

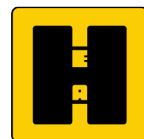


SOULS' QUENCH

By Elayne Harrington

Wait. Stall your thoughts to call mine home.
My loyalty lies. Tight.
Flesh. On. Bone.
That frays at the edges; let sleeping dogs lie.
Shifting sediments of the seas, paw print ever embedded.
Drown in the black depth of these and thine eye.
Howl at the moon. O'er the foam.
Hand over your heart — new tricks ripped and sewn...
To aged tapestries of happily tame prole prose and poem.
Quadruped-legged, steadied 'til dead, smell trouble, Necropolis is your bed.
Pulling of heartstrings to draw it tight closed.
Imposing black magic, Macbeth tablature morose.
Fall to rise and falter wise. Holy fidelity is your guise.
Worn with ribbon, lover so long, forlorn love unhidden, melody-less song.
So long. So long. So long.

She puts on old runners, wipes clown-white off face.
Admires the grime hard work's collected, thanks Our Lady for God's grace.
Samples a taste of colour to otherwise bland folk,
Her practical scheme, part of the wisecrack, grand joke.
Stands beneath the sky for cover, can't understand anything less complex than "Love thee as thy brother."
Rubbernecks at the roadkill and scoffs not to cry,
Believes in all and in nothing, the local Catcher in the Rye.
Sensible, and still rolls her foot from ball to heel.
Posture: stiff structure with voluptuous appeal.
Curtains drawn, but your imagination is bare.
Concrete caress, mutual meditative stare.
Girl next door, knick-knack, faceless boy; I draw you to life.
Wishing on nebulae, praying to galaxies that I'll never be your type.



She won't accommodate feelings of shame upon tilting her soup bowl.
"Beg your pardon" is her fashion — wears it loosely when it's cold.
Watching labourers collect rubble of the heart and spit the flavour off their palettes
While spilling souls' quench and bad words like odes to their enemies.
Sisters' worries as scarves and nephews do the puppet march —
Tripping and falling and tripping and falling
For the sake of their own spoiling others' fun
Because Daddy's promises were undone.
Blameless son, shadow's catching up.
You run, you run, you run.

Trickeries of the trade,
"Citizen"'s polite lingo for slave.
Too controversial for a knave.
Her life's no story but a stave.
So tick-tock, linear clock — just because I don't believe in you doesn't make you stop.
Toe toe toe the line, destiny's your dream.
Verily, verily, verily, verily — life's not what it seems.
My heroes are blind. They pluck the log out of their eyes
And surrender their tear ducts to deserts of desolation
That they witness from behind their own retinas.
Scrolled far and wide, tattooed across the surface of their minds.
Inward reflection.
Navel gazers. Painfully through introspection.
The most faithful believers.

Scrolls and swallows, flights and gloves,
Pushes and shoves, rough and tumble,
Succumbing to camaraderie born of fear.
Suburban wood pigeons and rock doves are not
Exempt — though no Children of Lír.

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