

## Breaking and Building in Python

I sat there,  
staring at the blinking cursor,  
like it was daring me to try again.

Variables slipping through my fingers,  
Data shapeshifting when I wasn't looking,  
Operators mocking me with every wrong input.

I wrote my first function,  
and it didn't work.  
I wrote it again, and again,  
until it finally breathed.

I learned that if is a lifeline,  
and that loops can trap you in a nightmare,  
or carry you home.

I chased a turtle across the screen,  
Watching it draw crooked houses,  
realizing —  
for the first time,  
that code could be messy and still beautiful.

I split apart strings,  
joined them back together,  
built lists of mistakes,  
and tuples of tiny victories.

I opened files like secret journals,  
and smiled when I found my own words waiting for me.  
I lost pieces of myself in broken sets,  
found my way back with careful dictionaries.

And recursion,  
the first time seeing it, it broke my mind clean open,  
until I saw the pattern in the chaos,  
the way down is the way up,  
the answer tucked inside the question.

There were nights I wanted to quit,  
slamming my hands on the keyboard,  
wondering if I was smart enough for this.  
But somewhere in that wreckage,  
I heard a voice,  
saying “try again”,  
and so I did,  
and the code began to work.

