

helen keller contemplates a rose

They said it was beautiful, a plucked affection,
But the stalk is waxy, she thought,
 An unscrupulous shout to my fingers.
A yelping insult, pricklingly cold,
 With its biting spines gripping,
 But not breaking the skin;
 A considerate maw, this.
Tracking downward, warm grit and damp consideration.

They said it was beautiful, a cherished thought,
 Vibrant as pools of sunlight,
But the unforgiving grumble of spine bites
 Chortle at her searching eyetips,
 Hissing insults at the trek back upward,
 A sullen giver, this.
Brushing up, stiff spider legs resist, stand aside.

They said it was beautiful, a delicate wish,
And there is the sunlight, she thought,
 Absorbed into cool, moist blankets.
A stained glass window, bloomed skyward,
 With its gentle secrets whispered,
 But only understood by flesh;
 A subtle art form, this.
Moving inward, blankets cup eyetips, sighing.

there were lilies

Waiting beside her quilt-adorned bed,
As his brown leather loafers dusted by the lace trim,

His tide-pool blue eyes whispered “Me instead,”
 As he watched her tired, gray eyes slowly dim.
 His voice was full of ocean-weathered stones,
 But it broke over her ear like a soothing wave:
 (“Isn’t it peculiar how a closing life hones
 Memory, like an echo from a shadowed cave?”)
 And lingering limply by her feet,
 There were lilies;
 Withered, shrunken lilies.

A fond smile wafted across her shallow lips
 As his crumbling frame bowed, callused fingers light,
 Brushing Atlantis lullabies with soft fingertips,
 Her smile a bittersweet condolence for losing his fight
 For a kingdom, exclusive; it belonged to just them:
 A refuge - a snowglobe - with their rocking chairs;
 A security blanket with a tattered hem -
 Remember the days when the world was just theirs?
 Back when bouncing brightly in her hair
 There were lilies;
 Fresh, dew-adorned lilies.

Her night-moth eyes fluttered shut, resting their wings,
 As his past-heavy words flowed sleep to her heart.
 His arms wrapped her shoulders against the cold, which night brings
 To the tide-weary souls, watching white ships depart.
 Two thin streams wound away, from his eyes to the sea,
 Where a rise and fall rhythm marked the slowing waves,
 ‘Til the moon turned its back, setting ocean shores free,
 And the waters were still in the shore stillness saves.
 And in the consuming, empty darkness,
 There were lilies;
 Blooming, gleaming lilies.