple you with worse

Is there only one outcome when the scorpion strikes

No conclusion is foregone

You have choices to make

Mere survival is but a start

Summon your innovation

Call upon your strength to feed your motivation

To overcome

To learn

To grow

Achieve this

And you will have lived

Immune to the scorpion

Whiplash world

POETS PREMISE

Technology is having a wide ranging impact on our lives. Some good, some not.

Poets sing a tribal song perched at fire's edge
Matriarchs cook while her men tend to farm
Callouses and gnarled knuckles reveal the day
Dawn brings industrial revolution to quicken our way

Everything changes
But what of us?
Speed of light society outpacing evolution
We *can* keep up but unrest hints of revolution
Exhausted and thrilled
Entertained by too much
Productivity expectations that just may have killed

Look up, look around, look ahead
You won't be found
It's a whiplash world
Look to the past for peace
Only there, is tomorrow's remedy
A remedy to survive in a *Whiplash World*

Dead foe regret

POETS PREMISE

An adversary in the professional sense dies, revealing how meaningless your dispute had been

Our path's often cross

You desire advancement at all cost

For it you earn my scorn

It's hard to see how I'll become torn

Unfortunate circumstances enable your attack

Wounded not fatally a foe I beget

A colleague

A partner

An adversary I can't forget

You fall ill while still in your prime

I feel nothing

When you died a sorrowful death

You found peace

For me

Dead foe regret

Effectus vox est renumerator

(doing right is the reward)

POETS PREMISE

Doing right is the reward. Altruism and doing right by our fellow man

What compensation do you require

What payment quenches your desire

Your basic needs met

Your wants no longer burn afire

What next

You or your brother

How do you choose, yourself or another

Whose interests are first

Selfish or altruistic

If only our domain were so simplistic

A higher purpose tomorrow we grow

I choose my brother

So I know

Effectus vox est renumerator

Doing right is my reward

Barking bird

POETS PREMISE

It's OK to be different. In some way, we all are.

I stand awkward and unsure
So different from the rest
Unaccepted and rifled with ridicule
Uncomfortable yet hoping to conform
A fate that feels so wrong
Fighting the urge without intent

My tribe will love me if only I could find
Be true to myself to burst through
Realize my destiny and prove to be great
Never look back but only within
Be different without fear for its my fate

There are no barking birds
Unless I choose to be first
I choose
My barking bird

Bloodlust revenge

POETS PREMISE

The animal savagery hidden within us emerges when a man loses his love

They enter in silence, moving with stealth
Oh, if only all they want is my wealth
So many possessions they could have taken
Yet they chose the one for which I am ever forsaken

Up the stairs to our bed room
Their rifle cocked foreboding the boom
She died instantly, taken so quickly
I bathed in her blood before I felt sickly
My love had died and so had I

Another man I became, I didn't understand how
Awoken when they took her, I knew what I must do now
I leaped to action with face contorted, time passing yet so distorted
Armed only with hate, the intruders quickly knew their fate
Hate so fierce it had voice, leaving them with no choice

I disarmed them, breaking limbs
Turning their weapon to exact my revenge
Hollow and inadequate yet it was done
I stood, chest heaving, tears streaming, knowing no peace, but only
Bloodlust revenge

Misunderstood eagle

POETS PREMISE

The eagle and his positive attributes as a metaphor for the human condition

Alone, steeled with pride and beautiful
A predator embracing solitude
A simple life punctuated by strength and fortitude

He cant be us, we need too much

Emulate his strength
Mirror his focus
Value his independence
Does he yearn for more, is he us?

(photo idea = two eagles, together, nuzzling)