

Our Notorious Youth

by Jerry Ratch

Our flesh was on fire like a flute with wind, or a little reed next to the dried river. I was like a voyeur whose heart was a sponge, brushing up against all that disturbed man. I was only and ever the flower of our notorious youth, aware of more than the normal heart, borne, carried, conveyed and lifted up by a sole word, while my flesh was carried back to your beautiful mouth like a prize.

Some shortcomings of the flesh, some deficiencies, may appeal to the vast, the deep and profound muscle in the middle of us all. The will may crumble into small pieces in the late night of after-acquired knowledge, so far mistaken through long use that a cloud mass covers the heart, mist, vapor, fog, covering all including the muscle itself. I was burning, and thou shalt be, secretly, with the human equipment swathed in its normal apparel.

Some creatures may still sit at the world's gate, the great port of the netherworld, holding to burn as they saw great souls burn, in lake or bog, in streams of pure fire. Not this one! I jumped in immediately, and swam to the other side to get close enough to you to burn.

Is it true that deception is the true flower of this world? Honey-like, sliding down the exposed sides of song, flouting the clear hearing and memory? Imitating all, having intercourse with sleeping men and women, with a cold ear to life, and an equally cold ear to the soul?

I think it is. So true, so true.

