

East Fork: A Journal of the Arts

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Amanda Curless

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The Dancer

It was a dance she had come
to memorize--to follow
the lead
to fall into step

Each time was like
the other - almost a twin
but slightly quicker
and more familiar

She kept her footing
although each step--stabbed
blisters from previous
dances, missteps

When her knees
hit the floor--sobbing against
the yellow wall,
she could no longer keep rhythm

It was dancing without
music to keep time--a ballerina
topping a broken
music box

She spun around; smiling,
they watched--her perfect
porcelain facade that twirled
for her absent lead

waiting for when
the fine cracked edges--prickled
down to detach her from
the spring she spun

They cried when her legs
broke free from the base- a pendulum
and she shattered into
a million butterflies

and they flew away.

Fences along highways

Stretched in thin lines
of barbed wire and tendrils that curve
the sweet asphalt
Incomplete and blurring
from taking each hand
and taking on-grasping the distance
breaking in the wood and metal
anticipating the faint shock.

There is a fragility
in your frame when you
grip the spun steel and stare
beyond the curve of the cage
Birds are waves and bend
against the cyan sky
and you are where the sky meets
the trees-the hills ricocheting
off their colors and shapes
All snapped into your mind
forever representing
what you thought
you had lost.

When You're A Stranger

It isn't breathing
in air and opening eyelids to stare
up at the sun.

It isn't the lingering touch
of someone's breath on your
neck or the sound of their voice
humming into you.
It is the last pieces of them left
in scribbles on a page--
the memory of them as a fire is extinguished
and the burnt remains--
the scent of flames hangs
inside and all around.

It is the dream in which you sit
and hold their hand
feeling the lines of their
knuckles and nail beds--
then waking up
and staring into your palms
still grasping at air.

It is inside the laugh
of a stranger you pass by--
making your head drum
a picture of the smile
until it is born again
from your lips.

Divorce

A sharp piece of slag lies
In my chest and it glows
Dull in the suspended space
That it lives.

It hangs there and trembles
Remembering the blaze that once
Crept up and tickled until
It devoured the sinew.

Now become a parapet
With edges streaked
in stone and moss
A consequence of what I gave

And what I keep giving
In order to make the edges
Of a mouth
Turn up toward the stars

It usually speaks a murmur
To me from its cage so
Lonely-- a fortress without a door
Just waiting to swallow more flame.

But you can't help what you
Choose not to see and with
You--there are never eyes
Enough to see me.

Free

Although she treads the surface
with a broken heart
for earthly things proved
unsteady and without meaning

She'd reach a peak with toes curled
over the edge and stare
beyond the tapered air
the edges of her wings dancing

with the wind.
Her thoughts were never her own
on solid ground

and she headed to feel
the breeze whisper through
her ears and eyes.

With one step forward--
leaning too.

she fell a
way forward
and swept into the summer

air--lightly
and all at once

she flew away
free.

Are you fan of Amanda's work? Then let them know! Be sure to put their name, your email, title of their work in the subject, and your message so they can see your comment!

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Moon Girle

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"Gatsby"

You can tell what they care for by the things they follow, they/
Like & comment/ where they lie.
I have learned/
The invisible man speaks hard truths, and/
it goes against their sentiments, so they/
Keep going for the fun facades/ and glamorous dress & drinks in hand/
A gorgeous world of glass & diamond/
Easily shattered & unable to break/ A prison
that splinters daily, sinking its shards/
Into soft flesh, but I find I tried/
Everyone's way but my own & I claim/ that truth.
Ironically, I am loved yet called/ one thing/
Then another while no one/

"A Tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks' 'The Chicago Defender Sends a Man to Little Rock' & Robert Hayden's 'Middle Passage,' with lines from each"

In Little Rock, the people bear Time.
In Little Rock, they know
"They are like people everywhere."
They know
in a hundred harryings of Why.
Why
voyage through death
to life upon these shores?
And why do
the living look at you
like the dying is your fault?

Are you fan of Moon's work? Then let them know! Be sure to put their name, your email, title of their work in the subject, and your message so they can see your comment!

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