Keys to the Sky

Jacob Russell Dring

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Art – if only I could make you.

Song – if only I could voice it.

Words – this is my medium, and I appreciate anybody's interest.

Feedback – my work is incomplete without it; all is welcome

Ø

"You've been running around for so long
You've been hurting yourself too much
You keep messing around with darkness
You're the one who's losing
You've been running around for so long
You've been hurting yourself too much
You keep messing around with darkness
You're the one who's losing…"

Shara Worden, *Razorblade Salvation* – Jedi Mind Tricks

"The best way to know you've cut into an emotional cord [when writing] is if the cord you cut is your own."

David Niall Wilson

"We can overcome anything we want because our greatest advantage is that we are all alive, and as long as we are alive, we have everything."

Cory Taylor

"Your presence within my love
Weight did not bind me."

Jonas Renkse, *The Nearing Grave* – Long Distance Calling

"I think I wanna stay alive and see if I can grow."

Vinnie Paz, *Razorblade Salvation* – Jedi Mind Tricks

"Embrace this moment. Remember—we are eternal…all this pain is an illusion."

Maynard James Keenan, *Parabola* – Tool

CONTENTS

1	Another Rung For Me
2	Journey Back Forward
3	The Aspiring Astronaut
4	Bane of Will
5	Survived By Three-Fourths
6	Gratified For Gloom
7	Unkempt Fixations
8	A Place For The Eyes
9	Alone In Our Rose Cottage
10	Bridge With Wings
11	Her Song
12	Volant Change
13	Supernova-Charged
14	Aspiring To Vacate
15	Peace Within
16	Falling From Perfection
17	Just A Thing
18	Extinguish With Fire
19	Gliding Vengeance
20	Meeting of the Minds
21	Fictional Science
22	Over Canopies Vast
23	Keroseen
24	Itinerary Reset
25	Mystify My Eyes

26 A Slow Death
27 High Ceiling
28 Capital Compensation
29 Left To Rime
30 Good Riddance
31 Master Peace
32 Vascular Autonomy
33 Carried Away
34 (Better) Intentions
35 Borealis
36 Halo Beautiful
37 Miracality
38 Cloudpaint
39 The Gathered Storm
40 Bound to Life
41 Woe, Solved
42 Slaves of Hollow Ideas
43 And The Dawn Settles High
44 Pearlescent Shore
45 Better Than You Imagined
46 Lather & Repeat
47 Irised Alight
48 A Different Kind Of Suicide
49 I Don’t Mind
50 Hidden Sweetness

1

Another Rung For Me

Manipulated and beautiful, I see blue
A feeling of yellow courses through me
I ingest the appeal of lighting up high
Veins tingle, sensation not easily defined

This is my experience, there is no you
Not being callous, at least not deliberately
Interlace fingers in this, understand my eyes
Mirror a colorful realization, soul becomes aligned

2

Journey Back Forward

Another door opens
This is your long awaited demise
I will stamp out your putrid ashes
Breathe in new form
Another door opens
I see into the beyond
Over your frigid shoulders
Lies a road not yet traveled
Ghosts of my past watch in awe
As I glide over the threshold
And smile upon your
Perpetual departure
My endless arrival

3

The Aspiring Astronaut

Through a sea of stars
I listen to your laughter
Sling-shot from Saturn's rings
I drive into your gaze
Lips reacquainted with distance
Warped in nebular beauty
I'm speechless, mindless
A sound of pure creation
Is mute to the explosion of eyes
From beneath your cascade
And just above voice of wisdom
What encompasses the rest
Reminds me of impossibility
Skin like Jupiter's cream
And everything I've ever wanted
Is beyond the furthest exoplanet
But still do I explore
Speechless, mindless
And still am I enthralled
To survey the unreachable
Experience the greatest possibility

4

Bane of Will

Bow down to the currents arcing rise and fall
Seek none but the heart which swells
Seal not the mouth for a voice escapes
Pressurized is the vessel of our bustling conscience

Emerge and purge
This is our domain
Climb and decline
This is our pain

Bow down to the images of provocation
Hunting a satiation impossible to slate
Suppressed is the desire to withdraw
Pressurized only that which we do not understand

Stare to the upturned sky
Or through a great reflection
And seize the turning eye

5

Survived by Three-Fourths

An extreme rebirth of shadows
Sunlight bleak by the regurgitation of abyss
Taste the pain mend with a sting
I saw their faces in the dissipation
Flat was the reality, but not mine
As I sunk high into the black clouds
Reminded of the wetness which I breathed

6

Gratified For Gloom

And as the lights shut out
Boneyards formed in the skies
Swallowing life from cities
Adorned with specks of luminance
I saw without my own eyes
In a darkness dense with life
And yet somehow too quiet to stand
Sentience in its tamest stride
Alive and dead at the same time
Alive instead for the sake of light

7

Unkempt Fixations

Thoughts torn between moons
Believing pain to outsource mind
An issue that should not exist
Still manages to press through
And I thought we were past this
A minor insecurity not reliant
On the amount of your smiles
Or how wild I make you laugh
You’re only as beautiful as I see
This is not the way it should be
And deep down inside you know
This is a twisted deformation
Of who and what we’ve become
I want to taste your eyes in glee
Not to see you just turn away
How have I become your pity
I thought you loved me
Clearly I was mistaken
Your love was placed elsewhere
But don’t expect me to cower
Because I still love me
For everything you didn’t

8

A Place For The Eyes

Sunset weeps across the firmament
There is a persuasive beauty in the tragedy
Angels sweeping the clouds unseen
Perceptible by the waves of illumination
Ranges of the earth reaching skyward

No time for tears, only utter engulfment
No time for smiles, only sweet surrender

All roads lead here and covered in shine
All roads, that is, ever worth taking

This place is for everyone, always
This place renews everything, forever

9

Alone In Our Rose Cottage

Holding out my hand
It floats there unreceptive
I've set my gaze upon the winds
Patience a virtue long since practiced
No compensation for the hearts I've given

Company in isolation lauds my conclusion
A healthy premonition in dream
Death brushes my arid lips
So eager to kiss back
Fold into embrace

10

Bridge With Wings

At the incipience of creation
Kindled sparks lit our conscience
Previously a cavernous cavity
Void of thought and its catalysts
But now our mirror shines lucidly
Look what we are, a collective mind
Capabilities branching out to find
Lost causes left to decompose
We have come so far
To fall so short
Of the achievement for life
Beyond the easiest definitions
And as we continue to fade
The expansion amplifies still
This will never become our end
As much as it has been our beginning

11

Her Song

There was no Light at the end of the Tunnel
No more than there was a mellifluous breath
A whisper that calmed my heated blood
And swept my shoulders off the glaciers
Instead I heard the most extravagant song
One of immaculate rhythm and splendor
All-encompassing, it mollified me
Immersed, I drifted headlong into its core
Until I sprang through the thunderheads
And at its end felt Her smile take me in

12

Volant Change

Their plumage flourished from impeccable skin
Like diamonds, smooth and impenetrable
Mute eyes solid, yet impossibly magnificent
Wet with ambition were the eyes in flight
Before their feet ever departed from the floor
Feathers amplified the opus of their essence
Collective wafting breeze through embrace
Agape and welcoming, they excluded no one
Then their wings spread, and everybody marveled
As the thinnest yet broadest shadow casted below
Sweeping the wrought faces of vehemence
And I witnessed the extermination of battle
Peace being the only thing they breathed
Everything became as it were, and should be

13

Supernova-Charged

And I'm not falling, I am seeing
My way through to the other side
'Cause this new shell, it is feeling
My daze through the hive mind
And I'm not falling, no I'm not failing
I can taste my route pave its path
I can hear a new beginning hatch

Supernova-charged, my voice soars
To the place I've been seeking more
And I'm not falling, I am finding
The freedom from my binding
Supernova-charged, my pain is over

14

Aspiring To Vacate

A voice inside my head
Bellows to be heard
Aspiration for oblivion
Coherency in emptiness
Discerning adversity
Touch upon its beauty
Twisted horror dances
Confined in a trance
The deep void roars
As I swallow the noise
Pull at the skin
Tear at the flesh
Open eye to its limit
Realize the vacancy
Seek to fill my insanity

15

Peace Within

When all else fails
Succumb to the silence of thought
Open the floodgates
Listen to yourself
If needed, introduce auditory catalysts
It has always helped me
And the meanings are perpetually endless
One image, a billion colors
One image, a billion shapes
One feeling, infinite images
Love my hatred for happiness
Euphoric in a sea of loneliness
Ambivalent without knowing it
Desirous for the unattainable
Concerns are not worth dwelling upon
Indulge in the beautiful cacophony
Impossible to write without mentioning
One form or another of beauty
In all of its various degrees
This is my escape, I find peace within
Amidst toiling troubles
This is my escape, I find peace within
Always, without fault

16

Falling From Perfection

She was cast from the black unknown
Stars clinging to her sinuous form
An impossibly perfect figure without shape
Plummeting through the infinite
Crying out in magnificent silence
Eyes expanding with the amplification of soul
She was becoming what she had long coveted
And through the clouds she came
No impact save that of her newfound heart
And limits now fenced in, she smiles

17

Just A Thing

You are the last thing in my nothingness
When I am alone and in search of something
You are the only thing on my mind
When I am alone with my monotony
But I choose utter exile
I'd choose death over the taste of you
Choke on your bitter bile
When you curse me in the yearning to own
Something that is my nothingness
I am not yours to claim, I am just your plaything
And in the wake of my everything
You are less than a speck of nothing

This is my choice, I speak no longer of you
Lest I risk losing my anything to the grips of you

18

Extinguish With Fire

Wrap your head around my logic
I find solace in the spreading of flame
Disaster churns the water beneath me

This is me, not all the time
I need this, not all the time

Sometimes the best way to extinguish fire
Is throw more on top of it, bathe in the heat
Until only positive energy is born, inebriated
A miscarriage of opposite emotions, alive

You cannot deny me this, never
I do not deny myself this, ever

Eyes turn and why should I care
Because I'm exploding inside
And not the way you'd think
Your judgment is misplaced
Yes, I have my bouts of ire too
But this fire is something else
I'll build upon it, something fierce

19

Gliding Vengeance

Deep beneath the waves of placidity
A leviathan rises from its dormancy
Hearing little, feeling a ripple for every sin
Cast upon the surface of its vast residence
Eyes as abysmal as its cosmic seclusion
A soul searches within to find meaning
The answers lie amongst the eddies
Tides troubled by their ascending deity
A yearning taste to return the malevolence

20

Meeting of the Minds

In a sea of crashing waves
Where water counts for thought
We felt ourselves dive inside
To a place rendering us untouchable
And form conflicts we would
Only to emerge fleeing into the night
More or less unscathed and not
All the while riddled with questions
On the hunt for answers nonexistent
It didn’t keep us from searching
It never kept us from exploring
It doesn’t keep us from discovering
The boundaries and their limits
For we as one have none

21

Fictional Science

Sweeping through the artificiality
On wings fabricated from unreality
Influences abound, seldom credible
This is unworthy of hostile criticism
This is a creation in its rawest form
Teeming with aspects out of reach
Our earthbound knowledge is futile
In grasping the concepts of the creator
Except in the instance of examples
Or many hundreds of pages of them
So enjoy these and drown in surrealism
Merit is inferior to celestial imagination

22

Over Canopies Vast

Outstretched to places at the edge
Just beyond our furthest gazes
Through the trees and over the sky
Beneath our own shield we ogle
At the expansive possibilities
Incapable of actually attaining flight
Yet still do our dreams amplify
Minds collaborating on emptiness
In hopes of one day achieving
That which we've sought after
For longer than a hundred lifetimes
And even if it were to land
Securely in our firm hands
Would we be so different
Than we are now, lusting after dreams
Over canopies vaster than conscience

23

Keroseen

I need a change of pace
A little syringe of rocket fuel oughtta do
Straight into my system
They say the sky is the limit, but I want more
Shoot me to the moon
Because down here I've seen it all before
The monotony is heavy
And I've felt lightheaded for long enough
So defibrillate my heart
Two pairs should give me the buoyancy
Add one for the brain
It has suffered this bland scene for decades
I need to taste it hard
Until death reminds me of my mortality
I will test these limits

24

Itinerary Reset

Venturing into fresh territory
A success adds another star
To the array on his shoulders
But the beauties surrounding them
Hold a secret not meant to be shared
Curious and malevolent at heart
He probes further when he should not
Only to reach out a stern hand
Malice at its tip ablaze
So far have we come
Only to be set back centuries
Sealed scars reopen their jaws
To swallow our enemies whole
Aloof in taking us along as well
All of this progress counts for nothing
When we leave our hearts far behind

25

Mystify My Eyes

Aren't I meant to know the meaning
Answers interwoven in my skies
But I'm having trouble deciphering
And my faith is on the decline
Time is once again toying with me

Tell me who I am
What is meant for me
Tell me who I am
Is there anything meant for me?

26

A Slow Death

I'd rather not wait to flow into you
Ooze through my clouds without reluctance
The chains have at last broken
And I won't fall through untouched
There's too much to be had in you
I want to feel your touch swallow me up
I want to feel your breath seep into my veins
As your tongue soothes me in sound
I'll fold into your uninhibited embrace
All the while expanding to surround
This is the best way to go, away
Away, I'll go slowly should I be able to choose
With these chains broken free
I'd rather not wait to flow into you

27

High Ceiling

Stare out above the stretching space
Neither cloud nor ray of sunlight pollutes
Where we set out to find solace amongst
Occupied by none other than ourselves
Please stay with me as we cross the void
Dull in color, like the nullified terror in your eyes
But pacifying and gorgeous in every other way
This is where we belong, together
This place that never really ends

28

Capital Compensation

Hit me with one more wave
Unrelenting, your ferocity
I'll cruise through its break
Grimacing from the pleasure
This is something worth fighting for
This is something worth dying for
And here, today, it's the opposite
So hit me with one more wave
Relentless and yielding, I'm weak
Break me into splinters
I'll pick up my pieces in time
As long as you're there to do it again
Enveloped me in a lasting wave

29

Left To Rime

Paint chips of memories in the breeze
Set free by our subconscious liberties

I screamed to my saviors of martyrdom
Lionhearted despite the furor deep within

We've set out to escape our fretfulness
Paying debts for a fate of regretful messes

Drifting through the dark ever-shifting
I'll let it lift me into the abysmal sifter

Find absolution in severed absolution
Degradation necessary for my salvation

30

Good Riddance

Terrible reality, be gone from here
Swallow yourself whole and digest
Leave the remains better to waste
We all have had enough of your touch
I want to experience us go unrepressed
I want to see our benevolence flourish
We need no impossible divinity
Only a veil of sweeping clarity
And in the wake of your perpetual riddance
We'll share a global smile from voided fear

31

Master Peace

Seeing through eyes elucidated
A voice creeps through lips flavorful
Refreshed by ideals renewed
Planets aligning in our firmament
The end nears ever so distantly
We stand firm in light of the – Light
We stand firm against the dark of – Dark
This is a battle most triumphant
Our existence will not be truncated
Nor our consciences servile
We beautify fortunes accrued
A masterpiece in living persistently

32

Vascular Autonomy

Let us be freed from this wretched pit
Removed the ink swelling our veins

Sing through an opus of liberation
Flesh escaping thought of restriction

Buried in the clouds of our dreams
We can remain or spread these wings

Healed the wounds from a past decrepit
Ardent to lift eyes and seize our reins

33

Carried Away

Gone from me are the ties that bind
Veins from skin, bone from flesh
Machine surrounds this entity
And within I am alluded immunity
To the harm which assails us all
One step forward, and on upward
I push us into tomorrow full-force
Onto my shoulders you may rest
In confidence, your reassurance is
And gone from me are weaknesses
Unscathed forever more, always
Realization sets in stone heart
For the better in lieu of my own
Banked by a shared conscience
I feel our ties unwinding together
One with the steel and apart blind

34

(Better) Intentions

Revived ways permit clearer vision
Removed from a life of utter misery
There has surfaced palpable positivity
Parting seas for better intentions
In a world previously abandoned
Riddled with incessant construction
Now the shattered glass pierces
Opaque becomes transparent
Which quickly looms from existence
Hands reaching out retract their claws
Fingers spread to hook opportunity
Those stretching inward are assisting
And somehow the dark is receding

35

Borealis

Fallen through, I wanted everything
Trees which wept for my lost clocks
I desired to feel the warmth seep into me
Things which cast discordance in my life
One could only lament for so long
Until the floorboards realigned beneath
I see now, the sounds tempting me
These things are best left to dwell on
Vision comes to those, not patient
But to those especially ardent
In the pits of their persevering hearts
To achieve a life greater than theirs

And out of this I arose
Through the waves bearing me down
And out of this I rise
Through the prayers I keep to myself

36

Halo Beautiful

Heaven, sail with me tonight
I know your sweetness can hear me
Surprise, the universe you own
It's no match for me, I'll soon find you

Stay or leave this place
Find a way to your embrace
I choose peace
Piece us together

Heaven, sweep me off my feet
I know your honey voice can reach me
Surprise, the world is alone
Without your presence in my love

Stay or leave this place
Find a way to your embrace
I choose to cease
Piece us together

37

Miracality

I've seen the way your face can light up
Amid all the terrible things down the road
And the thunderheads clear before you
But in reality they stay where they've been

You see, I find a real miracle in you
Something I used to search for
And now I've just happened upon it
The truest phenomenon ever unsheathed
This illumination is a refreshment
I look forward to it every time I dream

38

Cloudpaint

We’re on our backs, fins in the earth
Pinned forever, for all we care
Eyes tracing art in the broad periwinkle
Painting life’s abstracts with the clouds
Lackadaisical productivity at its best
Come rain, sleet, or snow, no matter
We’ll be here still and so will it
Some form of canvas or another
A welcome subject to our passion

39

The Gathered Storm

Crystalline thoughts streak my eyelashes
An equilibrium settles over frigid skin
Warmth swims somewhere deep beneath
There is a slick realization of our demise
And an impermeable beauty surrounding it
Crystalline epiphanies bead your eyelashes
This equilibrium is as chaotic as it is pure
I'll bathe in this warmth for as long as I see

40

Bound to Life

Bounce off of sunflowers
Springing from the trees
Feel the rush of the wind, needles
Under the skin, through your eyes
A tinge of taste in exhilaration
Riding through the corset
Breathe in and out until
You can no longer breathe at all

41

Woe, Solved

Encased in hearts stricken
With problems, living out misery swept
By fears fettering us from the dreams inside
Our greatest desires, pitted into darkness alongside
The issues of a mind and body forced into personal slavery

This is a withering of the human soul
Place the blame not upon a certain group
But upon we as a whole, because the greatest pain
Is what we've inflicted unto ourselves, through time
And the ugliness has been the victor for far too damn long

42

Slaves of Hollow Ideas

Born again, through false energy
Coursing over our heads is pride
A hand reaching skyward for confidence
Grasp truth in only ourselves
Look unto the next day with fresh eyes
Let us embrace togetherness as one
The only way to break the imprisonment
Turn the lies hard with reality
Shatter them with the strength of unity
Bound not by the vacancy of thoughts
But the weight of our actions

43

And The Dawn Settles High

Fire on the rim of discovery
I set out to find the light missing
Seized and stolen long ago
I can never put behind me the loss
These embers burning inside
You will see the meaning alight
Clouds and skies and mountains
Catch flame and provoke awe
I will fall to my feet, first
Before I ever disintegrate on knees
And you'll see the painting
With every color and more
Envelop the world as I've seen it
Cover your eyes and be lost
Open them wide and be found
As I have finally become

44

Pearlescent Shore

Taken to the rippling shimmers
She guided her eyes skyward
While feet sunk into golden opportunities
Buried beneath which was gone forever
But among the cacophony of silence
She reeled herself into the tide
Eddying memories from a time long ago
When everything had been simpler
Though regret didn’t plague her yet
Instead she fought for lucidity
And a clutch on the evasive
As the gleaming shadows caught stride
Rippling from shore to surface
Until time left her to seek alone

45

Better Than You Imagined

Sunshine down the rainclouds
Trees wafting under the masses
A split explosion lights the sky
This world is everything and more
Things here without understanding
Hollow screams and blank visages
Tears fall but never land
You see the sorrow in your eyes
A reflective surface without reality
Emotion siphoned from lips
Believe you're feeling it
But know you never came close
This world is everything and more
Something you'll never understand
Despite a longing desire to hold
That which has embraced you whole

46

Lather & Repeat

Cleanse me in Your light
Dapple skin and more with purification
Brought anew and refreshed
Long awaited is this rising breath
Seeping from me, the conflict
Lave me in Your many voices
Resurrect me with You pervasive touch
Lifted to the surface yet again
This time I am here to stay
With You to thank, as always

47

Irised Alight

A searing fire through the clouds
Breaking through the other side
Smile bright and swallow the truth
You know you can handle it
Believe in yourself for once
Take the words you bleed to heart
Fake neither emotion nor action
Punch the sky's aorta for what it's worth
Everything you've fought for, now gone
There's no way this is the end
You will not go down, like this
Open your mouth to inhale
That fire amidst your clouds won't fade
Without a fight taken up high
Deep within and fueling inside
I love you and you love me
Stop pretending like it's nonexistent
You feel it by being alive
By being alive and you love her too
So prove that you haven't been wasted
Take the sky as your own
Steal the keys if you must

48

A Different Kind Of Suicide (Note)

So into the shadow I go
But I shall find a light
And burn bright it might
Through my mind inside
For this is my own life
And it should be fought for.

49

I Don't Mind

As the ceiling falls inward
I feel the energy expand
There's a seizure in my eyes
And everything is realized
A scattering of oceans
Pits my eternity to life
There is nowhere I can't be
And time is irrelevant
I feel the fear begin to fade
As I find what I've sought
But still do I strive
Because I always yearn for it
Discoveries within me
My yearning will never fade
So long as I can seek

50

Hidden Sweetness

Towards the sunset in its emptiness
I uncovered the hidden sweetness
Kept within unkempt pathways
From shining skies to bland seas
Ascertain its meaning, eventually
Warranted the need to know
But I'm not given this charge
In light of always enjoying
The jagged route to begin with
I'll stay here, you can keep clarity