

A DIFFERENT STORY

HOW SIX AUTHORS BECAME BETTER WRITERS

JB HOLLOWES
MARIA ILIFFE-WOOD

Introduction by JULES SWALES

with JAMIE FIORE HIGGINS

with ANNE LEWIS

with USHA MAYANI

with RENUKA O'CONNELL



ALL SENSE DRAINED AWAY

BY JB HOLLOWES

It rains. I can see the dishwater sky through my bedroom window as it drowns the lush green fields with its flood of tears.

I can't hear the birds today; they must've found shelter deep inside the dark leafy trees still wearing their summer coats of gorgeous green and blossomed buds, laced with nests of sticks and feathers.

I write. My pen scrawls its blue blood across the off-white paper in my Moleskin notebook.

Sense?

THE WORDS – Dance. Meander. Storm. Tread.

All

Of their own accord.

No THING is to do with me. The artist is not the body I encompass, nor the constant crash of ideas like waves against the ragged rocks of my mind. Profound or otherwise.

I'm watching. For a moment, a pause, a catch in my breath. A snag of a distant memory ready to yield its juicy story.

The memory starts as a slither of silken thread as miniscule as a spider's web. And as strong. When noticed the pull is inevitable. I crave its tendrils to wrap my mind in the ribbons of its depth. I desire the rush of recognition of a self, seen through its ethereal embrace. I dream of a moment of suspense with my world reduced to hang by that thread, all time forgotten. Salacious Sins Revealed

All sense drained away

And yet. I fight. I struggle.

I squirm.

I do all that I can to wriggle free of being entered into that palatial world.

That unknown yet known. That magical realm of mists and muse. That tiresome treadmill of feelings waiting to be sung. To be acknowledged.

Its breath quickens from a languished slumber.

I feel it pulse my veins in its gorged excitement.

It longs to reveal, to lift the complex veil of lies I hide behind, beneath, between. Like before.

"You should name her." The midwife said. My arms cradled the still, grey faced bundle. A baby girl whose cheeks should have been pink with mystical blue eyes. Her rosebud mouth never to sound the wail of the unfairness of being ripped from the warm cocoon of my womb. The pain in my precious body waking me from the drugs that stole my senses and her life. A halo of curly auburn hair framed my pale face as her limp body stared up at me wrapped like a sore thumb in her tight white blanket. "Rosie" I said.

The rain has stopped. For a moment, my mind stands still. A

freedom from the relentless fall into the abyss. A ray of clarity slides through the clouds and takes me with it.

A moment of hope, a drop of her velvet touch. It's enough.
For now.

To surrender myself and be who I'm not.

To release the prism of my crushing ego and dwell in the bosom of life's iridescent flow. To quell the storm

Only for a moment

MIND

Before the gold-plated armour of the me that faces the storms of life is shined and donned and zipped up tight.