

Janie Ethel's bestie

Hold me, smell of mildew

I wanna die in this room feeling complete by her/w her, solace in her company

trauma

I still shake

Just by nature

Easy to hate, easy to blame

Shoot me down

Come on, hurt me

I'm wide open and deserving

"just do it already" / rip the bandaid off
Ethel's distorted self value

Ethel mourns changing relation

Please don't leave me anxiously

I'll always need more Ethel will always need her BFF

Please leave open your most quiet door begs Janie to leave some small part of her changing life available to her

I know she's your girl now

But she was my girl first Janie is Ethel's only love (platonic + generally)

She was my girl first

I can see the end in the beginning of everything anticipates losing

And in it, you don't want me Ethel feels she will be replaced

But I still play pretend like I don't watch you leaving willful ignorance
child-like behavior, emphasizing youth + age

I will always love you

I will always love you

I will always love you

I will always love you

Oh, I will always

emphasizes theme that love is never enough to make someone stay

* cut off symbolizes the end of their relationship

It's not looking good } ethel saying nothing goes right in her life
 But did it ever?
 Low stakes, low faith } low faith that things will work out. losing janie
 But I will wait } leaves her with nothing to believe in
 I will wait } naive, hopeful behavior
 I will wait } establishes theme of waiting for another while
 I will wait } being ignorant to issues
 I will wait } repetition to convince herself
 You'll keep changing. } janie will grow + change while ethel is frozen due to
 I will stay the same } trauma + events to come.
 And turn the page } hope for renewal but it is blank where her story should
 To find it blank be.
 Except for my last name Cain is stuck w/ her through blood, rather than will
 I know you love her } farlure to write future
 But she was my sister first } love deeper than friendship

Willoughby's Theme

Instrumental } the dizzying thrill + horror of falling in love
 } inevitably changed by love: for better or worse

Fuck Me Eyes

seductive gaze to signify desire to have sex w/
 } confident, attracting sexual
 } attention

She really gets around town in her old Cadillac

In her mom's jeans that she cut to really show off her ass }

She's got her makeup done, and her high heels on

She's got her hair up to God, she's gonna get what she wants } she puts effort into being sexually
 } desirable to get her desires met

Her nails are heartbreak red 'cause she's a bad motherfucker femme fatale

And all the boys wanna love her when she bats her "fuck me" eyes
 want to but will not

She goes to church (she goes to church) straight from the clubs } judgement from ethel

They say she looks just like her mama before the drugs } misogyny + shame + comparison

She just laughs and says, "I know, " (I know), "She really taught me well Holly's mother was an
 example of how to attract men,
 She's no good at raisin' children, but she's good at raisin' hell" } balance opposing lives

Holly didn't have a proper
 role model

↓
 glamorizes her mother's
 behavior

ethel is aware
 of the
 duality

Her daddy keeps her in a box, but it's no good *father tried + failed to restrict her voice sexuality*

The boys can't get enough of her, and her "honey, fuck me" eyes
sweet + sticky

Nowhere to go, she's just along for the ride (she's just along) *care free + reckless, no one to get home to*

She's scared of nothin' but the passenger's side *fear of not having control, contrasts her badass attitude*

Of some old man's truck in the dark parkin' lot (parkin' lot) *trauma?*

She's just tryna feel good right now *shows her desire for instant gratification*

They wanna take her out
But no one ever wants to take her home } *everyone wants to have sex + limited relations w/ her but no one wants to love her long term ethel relates w/ Holly*

long term behavior
Three years undefeated as Miss Holiday Inn *location for sexual relations earned her title*

Posted outside the liquor store 'cause she's too young to get in *shows youthful way of picking up men*

They ask her why she talks so loud (talks so loud) *never heard*

"What ya do with all that mouth?" (All that mouth) *sexualized even when speaking*

Boy, if you're not scared of Jesus, fuck around and come find out *threat turned to a challenge*

She's got the radio on, blastin' with her big white smile (big white smile)

Pretty baby with the miles, and when she leaves *miles is a metaphor for body count*

They never see her wipin' her "fuck me" eyes (oh, oh-oh, oh-oh) *Holly's loneliness shows, dropping her act, struggling inside + hiding pain*

Nowhere to go, she's just along for the ride (she's just along)

She's scared of nothin' but the passenger's side

Of some old man's truck in the dark parkin' lot (parkin' lot)

She's just tryna feel good right now

They wanna take her out

But no one ever wants to take her home

Home

But no one ever wants to

Take her home

Oh, no one ever wants to

Take her home (take her home)

Take her home (take her home)

I'll never blame her, I kinda hate her *cant help but empathize w/ Holly*

I'll never be that kinda angel *etnel will never be so desirable, wanted*

I'll never be kind enough to me *deeply rooted insecurity*

I'll never blame her for tryna make it

But I'll never be the kinda angel

He would see *willoughby* *wouldnt recognize etnel like he does Holly*

Nowhere to go, she's just along for the ride

She's scared of nothin' but the passenger's side

Of some old man's truck in the dark parkin' lot (dark parkin' lot, dark parkin' lot)

She's just tryna feel good right now (good right now)

Now, oh-oh

She really gets around town

She really gets around town

She really gets around town

"bad dream" depicting/eternity,
anxiety/revolving around loving
willoughby

Nettles

We were in a race to grow up *race is a survival tactic given traumatic upbringing*

Yesterday through today 'til tomorrow *constant challenge of moving forward*

But when the plant blew up *when the reality of the world overpowers love*

A piece of shrapnel flew and slowed that part of you *suggests embedding*

The doctors gave you until the end of the night *in this scenario, willoughby*

But not 'til daylight (not 'til daylight) *is close to surviving, but it isn't enough. cruel reality of love.*

Not 'til daylight (not 'til daylight)

Time passes slower in the flicker of the hospital light *she is losing herself + her time to her anxieties*

I pray the race is worth the fight *praying her forced growing up leads to something better*

Made a fool of myself down on Tennessee Street *where she grew up + had a breakdown holds misogynistic undertones*

It wasn't pretty like the movies *comments on romanticized suffering, hers was brutal*

It was ugly, like what they all did to me *cycles of trauma, they = family, church, community*

And they did to me what I wouldn't do to anyone *ethel wants to break the cycle shows her empathy*

You know that's for sure

Tell me all the time not to worry (worry) *recalling advice from willoughby. their love is not confined by earth. when they will have an eternity in heaven*

And think of all the time I'll, I'll have with you *they will have an eternity in heaven*

When I won't wake up on my own (wake up on my own), wake up on my own *fear of being alone*

Held close all the time, knowin' I'm half of you *ethel doesn't feel whole an' her own*

Mm, mm

Mm, mm

Mm, mm, mm

Mm, mm

Mm

death Lay me down where the trees bend low *soft, vulnerable plants evolved to be painful for self protection*
Put me down where the greenery stings *nettles*
I can hear them singin' (singin')

"To love me is to suffer me," and I believe *that it etel likens herself to the nettles. for anyone to love her, they must first endure her.*

When I lay with you in that auld lang room *house in nebraska*

Wishin' I was the way you say that you are *will. assures her she is fine. etel is not okay and sees through will's dishonesty. misogynistic*

You'll go fight a war, I'll go missin' *he will go + fight his battles by force*

I've warned you, for me, it's not that hard*
foreshadowing

That picture on the wall you're scared of looks just like you (you) *will is scared of turning out like his father. yet already resembles him*

I wanna bleed, I wanna hurt the way that boys do (oh)

And maybe you're right and we should stop watchin' the news

'Cause, baby, I've never seen brown eyes look so blue

etel enjoys the expressive anger men can show and the freedom that comes w/ it wants to be rambler, rather than quietly suffering the burden of the world outside of their relationship is heavy. etel shuts it out while willoughby faces it

Tell me all the time (tell me all the time) not to worry (not to worry)

And think of all the time I'll, I'll have with you

When I won't wake up on my own (wake up on my own), wake up on my own

Held close all the time, knowin' I'm half of you

Think of us inside (think of us inside) after the weddin' (after the weddin') *love + wedding as an escape from her past*
Sufferin' the while to lie a time or two *suffering to experience pleasure a couple of times*

When we won't wake up on our own (wake up on our own) *change so we could reflect etel's vision of waking w/ willoughby and their future children*

Wake up on our own (wake up on our own)

Held close all the time, knowin' (knowin')

This was all for you

ethel feels truly held by willoughby,
making her past worth it because it
led her to him
suffering as purpose.

Think of us inside

Gardenias on the tile

gardenias are ethel's mother's favorite flower.
emissioning them, wed + in their new home,
like when her parents first fell in love

Where it makes no difference who held back from who

emotional + insecurity struggles
are in the past. now + now,
they are in love + that's all
that matters

To love me is to suffer me

Willoughby's Interlude

Instrumental

dust bowl

Pretty boy

"you're not leaving here"
"whatever you want darling"
tension

idealized figure

Natural blood-stained blond visual of trauma + mental struggles

With the holes in his sneakers poverty; running from problems; restless

And his eyes all over me willoughby's attraction + interest in ethel

Drive-in slasher flick again drive in as an opportunity for sexual
relations

Feeling me up as a porn star dies loss of innocence

He's watching me instead she focuses on this due to insecurities
that she isn't sexually desirable enough

Eighth grade death pact strike me dead chasity pact? religious pressure, loss
of innocence

All of Alabama view of home as the whole world as it is all
you know.

Laid out in front of your eyes

But all you could see was me willoughby chose to explore ethel instead

You walked in, you were singing simple joys; focus of ethel's memories
casual entrance

You tried to wade in 'cause you wanted *approach slowly* rather than diving in. he wanted her to understand him + his intentions
Just to tell me who you were *"tell"* rather than show

You were kind *implies that ethel wasn't listening to him*

Dyin' to tell me

You'll wait if I have to make sure *he wanted to tell her he loved her. ethel's trust issues made it take her longer to realize + allow herself to love him. he was willing to wait until she was sure.*

Pretty boy

Scared of the rain, by God *willoughby fears weather + god(?). rain: divine punishment*

Tend to the row of your violets *care for + nurture something fragile*
vs gardenias opposing values + needs

With your eyes all over me *ethel is the fragile thing he tends to*

Watching, hoping *hoping the destruction of their relationship is slow so that she can have it for longer*
The wind blows slowly

So I can keep you a moment

Grew up hard, fell off harder *hard/challenging upbringing that made growing up even harder. mirrors nature of the drug bent.*

Cooking our brains, smoking that shit
introduces them to drugs

Your daddy smoked in Vietnam *willoughby fears becoming his father, yet falling in the footsteps of his drug use.*

You'd be a writer *willoughby's dreams before his generational trauma*
If he didn't leave all his hell for you *became too much to bare.*

Saying if you could, you'd leave it all *suicidal desires*

I knew it was love *• ethel experiences + realizes her love in a moment of pain*

When I rode home crying *• her insecurity leads her to envision him loving + sleeping w/ other girls*

Thinking of you fucking other girls

But when you *despite her insecurity, she didn't doubt his*
Said that you're in love *feelings + confessions of love*

I never wondered if you're sure

Pretty boy *drug addiction as an instrument of dying*
Consumed by death *mirrors the nature of the once alive dust bowl*

With the holes in his sneakers

And his eyes all over me

Over me, over me } *foreshadows the end of their relationship*
Over me, over me } *ethel convincing herself she is the only one*
Over me, over me } *willoughby is loving*
Over me, over } *willoughby is over her?*
Over

A Knock At The Door

Satan's in the state penn' *satan = willoughby's father returning from war ruined*

You're here with both your fists *ready to meet his father w/ violence*

And you're not scared of no knock on the door *he isn't scared of his father dying*

Everything I've loved *connects love + death in ethel's mind*

I've loved it straight to death *loved it/them until they left her.*

So I'm still scared of that knock on the door *ethel fears death + those she loves dying.*

No one should ever see their friend *ethel progressively watches willoughby*
They've known since they were just kids *loose more, more throughout their relationship*

Foam up and bite it on the floor *seizure?*

You never need to call my name

Though I love it all the same

I know you by your knock on the door (oh, oh)

I know you by your footsteps on the floor

ethel returns to her fantasized, obsessive love, idealizing how deeply she

"knows him" knowing people say their foot-steps reflect their childhood trauma

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

Ah

You're not scared of no knock on the door

Or maybe you are

You're not scared of no knock on the door

Or maybe you are

Maybe you are

Maybe you are

Maybe you are

Maybe you are

ethel begins doubting willoughby's strength, seeing through his strong, secure front.

Radio Towers

Instrumentals

*sounds mimicking hospital monitors
foreshadowing willoughby's death/departure*

Tempest

= violent storm

Can you hear them?

sound of tornado.

The trains

*hear causing him to imagine hearing
tornadoes*

Pick your flowers

choose to live in your fantasy

*written from
willoughby's
POV*

You're too late *ethel is too late to save the relationship*

I'll hurt myself if I want *he needs freedom from ethel's strangling love*

I don't care *suicidal undertones*

Do you swing from your neck } *he questions if ethel wears the curse of her*
With the hope someone cares? } *family to bid sympathy or aid*

Please, just go easy on me } *begs ethel to stop idealizing him +*
I am young and naive } *holding him to unmeetable standards*
I don't know what I need } *he is broken - lost*

"I can lead you to bed" } *ethel gives him what she thinks he*
But I can't make you sleep" } *needs, rather than what he truly*
I've heard it before } *does, mirroring the behavior +*
From someone who leaves } *action of his mother.*

I still dream of violence } *dreaming of death as an escape of suffering*
Angry at the waiting game } *angry god hasn't killed him yet*

Chain link on your lungs *smoking + drug use*

And sulfuric acid in my brain

Don't ask me why I hate myself } *don't question me while i'm in this*
As I'm circling the drain } *state of misery*
'Cause death, it takes too long } *you waited too long to ask me and now*
 } *i'm too far gone to save.*

And I can't wait } *suicidal*
Waiting on my own } *he is alone in his suffering*
Waiting on my own
Waiting on my own

Waiting on my own

Always on my own he has never felt seen or known

Always on my own

Always on my own

Always on my own

Always on my own

Always on my own (you came around here just to watch me writhe) *ethel didn't help him, only watched him deteriorate*

Always on my own (am I what you think about all late at night?)

Always on my own

Someone take me home (you can try and stop me, hold me) *home = death*

I wanna go home (do all the things that you do) *daunt?*

Take me out the dark (but it's no good) *dark = life. he wants to go to the light (heaven)*

I'm gonna regret this

Forever

Forever

Forever

Forever

Waco, Texas

My honey's heart is blue and a second offbeat *relationship no longer in sync heart is sad & bruised by love.*

Always tugging at me like he's running out of daylight

Yeah, my baby acts cool but they all know something ain't right, ain't right *willoughby's behavior is noticeably unnatural, especially when he's w/ ethel*

Only acting this cool when he's walking with me

1998 forever and a day

I keep the pictures hanging where the world can see 'em

I hope I die today *ethel wants to preserve their relationship by dying, rather than breaking up; obsessive.*

Save me from another late night of red eyes *crying*

But then the morning comes

You were there looking for me but I

I was gone, turned my back for a moment and

You had fallen apart

when ethel wakes, calmed from her saddened, emotional state willoughby was seeking her but she had already walked away when she hesitated + looked back, she saw him in his emotionally destroyed state.

They've been promising the lights as we beg for our lives *illusion vs. reality*
Selling pages of the times we've been waiting on *safety desperation*

Now the weight's too much and I can't hold you anymore *the weight willoughby carries from its role which is unattainable*
How much of a cruel year can you call my fault? *but making their relationship imposed*
Not even the memories are immortal *love is not forever* *though - memories don't last*

Terrified on this side of a conversation
A conversation we'll never come back from *terrified by what's coming + her inability to stop it*
I'll never live it down if I never get around it *ignoring the issue won't make it go away*
'Cause goddammit, I did it to myself in hindsight *she assumes the blame.*

I liked him 'cause his rule was, "Do whatever you like, " and I tried, alright ethel thought she could do no wrong in his eyes, but clearly crossed a line. she wears the scars of betrayal
Now I'll wear these scars for life
I loved you when it hurt inside to *she loved him when she knew love inevitably hurt her.*
But in the low light
You know I'd do anything for you *she would do anything for him in struggling times; she just wanted to keep him*

You know I'd do anything for you

You know it's true, 'cause I've said it to you

Held in my arms, I swore I'd be good to you, be good to you

Then sat and watched as you walked away from me (ah, me, me)

Yeah, you've changed

ethel feels betrayed because she promised him everything + he still left.
she wasn't "good to him"
"sat + watched" instead of chasing after him + fighting for their love.

But did I ever know you?

. illusions of intimacy + love
. acknowledges change but realizes she may never truly know him, only the side he allowed her to see and the parts she chose to see.

Or did I hold you

Facing away from me

The air in your room never moves

. one sided love, willoughby may never have been truly present
. she wanted to be close to him, but he wouldn't let her in
tension so thick its suffocating

Live and die by TV no one's watching

Do you hate me? confusing love w/ hate

When this is over

Maybe then we'll get some sleep

I've been picking names for our children

You've been wondering how you're gonna feed them

. when these issues are resolved, they can finally rest
. ethel is still delusional
. juxtaposing views on expanding family

Love is not enough in this world

love cannot overpower the harsh reality of their situation, world.

But I still believe in Nebraska dreaming

'Cause I'd rather die

Than be anything but your girl

HIV mention, dreaming of being w/ willoughby
. ethel is indifferent to her life.
. all she wants is willoughby's love.

I never meant to hurt you

"love to death"

But somehow, I knew I would

Will it be like this forever?

I'd reach into your body

And fix you if I could

. wants to fix the things she ruined
. doesn't accept that the damage she caused is permanent
. she will regret this forever.

Will I feel like this forever? (Forever, forever, forever?)

Are you angry?

Do you hate me?

. childlike fear
. bracing for impact, hoping for mercy

And darling, time may forgive me

But I won't

. she will never forgive herself for pushing him away

You know I'd do anything for you
You know it's true, 'cause I've said it to you
Held in my arms, I swore I'd be good to you
Then sat and watched
As you walked away from me (from me)

So I bled 'til I cried, 'til I felt I might die *fatal mark of her loss of love - overcame w/ guilt*
To be known the way you should } *ethel feels the ups & downs are a part of love + relationships. she wouldn't stay through anything*
Is to put yourself through hell
Still I waited and tried, 'til it killed me

'Cause you're right

I can wait if I want

But it'll never be good enough like I

Want to believe it is, is, is

} *ethel realizes her idea of love is naive*
} *their relationship will never be what it is in her head.*

preacher's daughter

Family Tree (Intro)

These crosses all over my body
Remind me of who I used to be
And Christ forgive these bones I'm hiding
From no one successfully

themes of christianity, religious, + generational trauma

Jesus can always reject his father
But he cannot escape his mother's blood
He'll scream and try to wash it off of his fingers
But he'll never escape what he's made up of

• attached + tethered to something you want to rid yourself of
• heritage + generational trauma

The fates already fucked me sideways *god's fate + her family's fate have put her in a poor position*
Swinging by my neck from the family tree

He'll laugh and say, "You know I raised you better than this"

Then leave me hanging so they all can laugh at me

her father *she will always be tied to this blood*
lack of empathy, love, and care from her family + community

American Teenager

Grew up under yellow light on the street *nostalgic, small town vibe*

Putting too much faith in the make-believe *establishes ethel's hopeful, naive perspective*

A life full of whiskey but I always deliver *deliver the sermon that was once her fathers*
Jesus, if You're listening, let me handle my liquor

And Jesus, if You're there *doubt*

Why do I feel alone in this room with You? *feelings of loneliness despite church community; religious doubt + disconnection*

And I feel you there

In the middle of the night

When the lights go out

But I'm still standing here *change in lyrics; she acknowledges her failure/struggle to walk away + her continued faith despite doubt + abuse.*

Say what you want, but say it like you mean it

With your fists for once, a long cold war

With your kids at the front

Just give it one more day then you're done, done

I do what I want, crying in the bleachers

And I said it was fun

I don't need anything from anyone

It's just not my year, but I'm all good out here

Say what you want, but say it like you mean it

With your fists for once, a long cold war

With your kids at the front

Just give it one more day then you're done

I do it for my daddy and I do it for Dale
I'm doing what I want and, damn, I'm doing it well
For me, for me
For me, for me, yeah

dale earnhardt

A House In Nebraska

Labored breaths and bed sores, sing it to me all day long *sex + death*

When the aching sound of silence used to be our favorite song

You and me against the world, you were my man and I your girl

We had nothing except each other, you were my whole world

Then the day came and you were up and gone

And I still call home that house in Nebraska

Where we found each other on a dirty mattress on the second floor

Where the world was empty, save you and I

Where you came and I laughed, and you left and I cried

Where you told me even if we died tonight, that I'd die yours

These dirt roads are empty, the ones we paved ourselves

Your mama calls me sometimes to see if I'm doing well

And I'd lie to her and say that I'm doing fine

When, really, I'd kill myself to hold you one more time

And it hurts to miss you, but it's worse to know

That I'm the reason you won't come home

But I still call home that house in Nebraska

Where we found each other on a dirty mattress on the second floor

*themes of lack of commun-
ication, comfortable enough
to enjoy silence*

*they were the only ones who loved
each other; love high
to her, yet he leaves*

*he was everything
her
metaphorically located
far from alabama*

completely alone w/ lover

*discovering their place + what
they mean to each other*

*both leave each other + are
heart broken by it*

*even in idyllic joy, she
is "property" of a man.
also means "your love"*

*emphasis on their privacy and
their absences*

*current time and our fantasies of
the future*

deeply missing him

*ethel acknowledges how she pushed
him away*

*he is still what she wants to
return to, despite everything*

(Where I needed you, and I need you still) *her feelings weren't dissolved, only intensified*
Where the world was empty, save you and I

Where you came and I laughed, and you left and I cried

Where you told me even if we died tonight, that I'd die yours

(So I died there under you every night, all night) *she would do it over + over again*

You know, I still wait at the edge of town *still unable to leave / walk away despite constant hurt*

Praying straight to God that maybe you'll come back around *longing + yearning*

I cry every day and the bottles make it worse *alcohol abuse adding to sadness + loneliness*

'Cause you were the only one I was never scared to tell I hurt *she felt he would never judge her for her ~~own~~ vulnerability now that he's gone, she has no one to talk to*

And I found photographs of our school, on the day we met

I thought that you were so beautiful, it was love, I guess *age passion at love at first sight, yet she remains unsure.*

And you might never come back home, and I may never sleep at night *unable to rest*

But God, I just hope you're doing fine out there, I just pray that you're alright *comfort rather than faith*

And I feel so alone, and I feel so alone out here

I feel so alone, I feel so alone out here

And I feel so alone without you, I'm so alone out here

I feel so alone, I feel so alone

I'm so alone out here without you, baby

Western Nights

changes subject to Logan

He's never looked more beautiful *depicts ethel's altered perception of love.*

On his Harley in the parking lot

Breaking in to the ATMs *introduces Logan's criminal involvement*

Sleeping naked when it gets too hot

I watched him show his love through shades of black and blue *reference of physical abuse*
Starting fights at the bar across the street like you do *defensive behavior*
The neighbors beat on the walls while I'm face-first in the bed *sexual relations causing disruptions for neighbors*
Show me how much I mean to you, while I'm lying in these sheets undressed *ethel feels loved, validated through sex, the use of her body*
I'd hold the gun if you asked me to
But if you love me like you say you do } *ethel doubts Logan's love*
Would you ask me to } *shows her tendency to stay despite danger*

Trouble's always gonna find you, baby *ethel's perspective is that it's not Logan's fault he is put in these situations, and she will love him regardless.*
But so will I
Crying only because I'm happy *attempting to paint disconnect as "happy"*
Hold me across every state line *traveling due to for crime*
I'm never gonna leave you, baby
Even if you lose what's left of your mind } *shows ethel's devotion and awareness that Logan is crazy + unwell.*
'Cause you know I'll be right there beside you
Riding through all these western nights

I haven't spoken to my daddy in a long, long time *death of father*
I don't want him to worry, always wondering if I'm alright *child-like*
But the neighborhood keeps getting smaller *they are running away + the distance from shady is growing*
All starved out when the money's paper thin
All that's left are your walls and you'll die there } *Logan's beliefs are trapping him in + blocking ethel out.*
I should have known that there's no getting in } *she realizes she will never be able to love + save him*
Trouble's always gonna find you, baby

But so will I

Crying only because I'm happy

Hold me across every state line

I'm never gonna leave you, baby

Even if you lose what's left of your mind

'Cause you know I'll still be right behind you *she will go w/ him wherever his motor cycle will take them*

Riding through all these western nights

Through these western nights

Crying in the light of the TV static

I'll still be alright

Clinging onto you like some love blind addict

I'll be screaming your name

Past the gas stations, trailing down the interstate

Please don't love how I need you

And know that one day, you and I could be ok

continued themes of staying despite the sadness

she depends on him for safety + security but hopes he won't take advantage of her devotion

believing her abuser will change for the better

Family Tree

These crosses all over my body

Remind me of who I used to be

Give myself up to him in offering

Let him make a woman out of me

opening line of album; shows she hasn't changed

scars from abuse or self harm

offering herself to Jesus to be saved

salvation

sexual implications

I'm just a child, but I'm not above violence

My mama raised me better than that

When the preacher talks, that man demands his silence

And daddy said, "Shoot first, then run and don't look back"

rebuttal against innocence

family + mother showed her that violence was a superior mode of behavior

prosecutor's people w/o questioning himself

So take me down to the river

* ethel's father is referred to as "the preacher" and "daddy" differentiating between the emotionally unavailable, distant pastor + her father

naivety? seeing the good in people

very
ambiguous

baptism / washing away sin

And bathe me clean

Put me on the back of your white horse to ride *represents conquest; Logan's death is a major + final push*
All the way to the chapel, let you wash all over me *god cleansing her of her sins* *fore etel to leave. his death "puts her" on her way*

Ah, ooh

Ooh

Ooh, ooh

Ooh

I've killed before and I'll kill again *parallell to "a knock at the door" and having things straight to death*
Take the noose off, wrap it tight around my hand *attempt to stop intergenerational trauma - use it as a sort of weapon*
They say, "Heaven hath no fury like a woman scorned" *no anger in the world is greater than a woman who has been betrayed + rejected*
And baby, Hell don't scare me, I've been times before *she isn't afraid of pain + hurt, as it's all she knows.*

So take me down to the river

And bathe me clean

Put me on the back of your white horse to ride

All the way to the chapel, let you wash all over me

These crosses all over my body

Remind me of who I used to be

And Christ, forgive these bones I've been hiding

Oh, and the bones I'm about to leave, yeah

And take me down to the river

And bathe me clean, yeah

! *forgive what i have done and what i will do.*

Put me on the back of your white horse to ride

All the way to the chapel, let you wash all over me, yeah

Yeah-yeah-yeah-yeah

Hard Times

Hide me there

Under the leaves

Nine going on eighteen

Lay it on me "i can ^{up fast} take it"

Tell me a story

About how it ends

Where you're still the good guy

I'll make pretend child-like behavior

'Cause I hate this story

Where happiness ends and dies with you

I thought good guys get to be happy

I'm not happy

I am poison in the water and unhappy

A little girl who needs her daddy real bad

In the corner on my birthday

You watched me

Dancing right there in the grass child-like, innocent behavior

I was too young to notice her youth - naivety made her blind to
That some types of love could be bad the wrongness - cruel nature
of his abuse.

contrasts child-like innocence w/ the abuse that is happening

sexual abuse at a young age forced her to grow up fast

ethel wants her father to still be a good man - fantasizes about a reality where he is, because in this reality he certainly is not.

her abuse takes her joy. After her father's death, she is forced to hold this secret - weight of that.

she didn't tell anyone of her S.A. believing that was the right thing to do because her father's position. Her silence only wore her down - further hurt her. she blames herself

despite her abuse, she still loves + misses her father, but desires a true, supportive father figure.

looming presence

Praying I'd be like you *still, she envies + admires her father*

Doing all of the things that you do

And I still do

And that scares me } *even when she's grown, she wants to be like him*

I'm tired of you, still tied to me (bleeding whenever you want) *she faces physical + emotional pain whenever he desires*

Too tired to move, too tired to leave *exhausted from abuse*

I'm tired of you, still tied to me (it's just the way that you are) *she justifies his cruelty*

I'm tired of you, too tired to leave (I just wanna sleep)

I'm tired of you, still tied to me (I just wanna sleep)

the feeling of being stuck to your abuser; they have a part of you + now you share that.

Too tired to move, too tired to leave (I just wanna sleep)

I'm tired of you, still tied to me (please, can I sleep, can I sleep?)

I'm tired of you, too tired to leave

I'm tired of you, still tied to me

Too tired to move, too tired to leave

Thoroughfare

introducer Isaiah

You fell in love with America

When you were twelve years old

themes of exploration

And by seventeen you knew you had to see it all

You loved your dad and the love he had for your mother so

You had to get out and go chasin' it's sweet call

} *motive for leaving was to find love.*

I met you there in Texas somewhere on the thoroughfare

On the side of the road in some torn-up clothes

With a pistol in my pocket

reflects the loneliness they both felt prior to meeting

fearin' men

I didn't trust no one but you said, "Baby, don't run

I'll take you anywhere"

So I hopped right in, outta luck to spend

And at least your truck beats walking

◦ despite her fears, she joins him, ignoring her intuition
◦ so much has gone wrong, what's one more thing?

And you said, "Hey, do you wanna see the West with me? california

'Cause love's out there and I can't leave it be" Isaiah's motive

And I said, "Honey, love's never meant much to me

But I'll come with you if you're sure it's what you need"

} love has meant that much to her.
◦ again, she is doing stuff for other's gain

So we made off for California

To find your lover, driving day and night

And every small-town diner

Saw our faces at least once or twice

But in these motel rooms

I started to see you differently, oh

'Cause for the first time since I was a child

I could see a man who wasn't angry

} ethel starts falling for him, admiring his kindness and differences from her past lovers and father

And he said, "It's been a long damn time since I left Florida

No one left to leave and no one left to love

But now that I met you, I finally know just where I'm headin'"

And we found Heaven in time process of falling in love

foreshadowing; she is giving him a sense of direction

Where your western sunshine met my deep Southern wet sex

And you got lost in it and yet you found yourself

Hard-pressed for air and sweatin'

And you said, "Hey, do you wanna see the west with me?"

(Do you wanna see the West with me?)

'Cause love's out there and I can't leave it be"

(I can't leave it, I can't leave it)

And I said, "Honey, love's never meant that much to me

(Nothing much)

But I'll come with you if you're sure it's what you need"

And once we reached the coast you said, "End of the line"

end of their drive

We finally reach the edge, after all this time

I didn't find my love but I still made it this far without it

*he didn't find a lover along
their journey, but he did
fall in love w/ ethel*

And then you turned to me and stared into me deep

And said, "Well, maybe not, 'cause look at what I've got

You might not be my love, but, baby, I doubt it"

And you said, "Hey, do you wanna see the west with me?"

(Do you wanna see the West with me?)

'Cause love's out there and I can't leave it be"

she is out there

(I can't leave it, I can't leave it)

And I said, "Honey, love's never meant that much to me

(Nothing much)

But I'll come with you if you're sure it's what you need"

Yeah

Yeah

Yeah, yeah

Yeah

Yeah

'Cause in your pickup truck with all of your dumb luck
is the only place I think I'd ever wanna be

she now loves him + wants
to stay w/ him instead
of finding herself on
her own

Gibson Girl

~~Charles~~ Charles Dana Gibson reference

You wanna love me right now

You wanna get alone with me *introducer prostitution theme*

You wanna get my clothes off
and hurt me

} continued correlation of love + violence

You came alone to me

From however far away

Asking me to know how I know

You're all the same

she feels men are all alike in the sense
that they want to use women for sex
then ditch them.

Black leather and dark glasses

Pourin' another while I shake my ass

He's cold-blooded so it takes more time to bleed

Obsession with the money, addicted to the drugs

isaiah is feeding her drugs and
she seems increasingly dependent

Says he's in love with my body, that's why he's fucking it up

objectification

And then he says to me

"Baby, if it feels good, then it can't be bad"

grooming + gaslighting. she's being
told that since the sex is
"pleasurable" this isn't wrong
• dismissive
• form of rebellion

Where I can be immoral in a stranger's lap

foreshadow

And if you want it good, downright iconic *she grows to admire who she is in these situations, likely as a form of coping + comfort.*
Something they all want that only you can have *still, she loves isaiah*

You wanna fuck me right now

You wanna see me on my knees *paralell to prayer*

You wanna rip these clothes off *violence*

And hurt me

And if you hate me } *continued naivety + fear of dishonesty*
Please don't tell me }

Just let the lights bleed *depicts her exposure, physically*
All over me

And if it feels good, then it can't be bad

Where I can be immoral in a stranger's lap

And if you want it good, downright iconic

Then I would show you something ~~that you wish you had~~
you can never have

And if it feels good, then it can't be bad

Where I can be immoral in a stranger's lap

And if you want it good, downright iconic *references gibson's iconic gibson girls*

Then I would show you something that you wish you had

You wanna love me right now
You wanna love me right now
You wanna fuck me right now
You wanna- } *mirrored climax + sexual relations*

You wanna love me right now
You wanna love me right now
You wanna fuck me, fuck me
You wanna love me, love me
You wanna-

repetition shows the repeditare nature
of ethel being pimped out

Ptolemaea

circle of Hell for those who betray their guests
I followed you in and I was with you there isaiah shifts blame onto ethel

I invited you in twice, I did he invited her to california - where he was staying

You love blood too much

But not like I do

Not like I do

ethel loves the blood of christ, while Isaiah
loves the blood of people, in this case, ethel.
he loves the pleasure + power he will feel when
he kills ethel

Heard you, saw you, felt you, gave you

Need you, love you, love you, love you

Heard you, saw you, felt you, love you

Love you, love you, love you, love you

Love you, love you, love you, love you

Love you, love you, love you, love you

You'd do well to say yes to me

"don't fight ~~your~~ your fate". gives a sense
of impending doom

shift in speaker

matthew
7:15

Suffer does the wolf, crawling to thee

Promising a big fire, any fire ^{ethel} he promised her fire: "love + comfort"

Saying I'm the one, he's gonna take me take - take her life

I'm on fire, I'm on fire, I'm on fire contrast of fire as love vs. fire as pain

Suffering is nigh, drawing to me her suffering is now inevitable + unavoidable

Calling me the one, I'm the white light through the act of sacrifice, isaiah
believes he will come closer to the
higher power he upholds

Beautiful, finite

mirrored
hallucinations
from drugs

Even the iron still fears the rot *even the toughest things still fear what slowly destroys them.*

Hiding from something I cannot stop *hiding, running from suffering all her life and in this moment*

Walking on shadows, I can't lead him back, uh *isaiah has gone to a mentally + spiritually dark place and cannot be helped*

Buckled on the floor when night comes along *she can't flee from his grasp, as a result of love, abuse, and drugs*

Daddy's left and momma won't come home, oh, uh *shows ethel's state of confusion + equates her: isaiah des joseph + vera can*

shift in speaker

You poor thing

symbol of sacrifice

Sweet, mourning lamb

There's nothing you can do

It's already been done

} another testimate to inescapable fate, especially that of god's will

shift in speaker

What fear a man like you brings upon a woman like me (show me your face) *isaiah says this "men are all the same": preying on women*

Please, don't look at me

I can see it in your eyes, he keeps looking at me

Tell me, what have you done?

} ethel, through hallucination, sees the devil in isaiah's eyes. she thinks the devil is making him do this.

Stop, stop, stop, make it stop

Stop, make it stop, make it stop

I've had enough *"the joke, isn't funny anymore"*

Stop, stop, stop, stop

Stop, stop, stop, stop

} asking God to end this and over begging isaiah to stop the devil possessing him. progressively building pleas shows ethel's growing dervore as isaiah advances the attack

fatal moment

I am the face

Of love's rage

I am the face

} ethel is an exemplification of the horrors + violence of love.

Of love's rage

shift in speaker

Blessed be the Daughters of Cain; *individuals trapped in cycles of generational trauma, violence, and sin passed down from their fathers*

Bound to suffering eternal through the sins of their fathers committed long before their conception *intergenerational trauma*

Blessed be their whore mothers *mothers may be the root of problems, but are also victims in the same manner*

Tired and angry, waiting with bated breath in a ferry that will never move again *at their children*

Blessed be the children

religious trauma + violence + cruelty in the name of god

hypocrisy of religion Each and every one come to know their god through some senseless act of violence

Blessed be you, girl

Promised to me by a man who can only feel hatred and contempt towards you *all his feelings of love were an act*

isaiah I am no good nor evil, simply I am

And I have come to take what is mine

I was there in the dark when you spilled your first blood

I am here now, as you run from me still

Run then, child

You can't hide from me forever

death has always been w/ her in different forms, but she cannot escape it

August Underground

Instrumental

ethel's slow + painful death marks ethel's death

Televangelism

Instrumental

tranquility + peace as one ascends into afterlife

Sunbleached flies

in heaven

Sun bleached flies sitting in the windowsill

Waiting for the day they escape

They talk all about that money and how their babies are always changing

consequence of wanting to leave is death

While they're breathing in the poison of the paint *lead poisoning*
What I wouldn't give to be in Church this Sunday *she would do anything to go back to a time before all this*
Listening to the choir, so heartfelt, all singing
God loves you, but not enough to save you *someone that loves you can also betray you - god → her*
So, baby girl, good luck taking care of yourself

So I said fine, 'cause that's how my daddy raised me
If they strike once then you just hit 'em twice as hard *contradicts common christian value of turning the other cheek*
But in the end, if I bend under the weight that they gave me *ethel always bends to the will of the men in her life. as a result, she feels loads of pressure to be what they need. ethel feels that her not being able to withstand such pressure would break a new heart, but hers as well.*
Then this heart would break and fall as twice as far
We all know how it goes *parallell to gibson girl*
The more it hurts, the less it shows *comments on societal expectations of women to be a support and not "too emotional", and the guilt of trauma.*
But I still feel like they all know, and that's why I can never go back home *disassociating + disconnect as a result of trauma + abuse.*
And I spend my life watching it go by from the sidelines *in this fight, ethel is not with generational trauma. she hits twice as hard.*
And God, I've tried, but I think it's about time I put up a fight
But I don't mind 'cause that's how my daddy raised me (how my daddy raised me) *by dying w/o a husband or children considering she's an only child, this puts an end to the generational trauma.*
If they strike once then you just hit 'em twice as hard (hit 'em twice as hard) *she knew god or anyone wouldn't save her, and still prayed to god. hope.*
But I always knew that in the end no one was coming to save me
So I just prayed and I keep praying and praying and praying

If it's meant to be then it will be (oh, oh) *acceptance of fate*
So I met him there and told him I believe (oh, oh) *she returns to her faith after, in a harsh way, being saved by god.*
Singing if it's meant to be then it'll be (oh)
I forgive it all as it comes back to me (back to me) *ethel has recognized her mistreatment but understands the cycle of trauma and how hurt people hurt people. This lyric shows her understanding of such topic and the forgiveness she meets it with.*

If it's meant to be then it will be (oh, it will be, yeah)

So I met him there and told him I believe (I believe, yeah)

Singing if it's meant to be then it will be (oh, oh)

I forgive it all as it comes back to me (it comes back to me)

If it's meant to be then it'll be (it'll be, it'll be, it'll be)

So I met him there and told him I believe (I believe, yeah)

Singing if it's meant to be then it will be (yeah)

And I forgive it all as it comes back to me (oh)

I'm still praying for that house in Nebraska

By the highway, out on the edge of town

Dancing with the windows open

I can't let go when something's broken

It's all I know and it's all I want now

after all her suffering, she still yearns for willoughby and his love. despite the bumps in their relationship, her love for him persists, for all of her relationship weren't easy: struggle was all she knew.

Strangers

But God is telling you and I that there is death, for all of us

But then we find that the scriptures also tell us

That we have a great promise, that there is a better place

For those who believe in the lord Jesus Christ

*recording from Inhedonia's grandmothers funeral
reinforces intergenerational trauma*

In your basement, I grow cold

Thinking back to what I was always told

"Don't talk to strangers or you might fall in love"

*blames herself for getting here
blames love as a factor of death*

Freezer bride, your sweet divine

You devour like smoked bovine hide

*her cold, dead body lies in isaiah's basement
part of her body resides in a freezer for when isaiah desires her
cannibalism*

How funny, I never considered myself tough *- ethel always viewed herself as weak because that's how others viewed her - tough meat*

You're so handsome, walking over to me now *still, she holds love for him*

I tried to be good, am I no good?
Am I no good? Am I no good? } *even after death, she fears disappointing him*
With my memory restricted to a Polaroid in evidence

I just wanted to be yours, can I be yours? *all she wanted was love. to be someone's lover. in this case, isaiah's*
Can I be yours? Just tell me I'm yours; *chosen naivety*
If I'm turning in your stomach and I'm making you feel sick *"turning in your stomach" making you ill + vomit*
"turning in her grave"

Oh, no, no, no

No, no

No, no

When my mother sees me on the side *missing person's statement*
Of a milk carton in Winn-Dixie's dairy aisle

She'll cry and wait up for me *women's hopeful nature*

We'll make love in your attic all night

Euphoric in some strange delight

I'm happier here 'cause he told me I should be, oh

You're so handsome when I'm all over your mouth *her remains cover his mouth after consuming her*
(When I'm all over your mouth, when I'm all over your mouth)

I tried to be good, am I no good?

Am I no good? Am I no good?

With my memory restricted to a Polaroid in evidence (oh, oh)

I just wanted to be yours, can I be yours?

Can I be yours? Just tell me I'm yours

If I'm turning in your stomach and I'm making you feel sick (sick)

Am I making you feel sick? (No) • *sick as in ill*
Am I making you feel sick? (No) • *sick as in guilty*

Am I making you feel, am I making you feel sick? (No)

Am I making you feel, am I making you feel sick? (No)

Am I making you feel sick? (Feel sick, feel sick)

Am I making you feel sick? Am I making you feel sick? (No)

Found you just to tell you that I made it real far *ethel's "last words" to her mother*
And that I never blamed you for loving me the way that you did *assures her mom that*
While you were torn apart, I would still wait with you there *tho isn't her fault*
**after the loss of her husband*

Don't think about it too hard or you'll never sleep a wink at night again *she tells her mother*
Don't worry about me and these green eyes *do not dwell on her death*
Mama, just know that I love you (I love you) *and that it's best to move*
And I'll see you when you get here *on.*