before hell freezes over completely

by Jerry Ratch

I remember how silk felt against skin, dressed in my damn flimsy things, while the cold bit my nipples. How I would lie in your arms when I was young, after being awakened from my pubescent slumber. (Enough of that!) In a rush to grow up for good, holding on to the oblivion long enough, thinking: *It's time to let loose!* before hell freezes over completely.

And we went running toward one another, aware of the perceptible moisture between us, naked, our heads held back to the flames. And I remember my discreet suggestion (touched with thick lipstick,) with my navel showing. And I bathed in the fallen lake of limbs, and entered the blue light surrounding you, while my soul rose to the quiet ceiling above your bed.

Now the years pass like phantom candles that file before us, the air full of women, lust of night song where you kept the dark bath of gossip, where I myself once luxuriated, bathed, and steeped in hot slander. I remember.

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