

the animal that's in me

by Jerry Ratch

If I can't lure you with this animal that's in me, what can? I want to know. With this pain that was privately held for so long? That was acquainted with the fellowship of hell? I sang, I cried out when I was away from you, even while tossing and twitching in another's arms.

But the stone flashing back its lightning could not, would not tell my tale. It was so hidden and obscure in the star's tongue that gets torn from the head. And to have suckled this dream of you for so long! To have fed the little monster within that causes such great unending, up-surfing pain now, after making a little extra god together between us. Between our twin souls, about which you knew nothing, or suspected maybe a little. Did you?

I think you must have! Or else you're a little psychic. It's the small candle that's in front of the soul that will help me see you. Hold it still, so I can see you again. So I can see into your freshened face, your heart with its barren singing syllable. You know how cold it can be out here, in reality. You know how the mammoth cranes its neck as much as the ice will allow. But I also know how warm it was inside while you were there, while we were on the Chicago plains together in our youth.

