

*I SHOULD BE LUCKY TO BE  
INVISIBLE*



*Poems by Chris Winfield  
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I Should Be Lucky To Be Invisible

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*I Should Be Lucky To Be Invisible*  
*Pt. 1*

I should be lucky to be invisible  
No human interruptions to add to the world of distraction.  
I can step through my doorway, a portal between my reality and the  
    inscrutable actuality.  
Go to the grocery store, go to the post office, go to the lavanderia,  
do what I need to do and never run into anyone I know.

## *Packages*

Waiting for packages was never meant to happen.  
But I've easily made it integral in my life, just like others have dance music  
or fast cars.  
We have society, so many centuries of it, and I take from it packages.  
The things I need are waiting for me on the front porch.

I do enjoy making those old style retail runs, to some degree,  
but they require so much planning. Especially in Los Angeles.  
I'll never survive the 5pm roads after work, so it must be the weekend.  
And when it's the weekend, I try to make it as exciting as I can.  
I grab a burger and a little soda, like a treat.  
A sweet reward for leaving the house.

## *I Still Have A Voice Even On The Freeway*

I know I still have a voice. I can order at the register and say I want it to go,  
then drive thru California's gauntlet packed with aggressive drivers  
in total control of their pedals, wheels, and horns,  
though I'm assured that won't be for much longer.

Then I go sit in my room. Eat that food.  
And fill the space with a medley of smells.

## *1857 Lemoyne St.*

If I say fewer than fifty words all day, then I've been very polite.  
I'm staying so quiet no matter what they expect.  
Trying to live a life here. I can do a little,  
feel comfortable, and read more.

I'm too tired to read though. It's painfully already ten pm.  
I go to sleep, and then no one hears about my dreams.  
An escape: a strange gift.  
A party: a kind of intimacy I'd forgotten,  
or just disappointment.

## *Expectation Interpretation*

I can hear a blonde woman saying "California"  
every night when I go to sleep. A different voice, but  
more or less the same person. She isn't a fantasy.  
She's the real people that I saw that day.

There's maybe forty people total in Los Angeles.  
Every day L.A. meets my expectations, like an obedient child  
going through the household routines.

I think I'm about to flip on this though.  
I'm not sleeping well, I stay home most of the time.  
It becomes easier to see nobody and myself be no person at all than to  
even put on a shell or make eye contact.  
I put up no signals at all.

## *Dream*

I dream about pulling my oversized work shirt out of my jeans  
and letting the fabric fall out almost to my knees.  
I say “check out my dress” to the person nearest me.  
They love it. In other dreams I recognize who I’m with.  
They say something and I get the sense that  
maybe neither of us wants the other in the dream.  
But still, we’ll get in a bed together, usually mine,  
which I guess could have an interpretation.  
I’ll wake up in the surprising California morning cool.  
Try to figure out which mistake has me so permanently disillusioned,  
as if I found a typo in a purportedly perfect book of poetry.

## *Clay On The Wheel*

So much focus on what we agreed was meaningless.  
It distracted me for a while in memories I wanted to hold on to for unknown  
reasons,  
with so many ultimately irrelevant details about your mouth and face.  
What really strikes me now is how I’ve repressed, I think,  
the way we held hands on your balcony,  
watching the city traffic and quietly talking,  
the one time you asked me to stay over when I thought we were supposed  
to be distant,  
and my excitement to see you on my birthday.

I let go of special and significant, and when we abruptly stopped  
I filed you away as another one who didn’t see me again.

Now I’m invisible in L.A., and I wonder if it was me who disappeared before  
you did.

I try to push back against the questions, spin them as meaningless  
as we agreed our relationship would be.  
Then thousands of miles from Virginia,  
I pull the blankets over my eyes and  
exhale loudly.

## *I Feel Uncomfortable*

I'm trying not to be the same person I was five seconds ago.  
How can I be anything but different though.  
From the moment I was born, I started to recede. My preference.  
Every memory was a time I pushed too hard until I shut it all down.  
Then every thought is devoted to not being the same person I was  
however many, fiveish I guess, seasons ago.  
Something like every fifteen months or so, I look back and assess.  
So far I've either lost or won temporarily.

## *I'm Cool*

Streaks of blood on the back on white sneakers.  
I met some girls from online and never saw them again.  
I got four blisters from all the walking we did.  
Around the block so many times like a leashed routine.  
  
If I'm an omen, I hope that I'm good.  
And then where do they go.  
I see them around and it must  
mean something. Or just nothing, like everything, haha.

## *Finger Tats*

The singer on the stage, the audience connects who he is to the album cover.  
The harmonica player, with all his diatonic keys,  
might have some long term economic goals to make himself more visible.  
Like a solo act. But it's bullshit.  
Nobody knows his name, and that's what he wanted  
from the moment he picked up his instrument.

## *Power Chord*

I pose with my guitar in the mirror, shirtless,  
not necessarily by design. And  
I feel the same presence I did 30 minutes earlier,  
watching the band from the crowd, in this virtualized 2016.  
Loud and energetic and inspiring in that dated rock way.  
They were no opening acts. Much like how I don't wanna be.  
Will they ever put me on stage and let me be cool.  
I don't have to be shirtless if that helps.



## *Comforting*

There is no truth.  
There is one truth.  
There are ten truths.  
There are eleven truths, maybe.  
Why not 100 truths then. Maybe nothing is false.

## *Missed Connection*

You looked at me today,  
I was wearing white shoes, black jeans, a blue shirt, and I have eyes and hair.  
I very distinctly remember you looking at me.  
You were wearing clothes.  
Please send an email including where you saw me, what time,  
a picture of your face, and your phone number.

*I Bet Neil Young Probably Saw the Plot of Land  
That Became the 7-11 My Bus Stop Is In Front of*

No one wants to hear this, or do anything really.  
Just like me, they don't go out or ever pick up their phones.  
No creating, no drinking, no talking.  
Inconsistencies and drugs are hidden, like a cover-up.  
Sometimes I'll smell weed outside, but that's it. Only a whiff.  
So much energy wasted trying to pretend I know where it's all coming from.  
I'm about ready to give up.  
Sitting at home, I can stop everything  
and just focus, even when everything's turned inward.

*Vividly Remember the Layout of the Trailer I  
Took English and Social Studies in 5th Grade in*

A clear light, like an office ceiling or the illuminated bus at night.  
It means expenses paid, full ride, much like they always talked about,  
the people I saw every day while growing up, trying to tell me how to  
avoid waking up in Los Angeles with  
no job and no friends, and no skills.

I've had it. For like a week, I did have it.  
Something like a breakthrough and feeling it's all over at the same time.  
It felt uncomfortably normal, like is this normal? or  
is this what mostly people normally feel?

A full ride to wherever I wanted to go, it was implied  
accompanied by that clear light, which is  
not at all like fibre optics. It's slow but omnidirectional and sustainable  
by me, who becomes free of anxiety, depression,  
and this goofy notion that I'm invisible.

## *Crushing It*

I used to ask so many questions.  
Now when I'm feeling relaxed, I think what was that like for me.  
I'm easily falling into good habits now,  
or trying to, as much as I allow myself.

It's Saturday morning and I'm working on ways to  
manipulate myself. To widen the neural freeways  
that I want widened. Make them up for luxury driving, neurolinguistic  
fluency, and  
experiences that I won't think about while having them.

## *Bad News*

There's major national news and everyone eating al fresco  
can be heard talking about it from the free part of the sidewalk.  
I'm responding to everyone's assertions, in turn, in my head,  
though mostly what I'm thinking is, "You're dumb.  
And so are you. And so am I."

## *Peedeeex?*

Picture moving somewhere else. North this time.  
It's a new ideal. New bus routes to a different downtown.  
New people in silhouette passing by me on the street.

The same me, no denying that at this point.  
All the memories go with me.  
The quote-unquote trauma. The identities of different wood grains  
and where I've seen them before.  
People saying I love you relaxed and happy.  
Drunk, but friendly.  
All the imagination comes too.  
The fantasies about reliving the memories which now  
are somehow constructive,  
with new characters and  
self-serving dialogue.  
Only what I want to hear  
and need to say.

## *I Should Be Lucky To Be Invisible Pt. 2*

Wear the same shirt a few times in a week,  
forget deodorant, skip showers, neglect to floss.  
No one will know but me.

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