

# Doomsday

*Evan Allee*

As the Sun falls behind the yew tree,  
I watch you making your rounds,  
and I think to myself,  
*When will my world end?*  
*Will we be 90 and 93—*  
*next-door neighbors in assisted living?*  
*Or will we be 25 and 28—*  
*will I die falling?*

As the Sun sets behind the funeral home  
you hug your partner, brother of the deceased,  
and I see how Grief—The Sculptor—digs  
brute fingers and blunt nails into the faces  
of my loved ones, rearranging their features,  
carving bags under their eyes and frown lines  
where there should be dimples,  
and I understand his inability  
to write his brother's obituary.

I imagine the damnation of living  
with a sibling as a corpse, and my chest  
becomes so cold and hollow,  
I fear I mirror Joshua. A grimace  
slashing a pale face, frozen on waxy lips,  
and I do not feel that mine would ever thaw.  
I avoid the once-warm man who laughed  
with his brother while I laughed with you.  
He had a gap between his front teeth.  
He had a full head of beautiful,  
brown curls that are now dull,  
and piled atop his concaved skull.

Your hair is curled, and I imagine you  
in the future, your wedding in Sedona,  
hair flowing in front of red-rocked mountains,  
so vibrant and alive that staring into the Sun  
would bring relief to my watering eyes.  
It is pitifully dim compared to you,  
but I have to thank it for being

the most appropriate thing  
to metaphorize you. On July 15th,  
you burst from the Sun,  
a star in the shape of a big sister—  
too incandescent to be concealed  
by the casket I imagined you in, unbidden,  
when I finally took a look at Joshua, and  
that body looked *nothing* like him.

My life is spent preparing and I am sure  
you would be concerned, but when  
a happy man is scorned by death,  
it's natural—taking shelter  
from the storm. But time  
is a dormant volcano—  
and is that an earthquake, or the cry  
of a newly-dead's loved one?  
Are you in your 60s—is it quick and painless?  
A heart attack? A car crash? Homicide?  
Type II diabetes? Chronic obstructive  
pulmonary disease?  
Will you forget me  
years before time rips my soul from yours?  
Have you been suffering—are we relieved  
your pain has an expiration?  
Will we be 90 and 93—mercifully,  
next-door neighbors  
in assisted living?  
Or 25 and 28—will one of us die  
falling?

If mercy is not a privilege I am granted,  
I will spare a warning:  
If the world tried to take you, I would  
burn it to the ground. If it didn't give you back,  
I would light up the ash, I would let flames  
swallow exorbitant wealth and drown the ocean  
in orange—global warming is a hoax;  
it's just a person in mourning.  
I am warning the world  
for the horror I would become,  
I am no longer a pacifist; I am a liaison  
with a gun, shooting at the Sun, and as sparks  
rain over the heads of the innocent, my hands

will stay cupped, outstretched in demand  
for the remnants of Heaven to give  
what was once my sister back to me,  
even if she is one spark of debris. I will be  
the reason we are cloaked in darkness, I will be  
the heat that suffocates the stragglers.

This will be of no concern to me; I would rather  
be damned than an only child. Moral codes  
are inconsequential without you to love me;  
they're no more than a conch shell reverberating  
vain blood back to me. The rain will make mud  
and your footsteps will be as permanent  
as the relentless shore of Destin Beach  
where I walked behind you,  
my little feet sinking into your steps—  
the waves ate the proof of our lives,  
yet we continued to feed it,  
but I will let my vengeance starve it  
without you to walk with. Beaches we once loved  
will no longer exist for tiny feet to skip through;  
I will not watch children who are not our own  
crash through foamy waves and dig for seashells  
while I dig a grave.

What a sick and twisted sculpture  
I could make ... But who am I, really,  
compared to the center of the solar system?  
And what could *I* do the day the Sun  
decides to collect you? What will I do  
the day my world ends?  
Will I warm my hands  
to mold Death's grimace  
from your cold face? Use leftover clay  
to stuff cracks in the atmosphere,  
and force the universe to share  
its last breath with you?

No. I am a poet, but I am a coward at best,  
so I wash my hands and premeditate  
a nonfiction piece of a world so uninhabitable  
I will inherit the title "Sculptor." This is a  
universe crafted with words in the shape  
of you, in spirit or in chalk. I will try not to

balk when the stars blink at me  
like defibrillator machines.

I stare back  
through the pitch black, wondering  
if this is a sign  
to warm my hands to write, wondering  
if Grief  
will perform a mimicry of mercy in a dream—  
the conformation that I will write  
my best man speech  
before I write  
her obituary.