

whose soul do you have?

by Jerry Ratch

Whose soul do you have, now? (How many are you?) There are several around here running from death, laughing, whom you might know.

I burned ahead, with life. I found my own haughtiness had little bearing on the unbraided thread of pleasure (when I was with you.) My interior ill-pleased, the heart at its center ill-pleased. I know how the west wind darkens the evening girls (while you were feasting beneath my clothes.) No matter how sober, no matter how true, the heart returns to another. I know how it burns.

You can see youth lacks wings. Clothing cast off, our bodies kindled, arrogant, wanting life, wanting death. Needing to belong. And while we danced for them (in the temple of human possession,) we were in full command of drunken wickedness, lechery, and damnation.

Bear in mind that I sat for you there. Crossed and uncrossed my legs. Turned away from the ceiling without clothes on. My silk in tatters on the ground, the black crescent curved under. So, lean if you will now over the memory of my face. Allow me breath. Allow my reflection in the glass of memory. I still see you there. Do you remember who I am yet?

