

“J”

Metaphors are the
combustion engine of the universe,
creating flames
visible to you and I.

J,
when I looked at you,
endorphins
mobilized and freefallen
down my spine.
They scattered
through my veins,
scratched off my rust
and engulfed me.

J,
your smile, oh
your smile! was
a sun rising behind
a mountain,

peeking
from behind the crestline,
then,
erupting into a brilliant grin,
coating your teeth
in gold.

J,
when we laid under the stars
and picked apart
the muscle of our minds,
whispering
our truths
into the air,
I could close my eyes
without fearing my dark.

In that moment,
we did not have to look
at one another.

I gave myself up but
gained a part of you.

And yet....

when the last ray of your smile
slipped into the blue horizon
after that *damn* disclosure,
your ocean
pulled back from my shore.

Slowly,

time rose to a high tide each day,
eyes missed calls,
“I forgot to...”
“I am sorry about...”
and apology after apology
lead to your love reeking
of abandoned honesty.

With plans to study on the west coast
and you, to work in the east,
time sharpened into a blade

that inched closer
and closer
to our hands.

Before time could cut
through our fingers -
stain us -
you grabbed the blade.

Your blood spit
on our wrists,
yet,
I was the only
one who screamed.

Memory is a flame,
strengthening or charring
the chains we hold in our hands.
The smoke from these chains
lingers in my lungs.

Sometimes,

all I want
is to smoke cigarettes,
hoping to feel you
in the burn.

This is why
when these final words
slip from me,
they are no longer
jagged at the edge,
they are no longer
stained in dilapidated red,
no longer
held in a travailing breath,
no longer
a remission to us.

Justin,
I loved you.