Some Fairy Tale and Sleeping Beauty Poems

by Heather Fowler

What Sleeping Beauty Thinks About in the Long Years Overgrown By Briars, Before Her Eventual Reclamation, We Hope

Always, as I'm dreaming, I have loved you,
each night caressed your shadow-shingled brow--
when nothing more than tremors clung above you
gave credence to this oft-retreating now.

And always, where I'm lost is where I've found you,
Strange traveler by this bed of wakeless rose;
What right have I to stray from briars I've come to,
No matter how they tear at my repose?

For if I dream, it's only to assemble
That dearest kingdom crumbled in my wake--
Reweave the silver webs where dew may tremble,
from stumbled looms reclaim what pricks would take.

But call me no rare beauty in her casket:
Through dreams, I'd love you. Wake, if you'd but ask it.

~

The Museum of Happy Endings

In The Museum of Happy Endings

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The only curators are whispers of men
tending false promises with powdery gloves,
inspecting the same exhibits, again and again.

Snow White drifted off, to star in another tale.
The head of the horse he carried her on, stuffed,
left red as blood on their freshly flayed bed.
Meanwhile, the apple (his slightly necrophiliac kiss saved her from)
soaks in the petrified sun, turned to leather,
like a screaming skull of summer
    in its glass enactment case.

The Beast Beauty's rose, left behind,
parades black petals preserved, reassembled,
to shed fossilized tears in bud, as if her father
were to hold his yesterdays in his hands, discard them.
Rumors gather like dust; she wasn't pretty as all that
next to the beast, once he put on his prince skin.
These things are a matter of comparison.
She preferred him when he was not so handsome,
a fur rug for her head and a claw
    tamed against her hand.
    Marriage cloaks but cannot
    improve. Hear me?

Walk forward,
    the gold the unnamed girl never spun
takes its centerpiece after she knew but never spoke
Rumpelstiltskin's name to save the greedy
    monarch's child. In fracture, she found escape.
A man with shaking hands
keeps shards of a garrulous mirror like fallen stars ,works them
over and over, trying to understand,
piece together,

broken eggshell of her face.

~

Briar Rose

I'm the one who can say, if I say,
I'm really an old fashioned girl.

Now be honest, isn't that why you came?
Twisted briars full of dead birds and bones.

I am simple, irresistible, in my comatose.

The untrendy high brow, my sun dusted face
full of blue veins, ripe as stilton.

What kind of prince can find no woman awake?
Falls in love with yarns of my seasons, spun as centuries.

Oh baby, maybe you were the first to lick these chapped lips,
Lift and wrap these arms, place unchewed yellow fingernails
on your neck, and move until they scraped down your back--
push past stained skirts to my hips' stone arches.

Hush honey, I know.
You've been visiting for years.
The whisper of me creeps up on you,
A beauty of bedsores, the allure of my half death repose.

Cuddle up, smell the dreams that might be on my breath.

Tell your friends, you had the oldest eighteen year old in the world.

Before that wet kiss on cold skin, sweetie, don't forget
to hold your nose, prise open my peepers,
and wait for my first words, after well water.

For the sake of happy ever after, do I thank you for my awakening?
Or are you dying to hear what I'm really thinking?
The gashes on your hands, the thorny fingers, your blunt sword.
This is forever. You make it go on and on.

Poor lamb! How far even a prince of a man will go
for the rumor of this woman who cannot say no.

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