Eyelids

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But then again, this is the life that we live in. 
So I guess the message that I'm trying to say, 
Is to the people who think “what's the point” ev-er-y-day, 
Is that even though you're having trouble maintaining your respiration, 
Air is thin like a matter of higher elevation, 
When you're short of breath, and feel like you got nothing left, 
Listen to me and realize that it's not your chest heaving, that's your soul breathing. 
You can fall into last place in a race. 
You can't participate, 
Or you can treat the pain like smoke and let it dissipate. 
Giving your heart a battery it can depend upon, 
Charging you up so you can carry on a marathon. 
Now you're catching your second wind, learning to breathe again, 
This is the beginning and the end, where my words end with AMEN!

Eyelids

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That dark December night, 
negatively charged magnetic eyelids forced open by a vibrating assiduous humming brain machine.

An untidy bed left warm, within the smoking, choking exhaust fumes. An early morning engine roars. 
I find that towering rock in eastern jagged-grin ridgeline. 
Peering up from yawning limbs hung from red toothpicks, frail clouds skirt that dark jutting face as stiff muscle tendon battles mud rock gravity staircase. 
All alone, in echoey sloping vastness.

Lunge forward from tree line, sink down, old snow, hunched old man drinks coffee says something... 
Away from that wretched voice! I scramble upward through white flakes, black boulders. 
Wool gloves hinder grip, boots shove rogue rocks to space, hand slips, smash thumb, eight now seven rocks until summit.

White washed walls of wild winter. 
Silence. 

In utero of a universe.

Four thousand feet above. 
Fire.
Me, my despair, a stone palace, and trail mix. I brought hope.
You brought a shining red hope extinguisher then swung the emptied
tank at my skull,
I am not impervious to pain like these rocks I hurl
at whirling gods they watch me
miss. Pebbles drop through glass table
swallowed by dark green limbs.

You do not know you could not know you cannot know it was right,
if you are Right, then I am Left
with aching expectations and a decomposing handful
sticky memories, remnants cannot be cast away, and
these blessed rocks are fond friends no longer call my own because
I'll never look the same but they always will.

Step down from nowhere and retreat south, your footprints remain.
Darkened face, this line is named you and will stay there.
It is a cold winter rain
that taps my hunched shoulders
I have stopped answering.

You are in everything I see.
It is sickening because you own all and you will not let go but
you cannot own this next day.

Biographies

McKenna Rinta is graduating soon and does not know what to do
with her life. If anyone is up for a twenty-year-long road trip across
the States that would be awesome. She is also currently collecting
unique drawer knobs. She needs five more.

Kayla Suvak Who Kayla is is in her laughter and her hugs and in
her dancing. It is in the way she stacks book upon book to read, and
in the way she crinkles her nose when she smiles. Who Kayla is is in
her forgiveness, in her faith and in her passion for life and for others.
Love, Will.

Katie Wartell is a senior and an Interdisciplinary major with an
emphasis in English.

Samie LeVay is a California native who moved up to Portland to
attend Concordia University in August of 2014. She is currently
serving in the US Army Reserves and is working on her degree in
Homeland Security. She ultimately plans to become a career soldier
once she finishes her schooling. Outside of school and the Army, she
spends her time painting, writing, and reading as many books as she
can get her hands on.

Ryan Bowen is a sophomore Elementary Education major.

Allison Woodruff is a sophomore at Concordia University, studying
Elementary Education and English as an honors student. Originally
from Kalispell, Montana, Allison loves exploring lakes nestled deep
in the mountains and reading beautiful stories. Raspberries, Disney
movies, holding his hand, the color blush, and family dinners make
her very, very happy. She adores wearing twirly dresses. Someday, she
dreams of being a wife, a momma, a beloved teacher, a published
author, and Princess Belle simultaneously.