

Frozen Blood

Six at a time, snowflakes fell like feathers. Swaying gently at first, spiraling their little dance before making contact with the verglas window. Thoughts swirled accompanying the white puffs of crystal. He watches as they fluttered and floated covering the last bit of grass in extremis. His eyes followed watching as a sheet of untouched snow landed smoothly in the yard of other homes. It reminded him of his younger self.

When his small arms struggled as they wrapped a long itchy green scarf around his neck. He would lift the scarf to cover his mouth and chin from the cold and proceeded to cover his ears with a soft fluffy hat. As a child he always misplaced his mittens, he risked venturing out, exposing his small hands to frigid air. Freezing air always greeted him as he stepped out of the house. He regretting not finding his mittens and huddled in himself. He trailed around to look for a shovel. Every day his chore was to shovel off the driveway in order to watch the cartoons that came on in the morning. So he would wake up at almost five to clean the long icy drive. His mother left at three in the morning, she was a nurse at a near by hospital in town. The driveway was virtually untouched save for the tire tracks his mother left leaving for work in the morning. He hurried so that he would catch his show at seven a.m. Grabbing the shovel from the side of the house he stuck it into the snow and moved it off of the blacktop. His fingers freezing to the handle.

A sudden vibration broke the trance as well as the silence. Buzzing seemed to come from the corner of the room. Merely sighing, he pushed his body away from the cold window. His

movements stiffened as he turned to face the inner walls. The walls, a champagne cream decorated only by a photo of a Geisha Holding an umbrella beneath a cherry tree. He shuffled his way towards the bed where the phone lay lit. A message displayed on the screen. He reached for the device but hesitated from the weight of guilt. At this angle, the geisha stared at his frozen hands, as if sensing where he struggled to erase his pain. He held the phone up, close to his face and squinted, struggling to read the letters.

Mrs. Jorgensen is a good one, I'll send you her number.

He set the phone on the small nightstand beside the bed. It occurred to him how cold his hands grew and curled them into his palms creating gentle fists. He made his way back towards the chair by the window. Sitting down, he traced the inner lining of the charcoal colored coat he wore. Guiding his fingers around the detailed stitching which held its entirety intact. A single tear collided with the fabric, soaking the area it touched. Heartache overwhelmed him as more tears followed one after another. He pressed the ball of his hands into his eyes, straining to forget her. The phone buzzed again.

(497)803-4289.

Buzz,

Please don't isolate yourself.

He felt as though the messages were made for someone else. As if someone else's mother had vanished. As if it were someone else's pain he was feeling. Uncurling his fists he looked out the fogging window.

He and his sister waited near the window in this room each day, awaiting their mothers arrival from work. Their breaths fogged up the glass and they would draw little shapes and words inside, passing the time after their cartoons.

He drew a small figure in the corner of the fogged glass and drew two smaller ones near. He imagined the accident was a dream and continued waiting for her return from work. Looking through the same window, he wanted her silver prius to pull into the drive where she would hop out in the lapis colored scrubs. Fixing her ponytail like she does, tightening it before entering her own home with a tired smile.

He felt his skin shift and squirm before the final vibration signaled defeat.

Mom wouldn't have wanted you to be this way, Jason. Call me when you get the chance. Don't forget to try the Mrs. Jorgensen, she's a great therapist.

Jason walked towards the door and stopped. Weight clung to his shoulders threatening to drag him down. Being close to his mother added more weight to the load. But he forced himself anyhow. Trudging through the dimly lit hallway, he passed her face in every photo on the yellowed walls. His body became a machine now, moving each leg robotically with concealed contumacy. He stumbled his way to the dining room table. The crushing bleakness surrounded

him in the emptiness of the room. He felt his body cave inward although not physically, he shuddered. Lingered before a small dining table, he thought about his mom while he stared and time consumed him. Finally, he felt his heart thumping in his chest. Reminding him of the warm blood that once caressed his palms. The thought soothes him calmly. He inhaled, taking the dry air through his lungs, urging him to cough. Shakily, he reached out to touch the smooth metal barrel of the .38 magnum revolver in front of him. Pain and fascination overtook his senses at the new texture beneath his fingertips. He took the bracing weapon in his hands, it became an icy deadweight in his anxiousness.

Clicking the cylinder back into place, he weighed the gun in his hands once more. Feeling the uncanniness of the object fade away. Holding the gun, he cradles it to his chest. He cradled it as his mother would him. A small smile escapes his lips. His body relaxing as he held death by its smooth body and wavered as he made his way back into the hall and slumped against the wall. Feeling his mom's disappointment stab through him. He took picture frame in his view and he held the small gun up. His finger hovered at the trigger for a moment until the machine started working again and he pulled.

The glass shattered exploding into the walls although his skin felt nothing. The bullet penetrated deep behind the tottering picture frame until it fell exposing the scar and shattering even more on the hardwood. Warm liquid ran down obscuring his vision. He reached up, and smeared his hands in the liquid and observed the glossy texture sinking into his fingerprints. The scarlet red of blood ignited his memories. Again, he pointed the gun up and shot. One by one the frames exploded, falling to the ground with ear piercing delicacy. Five portraits settled on the cracked brown floor to match the five bullet holes in the wall.

Dropping the weapon he buried his head into his knees and sobbed. He sobbed for hours until the impending darkness approached. His body reluctantly lifted itself up and walked toward the dining room. He took off his coat, feeling it slide against shards of glass impaling his body. Bloodstains blotched artistically in the grayscale of his coat. His mind began clouding, his vision fading. He barely had enough strength to turn around to see someone open the door before he collapsed.