

JAEIDE X

Selected Poetry

REVIEW EDITION



FOUR PERFORMANCE POEMS

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Set This Fire to Applause

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I got tired
of auditioning for love
from people
who couldn't even love themselves correctly.
Tired of shrinking my flame
so insecure people
could feel taller standing next to me.
Do you know what it feels like
to pour oceans into people
just to die of thirst yourself?
Yeah.
That kind of heartbreak
don't make you soft.
It makes you dangerous.
Because one day
the abandoned version of you
gets angry enough to resurrect herself.
And baby—
that resurrection got teeth.



See, I used to wear
self doubt
like skin.
Like religion.
Like chains inherited from generations
of “be humble,”
“be quiet,”
“don’t be too much,”
“don’t make people uncomfortable
with your greatness.”
Too much?
Nah.
I was never too much.
They were just too little
to hold me properly.

Talk about it.
I spent years
begging for crumbs
while carrying entire bakeries in my spirit.
Years waiting for support
from people
who secretly prayed
I would stay broken enough
to need them.
But pain has a funny way
of introducing you to your real reflection.
And mine looked me dead in the eyes one night
and said—
“Either become your own hero
or keep dying slowly
inside rooms that only tolerate you.”

Whew.
That hit like gasoline and revelation.
So I stopped asking permission
to exist loudly.
I stopped apologizing
for ambition.
For brilliance.
For taking up space
with my voice,
my laughter,
my art,
my healing.

I learned confidence
ain't walking into a room
thinking you're better than everybody.
It's walking in
without needing anybody
to tell you who you are.
That's different.

See now?
I clap for myself first.
Not because I'm arrogant—
because I survived things
people never even saw.
I survived betrayal
with a straight face.
Cried in bathrooms.
Smiled through panic.
Held everybody together
while secretly unraveling at the seams.
And still—
I got back up.
Still—
I kept creating.
Still—
I kept loving.
Still—
I kept showing up
with fire in my chest
and poetry in my mouth.

That deserves applause.

So now
I embrace
every scar like a love letter from survival.
Every failure like proof
I had the courage to try.
And validation?
Baby, I stopped starving for it.
Because the people who overlooked me
were never the authors of my worth.

Imagine letting blind people
judge your light.
Couldn't be me anymore.

Now I take the lead
in my own damn story.
No more supporting role
in lives where I was born to headline.
I became motivation
for the version of me
that almost quit.
The woman who sat on the edge of her bed
questioning if she was enough.
Questioning if anybody would ever choose her fully.
And I wish I could go back
and tell her—
“They will.
But first...
you gotta choose yourself.”

That's the real revolution.
Not revenge.
Not bitterness.
Not becoming cold.
Choosing yourself
so completely
that even your wounds
start healing from the attention.

So if nobody else cheers for me?
Cool.
I brought my own applause.
And trust me—
when a woman learns
how to become her own biggest fan,
the whole world eventually
has no choice
but to watch her burn bright enough
to become unforgettable.



CONUNDRUM:

Figure Me Out...

If You Can



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Tell me...
Who decided
that strength
had to wear muscles?
Who convinced the world
that silence
was surrender?
Who measured intelligence
by diplomas
instead of decisions?

See...
That's the first conundrum.
Because the loudest person
ain't always the leader...
and the quietest soul
might be carrying enough wisdom
to rewrite the room.

I'm...
more brains than brawn...
more bite than bark...
So...
go ahead...
try to figure that conundrum out.



See, I've been underestimated
more times
than I've been understood.
People looked at my smile
and assumed softness.
Heard my kindness
and confused it
for weakness.
Saw my patience
and thought
I lacked power.

No...
I was simply deciding...
whether you deserved
to meet the version of me
that doesn't blink.

See, I don't start fires...
I become one
when somebody keeps striking matches.

Contradiction?
Maybe.
Or maybe...
that's called boundaries.

Because I can love you
without allowing you
to use me.
Pray for you...
without chasing you.
Forgive you...
without reopening the door
you slammed in my face.

See...
that's wisdom.
Not revenge.

Another conundrum.

I can stand alone...
without being lonely.
I can miss people...
without needing them back.
I can remember the pain...
without living there.
I can cry...
and still be courageous.
I can tremble...
and still move forward.

Because courage
was never
the absence of fear.
It was fear...
running out of excuses.

Now here's another contradiction...
I'm soft enough
to notice
the butterfly...
yet strong enough
to survive
the hurricane.

I write poems...
but I don't live in fantasy.
I dream...
with steel in my spine.
I speak life...
but don't mistake my vocabulary
for vulnerability.

My words
don't whisper...
they perform surgery.
Cutting lies away
until only truth
is left breathing.

Some folks collect enemies.
I collect lessons.
Some collect applause.
I collect purpose.
Some chase attention.
I chase impact.

Because clout
expires.
Character doesn't.

Now answer me this...
How can someone
be broken...
and unbreakable
at the same time?
How can scars
become credentials?
How can tears
become testimony?
How can surviving
become serving?

See...
that's the mathematics
of resilience.
The arithmetic
of adversity.
Where subtraction...
creates multiplication.
Where every loss
makes room
for greater gain.

Figure...
that...
out.

I've been called
too much...
and not enough...
sometimes
in the very same sentence.
Too loud.
Too quiet.
Too confident.
Too emotional.
Too ambitious.
Too sensitive.
Too complicated.

And I finally realized...
the problem
wasn't me.

The problem was...
they wanted a paragraph...
when I was an entire library.
They wanted convenience...
from someone
created for significance.

That's their conundrum...
not mine.

See, contradictions
are everywhere.
The richest people
still feel poor.
The busiest people
have no time to live.
The connected generation...
has forgotten
how to connect.

We scroll
through thousands...
yet starve
for one authentic conversation.
We wear smiles...
like makeup...
while anxiety
applies the foundation.

We shout,
"Look at me!"
while secretly praying...
"Please...
see me."

That's the world.
One giant contradiction.
One beautiful...
broken...
conundrum.

And maybe...
just maybe...
we're not supposed
to solve every mystery.
Maybe some things
are meant
to be experienced...
not explained.

Maybe the greatest minds
don't have all the answers...
they simply ask
better questions.

So if you leave here tonight
trying to define me...
good luck.

Because I refuse
to fit inside
boxes
built by people
too afraid
to live outside them.

I'm the equation
that laughs at calculators.
The riddle
that rewrites itself.
The calm
inside chaos.
The melody
inside mayhem.
The ink
that refuses
to run dry.

I'm more brains than brawn...
more bite than bark...
A contradiction
wrapped inside conviction...
standing tall
without permission.

So...
go ahead...
take your best shot...
and try...
to figure...
that conundrum...
out



Broken-Hearted



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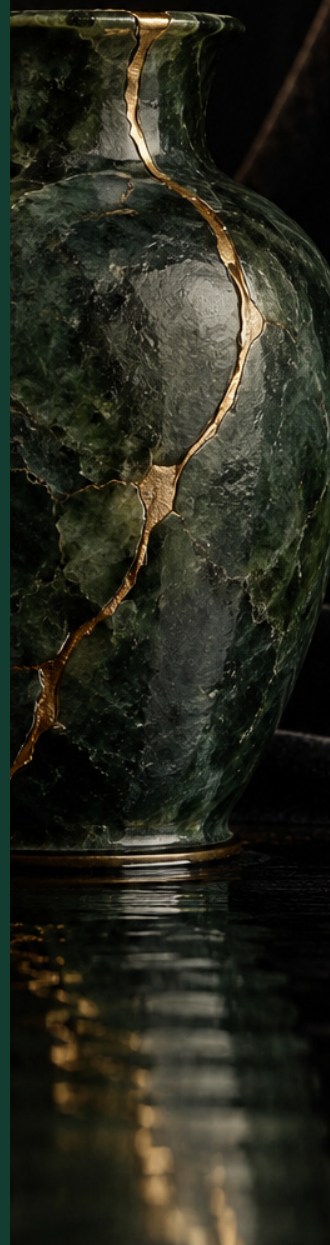
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They ask me how I'm doing...
I smile.
The kind of smile
that deserves an Oscar,
an Emmy,
a standing ovation.
Because nobody applauds
the woman
who learned how to cry
without changing
her mascara.
Nobody notices
how heartbreak
can dress itself
in confidence.
See...
I don't look broken.
I look productive.
I laugh.
I create.
I go live.
I encourage everybody else
while secretly wondering
who's gonna encourage me.



And that's the thing about melancholy...
It doesn't always wear black.
Sometimes it wears lip gloss
and a fresh outfit
while bleeding
beneath the fabric.

After eighteen years...
Eighteen.
Years.
I had convinced myself
that maybe love
was a language
I would never speak fluently again.
Then...
There you were.
A breath
of fresh air
after surviving emotional suffocation.
You made me laugh
from somewhere deep...
that place
I forgot still existed.
You didn't just compliment my face...
You challenged my mind.
And if you know me...
You know
my intelligence
is the most seductive thing about me.

My thoughts
have always been
my favorite curves.
You listened.
You understood references
other people ignored.
Conversations with you
felt like jazz...
Improvised...
effortless...
beautifully intelligent.
I wasn't just falling for a man...
I was falling
for how I became
when I was around him.
Hope
looked good on me.

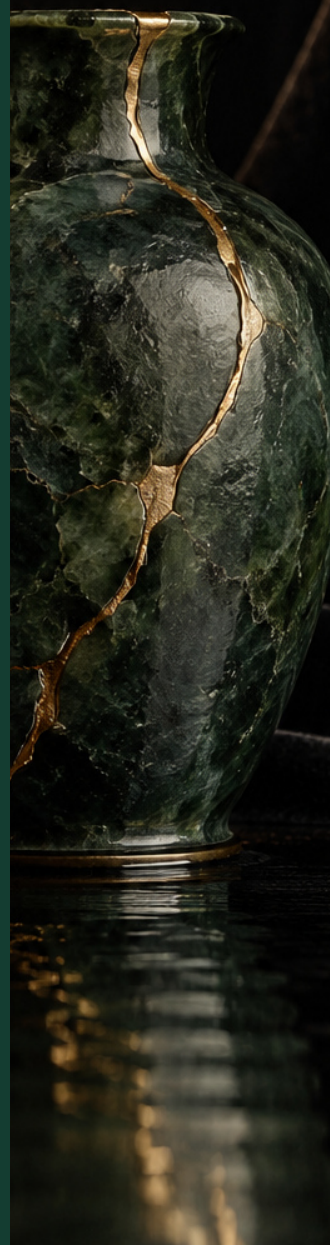
Then...
Silence.
Not an argument.
Not goodbye.
Not,
"I don't think this is working."
Just...
Ghost.
As if five months
could be erased
like fingerprints
from a crime scene.
Tell me...
How does someone
become invisible
without ever leaving your memory?
How do you mourn
someone
whose body
is still walking around
breathing somewhere
while your heart
is attending
their funeral?

The hardest part
wasn't losing you.
It was losing
the future
my heart
had quietly started decorating.
I had already picked out
laughter
for the living room.
Peace
for the bedroom.
Late-night conversations
for the kitchen table.
I had finally unpacked
the baggage
my marriage left behind...
Only to discover
I was unpacking it
inside another goodbye.

So now...
I perform healing
like spoken word.
Every clap
covers another crack.
Every smile
conceals another storm.
Every,
"I'm good,"
is another chapter
written in invisible ink.
People say,
"You're so strong."
No...
I'm just practiced.
There's a difference.
Strength
doesn't always mean
you stopped hurting.
Sometimes it simply means
you became fluent
in hiding the accent
of your pain.

But hear me...
One day...
This broken-hearted poetry
will become
a love poem
to myself.
One day
I'll stop looking
for the man
who disappeared...
And celebrate
the woman
who refused to.
Because you ghosted me...
But I...
I refuse
to haunt myself
for someone
who chose
not to stay.

And maybe...
Just maybe...
The saddest melody
I ever carried
was never meant
to be my ending.
It was only
the rhythm
that taught
my heart
how to survive
until it learned
to write
a different song.



I Love So Hard



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I love...
so...
hard.
Like my heart
don't come with brakes—
only gas pedals.
No speed limits.
No caution signs.
Just...
GO.

If I love you...
I'm all in.
Both feet.
Head first.
Eyes closed.
Faith open.
That's dangerous.

(Beat.)



See,
my love don't know
how to play tag.
It don't chase.
It don't flirt with feelings.
It plants roots.
Builds foundations.
Starts sketching blueprints
while you still deciding
whether you even like the neighborhood.

(Crowd.)

I love so hard...
I start praying for your future
before you ever become
part of mine.
I remember
your favorite song.
Your favorite meal.
The stories you forgot
you even told me.
I notice
when your smile changes keys.
I hear pain...
inside laughter.
I can feel distance...
before your feet
ever start walking away.

(Breathe.)

That's my gift.
That's my curse.
Because everybody
loves being understood...
Until it's time
to understand me.

(Crowd.)

Funny how that works.
Everybody wanna borrow
my sunshine...
Ain't nobody asking
who keeps paying
my electric bill.
Everybody loves
the fruit...
Don't nobody ask
how tired
the tree is.

(Beat.)

My love...
got calluses.
It's been working.
Heavy lifting.
Carrying relationships
that should've had
two people
holding the weight.
Instead...
I became the bridge...
while they enjoyed
the view.
I became the glue...
while they kept
testing gravity.
I became the safe place...
for people
who never felt safe
enough
to stay.

(Breathe.)

I love so hard...
I learn your scars
like Scripture.
Study your silence
like it's sacred.
Memorize
the rhythm
of your heartbeat...
Just to discover...
I was only
background music
in yours.

That thing...
right there...
That'll make you question
your own reflection.

(Crowd.)

Was I too much?
Too available?
Too patient?
Too forgiving?
Too willing
to keep giving CPR
to relationships
that flatlined
months ago?

(Beat.)

Nah.
I wasn't too much.
I was too invested
in people
who only wanted
temporary housing
inside permanent love.

See...
Some folks
don't know
what to do
with consistency.
Chaos
feels familiar.
Healthy
feels suspicious.
Real love
feels too quiet...
When they've spent
their whole lives
dating fireworks
instead of fireplaces.

(Breathe.)

Meanwhile...
I'm over here
building fireplaces.
Warmth.
Safety.
Peace.
The kind of love
that says,
"I ain't going nowhere."
The kind of love
that checks on you
when nobody's watching.
The kind of love
that chooses you
even after the butterflies
have gone to sleep.

(Crowd.)

But somewhere...
I forgot...
to choose me.
I kept making reservations
for people
who always canceled.
Kept setting tables
for guests
who never planned
to eat.
Kept writing chapters
for readers
who stopped
after the introduction.

(Beat.)

I'm tired.
Not tired
of loving.
Don't get that twisted.
I'm tired
of auditioning
for roles
I already earned.
Tired
of proving
I'm enough
to people
still trying
to prove themselves.

(Breathe.)

Love...
don't seem
to go hard
for me.
At least...
that's what I used
to believe.
Then my spirit
pulled me aside
and whispered...

"What if...
love has been
coming for you...
but you've been
opening the door
for everybody else first?"

(Beat.)

Oooooo...
That sat heavy.
Maybe...
I kept giving away
VIP access...
to people
who only bought
general admission.
Maybe I confused
potential
with promise.
Chemistry
with commitment.
Attention
with intention.

(Crowd.)

So hear me...
My heart
ain't closed.
It's under
new management.

Applications
look different now.
Consistency
is the password.
Communication
is the currency.
Reciprocity...
is the rent.

If your love
can't match mine...
Don't lease space
inside my soul.

(Breathe.)

Because my love
is expensive.
Not because
it's complicated...
Because it's genuine.
Loyalty
costs something.
Presence
costs something.
Showing up
every single day...
costs something.

And baby...
I've been paying
everybody else's bill
for far too long.

(Crowd.)

So here's
what I know now...
I don't love wrong.
I love rare.
I don't love weak.
I love with weight.
With backbone.
With both hands open.
With all ten toes planted.
With prayers
attached to my passion.
With purpose
attached to my presence.

And one day...
Somebody's gonna meet me
at full volume.
They won't ask me
to shrink.
Won't ask me
to soften.
Won't ask me
to stop loving hard...

They'll simply...
love hard...
back.

(Beat.)

Until then...
I'll keep this heart
clean.
Not cold.
Protected.
Not imprisoned.
Open.
But discerning.

Because I finally learned...
The greatest love story
I was ever meant
to write...
started the moment
I stopped begging
other people...
to read the chapters
God already wrote
about me.

I love...
so...
hard.

And from this day forward...
the first heart
that gets
all of that love...
will be
mine.

(Blackout.)



AUTHOR REVIEW

About this edition.

THE COLLECTION

Four complete performance poems by Jaeide X.
This is a selected collection, not the author's complete collected works.

THE TEXT

Original wording, punctuation, line breaks and performance cues are preserved. A page turn within a stanza does not introduce a new stanza.

THE REVIEW

The collection title remains provisional.
Sale or wider release requires author approval.

READING THIS PDF

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