



**THE LANGUAGE OF ELEPHANTS**

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# THE LANGUAGE OF ELEPHANTS

What I have to say  
no one else can hear  
but others like myself  
stand a mile away  
over tops of trees  
like a silent bell  
am I getting through  
with my point of view?  
speaking in the language of elephants  
My canvas hanging high  
far above the eye  
still I raise my trunk  
filtering the sounds  
from so far away  
sifting through the junk  
am I getting through  
with my point of view?  
speaking in the language of elephants  
I rumble through the grass  
can you hear me as  
I whisper in your ear?  
fences all around  
but I am free to roam  
far away from here  
am I getting through  
with my point of view?  
speaking in the language of elephants

# THAT'S WHY I LOVE HER

We could always talk away  
the better part of any day  
from the spell she cast  
I never will recover  
I know it sounds clichéd  
but her colors never fade  
I don't need anything from anybody else  
that's why I love her  
People see us through a lens  
of envy and coincidence  
to catch so rare a glimpse  
of some jewel they've discovered  
she runs with her eyes shut  
like a poem through my blood  
naked all the time  
no matter what she wears  
that's why I love her  
fast asleep she takes my hand  
her love as deep as instinct  
I'm a lucky man  
The way she takes me to  
places I never knew  
the way she wins the war  
one way or the other  
the way she tells me straight  
that our love is not too late  
she's everywhere at once  
sleeping in my arms  
that's why I love her

# YOU OCCUR TO ME

You occur to me in the strangest places  
the dim light of stranger's faces  
the shimmering pools of August days  
half-contented sad expressions  
the warm pockets of old confessions  
in points of view that used to be  
you occur to me

I look across the crowded room  
the gilded bride/the scented groom  
and I turn my eyes away

I can see you cotton white  
up against the howling night  
coiled in a wordless melody  
you occur to me

you are my cool apparition  
blue star, sacred and small  
you have no competition  
at all

I hear you sigh through radio static

I can't help it, it's automatic

you wear a veil but I see through

I find you in the smallest things  
you're just there like a wedding ring  
as if it were meant to be  
you occur to me

# AIMING HIGH

I was walking tall in the doll house  
I was skydiving off the first floor  
walking through a dream  
but I was not sleeping  
on the fumes of laughing gas  
I was still weeping  
I was aiming high  
with my feet on the ground  
I was aiming high  
for a beautiful sound  
I was looking for the high five  
from the Big Kahuna  
I was thinking hard  
but of nothing  
I was writing songs  
for the deaf girl  
and the miracle is  
that I'm still rolling  
and the miracle is  
that I still want to  
If I were a crow  
I'd fly jagged  
if I were rich  
I'd dress ragged  
I've got a woman  
who can see me  
she squints at my soul  
with night vision goggles  
and I'm still aiming high

# IF YOU'RE BUILDING A WOMAN

If you're building a woman  
you best take your time  
the blueprints are crucial  
so keep them in mind  
make sure her windows  
let in the light  
if you're building a woman  
you should do it right  
If you're building a woman  
with water and clay  
give her a big dose  
of forgiveness and sway  
give her the option  
to leave or to stay  
if you're building a woman  
it's better that way  
If you're building a woman  
make the foundation deep  
cathedral ceilings  
leaded and steep  
don't cut the corners  
don't move too fast  
if you're building a woman  
build her to last

# SHE MARRIED A DEAD MAN

She thought he was alive  
he could walk and talk and breathe  
she never realized  
he could look but could not see  
he even had a pulse  
protect her from the world  
in spite of all this sterling evidence  
she married a dead man  
He was built to impress  
she could never find the flaw  
he could listen to her talk  
all he heard was “blah blah blah”  
with cufflinks on his wrist  
and money in his fist  
in spite of all her well-intentioned plans  
she married a dead man  
see him swinging underneath a tree  
see how very lifelike he can be  
He should have come with a book  
and a battery pack  
and an extra chromosome  
for the one that he lacks  
but it’s a little late  
he’s waiting at the gate  
with his toolbox and his artificial tan  
she married a dead man

# WHEN TROUBLE COMES

When trouble comes  
I close my eyes  
when trouble comes  
it's no surprise  
I'm a hitchhiker  
with broken thumbs  
when trouble comes  
I tried to run  
but I hit the wall  
I tried to fly  
all I did was crawl  
into the arms  
of all the wrong ones  
when trouble comes  
never saw it coming  
no time to react  
time just keeps on running  
that's a fact  
I need her love  
to calm me down  
I need her voice  
to make a sound  
her true colors never run  
when trouble comes



# CURIOUS

How do you walk  
the way you walk?  
how do you leave them all  
outlined in chalk?  
how do you find  
a way to slip  
out of routine's vicious grip?  
how do you cry  
inside a smile?  
how do you die  
just for a while?  
how do you crawl  
out of the wreck  
with perfect hair  
and self respect?  
I'm curious  
How do you dance  
in empty rooms?  
how do you shine a light  
through catacombs?  
how do you spill  
the holy wine  
and somehow still invoke  
the light devine?  
How do you skate  
smooth and precise  
across a thousand miles  
of broken ice?  
how do you scale  
frustration's wall  
without the slightest risk  
that you may fall?  
I'm curious

# TWICE UPON A TIME

Twice upon a time  
I was yours and you were mine  
all the best parts underlined  
in our little book  
miles of open road  
walking where the river flowed  
anywhere you'd want to go  
I'd be right behind  
twice upon a time  
I was thinking of your smile  
how it lingers for a while  
how you go the extra mile  
for what it is you love  
we were broken/now we're fixed  
pockets full of magic tricks  
rain and sun and darkness mixed  
into something fine  
twice upon a time  
don't be leery of  
the undertow of love  
don't be skeptical of whether  
I'm going to love you forever  
Wonder where the old days went  
wonder how the time got spent  
wonder what the poem meant  
in between the lines  
doesn't matter much to me  
just as long as we can be  
in each other's company  
comic and sublime  
twice upon a time

# BURNING IN THE RAIN

Days go by in a hurry  
no way to slow them down  
got to shoot down every worry  
and bury them underground  
been to Rome/been to Spain  
took a walk/took a train  
everywhere love hissed like a flame  
burning in the rain  
I see your eyes in the water  
I see the water in your eyes  
lets you and I have a daughter  
and a life to memorize  
all I want is the light  
that you aim at the night  
like the arch of a blue blue flame  
burning in the rain  
something you can see for miles  
like a long black train  
something you can see for miles  
through the pouring rain  
Meet me down by the river  
with a blanket and a quill  
on both counts I will deliver  
if I can love you forever, I will  
I'm your man\that's a fact  
it's the truth\not an act  
I'm the wick  
in your blue blue flame  
burning in the rain

# OUTSIDE

The grass is summer green  
the sky a color no one's ever seen  
the weathergirl was smiling  
when she lied  
we should go outside  
we should go  
Water shimmers blue  
wild birds fly (we should fly too)  
everything is shining  
like a bride  
we should be outside  
we should be  
we should be wandering at will  
we should be moving, never still  
we should taxi off the lake  
and be gone  
From a window we  
live inside a world  
of secrecy  
only you and me  
why should we have to hide?  
we should be outside  
we should be

# PRIVATE SLAVE

Go over to the window  
turn around and look at me  
look over your shoulder  
now go down on one knee  
don't move till I say so  
don't think of somebody else  
give me a chill  
a memory to save  
be my private slave  
I want to hear you whisper  
words that you will not speak  
shadows in the mirror  
the light in the room is weak  
put your hands on the ceiling  
put your feet on the dashboard now  
imagine yourself  
through the prism of what I crave  
be my private slave  
No one could resist you  
nobody would even try  
anyone who kissed you  
would be swallowed by the sky  
I'd rather be rejected by you  
than be rewarded with anyone else  
can you make them go away  
and let me be  
your private slave?