

Verses of versus I write  
 As opposed to,  
 against my better judgment.  
 Life isn't black vs. white  
 up against down, don't make  
 me choose red or green.  
 Life is and, and if,  
 and but. And yet,  
 there is a peace  
 to certainty, to knowing  
 against not. To be saved,  
 or not.  
 So should I relent  
 or should I fight on?  
 Am I angry or just subdom?  
 Smart or dense? Sensitive or  
 merely weak.

**VERSUS**

And my father must have had  
 To bend over to walk to the  
 Bed, and probable bumped  
 His head over and over,  
 Hoping not to bother the  
 Old lady who kindly rented  
 The tiny space on top of her  
 Home to a soldier and his new  
 Wife in a time when  
 Apartments did not grow  
 On trees.  
 Always so dark with only  
 The String light bulb holding  
 Up the Ceiling.

On the lowest rung of  
 I pause and lean back  
 The ladder to the attic  
 On my heels  
 To see the top step quiver  
 Against the floorboard  
 And imagine in the midst of  
 The old schoolbooks,  
 The folded cardboard tables  
 The laminated pictures,  
 An apartment my parents had  
 Sixty years ago.  
 Their bedroom was an attic  
 Just like this. With rough  
 Wood made for splinters  
 And eves where bags  
 Of stuffing leaked out  
 Into view.

**UNTITLED**

Finally the sailboats drift as they should  
 The grit in the coffee tastes right to the tongue  
 And your heart beats its usual song.  
 So you loosen your belt into the ease of the same.  
 And then the smell of bacon smells of him,  
 a paper on the desk shouts her name.  
 The twist of the key sounds of other rooms.  
 But you paper your skin over the bruises  
 and swallow the nausea that boils your innards,  
 rap your heart in blankets, and gingerly step inward  
 pick up your pen and try to make words.

**ONE PURPOSE OF POETRY**

There is that moment when the world twists  
 the lover gone or the sister dead,  
 graduation day, or just an address change  
 Life teeters and you don't know if you exist.

The stomach quivers and the calves ache  
 How can the tide come in or the grass grow?  
 The light cannot be the same; and surely  
 the stars do not know how to glow.

There is the flash of possible escape  
 I will part my hair into even plaits  
 I will laugh at nothing, or eat more beets.  
 I do not have to be myself.

Then the grumbling starts deep down low  
 It will be worse -  
 the sun will curdle, the earth stop its spin.  
 friends will fade, and the bones gradually thin.  
 Your hollow core is what will grow.

*Please recycle to a friend.*

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**Origami Poems Project**

**ONE PURPOSE OF POETRY**  
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