

Starving Beneath

The lethargy is in courtship with the guilt
They kiss above me as I stare at the ceiling from the bed-cage
sunlight dancing long onto them through the window
I look at how his hair is greasy, how the other has deodorant stains
And I lay repulsed.
I lay motionless,
I lay unarmed.

In the first moments of morning they are nowhere to be found
I lay neglected and restless, craving their disgusting show.
The window winks distant lights on me alone and I could crumble,
could run into myself forever through my tongue
or be the coal of a train filled with my own nightmares.
It's loneliness,
Deeply bruising and dark.

Kind Score

I wonder my karmic balance, I wish there was an app
that could clock my contributions toward right and wrong
Have I finally run out of the good deeds I saved
like clipped coupons in my portfolio?
There's only so much good in a heart like mine
I have become a hypocrite again and again over such a thing.

The cat woke me at twilight this morning with a rattling toy.
No coffee can erase the missed half hour;
he doesn't know any better. I'll still pet him in the evening
and appreciate his mewls for dinner once the hour comes.
And I'll hide the toy for tonight's slumber. It is easy to be kind to felines.

What scale does kindness follow?
If I buy locally what is the ranking against holding a door open for a stranger?
My morality bubbles around me and I feel anxious
The world says that money is the most important gift
Pay, pay, pay
I know that money is the coldest kindness in the world,
so why does it make the world go around?
I wish that slicing fruit for family
And making soup to share and giving trinkets and pointing out the sunset
And *listening*
were given their due weight in this wretched society.

I'm making soup for some I call family tonight-
We chat over canned seltzers while garlic permeates the air.
A full heart like this is such a sweet fruit;
This must be the kindness I seek.

Cold Handed

In the absence of a lover, I appreciate the winter
for its blankets, its hats and scarves and other bundles.
In the summer I will famish for embraces again
but by then I will have the support of the sunshine
and the oxygenated air of greenery.

Yesterday I drove to the lake and painted. The water
churned green aside the pale blue snow.
The tops of the trees on the shore across were covered in more white
the higher up the hill they climbed; a soft gradation.
The snow falling down made it hard to tell where the horizon began
and the heavens ended.
I stayed in my car, and despite not wanting to waste gas
I had to keep it running to defrost the windows.
I got paint on my favorite jacket; artistry can be such a contagion.

I think I'll be okay again in the spring;
I'll have to be, for the fruit will be in season.
There will be rivers to swim in topless and cans of paint
to empty.

The snake is loose.

I hope you are not desperate in the dark
But comforted by it.
Said dark has terrified me to lose you,
Ripped open a quivering red cavern in my chest and made me
Frantic. I almost wish you had died
Rather than to think you're out there, starving and frightened.
Then I could mourn, and find comfort in the permanence
No, I am so grateful to dream you might still be alive.
The hope is yet what drives me to keep looking.
For all the fear your species inspires in mine, you don't deserve an ounce.
I remember first holding you, a docile creature with a tender curiosity
And ineffable elegance.

Let the ice outside stay far from your fragile scales; return to me
Beneath the radiators. I have your favorite things waiting;
A warm meal, a safe hide, and fresh ground to burrow into.

The Solution

I solace myself with abstractions
That have been cherished long over a century;
London, 1886, blossoms behind my eyes
In all the splendor of dog-cart mud, men with tremendous whiskers
Bootprints, haemoglobins, violin, kindness and cleverness
As I read the exalted adventures of Sherlock Holmes.
I rather prefer to be stuck in the breast-pocket of the good Dr. Watson
While he wonders after his roommate's latest feat in deduction
Than rotting in the bed-cage, where the window outside is bleak blackness
As always, these days.

When I am not privileged the space to read, I imagine.
If Sherlock Holmes encountered me, what might he glean?
What am I telling without saying a word? Is my manner of dress indicative
That I sit rather than stand in my profession?
Perhaps my hair is particularly groomed to explain a masculine tendency,
Or my fingernails bear enough pencil lead beneath them
To expose my wicked predilection toward portraiture?
I'd love to sit beside his fire and explain my troubles
Wringing my lace gloves in my lap.
The following afternoon, my riddle would be solved:

*"My good sir, the source of your woes is none other than yourself!
- You are the thief of your own joys!"*