

Broken Room, Fixed Photo

By Kristopher Miller

I'm shivering and emaciated,
All my ribs poke through my translucent skin
As I open up a broken cardboard box,
In front of the mirror broken into twelve pieces,
Standing between the windows shattered by heavy hail
And resting on a floor threatening to fall apart,
Cursing at me with every creak board by board.
In this shattered mirror,
A dirty, dusty background of sharp nails
Punch from out of the ceiling and reach out with rust to bleed me.
Heaps of moth-eaten clothing grasp out of the boxes they've tumbled from.
This room wants to kill me
So I turn from my reflection and see blurry portraits
Of a girl that I knew, of a girl lying in this broken box.

And from out of this box,
Of a girl with pure white, flowing locks
That Frame her smooth oval face stabs into my heart.
I fall in love with her bright, cerulean eyes all over again.
She's so close to me, yet she's so far away.
One look at her and my muscles contract in pain
My arms and legs are jabbed with a thousand darts
Dripped with poison to make my heart race and burn.

(I just hope she's happy,
Happier than I am right now.)

In one photograph,
She's teaching some kids how to finger paint butterflies in a meadow.
She was always a good artist with everything.
This girl mastered the art of sarcasm regarding to society,
On how people hunt animals not for meat, but for pride to stick to their wall.
She mastered the art of kindness,
Where she adopted people born dirt poor in sod houses and vomit-covered slums.
This girl is taking care of these kids well, these grinning, cackling kids
Shepherded by this smiling, wise woman.

(She's taking care of these children better
Than I ever took care of her.)

I flip to another picture,
She's standing by a sunlit window.
This girl is Amaterasu incarnate
As she raises her arms at the window
For she commanded all the bright energy onto her
And anyone else standing around her,
Including the irises shooting up for her
And the vines tangling around her in love
And the doves perching on her shoulder nudge her neck.
She closes her eyes in peace.

(I sought her sun powers once,
Then I worshipped her as a goddess.
This was all a blasphemy to her
As she burned my flesh to a crisp in her light
And sent me to my private hell.)

I look at her in many smiles in the photo album I found
In this shadow-haunted attic
Where the wind's hideous shrieks stab deep into my ears.
My dirt-covered fingers soil the pictures of this beautiful, kind woman,
That I knew, that I betrayed, that I antagonized, that I cursed.
A woman who sent me to a place of rotten wood and ash,
Of wishful thinking of reuniting with her,
Of retribution, of reconciliation
Of incessant, insane lust.

(I loved her too much to the point
Where light and dark were no longer woven together.
Both threads of both sides broke apart
And were tied on two opposite sides.
She was in the lighter half,
I was in the darker half.)

We are now separated painfully,
Set side by side,
Person by person.
Dark by light.

© 2011 Kristopher Miller