

Shouting the Muse Down

by Amanda Sledz

Today was chased up the hill by a rooftop windfarm.

Thar. She blows.

No one was meant for this.

In the tumbled-down now there's too much material, culled from pretty boys that don't notice me and tattooed ones that do, and I'm certain there's at least one dreamer soaking eyes into me who knows all the twisted lyrics invoking pretty little horses.

Hands?

No one is going to stop me from drinking coffee.

Fuck, all this prose is constipated, me mining me, pulling up bridges and blowing up others and never throwing this laptop across the room and through the window at the minicooper slamming on its brakes and the driver screaming "fuck you!" before the laptop lives in the street in pieces as it's always wanted.

Pieces. Peace. I'm witty.

Ronnie James Dio. You know, the heavy metal guy. Don't even try it.

Somewhere I lost time and none of these notebooks ever got transcribed, all my musing and ranting and handwringing dream spindles fell off the loom and died. That wasn't what I wanted. That was never what I wanted.

Spindles. Loom. I might be going somewhere with this.

What I want: to scribble "you" on the side of plastic tubs holding all my personal belongings, before abandoning them on random porches for some unfortunate lottery loser to find. I don't want anything in them and neither do you, but I'll stay up all night sorting my nothing into something and weaving it into ugly tapestries that imprison names and faces until screaming attempts at escape are burned into the fabric.

Weave. Fabric. Spindles. Loom. Vomit. Sorry.

Another want: to storm into the room and push you out of your chair and just when you approach peak confusion I squeeze you

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from your folded position in a four-limbed lobster grip, arms and legs pushing your pieces together until they finally click and reconnect their electric current and nothing hurts and every inch is lost to me.

Mine.

And: I want to walk behind the counter and give a shout out to the producers of barista-friendly soymilk and ask if anyone up in this joint has a hankering for something sweeter? When hands reach for the sky I'll escape with one of those milk whipping wands and dance from human to human, tickling the soft spots under chins. Can you think of anything sweeter?

Candy. Candy would be sweeter.

I suppose I could be more, oh I don't know. Why aren't you trying? Commitment to lifelong laziness, approaching the doorway and instead of knocking or opening or kicking the damn thing down just shrugging your shoulders and walking away, deciding there must be a place around here suitable for napping. That wasn't really a door now, was it? Huh.

How is it possible to not be curious?

In an instant I call you forward, I'm not asking anymore. All of this is commandment.

Come on. Stop being bullshit.

I've got another card up my sleeve, one that just fell from the deck after I shuffled and shuffled and shuffled, never resigning myself to the single-card fate of bad movies where Death appears and everyone shits their pants.

No: it's time to stuff the whole deck down the sewer and divine with a bowl of rice. The rings of a gas station toilet. The drafts email folder. The curve of your middle finger.

Here's what I've got:

Nothing. I've never felt so complete.

