

poetry reading 06/21/2024

the dope as fuck show

portsmouth, oh

kyrsten hodge

poems

in my memories, i remember that

i was eight years old

that's between you and your god

i'm feeling guilty for

goddamnit kyrsten, goddamn

ohio should be illegal

a kiss in the kitchen

we took a two week break

and the hardest part

the person i used to love

i just want to be

as a child

missladyma'amwoman

and yes i celebrate

we need more

very close friends

my nsa agent broke up with me

in my memories, i remember that
i'm just how i always imagined i was
my body, confusing emptiness for nothingness
and my heart, confusing sympathy for empathy

but either way i'm going to feel something tonight
because i want to lay prone and powerless

and finally feel
and finally feel
and finally
feel —
finally.

i was eight years old
when i was forced
to discover my gag reflex.
this was before
he made me wear the dress
and filled his granny's bra
with his dirty underwear.

this was before
he chomped down so hard
on the cartilage of my cock
that it snapped and
filled his frenzied mouth with
quivering droplets of blood.

this was before...
this was before..
this was befo

and i still have this scar
and i still have to tell this story
before someone can
truly love my body
and understand why
i disappear sometimes
and why i

stop.

that's between you and your god
and me and my
teenage mutant ninja turtles
because what you did to me
i forced them to learn
smashing plastic bodies together
donatello wrestling raphael
leonardo pinning down
both bebop and rocksteady
and me confused
from figuring out
why their cowabunga sneers
suddenly felt so empty to me
and why their frozen faces betrayed
a pain that even kissing
april o'neil won't fix

i'm feeling guilty for
falling in love with
the queers
who deliver
my groceries.

but i will
enver admit it.

goddamnit kyrsten, goddamn
purrs my imaginary girlfriend
who i just broke up with again
after the greatest
hate sex
we've ever had
and i honestly
have no idea why
my imaginary girlfriend
is so forgiving
my cute little cat girl
her big breasts bouncing breastfully
she's kinda fucking intolerable
my beautiful, incredible, and exhausting
imaginary girlfriend.

since i was there

an old fart was talking loudly

about caitlyn jenner

like i fucking cared.

"i probably wouldn't fuck that thing"

another time a mother

tugged her toddler away from me

while her tiny dog yapped loudly

man.

man, man.

man, man, man

maan —

this poem
is called
“ohio should be illegal”

thank you.

a kiss in the kitchen

the yearning in your voice
agreeing we can't
but what we can have is
different than
what either of us will have
with anyone else

and while we both recognize
our limits together
and expand our hearts
for the renewing
possibilities
of new people

just know that ...

i will still love you.

we took a two week break
the week the target
broke in half
and there was
a lot of weight
to the silence
in the air
between us
my insanity
not an excuse
but an explanation
for why you gave up on me
and why i gave up on —

and the hardest part
of loving is letting go
and the hardest part
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and the hardest part
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and the hardest part
of loving is letting go
and the hardest part
of loving is letting go.
and the hardest part
of loving is letting go.

the person i used to love

stashed her condoms in
a 1992 mcwitch bucket
and was always herself
for halloween
every, single, year.

the person i used to love

spoke these sentences
with sudden sinkholes
that always surfaced with
these "scare quote" echoes
and god, she had a amazing laugh

the person i used to love

loved me not a long time ago
and maybe one day
i will love her too
maybe one day
i will love
this girl
i've named kyrsten

i just want to be
the person
you thought i was
being
when i was
the person
i thought i was
being
the person
i thought i was

as a child

you taught me
to shut down
and shut up
but i wasn't calm
i was numb.

and now
i can't stop
feeling bad
for feeling bad
and i want to love
and be loved
without feeling
that numbness
again

so fuck you.

they're calling me slurs
with their eyes again

what kind of faggot are you?

i'm **misslady**ma'am**woman** sir
i'm miss lady woman ma'am

and yes i celebrate
gay wrongs
and the right
to be forgotten
and yes i celebrate
your growth
and your right
to correct wrongs
and become
a better person
and yeah i guess
i can also tolerate
your need to be
fucking intolerable
if you can tolerate
my need
to serve cunt
and become
fucking ungovernable.

we need more
silly little bois
and big goons
and trans girls
obsessed with
tossing the shark

we need more
gummy bear butches
and transsexual tops
and squishy enbys
with date mates
carrying mushroom purses

we need more
dapper little mascs
with millennial
finger mustaches
and genderflux zucchinis
in checkerboard suspenders

and we need more queers
because we always need more queers.

very close friends

when the dude who started
blenko glass in milton died
he requested that his ashes
be spread over the grave
of his very close friend
the socialist firebrand
eugene victor debs

this dude's name was
william john blenko
and he was
a total fucking comrade

blenko had met debs
in kokomo indiana
and they were both
very close friends

blenko wrote debs
dozens and dozens
of love letters
for over thirty years
and they were very close friends

and that's the story
that's all there is
because the
dozens and dozens of
love letters
were burned by
concerned family members
because william john blenko
and eugene victor debs
were just "very close friends"

my nsa agent broke up with me.

after nine years of
surveillance together.

i had brought up a new text
document and typed

– how are you today?

my screen flashes three times
which is how they respond

– "good"

i type into my search bar

– do you want to get lunch?

my browser window shakes
side to side, which means

– "no"

i type into a new email

– why not?

my screen flashes
sixteen times, which means

– "i don't know if
this is working for me"

i bring up a new word document
and type in comic
sans font size 72
– i love you.

my agent takes
control of my cursor
closes the new document
and saves the file as
– im_sorry.docx

and then my computer shuts down