

Time

Michael McAndrew

Time doesn't count

It happens all at once

In grains of sand

Or even drops of water

An ocean wave

Or volcanic eruption

On watch staring at the sea

Wanting to go smoke and forget

A different watch, staring into darkness

Waiting to see if any of the kids on the unit wake up with a bad dream

Sitting at a bar in Malaysia

Talking about nothing in particular

It's snowing and the kids need to go to school

I'm arguing with an 11 year old about why she can't wear flip flops today

I'm stamping my new rank

On a green flight deck jersey

I'm labeling the kids clothes when I get into work

I don't want them to argue about what belong to who in the morning

Whole milk in plastic tumblers with cartoon characters

Whole Red Bull's from Thailand, uncarbonated and warm

Tiger Beer mixed with Irish Car Bombs

Mixing Miralax into orange juice

Men and women who can't speak about what they know

Kids who haven't mastered how not to

"I heard you were in the army, is that true?"

I was in the navy

"My grandpa was in the navy, that's how he got all his teeth knocked out."

Yeah, that can happen

"Is it true you have to make your bed all the time in the navy?"

Just every morning

"That's all the time."

Uh-huh

"What war were you in?"

This one

“There’s a war going on now?”

Yep

“Will you eat breakfast at the table next to me?”

Yes

“Is the breakfast in the navy good?”

Not really. Well, the biscuits and gravy were good

“We have that here.”

I know. It’s better here

(I just know), there’s time for us to fall in love before I have to leave