Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Lilly Nelson: Three Poems

Lilly Nelson · Thursday, January 19th, 2023

Winter

Exhaustion burns blue circles under my eyes
craves the blood seeping into my mouth
from my broken lip I've been chewing on for two hours
like a pack of big league chew bubble gum
my nails claw into my forearm's flesh to distract from the iron
that coats the back of my swollen throat

I'm stranded on the last train to midnight
sulking in the caboose, musing sips of hot chocolate, bones
slumped against the iron window frame
staring at the man in the side aisle across from me
enveloped in the blue corduroy jacket
as he sews amber letters into the back of his leather notebook

He is planning my funeral in December
scattered with needles, under the pine trees
my empty casket
hinges sealed with black ice like a kiss
from death, white snow mixes with the smoke colored ashes slipping between his worn fingers
He chose death before me, but I'm too exhausted to care

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Smoke Break

Permission lit the cigarette
sleeping between my lips

Cockroaches crawl over my raised
skin as nicotine sends shocks
to my receptors.

My thoughts crave numbness.

I count the ten seconds till my next hit,

but it feels like infinity.

Smoke architects
my conviction as
addiction takes me further away into space.

I have a theory that chocolate takes
the pain away from loss if you eat
enough of it.

I ground the cigarette under my boot,
and sulk to the candy aisle.

They wanted to prescribe xanax.

I pop packs of M&Ms.

*

Pleurer á Paris

I thought love was supposed to stay remnant like the gerber daisies in my mother's garden, yet my trust is
waning like the snapping of my twig-like wrist under my own body weight
The migraines and gravity force my slothing body towards
the cold tile like wine glasses shattering
Jealousy drives the virus coagulating the blood in my veins

In November, I wanted to be your illicit love affair
What if you tasted like strawberries in an autumn breeze?
Or your embrace- the warmth of sex after a movie
Your eyes, pools of copper consumed my consciousness like a puppet ripped from its strings
Your nails digging into my waist, pulled me towards the riverbed
I would have drowned in the Seine if you told me to

But I can't be your midnight addiction.
Not when your blood is my amber and my tears are the sweat you're wiping away from your body
You left me with water colored eyes beneath the embers of the Notre Dame.
River flames drowning the scent of the insults you whispered against my neck
Degrading my worth till I hit the wall begging, pleading "don't stop"
Shoulders pressed against the walnut dorm frame, yellow blemishes engraved into my chest
You should have stopped the memories from slipping away, but my memory is decay past 1974

I still stay up all night grasping for your name

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