

Daniel Whitlow, P-31994

Words Uncaged (Poem)

“At the edge of sleep” Written by: Daniel Whitlow (2017)

We should vanish together – You and me,
Altogether escape and disappear;

and play our games, and make chicken strips and lick mint chocolate chip ice cream from ancient,
porcelain dinner plates because we like it,
and what we like, we do,
don't we, baby?

So let's leave this place before empty specters awake and appear and carve their invisible faces into my
bruised skin; I don't want your gentle eyes infected by their distance; the loneliness they suffer isn't yours to
carry; I will hold you tight, and keep you safe,

You amaze me. The softness of the edges of the faintness of your smile calls to me, it resurrects me, it sings
to me as I weep, or ache, or fear for your future, and struggle to protect you

Your song defends me against myself and my desire to unravel; you insist nothing good ever comes from
disintegrating, Mimi; you astonish me.

Silver light silhouettes unconditional foreheads pressed as lilac petals flutter silent in our lungs,

I love you, baby; you are the heart of me—

I can feel your fingers around my soul

The blood in your veins, the warmth in your flesh seeps into my wintry spine and elevates my brooding ghost into
light; the night bears your mark, a whispering midnight mane caressing my worries with delicate, silken tendrils—

Your father promised to stay, baby; I swear he did—with deserted Arizona wind flowing through his soft
hair, he promised to stay; he said he loved me and when you love someone, you stay and never leave them
because love conquers all, but he left, but he promised—it's not your fault, baby...I swear to you...

We should hide in the closet, before we grow apart, before you grow up and leave me.

But you have to, baby, you have to leave—just don't forget me. And now you're in prison. How could I let this
happen to you! How could I fail you; you are my heart, Daniel,

I should have seen it coming, I should have been there – I should have known, but I did not...