

Circus-thrust the Night Copier (ELECTRIC DELIRIUM 1.6)

by Jamie Grefe

I called you the sea, my skeptical expert, susceptible and perverse in your ways, just a child looking for a lion to devour alive, bit by delectable bit. I was trying to fail. And Rose asks, licking fur, What is your time-horizon for dealing with this new-found fervor? I cock head, crack neck, but the click-pop is a cruel reminder of these, my present circumstances adrift in the drab. I'm aging. The humdrum life is the life I deserve.

A tower of work. Rosalind is at the office, shredding paper, maps of routes. Sunbombs and machine guns fuel night. Her fever spreads through lines of a plaid mini, over burnt milk, darkened to yellow. Fingers explore fabric folds up and into the lost dimensions of logic. A bullhorn sounds--the Roman circus has arrived in the lobby. I'm pillowed on my back in the brothels of this pagan city, one after another, night-savage, dying quick in the cruelty of pleasure. Rosea brought a whip: three hours of corporeal study. There is a price to be paid in preserving and intensifying your communication with us, is what she says between cracks and lash-bats. The root, Rosalind, the root. (What is your cause in what you're up to here?) So often do we misdiagnose webs of knotted habits and images, pleasures, vices, that, were we to scrape, yank cords to the void, or talk them into meaningless oblivion, would scream the skin off your body.

They have taken root within nude muscles like mud or lyric poems of infinite wormdreams. The director screams a new role: giraffe trainer, acrobatic scourge, pet shriek, clown, martyr, and gimp. But you looked for me, all of you did, all night, kept looking. I was under

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covers in the dungeon sewers, another brothel, pink-lit with questions tossed about the walls, east to hemlock, bile-smeared in the dank clutching at the prayer stains of God's mercy.

This life we have, Rose, is the only one we have and, thus, the only one we are able to know, even given our capacity to imagine otherwise. Attention is the balm. Unbounded passion, she spouts, passion in fingers stuck to hot passion, images half-sleep in the cloud-haze of whatever city you find yourself in, passion in the dream for life eternal or the happy life impossible. And yes, passion, but she forgets happiness comes with persistence and struggle, not merely through laughter and forgetting. I say these things now, with Rosea bent, arms splayed over the copy machine, on a mound of white reams, cardigan strewn, hair between fingers, to the dawn of the right direction, the only road that leads to the alien nub: to the sweet smell of our country home.

