

YOU VS. ME

PART TWO:

YOU'RE

BETTER

OFF

# YOU vs. ME

Part 2: You're Better Off

Eva Moe

## **In Subplot, Seeking Help**

### **From: Damsel Underwhelmed**

Dear editor,  
all my poetry is about romance  
isn't that totally gross?  
i mean, i run my phone down to 24% in a day  
for a notification or a gif or a meme  
with this that the other person's charming face  
good god when comes the part where i don't look for trouble,  
it finds me?

and Wait there's more, i have no blood  
i have no herbs to add in my tea  
i have no spellbound trickster leaves  
i have no flapping stomach bees  
i have this sexy actor meme

i want to be the meanest woman and i want to be forgiven  
immediately.  
only one person can fall hopeless and it's that guy in the produce  
aisle.

## Henri Salvador Returns for His Last Concert

His voice purifies the room  
In one ear and out  
of tape  
His voice fertilizes your throat  
In one tube and out  
the other  
Mister Salvador, Mister Salvador  
Wake up  
Your music came back  
You're housed in a new body  
A young man who carries every stale piece of bread air  
through the toaster  
Melting ears like butter.  
Almond eyes sweet as root beer.  
He took the guitar off the wall  
and strung up your song at 1 in the morning  
for an audience of one woman dressed in black (that was me),  
one woman with a half-eaten personal pizza,  
and two men playing pool.

I sang a song after him and the woman let me eat her pizza.  
Glorious glorious  
Henri please wake up  
You need to hear this story.

Compare me contrast me  
Lull me to smoky sleep  
But Henri.  
I'm at the tender age  
where music fills each night  
and even in sweatpants I feel myself swaying  
in a dress of flowers  
dancing in the ballroom of my kitchen

while everyone's away.  
Henri, his voice is to come back for.  
Find your guitar.  
Play this moment for me again.

## **Emails**

I want your emails more than the American people wanted Hillary Clinton's.

In fact, anytime I get a notification from gmail and your name isn't sitting in my inbox, it's a bit of a fucking bummer.

## **Emulsion**

You and I are a clementine vinaigrette.  
I'm the oil, you're the vinegar (duh)

The thing about vinaigrettes  
is they never fully mix together.  
they have to separate.

We still got that clementine, though.  
That sweetness.  
That acid.

## Honey

you only commit to illusions like me  
pulling fists from my pockets

but they're bees  
in your stomach.

your mouth is full with the honey of my language

yes, it's Crimson and Clover  
dripping over and over.

you ran up the alp to whip your heart in shape

you worked too hard  
it's over zealous.

you caught a bird in your hands

who flew you south for the winter

now your blood's with the crows  
and you'll never learn my syntax.



## **Dolce**

Dear Piano,  
You are the only voice who can sing this one.  
No offense to clarinets  
But my god  
Your black and white teeth  
Bite along my spine til it straightens.  
You loosen my jaw  
Floss my teeth with your strings.  
And you're smooth  
As a bar of soap on glass.  
Dear Piano you make my eyes roll back  
Like a tongue between my thighs.  
Unfear me.  
I was born to understand what sweet is  
in many languages.

## Outside the Palace Theatre, 3am

You pass me after work on my final shift.  
Your beard peppered with snow.  
You say it's nice to see me.  
I return the sentiment and look down.  
My vomit-soaked clothing  
is an emerald gown.  
The Palace has velvet steps.

I cannot remember your name  
so I tuck the vacancy in a pocket  
with other unknown information:  
Do you live in a castle.  
Which troll lets you fish on this bridge.

What could your name be,  
has it appeared somewhere before.  
How might it feel if we walked to my car  
past Raspberry Island  
and you already knew the way home.

I make the walk alone  
with barf pants, icicle legs  
and turn out the pockets.

## Studio Apartment in Minneapolis

Wolf head, possibly from 1920s  
mounted over TV and Xbox  
between ceiling-high bay windows.

Large mirror attached to brick hearth fogs up  
replaces person with animal.

Buck stands in living room  
like a dog too large for couch.  
Leans against couch

He's called Stevie, likely from 1940s.  
Phone charger draped over antlers.

For review, don't forget to mention  
potted plants hug  
humid corners  
look like green flayed flesh.

You have Mother in Law's Tongue.  
Not just tongue  
but two human skulls  
dog skull maybe  
coyote heads wall-mounted  
coyote skeleton – no head – suspended  
over bathroom door

Books in bookshelf  
Teeth in jar in bookshelf  
Leopard cat in bookshelf  
Little doe bent at knees, crouched in bookshelf  
Live beetles in glass tank  
where fish might swim.  
Bottom shelf.  
Beetles eat old bananas, dog food.  
Fridge has

old bananas  
dog food  
beer  
coconut water

Good morning.

Open blinds.

Fangs glow  
in sun

Fur recedes.

Walls drip syrup  
of ipecac.

Apartment rains red  
geraniums.

Beaver lounges on gunmetal balcony.

Your view of Minneapolis is gorgeous.

Buildings look like sheets of ice sound like  
cars pulling up feel like waiting.

This apartment has no coasters.

## Pyrite

A person calls themselves Pyrite.

Fool's Gold is a mineral with no cleavage plane,  
it crumbles with unpredictable shape and

If chucked at white walls, leaves a black mark.

It does not taste metallic or salty.

It leaves a person just as un-wealthy.

Think of golden hills.

If the neighborhood wore mounds of this yellow shimmer.

A person has a common name.

It is unfindable.

If copied and pasted through the internet  
it would be buried in millions of common people.

The name does not return your phone calls

It knows where to find gold deposits  
high as houses.

This person chews salt.

Halite is a mineral with three cleavage planes.

You know its taste and color.

## Beer Face

One guzzler guzzling, thick tongue juggling  
juice that's bitter and golden.

Two floppy eyes under gravy boat hair,  
wavy spine, inky spider spindle skin.

If your eyes get big as billiard balls  
for a guy called Ginger Grumpy  
you better throw your money at the sunset,  
find his sloppy copy.

He's called Wax Fitzgerald Window Man  
ask for him on Dale and Summit.  
He'll untuck his double take and ask  
can he get a deal for the bitter and golden.

## So I Leave

What he said was good grammar  
good tone, good smile  
How much does an artichoke weigh  
How much Truth Do You Want

How Hard do I Tap my Feet so he Hears I wanna be light  
as a dancer on a drum  
Do I sing or scream through my window  
and how sweet do I make the sound?  
The longer I stay the faster my forearms feel dumb

From him I inherit a thousand  
tiny vases of jagged glass  
in my gums and stutter  
on the first word I think to say  
and find there is nothing to express