

*To Sherry*

# DECAPOIEMA

These poems are a coda for Decapoiema. Decapoiema is a series of 10 works of poetry, each based on one of the elemental numerals 0-9.

## CODA



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## NO THING

A void rose when eternity fell into a single moment.

When he who said, "A point is that which has no part."  
Was himself within that point; within, however, not yet possible.

Subsumed was not yet in this world.  
He was the point, as all things were, was the blind, as all time was.  
Even before things such as 'is' and 'was'.

Void, a depth that feeling flesh could not stretch to this horizon,  
Could not break, could not store, yet still broke soon away,  
Shed the fleeing particles, grew in formlessness  
As the embryonic plasma edged all things into being.

In the beginning was the void, alone and undefined.  
Void of being a void until the atoms of our song gave it dimension.  
No thing held its place. No thing was the all.  
No thing came when the flight began, when the echo  
Of the universe of yestertime vibrated itself into being.

No thing learned so purely that it became the void,  
Took the void into its bosom, stroked and held  
And dare it be said, loved.  
A ghost of the void became the shadow points.  
We knew them weightless for years, until we dared to take them in  
And taste their hidden flavors.

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They flew from the sun by the trillions, passing through  
The empty space in the atoms of our hearts.  
Once in a blue life they brushed this space in a melancholy way.  
Lending slant to the quiver of strings playing subatomic concertos.  
This is where we feel the dark, where we awake with a start.  
Knowing the void, tasting the void with a wary palate.  
Now we know, what will we do with the knowing?

Will we yield to the void or let the no thing take us home?  
Another limitless realm, it is a dilemma of pain.  
On the one horn, we succumb, on the other, we can not verify.  
One so dark, it becomes a far indigo like a bruise on the soul.  
Call us to this shore, bring a far sought light to our fading eyes.  
Create a world and you will hear its prayers.  
Create a void and you will hear the no thing lapping at your shores,  
Breaking down your door. It will not rest in your darkness.

It goes past the light. It is as far from the surface of your skin  
As the beginning is from now. It is as far from the sorrow  
Of tomorrow as the vapors of birth are from the last fading light  
At the fringes of forever that hold the void tenderly.  
The no thing will caress you gently. You will come to know  
That you are, and therefore are the only arbiter.  
Be the creator with care with a vision thus.  
Without your freedom the void will constrict your breath.  
With your consent, the no thing will love you unto death.

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## SOLAMOR

Far from the precipice, I take you, you are still.

The breath of lost things gives you a color.  
A transient cast brings the wind to our bed.

The last lonely thing cried when it left.  
A refugee of tenderness upon the sea.  
Drifting in a current of remembrance.

We rue what was missed but we can never hope to know  
What brought it to toss aside the only thing that could ever be.  
The only ship that could hold what arose.  
The only ocean that could contain every wanderer.

Who came to us with a promise of forever?  
Who would dare to bring these things before us?  
An expanse lined only by the floating infinity of love.  
A promise girded by the still shaken eternity of love.  
It cannot be, yet still it is imagined, a solamor of the everlasting.

What else is there to save those who return to love?  
The machinations of the mind, of words, of worlds?  
In the light of this morn, we awake.  
In arms and legs, skin draped with a moistened touch.  
Hair held in an embrace of extremes.  
Bodies lived in, loved in, heaven can only wish.

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Their theories call like hyenas in the night.  
They break on the shore where carcasses lie.  
They cannot prove, they cannot define  
A test that would satisfy their own methods.  
So what do they do? They build layer upon layer  
Of supposition. Futile structures or tiers of truth?  
The reasoning is sound but it seems to chase its own tail.

Shall we return to love? If not, where else?  
Returning falls from departure, which has its own rules.  
Take my hand, walk one step, one place, one home.  
We, every love, have nothing less than the all.  
No word, no being, no element, no light, no spirit  
Has anything on us. We are the forever.  
We are the only memory of the dream time.  
Every thing and thought becomes the moment of our kiss.

Love cannot discard us. We are only love.  
Love is only every thing that ever was.  
Love will never pass the test. It will never conform  
To the proof sought in temporal laboratories.  
Just as their strings and symmetries and verses dare not be verified.  
No experiment can scribe a love with lines.  
No dissertation speaks the depth. Just open your hand.  
The air between us will take on our longings.  
The love in our bones will be enough for the sky.

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## PAS DE DEUX

Drink at the confluence of the waters of knowing and other natures.

Join at the font of those who know without the cloth of proof.  
Of those who run headlong into the wall of the untestable.

Not quite faith, not quite face, I navigate where I could never dwell.  
I am a particle with two simultaneous states, on & off, up & down.  
I am two particles distant, cosmically entangled.

Who will attest to my otherness? Who will certify my schism?  
I verify, but without the scent of truth. I know, without settlement.  
I am dualities. I contain them and constrain them and call them.  
They are my suffering confidants. Ready to stand in my shadows.

Do you have a conclusion? Do you wait for confirmation?  
If a still small bird came and touched your hand, would you know?  
If breath from a lover's mouth covered your fears, would you know?  
If a color not seen since magic walked the earth broke on your skin,  
Would you know? Would you still wait for an answer?

There is a heaven where angels match the expectations of men  
And there are stars where the light is so soft it cries.  
These I have known, I scoped them with my eye in the desert.  
Arid air that held me up higher than the earth's blanket.  
Heat and soft were the words that smoothed the sand.  
Heart and sound were the limbs that gave me brace in the wind.

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Once in a mystery, a pas de deux came to me in the night.  
I had no thought, I had no step but the one of my youth.  
The one where I knew the end before I dared to venture.  
First, the hands press like pages writ with the barest flame.  
Next, a turn, an arc of elliptical shading where memory resides.  
Then a pivot, a point where the toe feels the line to above.  
Last, a lean where breath subsides into the beat of blood.

A pair of thoughts rises now in the arms of understanding.  
One, a mirror of my fortune when I let go of the quest.  
Other, a trace in the dust left by the crushing.  
Who will be my almsman? Who will take me unto it all?  
A fern spirals in hope of perfecting the curve of life.  
A branch fractures into nothingness, all the more dear.  
I break, I unfold, I never held such a thing, such an hour.  
What is salvation, what is truth in the face of a single touch?

To the west, I follow the sun. The arc of home leads me there.  
But it is there I find the east and with it reflected light.  
What other dances remain there? The sun and moon will reveal.  
What other paths will cross? I can barely see my own mark.  
A yellow glow rises wither the wall divides my thoughts.  
A bit above, it begins to pulse with a red like a pierced rose.  
Does it confirm my loss? No, it is a marker of stranger soundings.  
A river where the flow breaks softer than a drifting leaf.  
A spell where those of us entwined can never hold long enough.

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## TRİYUNA

He who left, he who sat, he who roamed, they all returned.

On the water, under the tree, on the mountain path.  
Going back, far before the mind, far beyond this air.

The “I am” has no becoming. No thought of when.  
The universal mind has tentacles of light silhouetting the break.  
The void is so empty it can birth all matter.

I perceive thanks to photons. They are my rod and my staff.  
They leave marks on the aura hovering where I was.  
They flee before the marks that come without being seen.  
A light box where no image leaks, no seam breaks.

If every thing has nirvana within, the kingdom within,  
Then what of those who continue to weep in the darkness?  
They remain bound to the thought of their self.  
They cry in the night, they blind in the sun, they turn always away.  
Thinking they have let go, they wander in sand.

When there is no limit, there remains a present moment.  
Seek it and you will find or maybe it will flee.  
But in the flight it is still yours, for you are flight the same.  
It is the way and it knows you as only a lover can.  
It is the winding call of passing light in the west.  
It is the captured breath of a hummingbird.

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Self came before and it was a long time coming.  
It ran behind and after a time it only knew to drift  
On the updrafts of longing where the not and the true  
Became one when they left every scrap of form behind.  
When they renounced contentment and settled into waiting.  
Waiting without longing, without a desire for any noble thing.  
As if it were a washing, a removal of all that could ever cling.

Here is the mystery, the river between the cliffs of decline.  
I am, as was said, and before the beginning, I came home.  
Here, where as a child, I knew, I carried my hope.  
The children of civilization brought a promise to the doorstep  
But it was a phantom. It carried no scent, no sound.  
It was a hanging maturity, a far flung cast on the waters.  
Worn down by all those who walked on them, common miracles.  
Uncommon in the unknowing, the mystery of fallen stars.

If I were to find you, I would lose it all.  
I would give in with so much dissipation  
That I would turn every cheek before I lay down.  
You are the light of the world. All it takes is your embrace.  
It is never a question of belief, never a wait for a sign.  
It is not even mine to accept or reject.  
It is the all in all, the meadow where every heart lies down.  
The station platform where those who wait see their song  
Played in a triyuna of chords on the strings of light.

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## ANNUS SPIRITUS

Breathe the cosmos, for it is surely breathing you.

Each expanse contracts and holds an image.  
An etching in every particle, like an eternal brass rubbing.

Big bang awakes as the exhale of another's demise.  
We are shadows of others, the next will be shadows of us.  
Does some thing override it all? How could it possibly matter?

A two breath year. An annus spiritus of communal air.  
The first inhale is watched closely, looking for any lost thing.  
The first exhale is quick. The second inhale is long, then held.  
Longer waits are watched more perfectly, like a meteor's arc.

The day brings its own watch to my bedside in the morning.  
It walks, panting as it goes, waiting for my own movement.  
I breathe, and what I take in is a remnant of air.  
Left by those who never knew me, yet still loved.  
Still held hands and bowed to my arrival.

Fervent wind now enters my lungs, they burn hard.  
Burn bright in their gasp, they call for more.  
More is not what they need, more will not be their servant.  
This air is for chilling, a bracing upon my ribcage.  
A frozen stream to follow my course.  
A slowing of my blood until my heart barely beats.

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Inhale truth, exhale facts. The oxygen of the real  
Will feed your blood, turning it ever more red.  
The veins themselves will stain like wine on a veil.  
They will be richer than the lodes of heaven.  
They will cast off numbers and certainty like broken chains.  
They will run to the river to dip, to wash, to float.  
A raft they will be, to carry the weary.

When I tire of the doing, tire of the constant breathing.  
In and out, yes it maintains, yes it carries, yes it glides.  
To do and do more becomes trite in the light of noon.  
Then I fall into being. Being long. Being far. Being here.  
If we had no self to breathe, we would need create it.  
It has a hold of us in a way that we cannot mark.  
Cannot carry to the loft of things that simply are.  
Are without a number or a name or a never was.

To breathe, to watch, to carry us to the undercarriage  
Of trains crossing the steppes of broken ones.  
Air in, air out, the color of pain paints with thick bristles.  
A brush of frayed hairs combing the bowed head.  
Breath is a hopeful thing, a promise for the young.  
It is not a cleansing, it is a flood, more than a food.  
A long lean into broken breezes, a reflection of skies.  
Inhale your soul until the edge of things melts in sympathy.  
Exhale your memories, they never wished to stay.

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## ELEMENTAL

You are my beginning, my billions, layered in a canyon.

Rock becomes heat becomes fluid becomes steam becomes nothing  
What is the counterpoint of elemental things?

Can we conclude a mystery? Can we know where we feel?  
Longer days were the start, they stretched so tight  
That they quivered with color and flame.

Do not doubt that you were named even then.  
The earth's crust heaved with your image imbedded in its cracks.  
The sky with your form drafted in the clouds.  
Your heart in flames, your blood a deluge, your mind a phantom.

First there was stone and silt pressing on each other's skin.  
The geo-archeo saints called their clans to a clearing to eat  
Where the tectonics of birth became a reading, a fragile fossil,  
A remnant of dust condensing into a mother.  
Becoming their touch, their mineralist, their herbal healer.

Magma, comets, bolts, falling in sheets, igniting hearts.  
Hearts rising in flames of fear and the chemistry of love.  
The same gestation one for one in a burning womb.  
The scent of smoke and ash and singed edges surrounding.  
I sweat all toxic breath into the chalice of cleansing.  
The sweet painful tongues lap my fringe, purging time.

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Gasses condense around vents; it was the breeze of forgetting.  
Fissures became seals preserving the origin of air.  
Breathe deep, feel the strength of your lungs.  
Sing strong, vibrate in and out from down in your gut.  
Hear each mark as physics writes equations on tablets of wishes.  
Constructs that are as stable as the minds that hold them.  
Withering in the light of the very moment, go in peace.

How is life possible, let alone thought?  
How do specialized cells dare to exist, to be their own?  
In the swamp of original sin, an amino acid rose  
And a salt fell and the brief passing turned their cheeks  
Just enough to taste the water, not just suspend.  
We have been divined like a well in the desert.  
Biology has become our memory, in a twisted frame.  
We drink the after birth, it is our elixir.

One day a mathematician was born, another day a seer.  
One laid the foundation, the other became it.  
I see truth in these lines, their elegance blinds me.  
I am truth in these dreams, their mystery becomes me.  
The other as spirit, as beauty, as order, as unknown.  
It is all that a mind could hope for.  
It is all that a soul could confirm.  
Take your proof in the angle of the sun on your skin.  
Take your prophecy in the orbit of distant spheres.

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## YIN YANG

Yin curves around Yang like space-time around a collapsed star.

She curves with her hand, caressing the empty layers.  
He curves with an arched back, leaning into light.

The relativity of the fall and the float completes the places  
Where matter is removed piece by piece until all that remains  
Is the shell of space, like a mold poured over the world.

Dance with me, you other, you bringer of blessedness.  
Lay with me, you bearer of compassion, the note in my bones.  
That is all, while it is not. That is now, while never.  
A cradle of hands made rough by the sand of sorrow.

It is a beginning, a head turning slow and pure.  
As it notices its tail, it understands that all things return.  
Layer upon layer of darkness until the only way through  
Is with something like dreams, but firmer, like a mossy plank  
Spanning the canyon where so many have let go.

The lights in the sky lay their balm on my wounds.  
A shaman treating the physician with herbs and mist.  
Potions from a vial unburied in the scorched earth.  
Gauze from the gowns draped on the backs of storytellers.  
Pressed with warmth by a hand gloved in grace.  
Wrapped in a soft spiral, crossed in a lost pattern.

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Leaven me now. Rise my blood. But first rest.  
Wait while the water collects in cracked bowls.  
Wait until light recedes into a small circle in the dark  
And until the dark does the same in the light.  
The curved end points to the bounded, they taste each other,  
Touch each other, tell each other words that curl themselves  
Into balls of unknowing, a chest of miracles.

The moon rests its head in the lap that forms  
When the sun folds its legs under the edge of the arc  
That angels make when they ferry hope to this dirt.  
It rest, it never resists, it calls for covering.  
Blanketed by ash from the unappeased one.  
The moon cannot be bothered with such things.  
It has much more to sing, it is a reflector.  
It takes in the sun. It plays back in random time.

With your half, you hold the colors of embrace.  
With my half, I shield light from your shadow.  
How do we know what the infinite means?  
What depths and darkness leaves when we stand?  
Look into the eyes of the vermin that roam beneath.  
They shine like the crystal tears of the least of these.  
I bow to your reflection in the glass that cuts to blood.  
I hold your home in the crook of my elbow,  
Bent to lift the basket that floats to my shore.

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## PRIMAL

There is now and doubtless always has been a theory of it all.

I once spread entrails on the rock and with a turn of my head  
I saw the sheen of blood meeting air.

A dark and wet reflection that, if I believed enough  
Would not only explain but also foretell  
A time when we would no longer wait for such readings.

It was a time to be equipped with slight magic.  
Equipped for and girded against mystery.  
Birds waiting to fall from the wire when hard cold  
Reaches low to stop the smallest heart.

Now we have devices, mere sticks and stones.  
Crucial to things that can be verified by method not madness.  
Yet even in their own realm, the further you go within or beyond,  
Experiment is not even possible. The horse cannot be ridden.  
The rider once dreamt a horse but that is all.

What will be this day's principia?  
Will we always look at the universe through physics colored glasses?  
Will such particles lead us to light?  
In the beginning indeed. Before that veil sits something.  
An oscillation of perpetual rise and fall.  
A laboratory of dreams, kilned to dust.

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The meta-physician may be attending a birth  
Where levels of being come and fade.  
Oft are the sounds of lovingkindness  
And a fragrance of mercy longs to break on this shore.  
Come with me and feel the limits of knowing.  
Feel the edge of love as it shaves the skin.  
From the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

Theory layered upon theory yields a fragile view.  
Tottering on its own surety, safe in its delineation.  
The wind of spirit blows soft but constant.  
Structures of nested things aren't long for this time.  
They sway like an enormous frond, far from the ground  
And as far from the sky as my touch is from the death nebula.  
If not, then heaven is broken, is trampled by lesser ones.  
They are the power of surety, sorely misdone.

The primal one breaks my bones over its table.  
A reckoning of far flung imagining and dormant strains.  
Bread and wine sustain the flesh of the bored.  
Compassion sustains the mind of the restless.  
Carry me away from your halls of knowing.  
Take my hand, hold it in keeping with the bells.  
Warm me in the fields of solace, with broken embers.  
Sustain me in the wilderness with sand ground grain.  
Love me in the back of time until I can be no more.

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## OCTAL

Look up to the night sky and tell me what you see.

Look between the sighs of your heart.

Look into the small where time wonders what to do.

There are more mysteries in a pinch of breath  
Than in all the combinations of all the words  
Of all the languages of all the worlds of all the ages.

When the quantum spelunkers reach the last cavern  
What will they find that becomes our own zeroes and ones?  
Surely not anything we can name today, light and dark or  
Good and evil or any such thing and its no-thing lover.

We build ever larger computing devices, octal cathedrals.  
Lost in the thought that more will become our hope.  
More circuits, more data, more parallel processing.  
More layers of longing. They dazzle with their power.  
They bore us with their lack of anything sublime.

What did we expect? They have only two states of being.  
But the wet one behind our eyes holds  
The combinatorics of cytosine, guanine, adenine and thymine.  
Four states in pairs doesn't need to be as fast as light.  
Or as stacked as a server farm.  
In itself, we wait until it discovers beauty.

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What then of the all? How does it process?

Imagine the n-dimensions of string theory being states of God.

Mating and breaking in a staggering array.

The mixture can't hold its own brightness.

The light of the melding staggers the dreamers.

The color of the possible stories paints the sky,

Drenches the cosmos and slips through its fingers at the same time.

If a box in a warehouse can calculate trillions per second.

If a living mass can know joy and pain.

What things could the universe be?

What love is to arithmetic; the universe is to us.

We would weep to the point of melting if it were revealed.

We would beg for belief if heaven came down.

Mercy was born for such an overwhelming.

Abandon all hope all ye who dare to dance.

If the mind be a quantum computer, what be the world?

Suffice it to say that it is more wondrous,

Purer than a crystal of frozen tears.

Step back now. Stop trying to balance it in your hand.

It will consume you as soon as you let go.

It will run if you ask it to tell you a secret.

Drink when you thirst, sleep when you tire.

Walk when the stars fall, sing when the supernovae explode.

Cry when atoms collide, love when in doubt.

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## NOVEMENTO

There are no small worlds, only one, it is touched.

Is brushed by the thought of rain in long slow showers.  
Falling, mimicking every pair, every layer, every cover.

When we come upon this storm, it becomes us.  
Like a third voice calling us both to forget  
And to sail to a gentler yet stronger clime.

When pairs beget pairs, each quadrant holds still.  
My heart, your mind and each of the other.  
They danced in a spiral of flame, an entwined look  
Carrying us down, down until we wake on a shore.

When the fifth love arrived, we were scarcely nothing  
But children ourselves. But what a place to be.  
We lived the days in awe of what had become.  
We lay as one in the nights knowing the stars were ours.  
We rose like foam on the sea when doubting waves crashed.

Perhaps enlightenment is post-modern physics.  
So sayeth the six magi from the east.  
The ones who refrained from the pilgrimage.  
For they had been told by god that the messiah was within.  
Not just the spirit who laid the stones reaching for meaning  
But the 'dare we hope' spark that may, once we cease, be love.

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In the seventh season of our knowing  
We stepped in a way we thought was a mirror.  
It turned on itself and brought us to another road.  
Where are we? When we awoke, was the probe  
Encased in more than we could ever carry?  
Seven colors, seven layers of soil, seven days of warm.  
These were our weakness, we were captive.

Your arm in mine, your leg warped beneath me.  
My hand pressed to your thigh, my wrist on your neck.  
Eight points mark their rising line, bone chalk on cloven slate.  
Do not dream that golden dawns will deliver us.  
We had already arrived in the darker hours.  
When streams and patterns were our companions.  
Dream instead of the now, the more that shook our sails.  
The here, the this, the why that turned down our bed.

If the light from fusion is this painting, this sculpture,  
Then we are children of more precious arts.  
I would weep to tell it if I had anything left  
But your love is all. It is the breeze and the moon's glance.  
You are the being of my drift, my riptide.  
We came clear when love took us into its confidence.  
In the cleft of this ridge, we no longer wait.  
It all begins with a novemento, a numbering of skin  
Where memories layer in a lattice of your beat and mine.

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