

Lino Anunciacion is a Texas-transplant artist from Florida. He is currently an English undergrad at Texas A&M University. His free time is spent being the Director of Community Outreach for his local non-profit poetry organization, Mic Check Poetry (501)(c)(3). In 2016, he was crowned Mic Check Poetry Slam Champion. He has a small obsession with blurry lights, talks too much with his hands, and is deathly afraid of deep water. You can find his two previous works, "The Light Bringers." and "The Ocean is Hell & Heaven" on Amazon.

"In the Dark Spots." is a collection of poems with the sole mission of demonstrating the dark tones involved with existing. While "The Light Bringers." was the testimony and triumph of beautiful light in the face of adversity, tragedy, and depression, this collection serves as a difficult, yet important contrast. It represents the heavy burden of seeing it all. Whether it be the struggles against modern institutions at large or the personal battles to get out of bed, "In the Dark Spots" dives unabashedly into the belief that, if there is a light and an object, there is a shadow.

In the Dark Spots.

Lino Anunciacion

**In the
Dark
Spots.**

Lino Anunciacion

Copyright © 2016 by Lino Anunciacion

FIRST EDITION

All rights reserved

No part of this book may be reproduced without written permission of the author.

Manufactured in the United States of America

eleven40seven Books is a nonprofit literary organization funded by the generosity of the Hamilton Family Endowment, Dr. James Giles, the TCU English Department, and the TCU Insitute for Critical and Creative Expression.

Tamir



TABLE OF CONTENTS

One Thousand Days and Counting
4

Little Black Boy
5

The American Sentence
9

The Forest
10

“What Does the Gun Want?”
12

Things I Think I Would Learn as a Farmer
13

An Excerpt
14

Garden Statue
15

I Got Love Burned into Me Like a Fire Sign
17

Belly of the Beast
18

ONE THOUSAND DAYS AND COUNTING

The scene opens on one thousand crows sitting across from me,
staring at the haunt
that hangs from my jaw.
I am one thousand ghosts telling the same story
like a chorus, abridged.

I drive with the radio off.

There is a constant, steady climax
taking place in my chest.
That is the best story I have today.
A survivor taking body blows from the best of them.

Every scene is a war.
Not a single cannon fires,
but it still holds true.
One thousand ghosts carry gunpowder
on their lips, warning me
about the end credits
that follow.

I am having a Cold War with nobody.
I refuse defeat. I wake up with armor
for skin.

One thousand crows have been a silent audience,
But now they sing in unison, they circle above.
The battle begins.

There will be blood. Rust. Copper. Flowers. Water. Brass. Rocks.
Love. Love. Love.
Laughter. Riot. Grass field. Forest. Fire. Brevity. Pain. Waterfall.
Grass field. Shrapnel.
Dirt. Revelry. Serendipity. Symphony. Sunlight. Sunlight. Love.
There will be love.

LITTLE BLACK BOY

A little black boy
sits in a little black chair,
says,
Hey, it's cool to be alive.

Little black boy
sits in a little black chair,
says,
Ma! I wanna be president when I grow up.

Ma says,
I wanna be here when you grow up.
He doesn't get what that means.

Little black boy
grows out of his little black t shirt,
wants a new one. One that says,
I know how to read well
across the chest. Says,
Friends welcome
on the sleeve. Says,
I mean no harm
on the tag tucked under his collar.

First day of school, he tears his sleeve on the playground,
spills ketchup on his new shirt,
goes home, says,
Hey ma, schools kinda hard
but I learned how to paint, so lifes still good.

Saturday morning, little black boy watching Power Rangers,
says,
Ma! I wanna be a police officer!

She laughs.

He shrugs it off.
He knows good and evil
need a mediator.

He knows that the bad guy has big guns,
but he has a big heart.
He wants to be a hero.
Little black boy wants a big red cape,
wants to fly.

Little black boy is walking to the park,
runs into an elderly couple,
they ask what his name is,
he says,
*My names Tamir
and I want to be a hero.*

They ask,
where are you going?
He says,
*I'm going to the park
to play with my friends.
I want to show them my new shirt.*

On the front pocket it says,
I got this BB gun because it makes me feel safe from bullies.
Says, *I still mean no harm*
on every single button, says,
I wonder what god looks like
on the collar.

Twelve years-old --
never said a prayer that wasn't told to him first.

Twelve years-old, on a Saturday afternoon,
he sits at the park, tells his friends,
I feel like something bad is going to happen to me.

November 22nd, 2014 --

A little black boy named Tamir Rice was shot
by Officer Timothy Loehmann.

Upon arrival at the scene,
only two seconds passed between Officer Timothy
getting out of his vehicle
and Officer Timothy
shooting the twelve year-old boy.
Two seconds.

It only took two seconds.
Doubled over on the ground,
no prayers left to recite,
no place for heroes,
no space for a little boy to grow.

Two seconds, two minutes --
and Ma comes running down the street.
Sees little black boy bleeding out on the ground.
She wants to hold him.
She wants to stop the seeds from spilling
out of the garden she'd been growing
for the past twelve years.
She wants to hold him
so that he can keep growing.
She wants to watch him grow.
The two officers won't let her.
Say they can't let the evidence be compromised.

Two seconds.

In two seconds, people fall in and out of love.
Cities burn. Two seconds.
Galaxies are born. Two seconds.
Heroes are made in two seconds.
Two seconds and the lights turn off.

Timothy, tell me this:

In the two seconds between when you looked at him and
pulled the trigger

did you see president? Did you see hero?

Did you see big red cape? Did you see artist?

Did you see little black boy?

Did you see human at all?

THE AMERICAN SENTENCE

I woke up with bricklayers working endlessly around my body.
I pulled them from my skin and gave them back to you, all of it
back now.

I want you to feel how heavy it all sits on my shoulders these days.
Now I am good like Chicago, and I am getting good at lying.

The American Dream is a good way to die without noticing.

My feet know the worst sides of Arizona and they know them too well.
I left the bricklayers at home so that I could see the whole damn world.
No, I didn't buy jeans like this, I didn't cut my hair like this.
America did this to me, I should have left the bricks at home.
I could have given myself sanctuary or some shade.

The American Dream is a good way to die without noticing.

THE FOREST

In your dream lies a forest
full of trees that every suicide letter was carved from.
You think yours is in there somewhere,
where every flower is in full bloom.
The spines of the skeletons in your closet
blossom gently. They wave you to come closer,
you run through the woods to join them,
plant your feet in the ground,
catch the rain in your hair,
grow out of all the things you've been through,
grow into something beautifully tragic --
desperately gorgeous.

You cannot shine darkness into anything.
You can only take the light out of something.
Darkness is only what's left behind.
You are not what's left behind.
Do not be left behind.

Some days everything takes it out of you.
Some days take everything out of you,
but absence does not equate opposite.

There is no word for the opposite of love.
There is no word for the opposite of love.

Hate is too committed,
and indifference is just an absence.
We built the word *love* like that on purpose --
with no opposite
or other option.

So whether you can feel the forest beneath your feet,
or if your socks are just wet,
walk like you have no other option but to love.

Because either way, you're still standing.
Be the pause before the most beautiful note,
and then be the whole melody.
Even when it's silent, the song is never over.

Some days you will
pull out all your bones
and lay them in a single file line
towards wherever you want to go next.

It's ok to have a direction and not be moving.
It's ok to be moving with no idea where you're going.

Even if you're stuck in the mud
you can write your way out of it.
If your words don't pack a punch,
make sure they lend a hand.
Just know that silence does neither.

Just know that even after they die,
fish don't sink to the bottom.
So even if you die on purpose,
you won't sink into this earth.

No, your friends will find you on the shore, every time
and in all their nightmares they will
wade out into the waters to find you.
Sometimes they will want to drown with you,
but most days they'll just put you back to land
and build a castle around your bones,
then grow you in the garden of their sorrows.
So for the love of God,
for the love of them,
or yourself,
swim ferociously upstream.
Sprint out of the forest as fast as you can.
Leave the wildflowers unattended.

“WHAT DOES THE GUN WANT?”

I want silence. I want
to break the silence.
I want to be the revolutionary.
I want to ride shotgun down
the street, I want to bring the fear.

I was fearfully made, I want to make fear.

I want my right. I want to be right.
I don't kill people. I want to.
It's the only thing I
know how to do.
It's what I'm good at. I want
to be good
at being myself.

I WANT RESPECT.
I WANT TO PROTECT THIS HOUSE.
PROTECT THIS HOME.
I WANT YOU TO HOLD ME.
I WANT TO BE HELD.
I DON'T WANT TO KILL NOBODY.
I DON'T KNOW HOW not TO HURT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW not TO HURT.
I WANT TO BE MYSELF.

THINGS I THINK I WOULD LEARN AS A FARMER

The deep cuts from a long day probably don't dry well.

Dry wells leave even the best farmers thirsty
and make it tough for those who live off the land.

You are all the earth to me.

Living off of you has been

tough.

Can't remember the last time I drank.

AN EXCERPT

They say you can never know someone's true colors.
I know that when people get angry, they see red.
When some people see black, they get angry.
I know that most of those people are white,
but the saddest part is that some of those people are black.
I know that somewhere along the line, blue stopped being my
 favorite color,
and that contrary to popular belief,
black and white are not things you can sound like.
They say no situation is black and white, but
if you let white wear blue, and try to mix it with black, you'll get a
 lot of red --

all over.

GARDEN STATUE

I painted the garden you sat in for so long.
I used the petals from
the dead roses that surrounded you.

I was breathing beauty in decay.
You were breathing beauty, in decay.

I think you knew I wasn't a painter,
but still, you sat there.
I think I knew it wasn't a garden
but still, I painted.

I scribbled something about heaven
at the bottom,
knew you were only a whisper away --
sitting there all

flesh statue, marble tongue . . .
Every word you spoke to me was carved
from an unsteady heart.

Then you went and pulled
and picked at all of your roots.
I asked you not to do that.
You said, *good things don't grow
in desolate spaces,
get out of this empty heart.*

You let the wind carry you across Texas.
I never hated this great state so much before.
There are too many
trees and not enough gardens.
There are too many
poets and not enough painters.
There are too many
statues and not enough tongues stretching out into the void, screaming,
I love you.

There are too many
tongues screaming out *I'm leaving* and not enough stomach to say,
I'm sorry.

There is too much sun
and not enough warmth.

There is too much space
and not enough me to reach across to you.

I know that's where
the good things are -- I bet my life on it.
I think I'm dying.

Ten years from now,
I imagine I will scavenge the last
few memories of you from my head.

With one last breath, your name will ricochet
in my ribcage
before I mumble it out of my teeth,
over and over until I do not recognize the name as a whole --

Just letters brushed together in an attempt to recollect.

I will walk away only to launch back into you --

Brick wall, I crumble upon contact.

Your voice still rings in between my fingers.
I try to rinse it off,
but rose petals keep
flooding through the faucet.

Ten years from now I imagine
your garden will be locked around my throat,
dust and desperate, desolate space that it is.
Good things may never grow in this heart
but you did.

I GOT LOVE BURNED INTO ME LIKE A FIRE SIGN

In the dead silence of night, I wait
for the dream to come drunkenly stumbling through the front door.
I waited up for you, now kiss me goodnight, I say.

Like clockwork,
you burst in the doorway,
tear through the frame,
fire and fury and beautiful scorching passion.
You hurl into me, and I don't even flinch.

I don't mind the burns, so don't apologize.
I gather a tiny tidal wave on my tongue
every day, preparing for your arrival.
My mouth fits like a charm
on your collarbones.
I pour it there while I hold you.

When I sit with the dream in silence,
know that I am only healing.
I swallowed one too many flames.
My chest has been an empty basin
waiting for the storms that it carries.

BELLY OF THE BEAST

In the belly of the beast, lie my people.
Black and bruised from the used history books
we did not choose to read.
Surrounding us is the acid.
It burns at our skin,
but slowly,
like an ether.
You call it microaggressions,
call it wrong place wrong time
call it respectability politics
call it what you want.
We don't call it anything.
Sometimes We just struggle in silence,
refusing to show pain or fear.
Even the most whitest, I mean quietest, rooms
could not hear the tears fall from our faces.

They drop on the tongue of the beast,
and some days they quench his thirst,
but other days they go down the wrong pipe
and it chokes him a little.
I call those days Kendrick Lamar.
I call those days iCon.
I call those days when I can,
because a lot of those days are cut short,
like a lot of black lives --
all of them too soon.

The beast tattoos their names on his skin.
Riddled with black ink,
so much black ink, you might think he was one of us.
He will not speak them out loud.
He cannot pronounce them.
He wouldn't look twice if he saw them on a resume,
he wouldn't look twice if he saw them on a loan request,
but he will never forget.
No champion forgets the taste of victory,

and this beast has celebrated the taste for centuries.
He drinks from the river of my blood.
We sit in the belly of the beast.

Surrounding us is the acid.
Sometimes it kills us,
but it's even worse when it doesn't.
Sometimes death isn't enough for the beast.
It would rather us live life like we're already dead.
Explains why the school house looks like a room
filled with coffins
or prison cells.
Coffins / / Cells
In my world, those two words mean the same things.

In my world, if you see the beast
and you do nothing to stop it,
you're probably looking in the mirror.
If you listen closely, you'll hear us sitting in your belly.
Surrounding us is the acid.
It chews at our flesh and has the nerve to call us beast,
to call us super predator, to call us dog.
Well if I'm a dog, watch me bark and bite;
take my canines to the insides and eat my way out.
I won't stop until I see light.
I won't stop until I bring it back to my people.

So when you see my people suffer,
and you choose to do nothing about it,
when you get that feeling in your stomach,
just know
thats me
right there,

and I'm coming out.

eleven40seven



Printed thanks to our friends at

