

Persephone by Rita Bhattacharjee

I

Faces break on cobbled sidewalks in the cold light of day—
their festering loneliness safely tucked under Pierrette masks.

Kohl-shrouded eyes harbor drowned sorrows gasping to resurface.
Ruby lips mask the blue venom of forked words.
Pristine, frilly hearts unzip to bare maggot thoughts.

In this urban wasteland—
Persephone waits to return with spring flowers in her hair.

II

It was the night when men turned into beasts—lurking at street corners, hiding in plain sight.

Gargoyles clawed out my guts with steel-tipped talons, feasting on flesh,
each of my wounds, a vagina oozing blood.

Crucified on the cold road, I lay shivering naked,
longing for the warmth of electric flames—
a witch burned at stake for being a woman,
for going out at night
for having a dream
for being there.

III

The woman with flowers in her hair
stands atop a hill
waiting to jump
down to annihilation
down to oblivion
down to freedom.

The woman with flowers in her hair
spreads her arms
takes the plunge
up she soars

up like a bird
up into the blue sky.

IV

In a world where fresh cadavers are served up every day,
vigils die a flickering death by candle light,
Not a word is spoken as dreams lie splattered in blood,
do I desire yet another resurrection?



Rita Bhattacharjee is a communications consultant with extensive experience in project management, strategic planning, and integrated marketing communications. She has managed corporate and internal communications for multimillion-dollar companies across diverse industries, as well as for several nonprofit organizations. She has recently relocated from the US to India to channel her skills towards social entrepreneurship to increase awareness and reduce disparity in public health through effective global research and training, development of information technology platform and deployment of mobile healthcare and alternative medical solutions. In the midst of it all, she remains a poet at heart. Her poetry has been published in reputed international journals including The Copperfield Review, Contemporary Literary Review, and About Place Journal.

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