



THE
ART
OF
SURVIVAL

RACHEL VAN GORDEN

HYSTORY

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where I come from
all the posters that were hung
back in 1900 still hang today
and you don't want to know
the history I've been told
about a man who cuts hair
on Main Street

there's blood everywhere
though the smiles are pretty
and there's blood on my hands too
cause it's my history

it's strange to be small
and told that you are wrong
cause you don't see the differences yet
oh soon you'll hear the words
that spell out how it works
when God decides to get "fancy"

there's fear everywhere
cause good men get lazy
and there's fear in my heart
cause it's my history

*I wonder about the speed of change
I wonder if I'm to blame?
cause, oh, aren't we all the same?*

*I wonder how recycled pain
can be stopped, all the way?
well, I guess it starts with me*

it's a deep tear to touch
when I realize how much
I look like those I've tried to escape
it's a prayer I don't know
but I'm grabbing for the words
to learn to breathe unselfishly

there's room all around
cause we were made for stretching
and there's room for my sound
cause it's my history

FAIRY TALES

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I see you setting fire to your own house
and then blaming the match
you shout out to the neighbors
that you are under attack
and as they run your way
with their rescues and escapes
you decline politely and then
ask them to stay and watch you burn

**fairytale cannot be true or real,
no in a world of selfish choices**

I see you casting ballots with every choice
a patron of both sides
with the tears of a true believer
and then the greed of a liar's eyes
see when the votes are in you can't undo
the marks that you have made
and it's never just you that suffers
in the aftermath of your mistakes

**fairytale cannot be true or real,
no in a world of selfish choices**

*so find that little girl who's trapped
inside of your soul
she'll have her fingers in her ears
and her eyes will be closed
speak slowly, speak clearly
be sure she hears the news*

**fairytale cannot be true or real,
no in a world of selfish choices**

I see you running numbers inside your mind
to tell if it's worthwhile
to pay the bills that winter brings
or flee to the warm and wild
but there's no joy in cowardice
or giving up too soon
the shiny loan will dull with time
and the seeds of debt you've sown will bloom

**fairytale cannot be true or real,
no in a world of selfish choices
so choose wisely**

CHRISTMAS 1914

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(Inspired by the 1914 Christmas Truce on the battlefields of WWI)

the lines in your face
give you away
they show me the sun's favorite spots
they read like a song
born in the shade
but too sweet to stay in the dark

**come and sit with me, come and have a drink
we don't have to solve anything it's Christmas
the war that brings us here today
is big but not too big to wait it's Christmas**

do you think of home
as something we keep
or something we lose if we leave?
well I'm hoping it's both
a brick I can touch
and a fire that will never leave, no, never leave my heart

**come and sit with me, come and have a drink
we don't have to solve anything it's Christmas
the war that brings us here today
is big but not too big to wait it's Christmas**

I've never known cold
so brutal so deep
as Christmas with silence and grief
so, come let's pretend
we're all family
let's quell all this madness with peace

**come and sit with me, come and have a drink
we don't have to solve anything it's Christmas
the war that brings us here today
is big but not too big to wait it's Christmas**

THE ARONIST

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I, I did not start this fire, no
but I am chasing it, even though
I am entirely afraid, afraid to know
how it feels to completely lose myself
to wake up brand new inside someone else
to find courage for two and take twice the pain
oh, I am learning that...

**fire is hard on the heart
there's no hiding once it starts
fire is hard on the heart
but it's beautiful as it burns away the dark**

you, you did not mean to tease the spark
but you sang it straight into my heart
by the time it landed all I could see were lovely flames
and the smoke, well it tells the story best of all
it scribbles and stains to make valuable
proof of the crime we know as love
oh, I am finding that...

**fire is hard on the heart
there's no hiding once it starts
fire is hard on the heart
but it's beautiful as it burns away the dark**

*some say cupid
others say God
many say foolish
the arsonist*

**fire is hard on my heart
but it's beautiful
I think it is beautiful
I'm sure it is beautiful as it burns**

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Robbie (OB) + Ali + Callie, Dad, Mom, Jim, MK, Gama M, Daddy Buck, Lisa, Ris, Pyzer, Preston, Elizabeth, Jody, GC, Shalom, Surrey, Saint, the Burgess + Bennett + Holtzclaw + Cherry + Ratclford + Callahan + Weymouth + White Families, Joy Morgan + the Moore Family, Kelly Moody + the Brown Family, Lisa King, the Conklin Family, the Warwick Family, Siloam + Rock Springs + Bethel communities, Belmont Church, The Village Chapel, Brooke Thompson + the Harris Family, Kelanie Gloeckler, all Shekinah supporters, Emily + Jeff Saylor, Doug Whittle, David Zacharias, my Converse College family, my South Carolina Institute of Leadership for Women (SCIL) family, the Layton Family, Sandy Payne, Kim Bridges, Stephen Mansfield, David Durham (The Crucible), Rob Still, Jason Goforth, Vicki Jennette, Tanya Butler, Dee Simpson, Kim + Jim Thomas, Sharon Metro Roll, Amy Courts, Paul Koopman, Theresa + Joe Mazza, Cheryl + Greg + Ges + Joel Seneff, Jackie Cusic, Robin Weber (Guitar Gallery), Patty + Tom Lene, Nancy + Michael Demus, Michael Brechner, Val + Dan Strain, Toshia Williams, Valerie Cecil, my Frist Center for the Visual Arts family, April Dace, Kelly Minter, CLM, SF, DC, Hadley Rowland, my Artisphere friends, the CESJDS community, and my beloved SC + Nashville + DC friends, Special thanks to Russ Long, Winnie Allibrandi, and the extraordinary musicians that created this project with me. Tony Morra - thank you for your vision, patience, and brilliance. You have been a gift to my life and I'm proud to partner with you. To my Savior, Jesus - you are my home. Thank you for every single moment.

GREAT NIGHT RUDE RIVER

© RACHEL B. VAN GORDEN

o great night who callously holds me captive
you know your power I see in your eyes
and with one short glance I gave you permission
to visit me later and make love to me with your lies

I don't know what it was I said
to make you feel welcome
I don't know that I used words at all
but this is no longer a conversation
cause you don't talk you just destroy

o great night you shepherd a lonely souldier
but you stum it so well even good mothers believe you
it is one slow kiss that rouses the thunder
and startles the clouds bruising leaks in every direction

I don't know what it was I said
to make you feel welcome
I don't know that I used words at all
but this is no longer a conversation
cause you don't talk you just destroy

o great night invisible master of injury
you find your form in the tears of misunderstandings
you teach one stray thought the art of survival
and a rude river is born that divides my senses for miles

I don't know what it was I said
that made you feel welcome
I'm not sure if I used words at all
but this is no longer a conversation
cause you don't talk
no, you never talk
you don't talk
you just destroy

REARRANGING HOME

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it's the break in your voice that paralyzes me
as sweet a rest as there could ever be
it's like the cracks in the floor that hold the memories
in the house I try to sell but I find I cannot leave

how do I say it?
oh, you know all the words I know
yes, I can rearrange them
but you will still see right through
I am sure, I am yours
you are home to me

it's the speed of your smile that leaves me so intrigued
and the pardon on your breath that affords your smile to me
it's like the proof in the cry of a newborn baby
that love makes right what life makes crazy

how do I say it?
oh, you know all the words I know
yes, I can rearrange them
but you will still see right through
I am sure, I am yours
you are home to me

it's the pause in your eyes that makes me long to see
what worlds we've yet to shape and share and meet
it's like the brightest star in a sky spun smiled with beads
a curiously lovely changing masterpiece

I am sure I am yours
you are home

IT'S ALL A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE.

GRATITUDE IS THE SECRET TO HAPPINESS.

LAUGHTER ALWAYS.

RESPECT = THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT TO LOVE.

EFFORT ALWAYS MATTERS.

FORGIVENESS = FREEDOM.

ART SAVES LIVES.

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JASON GOFORTH GUITARS, HARMONICA, ETC.

TONY HOOPER GUITARS

BLAIR MASTERS PIANO

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HEATHER DONEGAN BACKGROUND VOCALS

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