

# Heaven, or Whatever

Shane Koyczan

"You can't just do whatever"  
The words stumbled out of you  
Like a drunk leaving a bar looking for a fresh new last call  
You were not a man of words  
But did your best to offer advice  
You offered me "You can't just do whatever"  
And I know what you meant  
You meant that whatever I choose to do, I must not be aimless  
I must not simply spin this globe and go wherever I stick my finger  
Because 71% of the time I will end up in the ocean  
And if I do end up in the ocean I can't just do whatever,  
Better learn to swim" You can't just do whatever" The conversation came after you asked me about heaven  
Told me that you thought heaven would be specific to each person  
And that each person would have their own version of it  
Then asked me what mine would be  
I was so scared to tell you,  
"I don't have one"  
But you nodded your head,  
as if confirming a suspicion that school  
had robbed me of a belief in some stories  
You said "you don't have to believe what I believe, it's enough to be good.  
Be good"  
I will.  
I will think about your heaven  
Your heaven would be the same haircut, forever  
It would be a stick a dog and some distance  
A lawn that always needs mowing  
A six-pack of pills in those short bottles and your real teeth back  
Because your dentures could never master that bottle opening trick you loved to do  
The first time you tried it with dentures I had nightmares for a month  
Because I thought your mouth had fallen off  
Your heaven, would be Austria before the war  
And Canada after you met grandma  
It would be head cheese sandwiches and blood sausages  
Other deli meats that would ensure you would never ever have to entertain dinner guests  
And I would never be in danger of having my lunch stolen  
Your heaven,  
would be a stash of raisins  
Problems that you could fix with your hands

I remember you tried to fix everything with your hands  
I remember the difficult days  
I remember the bandages  
They looked like tiny blankets, as if your knuckles had all gone off to bed  
Walls that looked like they'd said something to get under your skin  
And where suddenly made to pay for it  
I know you were an angry man  
Finger tips like spent shotgun shells, bleeding smoke cocktails of gunpowder and singed plastic  
You had what some people would call, "a temper"  
But you loved a good joke,  
even if it was on you  
Something that would crack open the walls of your chest and let the wind tickle your heart  
Just enough to let you know it was still there  
You didn't always laugh, didn't always smile  
You did keep a mental ledger of what you called your "send flowers list"  
I remember thinking it was a thank you to those who got you good  
But learned the truth after my grandmother added a thin layer of sand to your sandwiches  
Because you refused to make your own lunch for work  
You told me about it when you picked me up from school that day  
You said "Grandma just made the send flowers list"  
And I asked "Because you love her so much?"  
And you said "Because I'm gonna kill her"  
Of course you didn't  
Your version of kill meant two months before winter,  
Having a seamstress take in each of her coats a few inches  
So on the first day she need one  
She fumbled with the sudden tightness  
And you stood there smiling then said "Honey, I love you no matter how big you get"  
She did not laugh  
And managed to staple your smile back into a straight face  
When she told all of your friends at work that you had to move into the spare room  
Because you couldn't stop farting at night  
You often asked me "If I had a heaven, what would it be like?"  
And I told you that for such a small word, if, is just too big to wrap my belief around  
I would not bend to the hypothetical  
But wish now that I would've  
Even if it was just to ease your mind in the belief  
That I could be headed to that other place you believed in  
I would tell you now how my heaven is here  
It was here, in the gentle warfare of your relationship with Grandma  
Where volleys were traded back and forth  
Like hockey cards between children who didn't care what the stats meant  
My heaven would have been someone in grade five finally willing to trade me their fruit roll up  
For my tin of sardines  
My hell was wondering "why?" Why would you give me sardines for lunch

My heaven would make you laugh  
Cause I get the feeling you didn't get to do that very much  
Through my hell, through the night terrors and bloody noses  
Through the eyes black, bruised back, sneak attack, nap sack and winter coat hijacks  
You did your best to seal up the cracks in my armour and made my heaven here  
I would have loved to have made you laugh more  
To make your send flowers list just once  
So I offer you now my if  
If there is a heaven  
Mine would have a post office  
And I could send letters to yours  
The first letter would read  
"Hell's not so bad, they pretty much let you do whatever"  
Song Discussions is protected by U.S. Patent 9401941. Other patents pending.

Lyrics provided by  
<https://damnlrics.com/>