

Animal

You know me by the animal I am
howling at the empty wind,
pissing lines in the sand

You know me by the reptile in my brain
who smells a fight and takes the wheel
his anger my fence, his fear my chain

When there are jobless beasts, tunneling 'neath the walls from the south
Godless birds, here to topple all our angels from the clouds
And the snakes in the yard will rise up and strike anyday
C'mon animal, are you predator or prey?

You know me by the dog I am
barking like hell, someone at the door
biting if they dare reach out their hand

You know me by the raging bull within
Behind every screen there's a red cape dangling
I charge, bleed, feed on adrenaline

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Intuition

Another man up in the pulpit, in the statehouse, head of the table
Got a fat pen, scratching egos, talking too loud
Externalize every outcome, every warm gun, every profit
kneeling down to the flashing numbers, the nasdaq, cold contracts
running backwards to just keep moving, just keep moving, just keep moving
unlearning every lesson that our mothers tried to teach us

Putting food out on the table with a straight face
Knowing damn well there's a war being waged back at the workplace

Everyday on your paycheck, your volume, your confidence
Against the idea, of your own body being put into your own hands
So please don't hold it, please don't hold it, please don't hold it back
Threaten em with the power, straight logic, of compassion

what we need now
ain't that old religion
Or the cold hard facts.
Just need a woman's intuition
To get us on track

Stepping out of the shadow of a false man's allegory
slowly erasing that old violence from the story
recoupling emotion, slower motion, to intelligence
granting every planter, healer, teacher, feeler, new relevance

what we need now
ain't more religion
Or the cold hard facts,
Just a woman's intuition
To get us on track

Dime by Dime

I'm pulling aces from the ether, pushing hits through the speakers,
got the new shoes from the sponsors, dreaming bigger than my father did
join a start up in the valley, shoot photos for a magazine,
design a virus of the day, watch the advertisers come to play
my content is currency, merchandise your deepest fantasy,
tonight it's all fiction, babe, but in the morning it's on your screen

Dime by dime, making do with hands and spine was a waste of time
talk about a long way to die.

I'm a hot knife through the static, a new game for the addicts,
sell ya back bits of your attention, spoon fed in suspension
deliver the world straight to your doorstep,
one click, turn your debts to assets,
skim a bit off the top, of whatever cream I cross
cut split seconds off your purchase, confusing what your worth is

a freelancer, the fastest answer,
the internet sensation, the repeat, repeat on the station.

Dime by dime, making do with hands and spine, was a waste of time.
talk about a long way to die.

Man of God

I'm a man, a man of god
a god-loving man
show me where answers lie
lord, take me by the hand
shed a light, I'll follow
break the night, I'll follow
peel the dark off the land

Into the wood, the deep, deep woods
one match for a light
"Son, those trees, dirt and wild things
only tempt the backward, tempt the lazy eye
their gardens are unkept
they dream in circles, not straight ahead
don't stray from the flame"

Into the canyon
now a candle for a light
"mind not the stories on the walls
carved by the water, the dogged hands of time.
I'm the one who made this
and could just as easily erase this
better hurry, son, the wax is getting tired"

Up onto the mountain, amid a starry night
pupils unlock as the world unravels fast and wide
just to retreat and disappear as I raise my lantern high

Into the library
my single light goes out
through the dust and dark

the stirs and sparks of dried ink, begin to shout
of ghost forests long depleted
of ghost people long defeated
of history begging to be read aloud

But I'm a moth to the blazing back door
That lets me out..

into a room of colored glass and chandeliers
hymns from the choir, weaving through my ears
I'm gonna trust you with this blindness
Just promise to keep me near

Shadow Songs

Don't let me pretend for a minute now
that these songs would've flown up on their own somehow
Don't let me pretend, I've seen enough to know
that a good seed in poor ground won't grow

You can string words like pearls on a pages of your mind
sing sweeter than any sparrow can, dream taller than the pines
But without a guide up the mounatin, to where the jet stream blows
a good song wont carry far from home

Point the light and cameras at less lucky men
The next blank canvas is for an unseen child
Pass the mic down to a countryless woman
singing softly in the shadows

Born with guitars and songbooks on the nursery floor
change in my pocket and a voice in the choir
One young man's daydreams were my mere fruits of the earth
Stumbling on stage, I mistook for proof of my worth

Now I'm standing here not knowing whose spotlight I stole
whose airwaves I'm riding, what dice I did role
what wilder poets are out there with a handful of seed
in a desert of poverty

Point the light and cameras at less lucky men
The next blank canvass is for an unseen child
Pass the mic down to a countryless woman
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Mind Made Up

C'mon, take a picture of me smiling, to show tomorrow I'm fine
I'm trying to ride the long wave up
But every ripple on the way is a fistfull of dynamite

I'm making lists and checking things off em
I'm dreaming deams and living em one by one
Reaching horizons, self-accualizing
But one bad show and I'm down with the sinking sun

How do you get with the good changes
when your mind is made up of rubberbands?
Like a past self turning the pages, saying:
You're never gonna be a happy man

I thought I was just reflecting my surroundings
the friends, scenery, sounds spinning round me
one by one, I changed em all out
somehow shed every cell in my body, but kept every doubt

Dark matter buried deep in my brain
send down a root just to watch it snap back in my face
a zero sum track on repeat in my head
I'm watching the tidal zone of dopamine falling and rising again

Because my mind is made up of rubberbands
Like a past self turning the pages saying:
You're never gonna be a happy man
How do you get with the good changes
When your mind is made up of rubberbands?
Like a past self turning the pages

Cave

Our minds strained and shook, threw aside the good book
And fled out from beneath the steeple
No longer held fast by fantasies of riding in the clouds
With those long gone people

We scaled that holy wall, ran a short while
just to crawl into a cave
perhaps darker than that from which we came.
hung a light and gave it a name

There were voices within, a new brethren
found each other by the least winding path
Telling tales of escape, the dawning of a new ape
a vaccum in the aftermath
Now the glow from our devices cast shadows on the stone
spinning stories from negative spaces
At least those stainged glass windows had let in light enough
to see the lines in each others' faces

Our chamber did swell with different versions of ourselves
Chanting and growing drunk on the echoes
Bound not by truer form to love,
but rather by that which we let go

C'mon you free-thinkers
we can build something better
this place need not spin any fables

If there's food enough to share
Roads enough to get there
An answer might just show up at the table

High Ground

Heading for a high ground, just me and my baby
A cool five dollars is the last of this payday
Got our minds set on the county fair
Take the ferris wheel up and out of the city air

High above the tangled smoke stacks and power lines

the blighted corn fields and beetle-killed pines
High above the the sea wall in its crumbling glory
We're safe up here higher than the highest story

Throwing popcorn at the bankers in their luxury suites
With their air conditioning and diamonds in their drinks

The flames are climbing higher, lord, and so is the tide
Even the crows are heading north, they got that hell in their eyes
Dogs barking and fighting over some floating fish bone
Down in the quarry, on the brackish foam

What's a man to do with a good week's pay?
I hear the cotton candy kid is pushing bootlegged whiskey
Only fools stash cash in their floorboards
Politics been bought, futures been sold...

At least the band's final number is a four on the floor
Dance with me baby, it might be the end of the world

Wilson's Warbler

Wilson took the long way home again
through a hole in the fence where the river bends
He's scanning for waxwings, where the willow meets the sky
Field notes in hand and ears wide open

He yearns for their secrets and for them to know his
of the mayfly hatching, where the spiders live
just to sit twelve friends long on a powerline
where man's mean and whimsy ways are just a buzz in the night

oh, to have been born on the wing
if only these small hands were claws
slow tongue a beak
and unsure words, bright singing

He learns to sidestep the sidewalks, keep off the streets
where the crows and the cowbirds prey on the meek
Myopic and hungry, using devices

and speaking at volumes that scare him

He hates them for the cool and easy way in which they move
through a shapeshifting world, rewriting the rules
masters of both the concrete and pine
his refuge made small, small and undefined

oh, to have been born on the wing
if only these small hands were claws
slow tongue a beak
and unsure words, bright singing

On the way to school, in the safety of the wood
black shapes descend upon him, up to no good
He veers toward a thicket, on hands and knees
scraping skin, sweating, begging please

He keeps dead still and silent, evading their eye
when a brush on the shoulder nearly gives him a cry
it's just a small yellow songbird, perch by his ear
"Follow me Wilson" it sings, "we'll get you out of here"

They climb to a tall perch, newly embolded
The sun barely up, the sky barely golden
So a stranger might see in the first light of day
Two Wilsons Warblers flying high and away

Dream of a Child

I'm counting on days when the whiskers on my chin
Come in greyer by the dozen, am I worn out or just worn in
Thank goodness I can count on an easy kind of lovin, in this house tonight

Counting on days when these daydreams take another step toward death
When they're reborn inside kids 10 years younger, full of hunger and unrest
Thank goodness I can count on your easy breath, the follow through the
night

I've got a steady hand, but you know my mind often trembles

And when you hold my mind steady, babe, I can see myself starting to resemble a man I had witnessed in a dream once as a child.

Days when doubt swims inside me, when my mind scrapes the rust
From the past, into the moment, now it's raging through my blood
Will you wash me down and and make me stare with big, blind trust,
into your eyes

I've got a steady hand, but you know my mind often trembles
And when you hold my mind steady, babe, I can see myself starting to resemble a man I had witnessed in a dream once as a child.