

*I'm red, like my own drops of blood
dissipating in dark blue waters, thick like mud.
I'm a jagged rust that chews through the gate of azure iron
that tries to lock me out with its chain link pattern.
I'm red, a color so bright and bold
drowning in this world of blue, a color so vast and cold*

*As above, so below
So says a saying concerning microcosms and all other cosm varieties
Cosms reflect another - small mirrors large and reflects upon the next
The way I see it, it's a case of monkey see monkey do
Monkey on top swings from tree to tree
To laugh as monkey at rockbottom swings from dead end to dead end
Dead*

*As above, so below
So believes many, that our ways are mere reflections of a greater power
Greater than thou, greater than I, greater than we who live
Who is to say that they are wrong?
Are we just echoes of a larger thing, the ripples created by a stone skipped across water?
Across vast stars and existences, something makes us as it is, forever permutating*

*Forever
As above, so below
So is this just how it is?
It cannot be that we are nothing more than mere extensions
Mere protrusions of that which is incomprehensible, wholly conceptual, beyond sense
Beyond that which is my understanding
My heart cries that I am unattached
Am I just a cog in this cycle, doomed to think as so many do?
Many of my thoughts might not even be my own.
My mind is now restless, just as the chaotic universe now is
Now
As above, so below*

*so lonely
yet surrounded by so many
not lonely regarding proximity it would seem
disconnected rather
my strings are cut or knotted or frayed or tangled or wrapped around my throat pulling
tight
there are multitudes
yet i access none
i know what i am
so lonely and so very afraid*

*I could go down, remain grounded
I could go up, move beyond this place*

*I could go left or right, gain new perspectives
I could go out, grow beyond my perimeter
I could go in, become comfortable in my own skin
I could go in many directions, each a journey itself
I think I'll go find out*

*Spring is really about death
Internal and external revolt
The plagues of winter are exposed
The criminal mask
Your old tendencies
Your former mindset
Explore all the death
Because all death comes to light
Knowing death is victory over death
Darkness is burnt, quite brightly
The wheat field aglow
Your lightbulb is lit*

It would make for a tool befitting someone who could actually be considered an artist.

It still has the capacity to create even when it clogs the airways and asphyxiates its user.

In front of a blank canvas, it would be most sufficient.

*In the trench, it might even be better than a gun; the pain and discomfort would be more
crude.*

The machine thinks it would belong, because it thinks what it's doing is art.

Destruction, deletion, and desolation are not acts of creation.

I am an artist, and I need tools.

The gun is powerful, loud, and carries a message. But the paintbrush...

The one I've slammed down my throat would still paint in more colors than red.

Suddenly there was a light

A stream of consciousness

Like a thought-provoking memory late in the night

With stress as my witness

I had to get it out, and I began to write

I can't remember when it all started

*The earth-shattering, teeth-chattering, ear-piercing theories of what it means to be a
good student*

I can't recall how I got to this place

My inescapable imagination begins creeping its way into pigmentation

A shaky breath

Like the mind-altering, life-changing, heart-clenching profound proof

Of my inability to have my real passions stamped with their approval

But, I had to carry courage, and I put on my backpack

I endured the tormented lessons of what I ought to believe in

When beliefs became memorization, the regurgitation of textbooks

A maze of dates and names I cannot seem to recall

The reality of my imagination taunting my ability to focus

Pay attention

Worry inside the anxious drip of nauseating silence

Before the teacher calls upon my government name

My identification plastered alongside a letter grade

With the hope that it is followed by the highest letter in the alphabet

Suddenly there was another exam

A sense of external invalidation when I received assignments

Etched with my blood, sweat, and tears

A symbol of my stress

Decorated with red hieroglyphs

Coated in errors with success becoming a fleeting dream

A passing thought

Suddenly there was merit to the work I was doing

Those early mornings where I blamed the night prior

Those late nights when I told myself I would wake up early to finish

Procrastination is the key to a door never found

And with that, failure is the first step to touching its destination

A path marked with rocks as letters

Concrete like GPA's

Grass growing from salty late-night tears

And a full bloom of possibilities becomes clear

*When approaching the shore with a joke
in our Crocs and our cognizant socks,
we'll polish the punchline with algae
and smother the agates in kisses*

*As frothing and rippling pebbles conspire,
we'll summon the bluegills that crackle from under
the curtain. We'll wade to our ankles, then navels
suspended while treading the paths of the loons*

The seagulls will laugh in our absence