

**Heartbreak Tales From a Godless Rapture**  
By Xora Odelle

## Table of Contents

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<b>The Bitch Who Goes Boom</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>A Poetic Break</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Moonlight Ponderings on Hope Street</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>An Ode to It All</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>A Case of the Young/Old Blues</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>“Yearning for Your Love” - The Gap Band</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Overindulgence</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Confessions of a Heart Broken</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Bread</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Untitled</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Mommy, Can We</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>The Flames are Sweet Like Candy in Hell</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>San Francisco</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Motherful</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A Global Crisis in Love</b>	<b>24</b>

## **The Bitch Who Goes Boom**

Where do thunderstorms go  
When they die?  
When the storms blows away,  
Where does it go?

After I have wrecked my havoc,  
After I have scared those with my booming presence,  
I think I'll make myself a nice tea  
And slide into a bath full of oils.

When I have given those who need rain  
A nice shower, so they say  
"We needed this.  
Thank you!"

When my winds have cooled and destroyed,  
I will have myself a drink and an American Spirit,  
I'll listen to Enya and Miles Davis  
And I'll touch myself to their whimsy.

I'll roll a joint and say adieu  
To my usual stifling paranoia.  
For when my storm is over,  
It'll be done,  
Done, done.

And I will be dirt, waiting for the  
New storm  
To quench my thirst.

## A Poetic Break

Today, after work, I walked to the river.  
I'm not sure what I was searching for.  
I think I found a moment of calm  
That was lost when your name appeared  
Like that fatal comet.  
I saw other things too, all the things that poets and lovers see:  
Glorious birds diving into murky water,  
Diamond ripples that reminded me how  
My blood flows.  
Towards the heart and then away.  
A wet log that fought to stay still and lost  
Against the flow of water.  
A butterfly passed and I thought of  
Childhood.  
Of my Grandmother and her smile  
And how she used to hold me.

I am sleeping with a boy  
Who thinks to speak of the past  
Is to give himself away.  
Like you.  
Like all of us.  
When you left and my soul sank to my soles and then to Hell  
I thought you had taken a lifetime of progress with you  
Because you had.  
I cried after I came to that one picture of you.  
I called you too many times.

The butterfly is gone.  
The water still glistens  
Praising a God I hope to know one day.  
And love like matter  
Is never really lost  
Just changed.  
So I will not repeat the old adage,  
"Than to never have at all."

I will carry my love for you in my bag.

I will get on the bus.  
I will arrive home.  
I will carefully unwrap it - my love -  
Hold it in my mouth until it turns bitter.  
Fold to my knees  
And cry out to the spirits.  
Hope they hold me like you used to.  
And ask them why love can never be as  
Simple  
As a poem.

Xora Odelle Original

## **Moonlight Ponderings on Hope Street**

You drink Guinness  
Like my mother.  
You slur your words  
When you tell me you love me.  
I drink the rest.

A group of women  
Trade sex stories and laugh  
As your trembling fingers  
Paint your desire  
On me.

It is the blue of your veins  
And the silver of your eye  
Glazed with the kind of  
Pale you turn right before  
You go and say, "You know  
I don't want to, right?"

You almost connect to a  
Part of me that tightens.  
I squeeze your hand to escape.  
I say things I don't believe.  
"It all happens as it should."

Someone exclaims, "I've said it before and I'll say it again."  
The sign behind you spells Hope St. I can  
Just make it out.  
I smirk.  
You raise your eyebrows.  
I shake my head.  
You kiss my hand.  
I think  
Maybe...

I do tough math in gentle moonlight.  
How lonely you are plus  
How lonely I am plus

The drinks we've had -  
How many drinks have we had?  
I subtract the spices you  
Put in the oatmeal you make me  
Then double it by the distance between  
Your place and mines.  
I multiply exponentially by the antipsychotics  
I take daily,  
And then place it all over this moment -  
Our eyes doing a frantic  
Dance with each other.

It is all wrong.  
There is a variable missing.

When I stumble pass  
Hope Street  
You steady me with an unnaturally graceful movement.

I whisper in your  
Mouth that I only believe in  
God when the moon is bright.  
I loosen.

We loose ourselves in the despair of could and won't be's.  
A metacognitive want - void.  
I tell you  
Without certainty

I'm yours

## **An Ode to It All**

The air is still and  
Sticky today. I feel like a  
Fool, and yet, I'm  
Ready. Foolish.

I am swimming through a  
Sea of unique, humid  
Moments which I could not  
Differentiate between even if  
Heaven was nothing more than looking back  
Into all that was which is all there is.

Nothing  
But a constant

Desire to get just  
A glimmer of  
Why leaves and branches  
Dance magic in  
Every  
Summer  
Breeze.

And why this  
Biblical knowledge and crucial  
Memory has been tucked  
Deep within the folds of  
Me for  
Too long. Only to be  
Roused in this millisecond. Already  
Gone

Forever.

Every instant dripping  
Dripping in a bitter-sweet  
Goo - since the very  
First bang. Before



Chaos made sacred vows  
To us. To you. To be  
Bound to the dust of  
Our bones. To erect essence  
From the universal womb of gloom  
For better and for worse.

For this summer afternoon,  
Rightfully ripe  
Justifiably rife  
with mortifying confusion  
Overwhelming terror and  
Lust so grand the  
Strings of the Universe  
Expand and expose  
Thinner threads  
Maturing into a vessel  
More permeable to it all.  
An endless struggle

To the boggling contradiction  
Of Now. Finites metamorphing  
Into infinites and to finites again and  
Again. In our cursed  
Rhythms - brutal tempo of molecules  
Slamming into each other with  
Primal pleasure. My greatest  
Sadistic secret!

I confess with every ounce  
Of humility: I want to own  
This! I want to carve my spirit  
Here, and cut out a  
Piece of this animal sanctuary  
And cage it  
Like it has done to me.  
I do not want to repent this  
Sin. I dream to  
Take shameless wonder in  
Dragging it into my personal

Abyss

But in my corner of  
The Galaxy. Dreams are only  
To be dreamed.  
And moments  
Continually lost  
So let me submit  
To the ancient traditions -  
Forces of being -  
And simply exist.

Like the breeze  
Within it all.  
For I have stumbled into  
The luxury to be  
The fool today  
And pretend in  
These fleeting fragments  
of Life that right  
Now, right now,  
Right  
Now  
Is all there is  
To it.  
To it!  
For now...

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## **A Case of the Young/Old Blues**

My insecurities fluster like  
Adolescent acne  
Ruining that which once was  
Pure

Driving me to ponder  
What is love without doubt  
???  
Is it only  
Twisted within the themes of  
Fairytale

To look at the other and see  
The self  
Must feel more like love  
Than when I stand before  
A mirror

Must feel more like suckling  
And less like insanity

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**“Yearning for Your Love” - The Gap Band**

I yearn to be yours  
It is a migraine between my eyes  
Leading me to kneel at your feet

Lift me up  
Kiss my dirty mouth  
That wants too much  
And says too little

Your skin stays on my tongue and  
Screams a disco of devotion  
That only I can hear

I don't dare swallow nor  
Spit

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## **Overindulgence**

Sometimes, I make myself a Hot Fudge Sundae.  
And for my Mother,  
I eat it like no one is watching.

Sticky on my fingers.  
Sticky around my mouth.

I savor all the sweetness I can get from it.  
And don't you dare say a damn thing!

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## Confessions of a Heart Broken

Some days  
I do not cry  
All alone in my apartment.

I wrap my mind  
In a cling wrap of suffering.  
I laugh because it is  
All I can think to do.

I have cried so much.  
I have cried for you reader,  
I really have,  
So desperate you've turned to  
Poetry

Oh god!

I cry for you still.  
And, forgive me, I do laugh.  
Will you join me?  
Sometimes it is all you can do.

When words feel realer  
Than the Real world,  
All you can do is look around  
And laugh.  
A broken laugh  
For a broken heart.

## Bread

Bread making is a tedious process,  
but I gather  
eggs  
flour  
yeast  
measure each ingredient exact  
I cut out my larynx  
and a bit of the lung  
Just like granny said  
Knead it until smooth  
Watch it Rise  
Bread making is about patience  
It's about the body  
The pain of cutting yourself open  
Sweetened with vanilla  
Like Jesus  
I turned my body into bread  
Made myself available for consumption  
How D'vine?

Would've turned my blood into wine, but I  
did not want to commit the sin of greed  
And besides underneath the sweet aroma  
the tannins are Too bitter

I was satisfied with Bread  
Although it can be hard to swallow  
alone

But the sweetness and warmth  
of the moist bread  
glided smoothly  
down throat with  
larynx attached  
The vanilla overpowered every trace of my Body

the sweat that dripped as I kneaded until  
my arms went limp

How sweetly can something taste without  
sweat? I'll never know  
Maybe I didn't put enough in  
Maybe liver and kidney were also required  
Maybe I just have to wait  
Bread making *is* about patience  
Maybe it is needed even after the bread is gone  
Bread making is such. a tedious. process.

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## Untitled

before, she wasn't that innocent  
    she was stashing sin in her coat.  
when her mother wanted one last  
    moment to hold a little girl.  
after, not much changed. She was still  
    her. Only, slightly underwhelmed.

the first time she was raped  
    the cab driver picked her up  
    for free. "Habesha?" he asked  
    "Yes, Ethiopia"  
    "We have the same face"

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## Mommy, Can We

Go on a walk where every step we lose ourselves  
Until there's almost nothing left. And the concrete that separates me from you  
Blasts off into another dimension, so that all is left is us.

Can we make believe like we used to? Playing with those silly  
Figurines. The black girl with braids in her hair reading a book next to an orange cat was  
My favorite.

I thought she was me.

I thought you were me

Can we go back before mirrors?  
Before reflections and reality blended together into a beige hell  
Remember when the moon followed us because we were royalty  
Protected us from fires and bullets and cold motel rooms  
The moon's reflected light keeping us safe, if only through the night.

I look up to the moon to try and find myself  
But it's a man on the moon  
Always a man reflecting back.  
Isn't it *always* a man? staring back.  
Can we go back before  
men's eyes were the only way to look, were the  
only place to look?  
Before men were?  
Does it exist? A time for us?

You do not believe in an afterlife, but can we believe in Before.  
Can we soar back to Before?  
In Before, we could, or would, or did  
Screamed and forget.  
We will Loosened  
Up the jaw and loosened up our minds  
To sweet potato kisses,  
To a hot chocolate kind of love

Outside of this world  
Outside of the physical

Outside of ourselves  
Can we be me?  
Can we be us?  
Can we? Will we? Did we?  
Ever be free?

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## **The Flames are Sweet Like Candy in Hell**

I would call our love  
A phoenix  
But it is your love,  
Steady and unscathed,  
Which rises out of the  
Ashes I burned.

Was my fire a test?  
I wanted this life to fit  
Within the palm of my mind  
So I could make sense  
And my suffering justified.  
I sought to ruin any excess.

My hand has never  
Been as steady as your love.  
I trimmed the meat;  
I kept the fat.

I take off the clown mask,  
Though it is your favorite,  
To say to anyone who'll listen  
I was wrong.  
Make no mistake. I was wrong.

Treaded pristine roads  
Of Masturbatory loathing.  
Broke bread with those  
Who reeked of the same sickly scent  
Those trees that bloom in July.  
I ask for forgiveness.

You know  
I straddle contradictions with grace  
You know I am  
Whore, bitch, cruel, resentful,  
Forgiving, nurturing, kind, innocent  
You know every reflection is true

How do I thank you?  
How do I give all of myself to you  
And make it easier on your  
Spirit?

And you respond with,  
“Don’t you dare dull yourself,  
File yourself down.  
At least not in my name,  
At least not for love!  
Come with knives, nails,  
And tongue  
Sharp.  
Make sure your weapons are  
Drawn.  
We are survivors  
After all.”

And we are  
Survivors, jokers,  
Lovers, villains.  
We are.

And there is always  
Something more to love  
Be it misery or death.  
We will burn together  
Laughing at painful cliches.  
Shouting, “We were here!”

We lived  
We cursed  
We danced  
We fucked  
We loved  
And we will mock the smell of  
Flames on flesh  
With girlish delight!  
We are survivors after all.

## San Francisco

Earthquakes used to scare me.  
Always a possibility  
Looming, looming, looming  
over Every moment.  
I used to long for  
Hurricane Season.  
I thought forewarning  
would give comfort,  
But now Northern California is the only place  
I feel safe.  
I never imagined  
surprise  
could feel like like cool fog  
on a hot day,  
That shock  
could feel like a lover's embrace.  
A *lack* of anticipation is now  
the only thing  
that makes me cum.

Let me sink into the Pacific  
with one.  
sudden.  
shake.  
Lack of oxygen  
like lack of anticipation.  
Please, Goddess, Please  
Let me have that.  
That easy Afternoon Dream,  
Earthquake weather tingeing the breeze.

## Motherful

I was born in a heat wave.  
Either too late or too early, doesn't matter  
Too somethin'!  
Mama walked all the way to the hospital by herself.  
I was born gray. Gray like indistinguishable.  
gray  
gray like fog  
gray like black and white  
gray like house niggers and field niggers  
gray like mas'r  
I was gray wrapped in blue  
gray and blue  
Y'know like what are you?  
"It's a girl!"  
Made all my mother's knitting mute  
Girl to Girl to Girl to Girl  
We were born for generations  
light skinned  
dark skinned  
Skin that hold secrets  
Skin that hold sins  
I was born the color of fear.  
Boy, were they scared.  
Told it was only skin deep,  
But fear is hereditary-  
In the blood.  
That's why bleach could never kill it.  
Why it jumps from womb to womb  
It was always in our blood  
That's why we were all born in heat  
Why we all exist in heat  
Why we were always  
Too somethin'.

## **A Global Crisis in Love**

I do not want to die.  
I just want to become soil-  
Something sturdy enough to hold the world.

I can't even hold myself,  
And I fear I am leaving a trail of broken pieces behind  
Like a scavenger hunt of horror.

I am sorry,  
Though I know there are those who will never believe me,  
I am sorry for what I've done.

But I do not apologize for who I was,  
For I have always been my mother's daughter  
I have always been scared and  
I have always been hungry for love like a zombie for flesh  
And bits of me have always fallen to the ground.

My only comfort: that my body will soon  
Hold the rot of others  
And make earth of their sins.  
Because this is real life.  
Perfection has never even been whispered  
By this universe.

So while you refuse,  
I will forgive myself, and  
While I'm up there,  
I will forgive you too,  
While we're still alive.