

Two Poems about Edie Sedgwick

by Kyle Hemmings

Edie Sedgwick: Bad Night to Do the Boogaloo

A crippled war veteran paid me to dance for him. He had a bare-bones flat in Brooklyn. Or was it Mars? I was too far to tell the difference. I did all the right moves. I did the Frug and the Watusi. I did the Jerk and the Swim. He spread out some bills on his night table. I said You want something more? I said You must be hungry. Pretend I'm a vanilla chocolate bunny. Pretend I'm a soft-boiled egg with a painted face. Pretend I'm pink salt-water taffy and the ocean is full of open lips. He pouted like a kid reluctant to do house chores. He said It's not my cup of tea. But then I understood. He had been shot by the Viet Cong, by other one-night lovers, either too high or too low. He thanked me, shut off the lights and went to sleep. I rushed out to score some pills the color of the last taxi cab the fare I couldn't afford. The Iceman had melted. I bought two packages of Twinkies from an all-night deli, lox on a bagel, a baloney and swiss cheese on pumpernickel, three bags of hard pretzels and a bottle of seltzer water. Hadn't eaten in two days. I returned to his flat and crawled into his bed. We slept like two empty tea cups with plenty of room between. In the morning, I purged myself in his toilet. I gargled and spat. I then folded his clothes and left him a nice tip.

What Does You In

So I'm telling Andy what does it all come to?

Available online at *«<http://fictionaut.com/stories/kyle-hemmings/two-poems-about-edie-sedgwick>»*

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I mean the years leading up to.
Years of peeing on stairwells
so the teacher could slip, of fitting myself
in single-breath swallowtail-tight schoolgirl
dress while repressing one-wing
butterfly scream, ossified by
Houdini-contorted nightmares with blue
inverted hands tied, snaking in father's
moldy closet space while picking
condoms from his Sachs Fifth Avenue
suit jacket pockets, getting whacked
by the woman with spermicidal eyes
who disinfects me with name brand
bleach and ammonia, biting down
on some amateur film maker's penis
just he can feel me, feel me?
sparkling like Tiffany glass but oh
does it hurt to shit, getting bent
to get fucked, getting zonked
out by artificial star light in some
cat's mismatched eyes, just so I can
wind up all beat-up and
sprawled out on your floor like
a Christ figure emptied of all blood
and pink tendency?

Tell me, Andy. What is it all about?

He removes two bent fingers from his lips. He says, "Now, hoochie-poochie. Whatever you do or don't do, just call me first. We have to get it on film. At least fifteen minutes of it. So we can show the world what they've been starving for. And by the way, your first screen test is still valid by me."

