

The Dream I Had Last Night

I.

I do not remember how we came to be here. Or why, for that matter. Only that we are here and that is enough for me.

A leaf in the wind, a bug in a storm, a pebble in a current; this is how I feel. Like a thing out of control, being tossed about in a riptide of 'powerlessness'. I also feel like the fluff that rises from dandelion, the kite that rises and shifts in a breeze. I am two molecules of water being broken apart and destroyed, only to find another who will join me again into togetherness. I am the entire ocean - roaring, churning, raging. But still held under the sway of the tyrannical moon. Do I have any power of my own?

Control is a thing I must let go of; power a thing I must swallow. I am a seed blown in the wind, and I must become content with that thought.

We are in the woods. The ones by my house that I would sneak off into as a child, when I felt rebellious or sad. I still am a child. Though, I am not here because I am rebellious or sad (which I am both of those things). I am here because I wish to get lost. *We* wish to get lost. Sometimes, I feel, the most liberating thing in the world is to become lost. It stirs curiosity; you must think. Every leaf is a clue and every petal and stem is a landmark. You must pay attention.

I try to pay attention. Something is different. The woods before me, around me, are familiar like a photograph seen once, years ago. These aren't the woods I know, though they can't be anything else. The forest, like a friend from the past, has changed and is now unrecognizable. Or maybe it was me that changed. I don't know anything anymore.

The rocky trail that I know (or had known) from my memories is now green and perhaps a little overgrown, and the hilly terrain from my head is nothing compared to the vast mountain of a trail I now stand on. Everything is light. Everything is color; the air is lapis lazuli and the wind tastes yellow on my tongue. A halo of fuzzed light enshrouds the trees on both sides of me, as well as the girl that walks behind me (whom I admit I had forgotten about until now).

Who can tell us where to go? Who can tell us what to become? We stand in a polaroid snapshot taken in 1999, but the photo is only one of a million in an album, half full. Not even half full. Oh, the time that we have for all these beautiful candid.

In this moment I think that perhaps the world never truly began, and just always was.

II.

Now that this world has been shaped, and my thoughts have been made concrete, I can finally begin.

I am a boy. Sixteen, tall, unique as we all believe ourselves to be. I am controlled by love and I love to be in control. Sometimes I pretend that I'm a poet. Sometimes I pretend I am good with words. I am not.

The girl who stood behind me, and now walks beside me, is also sixteen. She, perhaps, truly is unique, and is as much a mystery as she is a genius.

Do not mistake my admiration for love, though, or my fascination for lust. It is just that: fascination. She is a mystery to unravel and I am a detective (who really never was good at his job).

For the sake of our story, I shall be called I, and she shall be called She. And you- and you shall be called I.

She and I are hiking up the trail, and for a brief moment we are not alone. A friend is with us, but they don't stay for long. I cannot recall their name or face, only that they were here briefly. Once again it is just her and I. It always ends up just her and I.

She asks me what time it is and I answer 'I do not know' and She says 'what fat lot of help you are'. That's not really what she said, but I didn't hear her so I must make an assumption.

The reason I didn't hear her is because my attention was directed towards a shining silver thing gleaming among the dirt. Upon closer inspection, I see

that it is not a *thing*, but two *things*. A sword and a handaxe. Freshly polished in the dirt. One for her and one for I.

She took the sword and I took the axe, and perhaps it's just me but the axe seems to weigh nothing. It is merely an attachment of my arm. Freshly polished.

We must have been walking for some time now because my legs are beginning to ache and my feet are feeling sore, and there's a funny feeling in my head that something's *not right*. The trail that we had walked upon has now given way to a street of cobblestone, and the trees that once surrounded us have vanished, as if we had crossed a threshold in another world. We had.

It was every year at once. We stood in medieval England and we stood in 1800's Berlin. The linear thing that was time had been twisted in upon itself and now laid flat, folded in upon itself like a piece of paper. Every moment was crammed into this one place.

She told me that she knew the way, and she had been here before, and so I followed her down the cobblestone streets and to the house that is my neighbor's house and was also my lover's house, and was once many others' houses. *Is* many others' house. For the time being, it *is* many others' house.

We go in through the back door. It is an abandoned house, She tells me. She carries her sword and I carry my axe. We are freshly polished.

III

We are in the new sound. We are in a city of bones-- and we are the archaeologists to dig and search and shovel through the dirt. What fossils might we find here?

The room we stand in is a dusty one, the only light filtering through blinds on a cobwebbed window. The room is completely square and the single window looks out over the ocean. We are somewhere, high above a beach. The door that we came in through is nowhere to be seen, and it appears as if the only way to go is forward. And so it is forward that we go, into the unknown, into the infinite.

The square room exits to a long corridor, it's only furnishings a drab, oriental rug and an old-timey chandelier (with three of its four light bulbs missing.) Dragging ourselves along the eerie hallway, the distant echo of some horror movie soundtrack playing in our heads, we clutch our polished silver in bone white fists. It occurs to me that this is the type of thing my English teacher would have us underline or highlight in class. *It's foreshadowing*, she would say, *everything means something*. I would always roll my eyes. If I were awake the hallway would just be long and the house would just be dark and I would just be right as usual, but I'm not awake. And so everything means something.

At the end of the hallway, seated in school chairs, sit three people: two men and one woman. I briefly notice that She is no longer behind me and

wonder where she has gone to. Perhaps she has gone back to the square room.

The leftmost of the three people stands and looks at me with eyes of blazing blue. He wears chainmail, his chest emblazoned with a faded celtic cross, and in his hands he holds a rapier, which is pointed at me from across the room. He says nothing to me, but I understand his intentions, the way that one does in a dream.

We are fighting and it is okay. It is a duel. It is a game. No one will truly get hurt. I lift my handaxe and I swing at his thin little sword, cringing at the tinny sound emitted from the clash. I swing again, he swings again, parry, deflect, bow, bend, slash. We are dancers, tapping our feet to some melodious rhythm, the clash is now just background music to our song. But all songs come to an end.

He swings his rapier out at me, away from his body, and leaves his chest exposed. In a triumphant thrust, I present the edge of my blade to his chest. He has been defeated. He surrenders and sits back down. He is a little bruised. There is a scrape on his face.

The man in the middle stands up, bearing the uniform of a British officer. In his hands he holds a musket. He is the easiest; while he fumbles with the gun, attempting to load the thing, I gently place my axe against his throat. Not a drop of sweat is lost. He sits back down, a faint red line on his neck from my blade. Not bleeding, though.

Finally, the woman stands up, adorning an outfit of army camouflage. In her hands she holds a

polished silver sword, a stark anachronism to her outfit. She is quick to strike and I am slow to defend. Her attack sends me staggering, and I hold my arm out to steady myself. She leaps at me again, agile as a cat, and I swing my axe to meet her sword in a glorious screech of metal-on-metal. In the background I hear the sound of a siren-- it is just the sound of our fury, of our song. It is the sound of our hate and our love.

This time I am the first to swing, and we meet each other as equals. We go on like this for minutes or maybe hours, not quite dancing and not quite fighting, but some unearthly thing in between. We slash and parry and swing and duck and fall and stand back up again and I am so tired.

The sirens have grown louder, and I can hear shouting somewhere outside. Perhaps there is a party on the beach. We continue, ignoring the noise.

Moments have passed and the shouting has only grown louder. It is not happy shouting. The sound of a door falling interrupts Her midswing. I drop my axe, that is not an axe, and She drops her sword, that is not a sword, and that is when I realize that it is She who stands in front of me and it is She that I have been fighting.

Red and blue lights fill our vision as a stampede echoes through the halls. She and I hold guns in our hands, no longer our polished silver. Beside us lay the bodies of my father and my lover; the former with a bullet to the throat, and the latter with one to the heart. We are under arrest for murder.