

Katie Rose Guest

She Says Suffering

She says suffering
helps her see
beauty in the world.
I know the suffering
she speaks of,
I know it well.
To open a window
after dark inside days
and smell the sky
untainted
by the melancholic air,
to smell the sun
even if it's hiding.
Or perhaps it's night,
and my sprites escape
off the ledge
to haunt
someone else for a while.
I always welcome them back.

She says suffering
enables her eyes
to see beauty.
Everybody suffers
but not everybody sees
not everyone turns
from their interior
to see the world.
What if I see another
more beautiful than I,
more loved, adored—
will that destroy me?

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I see beauty
and take it,
make it secret
in a small ventricle
of my heart,
and bring it out again
when I need to retaste
myself, then.

Not everyone
has cried
on a hardwood floor
not everyone has wiped tears
on white plaster
or sought a doorway's embrace.

There's a difference
between pity
and mourning.

I mourn the child I was
before

I mourn the woman
I might have been,
I mourn the girl,
the fears thrust upon her
and sickness
I mourn her
but I do not pity,
never ever pity,
pity would mean death
or worse.

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I would die
before feeling
sorry for myself.

This sadness
is my inheritance.
It is real,
handed down
as a gift.

There is freedom
in sorrow.