

Love Lost & Found

We need a lost and found for love,
a phone number, an answering machine,
and maybe . . . maybe even the imaginary
address of some shack, rotting, of course, beside
rusted tracks in deep dust where no train
has strained the rails for years.
Or why not an abandoned bar, neon weeds, junked cars,
graffiti-smearred glass still fogged by the gasps of long-gone lovers,
their teary promises adrift in Dixie cup ships on puddled beer?
We wouldn't need elaborate pens, no chain link fences,
cement blocks, or locks like at the animal shelter or stockyards.
Walls and fences never held love anyhow.
No, all we need is a stable place our quivering minds can embrace
in this eternal lonely moment we've named Now.
And we need no staff, really, just one friendly recorded voice.
"Please describe this love you lost," it will say.
"Tell us where you last had it. Speak slowly. Details matter.
Leave your number when you finish. And your name."
Then there'll be infinite tape that automatically erases,
rewinding with the whirring kindness of a caress.
But in those hollow nights when darkness presses
heavy as a boot heel on our throats,
when each breath teases our lungs not to release it,
and when each memory threatens to choke . . .
well, those are the times I lie dead awake
and long to climb cold moonbeams into sky.
I cannot recall a reason to live without love
And I don't have enough drive left to die.
Those are the times I laugh mad as a loon,
understanding that hell is just another word for alone,
that solitude is a synonym for sorrow,
and that broken hearts are harder to mend than bone.
In those times when Nothing seems too much to want,
and Nothing would require too much ambition to be,
when Nothing describes all I've finally become,
when I am Nothing, and Nothing is me, well . . .
that's when I most think we need a love lost and found,
a place we could call the one voice who would listen,
who would take our number, take our name
and in leave us hope that some night our phone will ring
and someone say, "I think I have what you've been missing."