



The
Moon
is

"Moonvember"

2018

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The Moon is - a writing exercise by Ross Sutherland. The game is to write something using the prompt "The Moon is an (adjective) (noun)", with the adjective and noun pulled from the world with no particular thought as to how well they might work together. Ross talks about it in episode 49 of his excellent podcast "Imaginary Advice", check it out.

Every day in November 2018 I generated a new 'Moon is' prompt, and filled a page of a tiny notebook with a new story or poem inspired by it. The goal was just to write more, and experiment without having to worry too much about the final results.

This Zine shows what I wrote in that notebook over the month. It seemed like cheating somehow to edit the pieces too much, so aside from the odd comma, I've left them as they are in the book. Some of it works, a few really don't, but I'm proud of it all.

Try it yourself.

The Moon is an achievable goal.

Brian

The Moon is
a specific report

It tells us what others will not
Enough detail to pull
you away from the world
Sparse enough for us all
to reflect on our flaws
The rays a spotlight on you alone
for better or worse, away or at home

The Moon sits impassive
distant and massive
uncaring and bleak
familiar and meek

A mirror for you alone.

1st November 2018

The Moon is
a sweet goner

The odds were appropriately astronomical. For the Moon to be there, exactly there, when we needed it - well, it saved us all. I mean, not all of us, not really. We weren't annihilated by a meteorite, but the Moon being gone caused a lot of damage, changed the conditions by which we had to live. But still. There were enough of us around that we could go on. Enough of us to remember the Moon, and what it did. Enough to worship it. To honour it. Or, at least, to never forget it.

2nd November 2018

The Moon is
a polar disease

'Stepping Stone Base' they called it. First the Moon, then Mars. But when we dug into the - not Earth, I suppose - Moon beneath us, we released something long frozen. A disease. All of us up there caught it. Thing is, the Moon disease isn't actually that bad. A sniffle, a low-level headache, maybe some stiffness. We couldn't figure out how to treat it, and it shouldn't have stopped us. But it did. It was just annoying enough that it took the joy out of it for us, so we decided to just forget it, and come home. Space wasn't fun anymore.

3rd November 2018

The Moon is
an aged saucepan

It's round face, scratched
until it shines
Non-stick coating long gone

It's seen a lot. Everything, really.
Made at the start of the world
It's been there

through the heat, and
the cooling. The flourishing
and visitations

You should really get a new
one, but you can't quite bear
to throw it away

4th November 2018

The Moon is
a healthy drink

"That's very expensive for water"

"It's infused with a special light,
which activates the natural healing
powers of the body"

"Okay, sure, why not. One 'water' please"

...

"Here you are!"

gulp gulp... "arrh...ugh, no it's not time!"

"Sir?"

"What kind of light?!"

"Sir?"

"What kind of special light was it infused
with...aah! Tell me!"

"The light of the full Moon sir, but -"

"RAAAAAGGGGH!"

5th November 2018

The Moon is
a stubborn poet

It insists on casting its
magical rays
tearing beautiful lines through
the midnight fog
illuminating the life
normally unseen
in a fine silver glow
diffusing everywhere

A beautiful dusting of brightness
and light
Even though you just want
to bloody sleep
and you curse the Moon
and yourself
for your lack of
blackout blinds.

6th November 2018

The Moon is
a squishy point

Everyone assumes it's made out of a hard cheese. A cheddar, or parmesan. Stands to reason, they say. But me and a few heretics, we'd be arrested for what we believe. Disappeared. Burnt at the stake. For we believe it is a soft cheese! For is it not blue, sort of? We don't speculate as to which soft cheese, for we are scientists. But little do they know that Buzz is one of us, and he's taken a ziplock bag to bring some back for us. Then we'll show them. They'll see.

7th November 2018

The Moon is
a fragile penguin

The storms were the hardest. All of the other penguins huddle together. Eustace, however, moved around the main mass, at a fixed distance. They teased him, you see. A birth defect. His unhidable shame.

Until one day, a man came to see him. Said he could use a penguin like Eustace. An easy job, but he would be valued. And he would have a friend, just like him.

That year, the man didn't fluff a landing even once. Eustace's bright red beak made the perfect runway marker, and Rudolf always glowed brighter when he saw his friend waiting

8th November 2018

The Moon is
a restless ladybug

The others use The Great Light to navigate by. But not Bertrum. He wanted to visit it. How Great it would be then! How Great he would be then! So he tried. And failed. For years (well, ladybird years) he went towards it every night, to no avail. Until today. The Great Light seemed different somehow, and it seemed to be getting bigger as he approached it, which was new. It was bluer than he thought it'd be, but who's to say it's not supposed to be? That buzzing noise is very str-

9th November 2018

The Moon is
a feverish doctor

There's no time, I have to go. I can't go,
can't leave him. He'll die, I'm his only
chance. But with me, he has no chance.
Unless I'm fast. Unless I'm slow. Unless
I can beat myself in this race. Stop the
bleeding, don't get distracted by the blood.
Readjust my gloves, they're hard to get on
now but infection is a killer so it's just
another thing to race against. Quick! Devour!
No, focus. Almost done - almost isn't
enough! Almost is weak prey. Almost is dinner

10th November 2018

People ask it questions every day. Well, every night to be specific. They look up and ask 'why' or 'how' or 'what do I do'. And the Moon hears them. It cannot, but it does. And it considers each request carefully. Flung into the sky, these tiny prayers are important, and deserve a response. And it will, it's just...deciding. New questions come along, which makes it harder. But some day the Moon will speak, and we will have our answer.

The Moon is
a complete response

11th November 2018

The Moon is
a hazy daydream

What seems so solid is weak
The other side says it's real
But what do they know
I look up now
And see Sun
But no
Moon
until
at the end
The day is spent
and what do I see
acting all innocent
shining strongly, no weakness
But the Moon, fine, I guess it's real

12th November 2018

The Moon is
a fast print

The other Moons got a nice all-round patina, some good craters. Generally pleasing mise-en-scene. You could really imagine an astronaut bouncing around there, maybe with a space-gun - pew pew! Heh. But the Earth's, now there's a rush job. I mean, it's fine on the face of it but around the back - a mess. Total kludge to have it tidally locked, hide the worst of it in a permanent dark-side. Shoddy work.

13th November 2018

Above - that is our home. We come from there. Your rules, your laws, they are not ours and have no power over us. We declare for the Moon, a fair and just place. It is only itself, and nothing else. No people, no life, no atmosphere. Just Moon. We declare as only ourselves! In your orbit, but separate, distant, austere. You cannot touch us, although you have left your footprint behind.

The Moon is
a citizen's flag

14th November 2018

The Moon is
an odd door

Neil Armstrong stared at the door. Red, with a brass handle. Totally normal. So what was it doing on the Moon? He should report this, but what would he say? Buzz has the camera, that could vindicate him when he got back to Earth. He'll have to say something, he's only supposed to be down in this crater for a minute. He should open it. The brass handle feels solid, feels real in his hand. So normal feeling, in a place like this. He lets go. Turns back. It's too much of a leap.

15th November 2018

Is gastóg tútach
i an Ghealach

(The Moon is
an awkward quick-witted-
girl)

"Aithnim", dúirt an Ghealach, "Ní féidir
leo a chloisteail mise, mar táim i bhfad
ar shiúl"

"Agus, tá a bhfios agam go bhfuil mo
ghreann an-ghreannmhar"

"Seo! Tabharfaidh mé barróg doibh"

Ghluais an Ghealach.

16ú Samhain 2018

"I know", said the Moon, "You all can't
hear me, because I'm such a long distance
away"

"And, I know my jokes are very funny"

"So! I'll give you all a nice hug"

The Moon moved.

16th November 2018

The Moon is
an iron shadow

The 43rd Earl of Tranquility looked over the sacred space. The dust and craters that made up his kingdom were ancient and wise. The traditions of his people are remembered in the bones of this place. He could no more ignore his role today than could the Moon its tidal duty. The denizens of The Keep, who always shall protect this place, stand around the edge. The Earl steps out into the Space of the Iron Shadow, and begins the chant - "The Eagle has landed -"

17th November 2018

The Moon is
a battle-wheeled pillar

"This insult must be answered!" he bellowed.

"But sir -"

"No! We invade in the spring. Make the preparations"

"But sir -"

"Did we not wage war against those over the long-water?"

"But sir -"

"Did we not wage war against those over the insanity mountains?"

"But sir -"

"Did we not wage war against the land below?"

"But sir -"

"Then our course is clear! The Moon shined on my nudey body when I was on the battlements, taking my exercise, and everyon saw. It must be destroyed! Build. Me. An. Attack. Tower!"

"Yes sir..."

18th November 2018

The Moon is
a blinding mould

We left a perfect circle, just to see what it would do. Remove its ability to grow, surround it with sterile space. Would it wax and wane with the seasons? Leap into its sky, to explore its own constellations? Or remain unchanging, only showing the imprint of the insects who walked across it? We waited. The grey, pockmarked surface reflected the light above it, and seemed to infuse it with its own illumination. Beautiful, in a way. It inspired us to play a game - "The Mould is..."

19th November 2018

The Moon is
an ending strand

It started small, in a field. Picked by the sore hands of a person tired from the day's labour. Packed tight, and sent to a factory. Treated, subjected to manufacturing processes to get it in place. Shipped. Examined. Stitched in place. Examined again. And again. And again. Stored, carefully. Compressed and shook as it is shipped again (in a way). Checked again. Strapped on. Subjected to a hard vacuum as a day's labour is completed. Disconnected by the work, there to remain, slowly decaying, forever.

20th November 2018

The Moon is
a tinned liquid

The moonlight shines down upon -
no, that's not right.
The moonlight sloshes, covering everything
Sloppy and everywhere.

The moonlight isn't clean, crisp, or clear
It is spilt all over this scene,
oozing into carpet and under the fridge.

You'll never clear up this moonlight.
Never mop up every little bit
You'll find this moonlight in unexpected
corners
for the rest of your life.

21st November 2018

The Moon is
a short kiss

A routine affection
seen on your way in
or your way out

Quickly noticed as you
pick up your rucksack
or put down your handbag

Regularly, you try and make sure
to focus on it
and lose yourself in it

But the brief, almost thoughtless, act
shows how normal it is
and how extraordinary

22nd November 2018

The Moon is
a stone myth

It was ours, once. Our people made it. Granted, it was tricky to get it up there, but we are a clever people. Mined from our land, we built it on the great plain - that is why it is so flat, so it would fit. Our people are the greatest stone carvers in the world, so we wanted to give the world a gift. And show off a little. It's not perfect - we never did finish the other side - but it is ours, and yours by birthright.

23rd November 2018

The Moon is
an uncovered ache

We.

Us.

I mean.

I never thought...

We were just friends before.

But somehow we ended up walking together
alone.

The countryside seemed empty aside from
you, me, and the Moon above us.

And even though we never spoke about
feelings, never held hands, never
kissed, something began that night
which shall never end.

24th November 2018

I don't know how long it takes light to get from the Moon to the Earth. I could look it up, but it doesn't matter. Let's call it a second, more or less. That means, it's not the Moon you're seeing. It's on a delay of a second. Anything could have happened in that time. So I watch, carefully, whenever I can. To see if I can catch it, catch the moment when the second ticks over, and we see what we've missed, already out of date. Maybe if I watch, I'll spot something and be a second ahead of all the rest of you.

The Moon is
a rapt second

25th November 2018

The Moon is
a good Moon

It tries its hardest
It gives as much light as it can
(the Sun can be stingy)
And anyway, it thinks it's a nice effect
and that you might like it a bit
(although it's too shy to really check)
Sure, it keeps messing with the water.
Sure to keep its distance though
(it knows the trouble it could cause)
Sometimes it tries too hard.
Some time every night looking inviting
(but sure to kill anyone who tries)
I can't say I like it too much
I much prefer the Sun, but, y'know -
it Moons well.

26th November 2018

The Moon is
a new reservation

"The world", she thought to herself, "seems pretty good so far. Parents are loving, I'm really getting a taste for milk, and I'm looking forward to getting my bowels under control some day. I really liked the feeling of the sun on my skin, although my parents worried about it. Wait - the sun seems to be disappearing? I like the effect though. Huh. Now it's all dark? Okay, I can get behind that. Bit of variation. Like the twinkling stars, nice touch. Wait - what's that? The...Moon? Oh no. No no no. That will have to go."

27th November 2018

The Moon is
a temporary place

It exists only in moonlight
Never seen without
Only letting us see just that
which the moonlight deigns to hit
Creeping along the edges
filling in the centre
before moving away again
leaping off the edge of the Moon
It ceases to exist again
We must wait until it is ready
But it always is
It appears again to us
existing for months at a time

28th November 2018

The Moon is
a lost thing

I don't know where I would put it, so it's probably best that it's not here. But I can see it's thousands of miles of surface fitting in nicely, perhaps, in the kitchen. Its gravity affecting the whole house, a tide of rugs and curtains twitching. It's glow providing a night-light when I need a glass of water at 3am. I can picture it, all there. But I see it there, every night. Distant and impersonal. I never had it, but I still close my curtains, to block out the feelings of loss.

29th November 2018

The Moon is
a wrinkled ending

Bring me outside
when it happens,
even if it's just the carpark
of a regional hospital.
Let me breathe in the night air,
it would be a good vintage to finish on.
Lay me on the ground,
the shock of cold would be welcome.
One last feeling
even discomfort is valuable
when so rare.
Just make sure
(if you can. Don't feel guilty if
it's cloudy, or day time, or too hard)
that I can see the Moon
and be witnessed one final time.

30th November 2018