

the blind girl & the hit man/

"An Act in Two Plays"

Part One: *the blind girl*

Scene I

One afternoon in the park,
hesitant memories
skim over gray matters
sun-patched blues
overlook in the clearing –
skip like dusty old records
stuttering, scratching by
to a walk in the park;

or, walks in parks distract
memories' reviews
passive afternoons reenact –
weather plays no part.

we see the girl
who can't look back –
indefinable calculus
plots terrain's shifty footing
constant variables risk
and pebbles embarrass,

far-away eyes too close to tell
map the signs hands print
reading her future in palms –
chance likes to gamble
but insight rolls the dice

honing rough-cut diamonds
out of glass-eyed windows
like slight squints of sky
peered through microscopes
broadening their prospects
narrowed birth mislead
guiding her first steps
with more tricks:

*learn how to separate shadows...
blackouts have good memories...
daylight's never late for tunnels...*

her steps rock more than plant
like a slow number at a fast dance,
the snapped reed in lonely storms –
she was a careless gesture
and nature spoiled the rest

(dome's black-eyed shiners
eclipsed by a sucker-punch)
but flowers lit under ground
tinge monochrome reels
darkness dreams in color –

foggy mirrors polishing silver
shine without sunglasses,
wink to light's flirting glance
at the beauty tarnish masks
from every reflective angle
she faces herself in thought –

sunrays deflect a certain irony
she struts to reckless expanse
staging stilted portrayals
art borrows from imitations,
highlight two sparkling violets
signaling at blind spots
striding sightseers traffic:

flares a make-believe mouth
routine forged with smiles
at each bashful recognition
of the glowing resemblance
compliments pass in the dark –

the stare is subtle as the sway
her profile's bounce of hair shades
like curtains flicked over split glass
once approach turns to examine...

under the sage tree's kindred stigma
immovable views attract,
she soothes struggle's wayward soles
far from sight to mind –
and saddles a bench supporting the idea.

Scene II

an ear masters sight
her instincts envision
instrumentally tuned
to sounds fury mutes

*quickens string section's pace
heart plucks on sudden beats*

she whirls to muffled strains
above shock's deaf screams
choked by a ruthless pause
surprise stabs in the dark
fixing toxic-tipped spears
peepers level at targets
paring flesh from blood
on wet shivering hides
doused in cool pools
an icy plunge chills

*from staring back
at the man in black*

widens her, eyes to mouth,
no tear or word she'd risk –
this same gingerly girl
under the furtive blankets
shades ease into breeze,
what walk & heat unrest
tree & bench relieved

*blinded by secrecy
their sight conceals*

panic's leaky pores sponge
hair-mopped streaks
skin soaks in lathered coats
of sun-burnt smoke
laboring over limbs' ache to escape
the turbulence of bones
frozen under wiggled outcry
a bitten-down lip jags

*sharpens saw-toothed nerves
his glare dulled with cold feet*

scowl's grooved acerbic lines
spell steely-stone etchings
of hard action's signature –
the calling card
in the *hurt* business

*blood inks the deal
delivery guarantees*

for once her defense falters
in alliance with ground
leaving sudden stillness
open with no cover
but bottomless scratchings
of frightened calm...

she thinks back at herself *tunneling ahead*
along walls' guidance
her feet track pursuing hands
paced to slowing echoes
trailing voices gain in sound
exposing light acoustics carry
the louder silence
speaks to shadows

she gropes after portals obscurity walls
looking for the entrance in exits
her hands dragging feet scuffing floors
while knocks assault doors
crippled angles swamped by sound
stir whirlpools in teacups
tempests hit the roof,
water topping glass

old watchtowers steer wasteland's drifts
on higher grounds lower depths shore
only sweet wildness of despair
occupies with tragic vacancy
tugs of rope slam down trap doors
in the blink of a lighthouse
shelter against tides
stronger than shutters

for an instant there, the scene
touches upon a different feel,
not closing out but holding back:
did she see something she shouldn't
exposing negatives to daylight
among black and white snapshots
memories develop in darkrooms?
was the road for martyr's freedom
a cross between pillars and barriers?
which then stake the bigger sacrifice?
well, that's not for us to say,
but what we do know is this...

she owns to the barrenness
of fruitless stands
carting afterthoughts
trusting promises will keep
 by the courage
 betrayed in solitude

she no longer holds
to standing her ground
chasing distance
liberty traps in a cage
 doing time on the run
 escape never frees

unwilling to fight,
reluctant to die,
too scared to stay,
more afraid to run:
 how never asks
 for whom or why...

*and you head for the front row
to the last seat of the late show
where dreams begin
before the music ends
and all the lamps are on
and the dark goes out
and freedom bargains
with nothing left to steal
when only grace can gift
and you're in the clear
down to the last hope
running out of fear...*

if they cut down the tree
dream plants a song,
when he closes her eyes
a flower will open –
 an iris of purple swords
 the light defends.

Part Two: *the hit man*

Prologue

He was animal-made.

the voracious lurking alpha hunter's
lascivious lunge slip-sliding-sleek-sneak springs:
seats the product of his prowess
and environment
as its prey –

civility hushed over tables
like hunchback beggars
mercy finds in prayers,
appease famished guests
man invites in beasts –
roasting carnal banquets
served on slivered platters
garnished for all seasons
inhaling sweet long breaths
the air layered with scent –

he sizes the mark
measuring the music
slimming openings
by incisions of precision
carving out notes
at bones in the flesh
sleight vanishing hand
sharpened to knives
raping thrill at the kill
in a symphony to red

fate confides in the past
telling an unreliable future –
memory forgets itself,
plagues wouldn't rat him out;
he's that whisper of gossip
you DON'T talk about

even his shadows
have ghosts

accidents don't wait,
he happens first:
before late arrives
he's already gone

nowhere's never
seen him coming...

*evil's reign of the wild has never been truly harnessed
(and I'm not about to temper it here), but appetites that ravished savor
are fasting from slowing down – his chews as big as bites
spew the victor's spoils hunger won't stomach
turning to the role-reversal of his last assignment:*

the tooth-chiselled street artist
prowling concrete slabs,
subjects as romance
and death its art –
words aren't speaking
but silence talks out loud
behind clouded whispers
nightscapes deprived of light
*picture a thousand cuts
the speechless paint,
muddy hallways of unwashed carnage
walls inch closer –*

he queered the play's opening
stage-struck-at-knife-point
severed skins reveal on sudden twists
caught in the act red-handed –
flood lamps illuminate
an unarmed shadow
naked under the covers
joyless as holes – *gutted, outworn
silhouette smudged, washed out
a coffee stain of faded black –
smeared makeups inform blue murder
in hard light of doubt*

over whom fathered the sins
of unborn children – death houses
breed living ghosts, raised and roused
as still-life sculptures;
looming, nudging, crowding silence
memory shadows –
*but why was he their keeper?
his torch-lit hand's dark survival
grinds sharp-eyed fatigue
measuring razor's guard – for the edge
against vengeful gods*

*sleep flits its shadowy schemes.....circling cool aired cabins for escape eyes no longer
harbor.....eyelids scrape veined tinted paneslike splintered glass grating teeth.....
regarding that one last long lost flame.....whirlwinds puff blowing the pilots out.....*

I. can one outrun the future?

*he had given time the slip
but drags drooped, wavering
flagged hoist of skull & bones
with his blood on the contract –
musters a last game of chess stalemates maneuver
keeping death in check,
but black pawns are foot soldiers
in a game of kings:*

the sun-starched stakes
lining up horizon's highways
jut out like marked graves,
road signs read like headstones –
with time now running the race,
he's bucking for the short play on a long ride
looking through side view mirrors
at a white horse creeping into view...

II. can one's blood not stain?

cleaner hands trace soft and slow
the nameless badges
citing age-old wounds
ribbed seams mapped
seared between sewns –
tattooed medals
of the forgotten memory ages
like landmarks for the vanished
the wind whistles past
as grassy hums of existence,
held up under the light
are blotted out by the sun
warming a cold blade:

he rips the threads that tied him down
imprisoned like a live bullet late to life
triggers second shots cold chambers release
killing the past in its tracks
by the warmth blood streaks
over the rusted emblems of his trade
smoothing puckered-patched
needle-scarred crevices
stitched in the course of silver linings
unlace a shiny new nakedness
sprung in hard red rain...

Part Three: *the girl & a man*

(*'blind spot' at the park*)

She could conceive this man unborn – almost see it:

childbirth's accidents
blindsided by vision
with their natures torn

finding an oasis in a mirage – the sleepy deserter leans into shade,
whiffs of sage
bear her fragrance

he angles for heat – two shadows shoulder sharing crooked light,
warm their blood
out in the cold

lean on each other – braced against helplessness like sad guitars,
nestles knotted crown
her breasts cradle
to cushion harm
before the fall...

her feathered brush combs his hand, skinned to sand –
and he leans the last
where prayers touch:
a flower's kiss takes
death to dance

spying eye to eye, lips weaken knees to beg –
eyes that denied
breath's last request
plead from the place
we all kneeled in once

nature's softer verses unearth crudeness –
their quivering oars
of untouched waters
roar at the surface
too deep to silence

rivers wetting lips along solitary banks
rage before they meet
mouth to mouth
echoing rumbled voices
tongues speak –
a fingered kiss
licks the hurt...

she was the diamond with the ring missing –
wild orchid
stranded yellow
sleeved a rose
her lady's slipper
misfit for gold

he was a fatal messenger with a gift –
if hate could love
life earns its death
fugitive beauty beds
in wrinkled sheets
of unhurried streams:
remains as treasures
hold rippled wakes

*the sage tree, their bench
shades and stones*

she crowded her presence with his absence –
where freedom is loss
only the lost are found
in each borrowed kiss
they'd steal from light

*she buried his name,
kept the knife*

he saw his passing art designed by desire –
slayed the demons
to crown an angel
planting wildflowers
in a nest of stars
opening her eyes
flaring rainy glints
sun's moonlit sky
corn-colored bright
surged in violet

*and shadowed stones
silence the bones*

with his closing eyes, dissolved into shade...
watching himself
at an open window
emerge in half-light
unseen and unmarked –
who waited for the girl
until dark.