

# Mare

by Jeremy Cairns

She is not your mare.

Swollen joints bulging through the cracked mud coating her legs. It is the gritty icing of labor. The bow in her back is not a sign that you have broken her but that she has accepted you. You take it for weakness. Only fools judge their lovers after trust has been established.

This cart that she pulls is not your chariot.

A righteous ride of pride that drags your jutting chin across the sky. What began as a modest vehicle is reduced to warped grey timber, mended wheels that wobble and creak, laden with crates filled with your self pity, excuses, and hate. She pulls out of love, while you sit upon the rumble seat, a granted is taken for every crack of the whip. She pulls out of fear. She pulls.

You are not her driver.

The straps you hold are ornamental. Symbols of the control you desire but do not have over her or yourself. People with control possess it as if it were a locket containing a picture of their destiny. They do not cast it wantonly into a lake of tears and then swim after it to be cleansed. You are the opposite of what you desire. You are not the hidden genius, keyboard revolutionary, or post mortem saint. Those titles are reserved for people who step away from the mirror in their minds and act upon their ideas. You are nothing. Not nothing but...not nothing or...just nothing. But not for long.

I am not her lover,

Or her savior, or her mentor, or her friend. I am the road. The unforgiving mud. The fork for which choices are made. Beside me you will find signs directing to places that don't deserve names. Abuse, emotional sabotage, sexual blackmail. I possess cairns hiding messages of danger, shrines to those I have claimed, but there is no marker warning of you. The only sign of your presence are deep wheel tracks down her back to show that you are very familiar with this path.

The website we build for you is not your church.

It is a roadside monument. A mosaic of images depicting your chronic laziness, unearned ego, and recreant cruelty. It will be a siren to all of the women who follow the red stained grooves of your path that they will inevitably be marked by them. No matter how you paint your carriage or fill your bushel of apples you will always be oiling your whip. This monument will affirm that you are never able to unleash your vile love upon another unwitting traveler again.

Travel wisely, you have been marked.

