Of Beauty Clasped

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To Make a Memory

Mix sea salt with the flowing tide, and eyes

Bluer still.

Feel fading heartbeats; recall the warmth

Of aged love through lumbering blood.

Say goodbye.

Say hello.

Stay up late until it's early, until words

Cannot dive deep enough.

Say I do.

Pay attention. But only to moments, and not

The years falling like leaves -

Drifting tongues of fire

On a mounting breeze.

Then, swept along too swiftly, pause

To note the slant of sunlight through a window

Reflecting blue-green pools, and two

Fresh smiles.

Let no wonder pass, no beauty go unclasped

But do not grip too tightly, as with age

The setting of the sun becomes a friend.

Like shifting tides, the hours all rush back

In the end.

Warrior's Prayer

Make war upon the enemies of light, and give

No mercy to the evil, the horrid, the false.

Rally to the groaning of creation.

Hoist high the standard - each man's cross.

Let blood spill where sin fell to the earth -

Justice pleasing to a wrathful God.

No memory of fell and fallen creatures

To last, stricken by the edge of the sword.

Lift up the ram's horns, circle the gates

Of Hell seven times - once for each most deadly sin

And take no spoil, for the treasure there

Is already spoiled within.

Let armies seen and unseen clash;

Let blackest gates know fear at fearsome siege -

But let the angels take their rest.

Here am I. Send me.

Of Little Faith

The lilies of the field

Are clothed in violet glory

Flowering over

Graves to soothe

Their use.

No Roman guard for Angela

No burial shroud for Jack

No stone rolled away

For the children.

There is weeping and gnashing

Of teeth afflicted

By this transient world

And they say judgement is yet to come.

Oh ye of little faith,

The good book reproves,

Why do you trouble

Over what you will wear?

Grandma wore purple

Like the lilies,

I whisper.

Grandma wore white and brown

Like the birds

Of the air.

Tell me guide, friend, scholar of the Word

That He has a plan.

Tell me preacher at the altar

That He feels our pain.

Tell me all things work for good,

That every tear is necessary,

And perhaps your burning tongue

Will lead me to the helpless sin

Of anger at a just God.

If my faith indeed could move the mountains

Would I weep still

Beside this tomb?

Or could I boldly claim,

"She is only sleeping,"

As loved ones look on, amazed?

Instead of boarding a plane

Back home to those I've honored

All my life, and wondering

What will Father say?

What will Father say?

The Highest Calling

Behind the screen

With its kaleidoscopic colors.

Beyond the siren call

Of the projector.

Past the afterglow of Summer,
The languid appeal of bright smiles

On bright days.

Hidden under layers

Of coal and rigid rock

Like diamonds sparkling in secret caverns

Perfected under weight

Of darkling depths.

Searched out under sheets,

Found atop the battlements

Between frail bodies

Bracing for the sting of steel

Or the bite of bullets.

A lifeline stronger than the pull

Of death, longer than

Time itself, enduring pounding waves

And with the whisper of a single word

Frayed.

Fragile beauty veiled

Between drops of rain

Humble through the night, yet in the day

Bright beyond all colors,

Simply too brave

To come without

A promise.

Blizzard

Veiled in snow, a muffled world

Whose voice howls down with bitter flurries

Calls to the adventurous with cold, unparalleled

Beauty.

Who goes there? Not a soul, despite

The gift that falls like diamonds from dark clouds.

In neat rows down Pine street, houses crouch under the weight

Of crystal glory lighting on the ground.

The occupants turn dials,

Snare themselves in warmth and covers pulled

Tight enough to insulate from trials -

All fear their fallow hearts evade, are fooled

To think that such a mighty offering

Winter's call to young and old - fierce roar -

Could be received over a cup of tea

Could be heard over the blazing tongues at hearth.

Yet if they stepped across the warm threshold

Of home, strode out on frosty blanket fair and pure

Found would be some welcome in the cold,

The biting winds a tonic swift to cure

The malady of idleness - vain faith

In a solid world reality

Denies throughout the seasons, for blind fate

Tosses every life like icy seeds.

For the soul loses its purpose

Bound fast by languid hours

And, so tied, cries for deliverance

Accepts the wintry challenge

To break all bonds, to loose its nature

Taking on new burdens, burdened less -

To stride across the alabaster fields, enraptured

And earning hallowed silence, trial bless.

Fiction

Scattered dust settles on the spine

Of an aged novel lost to passion

Like streaks of grey in an old woman's glory

Or the wonder of snow on a lonely mountain.

Such riches, appraised, sell for less

Than half their worth in wisdom

But to the prudent mind, unstained by greed:

A gilding worthy of kingdoms.

Travel far, still no man will reach

The lands of which this tome has told

To the growing and grown, each one alike -

It bears them past their mortal fold.

So just as every mighty gift

Is hidden lest its favor fall

Upon ignoble heads, this spellbound tome

Is passed down generations, or in halls

Lined by shelves supporting all the weight

Of years poured out in earnest grace

To please the heart, to spur the mind

And, bearing merry marks upon the face

Of some distant wanderer, at last to gain

That realm which even words could scarcely picture.

To fill the soul, in valor animate

The spirit of a gracious reader -

And ask no thanks, upon the feat

Except to view a further benediction.

Such works as these we best esteem

Returning them to dusty thrones, and crowns etched with the humble rank of Fiction.

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