

What I Really Wanted

by Larry Strattner

Someone asked what I really wanted. Really wanted. You know. Wanted so much, as Grandma used to say, "I could taste it."

My answer surprised a lot of people. I said, "I wanted to write things bringing tears to your eyes, without bad language or shocking images. Something like Sublime singing Rivers of Babylon; so beautiful it didn't matter they were heroin addicts with their shirts off, singing other songs my same grandma would have had a stroke if she'd heard.

So, what I wanted. I never got there. I'll bet you never got where you wanted either; your moment of ecstasy. Knowing you made something beautiful. Beyond the mortal coil, so to speak. Rising up, puffing out and turning purely white, one of those spectacular clouds sailing away, leaving its perfect image in your mind.

I don't know a person who makes art who's joyful. It has always seemed to me art would be the place to see my want come true. Although, to be fair, there is some ecstasy in love. The place of consummation and release you think the gods have swallowed you and you are resting deep inside a being who cares unconditionally. At least unconditionally until that lover stabs you, and as you die, revises your position on the favorites list. It's a comedy, but not the fun kind. More the Greek or Shakespearean kind where it's only entertaining for people not getting cursed or killed; and sadly, said group does not include you.

So, I make a little sad art, like this art here. Try to accept how all of it works. Understand every smile costs ten tears and every gasp of pleasure twenty wracking sobs. Give and take, that's how it is, in the world of a laughing God.

