

bed, bath and beyond

out into the world
in our leather jackets and jeans
running for the subway
feeling the lights fade in the nosebleed balcony at the Met
just enough Lagrein in the bottle to wash down
pear tart with bitter chocolate
talking about sex on a rock in Central Park as fish cavort in the lake
screaming in the dark to save a fallen cyclist from death
as headlights glare in our eyes
making just the right connection for a noon service at the Cathedral
a woman priest talks about peace and poetry and music in Edessa
Aramaic,
the arbitrary congregation stands and embraces one another:
"Peace be with you."
I feel you beside me all the time standing kneeling praying
searching for the right pages in the Book of Common Prayer
Are we going to take Communion, or merely fold our arms on our breasts
and receive a blessing?
I would like to, you say. We approach the altar.
The Body adheres to the roof of my mouth and is washed away by the
Blood.
As the twenty worshipers slowly exit, the Priest seems to single us out.
"Welcome home," she says to me.
Soon I am kneeling in the neighboring Chapel of Saint James
speaking my heart to you, asking you to do me the greatest honor,
and just at that moment, an unseen choir begins to sing,
echoing from the main hall of the Cathedral.
You say yes. Tears are in our eyes. I place the ring on your finger.
It shines like a galaxy at its prime, confident in its equilibrium of light.

Then we have crepes across the street, sweet and tart.
Walking in Riverside Park, watching the light on the Hudson,
talking about everything and people and places and thoughts and dreams,
my ideas and yours,
Love has made us who we are.
I do not miss the sour cynical guy I used to see in the mirror.
Instead I look at you, with my blue eyes that you tell me are
sometimes gray.
"You look about sixteen," I say. Your kindness, your spirit, your stories,
the way you look at people inside and outside and understand them with
as much kindness as humanly possible

I strive to be like you.

I do not miss the frustrated dissatisfied doubtful yet pretentious guy
I used to see in the mirror.

I do not miss the women whom that guy wanted to get close to,
to have on his arm in Paris or London or Cannes or Melrose Avenue,
to sleep with a few times and then get left behind to stare into his mirror
at a sadder, more sour, more cynical, more dissatisfied version of himself.

Behind the mirror are toothpaste, dental floss, razors, bandaids,
misperceptions misconceptions
the ebb and flow of diurnal misery as the days creep past
women and their illusion of affection drift away
music and books and movies get written then repose in the galactic spin
of the hard drive
-- the old world, the old life,
years and years of it, watching someone else's old dream of "California" die.
I do not miss the lost, numb, disconnected guy I used to see in the mirror
Since now love has made us as we make love
in complete connection, in total empathy, in seamless passion,
to give is to receive, our fantasies aligned as we touch and spin off and up
and soar and at the moment, at that moment, at **that** moment
the gush not of release but of union
not of conquest but of connection
not of domination but of mutual power
the outpouring not only of flesh but of spirit
not only of the body but of God,
I find the breath to say
I Love You.