

Lover's Rain

By Christopher Forrest McDowell

Late at night here, a driving rain on the roof. I sit in the upper story corner of the house, the loft where I sleep alone each night. The rains remind me of oh so many tears that flood the hearts of the despondent. I think of families who have suffered tragic losses of loved ones too suddenly to prepare for their own personal trauma. I think of those who must find the courage to beg or pray each day, their hope measured by the size of their cupped or clasped hands. And then I think of lovers - the forlorn, the parted, the ones yearning for each other. The rain has seeped through the crevices of my heart, and I feel moist with tenderness.

Somewhere there is a woman alone in her sanctuary, wondering how much he really loves her. A woman must have such thoughts to practice being a woman. She lays before a candle, mesmerized by its flickering dance. She can smell his skin, remember the scent of his breath those few minutes after making love when he is melting inside her. She folds her hands over her chest, wondering if she will ever feel his caress again across her breasts, scoring her body gently as if mapping the evening's journey across some landscape. She closes her eyes and still sees the light, and remembers that love can feel like that - comforting you in front of the veil and behind, when you know it is very real and when you have doubts. She lays on her side, fetal-like, very much a little child, a girl. And a woman desiring to be loved by a man can still be a girl, especially at such moments when her only comfort with her lover is his memory or a dream.

I know there is a woman who at this very moment would throw away reason and all caution just to live for a second inside a man's heart. You know, to root around his room just to find that little box where he keeps his love for her. It's the same box his mother gave to him, if he was so lucky to have a mother who loved him so much. It is a woman's desire to know that inside a man's heart is a mother's devotion.

You know I care about you, lay a pillow next to mine, and cross my legs over onto your side of the sheets during the night. I do not watch a candle - you do not live outside me. I enfold your heat, your light, next to my chest and abdomen, feeling your buttocks pressed against my pelvis. I hold and cup you as if you were a chalice pressed to my lips, inhaling the fresh bouquet of your womanliness. You are my sanctuary, my duty to caretake in the middle of the night, even in your absence.

Last night the moon shone full through the window onto the vacant space next to me. Tonight the rain knocks at the pane. I would do anything to be the sweet moisture in your thoughts, the moist kiss on your lips, the moist feeling of love between your rising and falling breaths. A rainy night is a beautiful mystery, where lovers like us die in our distant dreams then awake in the morning reborn in each other's hope.

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