

Fill the Void

"Fill the void"

I said to seraphim

(presence, never there)

as heathen starlight

spun sparks through

flaxen hair

Neglect

A humid wind caresses

delivers its love, mothering the earth

green as the middle child

Too late for one

a decrepit leaf whispers death

swaying from a spider's web

curved stem halted from growing undulations

These Fluted Lips

These fluted lips
make music on me
ecstatic notes
played expertly
the sweet secretion
of melody
Left, piano,
trilling delicious reverie

The Sales Lady

Descending into a mega-mall, the fluorescence blemishes my skin.
There is a twinge in my temples as I approach the makeup counter,
meeting eyes with a woman whose shoes pierce my gait
and whose artificially white teeth flash like EMP bombs.

But I must not be blinded; there is something behind those calcium shutters,
illuminating inside her vessel and peaking through each crack ... I wonder.
Is her exoskeleton painted so pristinely to brighten the day?
Who owns the day she, in every meticulous gesture, labors for?

But every question is drowned in a clanging,
a clamoring of those persistent teeth trying to make a sale.
Rattling around like new tap shoes, sheening ivory.
White noise, white noise.

Every coherent thought blurred, humming viciously
as done in the shadows of the perfect women in chromatic ads.
But she is not perfect; I can see her pores.
They are weeping the regrets of thick foundation.

Those streaks of saline wet speak gallons and shimmer
as they slide, revealing pockets of uneven flesh tones,
subtle bruises from the hot-lipped sun,
every mar a testament to resistance in midst of the Tyrants.

Gravity, Matter and Time; how admirably this body has battled them,
unaware of its own striking animal; a masterwork of sinew and bone,
of neurons and cartilage, of mucus and moles.

Each electron hums in its proud, puffed little chest.

In earnest I wonder, does the sales lady know every outline,
every wrinkle of her beige, waterproof suit?

Does she wear it in precious stride, beaming just bright enough so as to share
her whole self, lovely-garish, yet never glaring the keenest lens?

There is no answer.

I only nod slightly, appreciating her mottled gem eyes,
politely severing our feeble connection, departing, contemplating them,
that such dazzling blue could exist immersed in milky pools
disrupted by long-legged channels of blood.

Phantoms You Have Carried

The clearest blue became mottled with age,
and I only recently began to notice.

Time-soaked eyes, foggy mirror to my own,
reflecting a frail wire, just out of reach.

Leading to a skull-shaped cellar,
therein lay the contents, shadows,
wavering in small glimmers of truth.

To me they are reserved but yearning.

Whispers carress my lobes;
they are phantoms you have carried.

They ride on waves of joy and anguish,
snapshots of my tiny feet trodding down halls,
chasing cats with remote-control race cars.

Then I tumbled over a carpeted ledge
and bent your office-drawer key.

Maybe you'd suspected those young paws
were much stronger than they looked.

As time sped all around me, your atmosphere grew thin,
and labored breathing stole the spark from your limbs.

When cells began to replicate like narcissists in the West,
your hovel became a warzone, and I, a refugee.

You never caught your breath in the wreckage,

and when a second bout of war came, your lungs gave out.

I watched it happen, at a loss.

I remember your mouth hanging open, eyes glazed, wide,
as, in your final breath, you ran towards something I could not see.

Now, the battleground you once crawled through
has been cleared of every trace, every tuft of dog hair,
and all the shining documentation to prove you were an artist.

And you were an artist, having sculpted so much of my
lanky willow limbs, my dense, ferocious heart.

I have a case of survivor's guilt.

I am writing every day a mystery, wading through
my own metaphysical mess, only faintly aware of yours,
the stuff that lingers like shadow people,
darting in and out of my peripheral vision.

I only wish they'd speak to me and
divulge what last you saw, or that I could
reactivate your smart phone and read
the very last text message you sent.