

## **Clutter**

Breathe,  
my friend  
... b-r-e-a-t-h-e ...

-

-

a quiet  
moment  
before  
you turn  
to leave,

-

f

o

r

-

did you have  
any idea  
that after  
you earned  
your  
college degree,  
your mind  
would clutter  
with:

... contrasting realities ...

-

-

-

... fading possibilities ...

-

-

-

.

.

.

a

n

d

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-

-

conflicting personal  
... and business needs ...

-

-

-

-- continued next page --

Did they try  
to bind you

-  
-

into new  
responsibilities

-  
-

which relentlessly  
grew

. . . h-o-u-r-l-y . . .

-  
-

. . . d-a-i-l-y . . .

-  
-

. . . w-e-e-k-l-y . . .

-  
-

. . . y-e-a-r-l-y . . .

-  
-

Did they  
applaud when  
you worked  
hours fourteen,

-  
-

seven-days-a-week  
to keep up with  
the money machines,

as

the upper echelons  
retreated early

. . . evenings . . .

-  
-

-  
-

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-- continued next page --

... holidays ...

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a

n

d

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-

-

... weekends ...

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-

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Did they

ask you to

sacrifice

... your family ...

-

-

-

sacrifice

... your dreams ...

-

-

-

sacrifice

... everything ...

-

-

-

so long

as you meet

the advertised

... schedules of deliveries ...

-

-

-

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-- continued next page --

Did they  
ask you to  
eagerly seek  
. . . new challenges . . .  
-  
-  
-  
. . . new opportunities . . .  
-  
-  
-  
~ anything ~  
that could  
make you  
productively  
and  
competitively  
. . . complete . . .  
-  
-  
-  
.  
.  
.  
Did they ask you to  
trade your life  
-  
-  
. . . week . . .  
. . . after week . . .  
. . . after week . . .  
. . . after week . . .  
. . . after week . . .  
. . . after week . . .  
. . . after week . . .  
-  
-  
for  
commendation letters  
that might come once  
every year or three  
. . . if office politics agree . . .  
-  
-  
-  
.  
.  
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-- continued next page --

. . . Did they ask you to . . .

. . . Did they ask you to . . .

. . . Did they ask you to . . .

. . . Did they ask you to . . .

. . . Did they ask you to . . .

-

-

-

*Has your pristine,*

*little girl suddenly*

*transformed into*

*. . . a full distant teen . . .*

-

-

-

*Has your*

*loving wife*

*become numb*

*. . . and bitterly . . .*

-

-

-

*Has everything once*

*gold and green*

*faded into*

*. . . passing history . . .*

-

-

-

then, please

take a seat

on the

barstool

next to me

-

a

n

d

-

drink:

-

-

-

.

.

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-- continued next page --

*Drink away  
the misery  
of  
how things  
might have been,*

-

-

*had we  
not tried  
to be,  
the best*

*we  
could  
possibly  
... be ...*

-

-

-

.

.

.

Let us watch  
our overtime  
night

-

a

n

d

-

weekend  
earnings

burn and blur

in the background,  
along with everything  
we were told

our lives

... could possibly be ...

-

-

-

.

.

.

-- continued next page --

~ along with everything ~  
we were told  
our lives  
... could possibly be ...

-  
-  
-  
.  
.  
.  
a  
s  
-  
-  
-

our lifelong savings  
drain steadily  
in payment  
of  
divorce attorneys  
and monthly  
alimonies  
to sons and  
daughters we  
had practically  
... never seen ...

-  
-  
-

leaving us  
to question  
the  
job-related  
priorities  
we once  
held so  
... dear ...

-  
-  
-  
.  
.  
.

-- continued next page --

Dusty  
collections  
of  
commendation  
plaques lean

-

-

against  
the empty  
hallways  
of  
. . . self-esteem . . .

-

-

-

serving  
as raw reminders  
of  
the way things  
might have been,  
had we not  
. . . been so naïve . . .

-

-

-

had we not  
. . . so blindly pledged . . .

-

-

-

our  
loyalties  
to  
immaterial  
needs,

-

-

waking  
one  
morning,

-

-

-

.

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-- continued next page --



only to find  
our dream ships  
. . . sinking . . .

-

-

-

.

.

.

~ only to find ~  
our dream ships  
. . . sinking . . .

-

-

-

.

.

.

beneath  
the  
somber  
seas  
of  
friend

-

a

n

d

-

family  
debris.