Butchery Innocent

And Other Poems By A.J. Huffman

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"All things truly wicked start from innocence."

— Ernest Hemingway

Butchery of the Innocent

Tonight is the night of the devil moon. Listen.

Can you hear the tongues dancing on the silence of the lawn? Such beautiful music their suicides make. Falling from innocence to death is steep. And deep in the strings of their blood lies the answer.

Severed and swinging was the only obvious choice.

To Keep My Sanity

Are you a feather?
Falling
from my fightless fist,
I know I did not release you.
You must be a trick
of spite.
And my palms are bleeding.
Too constant
to be a dream.
Jump back.
Through and inside them,
reinstate my night
before your eyes explode
under the pressure
of my own.

By Hammer And Hand

She sits
in a pool
of glass,
counting fingers
lost. She knows
they are not hers.
Her touch is too dull
to leave such damage.
These belong to regret,
which is new
and apparently missing
the depths of her blue.

Through the Dead

One taste of black is all it takes to turn a mind into a knife. Darkness is a sharpened skill, cornered to a point much deeper than frustration. It is truly a weapon, a divine poison, wallowing inside itself less beauty

as it spreads.

Blurring in the Mirror

Press my lips to your glass.
They are too dense to crack under any pressure, but fear is a weight too great.
Too late,
I rinse the blood from my tongue.
I can speak in colors — not blue.
But who wants to hear that banter?
It is better when we are dark. We believe the shadows understand. This silence — our silence — is everything.

But complete.

Dancing on Razor Blades

I prick my finger, and spill your name. So beautiful, it belongs in a scream, but my lips are tired of following the drain. The curve of the letters is too steep. I stumble, fall into and beyond the blackening wall of forget.

Ravaged By Radiation

Suddenly, your image froze, and I was frightened.

I knew my mind was burning around you. I could see the danger in its smoke. I could feel you wavering just slightly, a tiny shudder, involuntary, but the percussion of the move was magnified, a fire alarm against my skin.

I looked down, and all there was to see was your smile because my hands were the ones that had started to melt.

Like a Fly in a Highball

Dance down the center of the dots.

Make it sharp,
like a razor before its blades.

You cut my eyes in two
or three
thousands of pieces
at peace — all images in their own light,
but still part of the whole.

That thing that is not me,
though I often see it
in my mirror, Snarling bloody hate.

That is the shape of fear.

Turn it around
and the picture is clear
ly dead.

But aren't we all?
At least, in our heads.

Flowing Gladly into Dawn

Stretching naked on death's side of the bed, I am awakened to the possibilities of damned.

They do not seem so bad.

I have traded my skin for worse tortures, so I roll over, burying myself deeper, in sheets cold as dirt.

I belong here despite the protests of my own breath.

No Witness Left

The mirror was her muse. Cracked by a flash., its laughter was heavy, and her heart was hurt, haunted by dreams of those broken hands cutting everything but its voice from her chest.

The Blood Ones

Can't you see I am torture, not tortured? These scars I wear are fake, scraps of faith, gathered from victims very much like you. They are souvenirs of sorts: for the dying, from the dead. Which is interesting, don't you think? Of course you don't. I control your mind. I own your body, but it is your soul I need to swallow. It will fill me until tomorrow. Too bad. Another day, another hollow. I guess I will need to find another lonely fool to slaughter.

The Murmur of Falling

I like to pretend I can feel human, so foreign, even the word does not fit. My mind or my lips reject everything.

Life — take it back.

Take me back to the cave.

Call it hell, call it home, then go, and ignore the door.

Your scream is the only lock I need.

To Attain Innocence

Welcome to my world.
Do you feel alive?
Let me kiss you. Your pulse
will know the difference when it misses
the hollow echo of my breath.
You will bleed
for me, my absence,
but only for a moment.
I am a test,
a final, taken
to see if my mouth can rise
to the kill.

Oversational

Set free the light.

I am not a member,
and do not belong
among the golden-haired world
of angels. I am a saint,
but only to sinners.

I prefer the night,
the hollow that can swallow
sound. The screams I mirror
precisely, roll gold
into a thorny halo.

It drives deeper into hands,
twin deaths that hold
my head.

An Unusual Number of Fires

I carry water in my fist. For death, where I find it, is arid.
Unforged and unforgiving.
I am the light that permits its bloom. Diseased, my breath breeds wings like tiny angels, dancing, stabbing. Blood is the life. Blood is my life, and I will set it free to sing about this nothing that is

was

and always will be.

Me.

The Answering Yes

Suck my blood, implode my heart.
Let your laughter refuel my veins.
I will be your clown, your dressed-up, messed-up, walking echo. So beautiful, in shades and shapes of your own shadow, I will be scraping beneath your feet.
Will you hear me cracking?
Will you believe my screaming is the mirror you seek?

Shockingly Gandy

I took your heart, and turned it inside out to gut the sky.
Watch it cry silver blood, sickly sweet — must be from your touch.
Mine was trained years ago to only draw the deeper, duller shades of death.

My Refrigerated Coffin

Follow the point of the blade as it frees the ghost from my chest. Watch it rise, silent, red — never white. That is left for the hole where my eyes would be if they hadn't shattered in the sudden cold of your breath.

Welcome to the Cut

Crawling into the open window of your mind, I scrape my knees.

Now we are both bloodied and trapped In the emptiest darkness. Alive?

I am unsure of that possibility, and I do not like the film of fear it leaves in my mouth.

I spit it out, watch it bounce backwards.

If it sticks we will know at least one of us still has a chance to breathe again.

Return to the Violent Mind

I am my own razor-blade dream, slicing stripes of bleeding dark across my life. I know it is deadly, dangerous, but it is also automatic, some semi-conscious suicidal impulse with manifestations so bizarre they appear almost beautiful ly tragic.

I will adore them straight to my end.

Impostering Release

Watch me carefully.

I am more than the mirror
you seek. I am the changeling
angel. I will become you,
slowly, turn your skin,
into gold, a halo
I need,
though your wings should be enough
to raise a smile on even
my dead skin. They are heavy,
I know,
but it's my shoulders that will continue
to bleed under their beat.

A Shadow Darker than the Shadows

Can an angel leave a footprint on a soul?

If so, then why can't I heal? Forgotten in the cloudy depths of this solitude, I pray these scars will bleed wings. What else are they for? You are gone, and hell has trailed — obediently — behind you. This has to be heaven. I know I am dead. I cannot feel anything, which is better than the evil you swore was just our heat.

A Queen to be Damned

The goddess floated in an ocean of red. wielding tongues — forked and flayed — as fingers that played your mind. A riddle equivalent to god, she addresses repent. Your genuflection, before her, sours, the words get caught, become noise of a ceiling flower. You pick its roots, muddy your hair. This reflection is sane, but refused. An older solution is needed, but your hammer is lost in the dark. Be patient. All eyes have power, and yours run water, turning stone into blood.

The taste of Things

Touch the tip of my heart, then slice it like a tongue that has forgotten its area was silence. Tell me, do you think it will bleed?

Fading from Dreams

Watch the razor trace my skin, cutting me out of your world. I want to be cut out of mine, but the air there is too thin, it clings to anything, even death.

As if it could be saved.

As if I could be saved by anything as uselessly trivial as free will.

An Exercise in Creative Semantics

Walking through fountains filled with blood, I stopped to wash my hair.

I was afraid if I left it light, the purity would make you stare.

I was right.

That night you showered me, and showed me guilt from the inside of a knife blazing and branding me.

Now my name is truly Dark.

No Repentance. No Regret.

Trace the edges deeper, darker, around this hole that longs to hold a soul.

Maybe a body will begin.

If not, a shadow-form may be enough to fool the sun's disinterest just enough to stir the blood that isn't showing yet.

That is, of course, the point.

Bleeding is breathing.

Breathing is life.

Life is consumption, breeding death — the ultimate goal.

Trapped in My Palace of Lies

Follow
the line of my skin.
I know it is crooked,
but it is the only way into a mind
that is cracked.
Take the journey as training,
the darkness as luck,
and be glad the trail
of blood is behind you.
You will need it
to find your way back
into tomorrow's sun.

Two Body's Harmony

Smile in a jar, then seal the lid.

I will carry it, copied in my pocket through tomorrow.

There I can smash it, stretch it over my own. You won't believe the fit. I might not either.

That's why I will leave you my eyes to take its broken place.

In the Capital of My Mind

The irises are blooming. Black, they are offering midnight. Scented with hope, you pluck them., dozens at a time. They fill your fist with desire until the air is heavy with their death. For me? I presume too much. Your laughter reminds me of blood. It echoes with answers I'd rather forget. Instead I dig the hole you planned, and cover myself with unmarked fear. There, the picture is finished, though far from perfect. It is the best seed for tomorrow. It and I will live and die with the sun.

The Diary of a Seducer

I have a mind to dissolve your fingers. What would it take? What combination of flesh and magic is needed to turn your blood to dust? I am sure your teeth are wild enough to test my tongue. After that? It's all over.

. . . But the crunch.

Desperate Ideas About Happiness

He built her perfect inside to match his outside.
All broken, all red, all ready to die, but that (e)motion is denied, as together they learn and unlearn the pain of dancing against each other behind a sheet of shattered glass.

An Angel Approaching Earth

Chains full of broken

and missing

links define me, define my life as unwhole, unheld. I am crumbled: rust

and dust, disintegrating. You are disinterested, and dismissing the point of the file stuck through my wrist.

The Thrill of Exorcism

I pulled you from my dreams, and turned you into a nightmare. All teeth

and blood

and bones,

and I

can't even cry
at the sight of your missing
reflection. It matches the absence of mine.
A point which is beside the point.
I suppose we should stick me through you, and see whose turn it is to die.

Dreams of Departure

I am walking in a hurricane on fire, and the flames — so wild — are reaching inside my mind, inside yours. They have burned you damned, and yet you will follow me deeper into the suck zone of the blackest stillness left. Alive?

Consciousness Dilates

Don't look down,
the sky is falling,
and the floor is gone.
A shadow is all you have left.
Too bad it's not yours.
Too bad it's not mine.
Too bad it's not safe
to say either
of our names to the wind.
Either would save you,
but only as a shelf.
Every sin needs a shell
that isn't afraid to force
a nail into and through a crack
your eyes never even realized was there.

The Shadows Passing By

This rain follows me like a cage. It keeps me cold within its dimensions. Only I can see their corners, teasing me as I try to move into yet another space of sun. Can't you hear the thunder laughing? At me? My desire for the warmth of empty air? The legend lingers, frustrated by my failure. I cut out my eyes, hoping it is not too late to drown myself in the blood of the clouds.

Perilons Erotics of Flux

I break a bottle of blood — mine — for the beast — yours, but it pours out fire, burning all and none until this hell too feels like home.

A Violet in the Center of the Moon

Welcome to the white room, where innocence is disallowed. Come in, take off your shoes, and nail your tongue to the floor. Don't laugh. I will suck the sound from your eyes, but I despise the taste. Too bitter, I prefer the burn of your fear, dripping slowly over your skin. That is the fee I desire. Against my sin, you are still warm, and that is wrong. I must take more.

Lower.

Slower.

Down.

You must drown in the chill of your own body's delight. Release, give up everything. This is the feast that will become our night.

Some Semblance of the Sacred

Would you touch me if I were still breathing? If my skin were as warm as your own? Would you need me? To be still? To be sleeping? Like death, next to you, I am the coveted nothing you seek. I represent the silence,

the violence,

the fight that lost

itself inside too many folds of a kiss. Not ours, but darker, and from lips that do not remember the tragic color of sun.

Fever's Dream

The mirror seamed to split her eyes, her mind. Her vision, when she smiled, rose, became blackness, burning her face back into the image of an already fractured bloom.

Suspended in Nowhere

I forget, sometimes, that I am not a butterfly, that this silver paint is not a kiss or a dew.
I know the air below me is hollow, only helpful for an instant.
Still I try to fly, faltering again and again. Maybe this time the ground will stay stained with my shame as my pain spreads like wind around me as I die.

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Inkapture – "Two Body's Harmony"

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Neglected Ratio – "By Hammer and Hand"

"Like a Fly in a Highball"

"Oversational"

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About the Author

A.J. Huffman has published eleven solo chapbooks and one joint chapbook through various small presses. Her new poetry collection, Another Blood Jet, is now available from Eldritch Press. She has three more poetry collections forthcoming: A Few Bullets Short of Home from mgv2>publishing, Degeneration from Pink Girl Ink, and A Bizarre Burning of Bees from Transcendent Zero Press. She is a Multiple Pushcart Prize nominee, and has published over 2200 poems in various national and international journals, including Labletter, The James Dickey Review, Bone Orchard, EgoPHobia, and Kritya. She is also the founding editor of Kind of a Hurricane Press. www.kindofahurricanepress.com

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