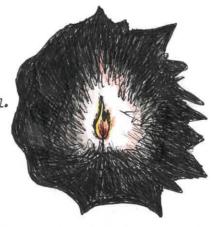
## The Quiet Unknown

Falling. We are falling. Off the cliff we thought was safe. I am numb to the rush. Bee's wide open eyes, Her mouth parted in a silent scream. All that I see As we fall. My breath is gone. We are no longer falling But floating. In a dark where my eyes failed So I opened my mind instead to a world of thick white mist That tastes like sweet honey And the flowers that gave to it. It swirls through us as though We are nonexistent But I feel it. Like light cotton And silky feathers Underneath my has-been skin. We meet a wall. Bee disappears through it with Grace and Swan-like ease. But I am afraid Of what the other Side will show To me And me alone. I cannot pass and The mist closes in, Thickening. I am ice. An achy cold And straight and still as steel. It's like Trying to find a hand In the darkness Knowing no one is there. But then there is A small candle Of hope That someone will find me And light the way. With that the mist clears





And I fall through.

Death.

Life.

I wonder.

I wonder why we fear

Our final cross,

I wonder why some fear

To live.

The candle guides me

And I wonder where I'll

Go, waiting for dust

To become gold.

We are in between.

A hundred words.

To describe.

Is not.

Enough.

My bare feet feel wet grass.

I wear a dress of silky white poppies.

In my hand I hold a banquet of roses.

Ahead Bee has

a gown of orange carnation petals.

She clutches a single one,

close to her heart.

Before her is a grave.

A dark haired boy rests his head on it,

hanging a lifeless arm loosely over the words

'Callan Baldasarre'.

I see him look at Bee,

Dared hope in his pale blue eyes.

He stands.

Bee moves towards

Him.

"I have been here for many years.

I no longer wish

For life

But a trade.

I've lost all my hope long

Ago.

Watched it wilt and

Die along with me,

For wasted it on the drug of

Coming back to the therebefore

In which I no longer

Belong,"

Bee thinks for only a moment



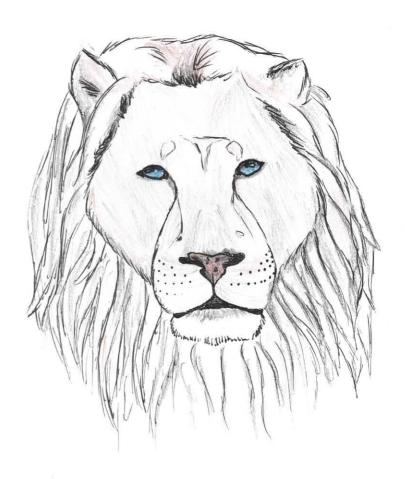




"And you want death?" "More than anything. I want to be with those I love, To rest And see for myself why I have lived," Bee's flower begins to wilt. "I'm dying, aren't I?" I stand in the background Frozen and unable to do anything but "Yes. That is why you Are here," The boy called Callan takes a flower -a lily-and holds it out to Bee. Without hesitation Bee takes her Own. Callan now holds the carnation gratefully. "Thank you, Bee" He disappears in a gust of wind and lilies. A dumfound silence A Bright appears, Blinding. A great white lion With intelligent yet Horribly sad blue eyes Sits before it's inferior. "You have shown great Courage and Great Faith" His voice. supple thunder in A quiet yet ever-changing rain. "You knew and Are of knowing that You cannot join me without Your Hope." "Your Soul is bright and Brave. There is no need for a time Of Judgement If you'd like," And from His breath a Single carnation materializes For Bee to reach out. Hope in her hand she slowly wraps her Arms around

The great lion's mane.





I am only soul; I cannot cry Bee looks back and smiles at me. "Don't worry about me." Her eyes, alight in a way I have never seen In all the years I've Known her. "I can see this new world now. It is all the things I've lost The air is safe and strong Unable to be broken. I only will await Your arrival," And with that they are gone too, In the place of the lion A dogwood tree, The grave now reading 'Bee' Just Bee Covered in the little orange feathers Of carnations. I lay my roses down on the Soft earth and because She was never Buried I bury the Roses instead. I am surprised when a thorn Pricks me and I see Blood. I am still Human. I fall back, I open my eyes. The smell of old pages New bindings Sound of echoing footsteps across the Silent floors. A world of books, A library. I am holding one With my shell of a hand 'The giving tree' I sink to the floor, Quiet tears unwarningly Slip down one By one, two by Two



As the ugly pain of loss tears at my heart, For Scrawled across a corner is A blue-eyed lion Pale white against the Background and An orange flower resting in his Strong thick Mane.



See small hope as
Strength
Sacrifice as
Love
And do not fear what we all truly fear;
The Quiet Unknown