

We Had Names Once

We wake up to the sirens as they pass.

It's only 3 in the morning but We're wide awake.

The practiced movements of the morning exercises connect the beatings of our heart; the rhythmic drops of sweat sting our eyes and wet the hardwood floors in front of us.

We stretch our left leg and bend our right, repeat with the opposite side.

We clean ourselves with water stained rust and prepare for the day ahead. The sun is coming up as we depart from our houses built of recycled nails, scotch tape, and drift wood.

We had names once; like SmithNicolBrownandBlack; now we go by diggerpickerREBELstamperwatcherlendersender.

We walk the discarded streets through the translucent dawn and push our way past the empty hovels of Others like ourselves; twisting our heads, our eyes twitching over their voids like the legs of little flies.

We sit and wait, rubber stamps pressed within violent colored ink; the cadence of our movements called out to stark grey walls and disposed looks.

We make conversation in hushed tones, beneath glowing eyes, above regarding ears.

“The Others told me...”

“We do not speak to them.”

“But why, why don't We speak to them?”

“We do not speak to them. We know this.”

We leave, glancing with trembling eyes over drooping shoulders.

The ticking of our ears leave imprints like the creased pages of books We've never read, beneath the harsh lights of our empty rooms.

Sirens sound, telling us the day has ended; our empty beds wait for the next day to begin.

It's 4 in the afternoon but We're wide awake.

The practiced movements connect the beatings of our heart; the shifting of our weight as we climb stings the bends of our stiffened legs.

Our breath pushes us forward; like harsh arctic winds against fur lined parkas.

We stutter in whispered tones, our voices tucked deep within crumpled alleyways.

"We cannot."

"We must."

"We are the same."

"We are but a particle of the whole, We are the salamander's tail, We will grow back if cut off."

We push our hands through the pale curtains of the granite specked streets; twisting our ankles as we slide our feet between the city's small intestine, scratching our knees as we pass through the large.

Our gloved fingers twist and pull like the legs of little black spiders twirling their way through silk sheets spread over hidden doorways.

Sirens force us to lift our aching head.

We stretch our right leg and bend our left.

Our eyes shift like the hands of a broken clock, up and back as We pass others.

We do not look up as we walk the decaying streets, our sore hands pressed into the soft cloth of our hip pockets. Our cadence is off as we look around; no one can tell who the offender is that throws off our practiced rhythm.

We want to scream, "It is us!" But we don't. Instead We make our-self smaller pushing our hands into the fake grains of our fake wooden desk.

We had names once like WilliamsGilmorePattersonandFox; now we go by diggerREBELpickerREBELstamperREBELwatcherREBELenderREBELsenderREBEL.