

MARIE McCOURT

One Point Six One

Demands the losing hand to be dealt to the neo-morts. It is as right as a best intention. It is just they are returned to dust. Culled to make room for the more highly evolved. Be kind to dumb animals. Terra firma is no place for the soloist, the sick or inferior. Thank you Herr Charles, Herr Adolf for trying to make the underevolved understand your views: natural selection, evolution, the final solution for the Jews. Blonde hair, eyes fair, intelligentsia. What are you grimacing for? What God is keeping score?

My Lord Thanatos, I could consume you, sucking you milk rich with immunity between my teeth. Your place is full of insular stillness, steady blackness and Cerberus guarding the gates of this painless paradise, the spirits in his charge. They require nothing – no air or applause, just perhaps a prayer. No-one speaks ill of these denizens anymore. The blackboard has been erased and their golden portrait restored. In the envious eyes of the breathing, they are flawless.

I can see myself in total darkness, the menace unbrought, where nothing slips through. The only place the violence doesn't. It is a bloodless cage. Careful all you fools: someone, somewhere, someday will have to pay for my co-existent disorders. And I will be the one laughing...laughing in the pitch trying to remember, happiness.

I have lots of friends, yes I do. They live in the top floor unit. Lots of parties go on up there and I'm always invited. It's lucky I am so in love with my mind because that's where I spend my time. My heart beats faster just thinking about it! This solitary existence – no error there. I flit and flutter between Bloomsbury Group, poets and the Algonks of the round table, all polite and proper society. Filth and vulgarity more distant to them than the scent of wounded reality. One is sooo in one's element: gorgeously intellectual. Being served history and high tea with lashings of refinement. Imaginary friends and me, what chance did we have?

Born haters need to flee into concentric worlds where it's clean, silent; the prophets still with heat. Restless dunes: voiceless, gazeless, featureless, clear expanse. For 40 days and nights I fast from humans. My contentment ripples across this beach without a tide. The only thing that changes is the shifting ground. It's where I can lie face down and breathe without caution and threats disappear like unkept promises.

Lying on this bed, feeling the just lit dawn's fingers against my skin, I am in communication with today and tomorrow, the lives of these siblings yet un-lived. I am close to the far away sisters and we converse about the unrehearsed with no fear or replication being produced.

I am the ultimate blank canvas. Nobody told me what to do, nobody told me what to think or how to behave. No thoughts, no examples, no behaviours, no role models were inflicted. Apathy was my blueprint instead. Freedom inverted. The artists that surrounded this easel left it unattended, unlabelled and unfinished. The imperfectionists!! I am like terra nullius, something that belongs to no-one. I have not been birth marked; instead the watermark is my tenuous link to humanity. Only I see myself for what I really am.

I was their mistake, fathered by an atrocity holding onto a wrong like a conduit of hate. The juxtaposition of control and creation, divided and separated like a multiple personality disorder, leaving a whisper, a moment, of perfection. The unborn are free of stain and shop soiled existence. We begin when the aloneness is no burden like having an empty seat beside you. The "on" switch is still "off", the anticipation of an odyssey not yet begun. The memory, still missing, is seated comfortably in an armchair waiting for the images to commence. There is no hurt from the postnatal world. The hurt that saddens angels comes later. By then, it is too late, you cannot go back on yourself and re-visit immortality. The broken umbilical cord, resembling an estrangement, lies discarded.

So there it is, the immediate disconnection: caught in cold (as cold as a murder) Catholic hands holding this sacrifice to Mary. We all belong to her. Mother, Mother without sin; Ave Maria without fault we are your blessed children. Separated from you by life itself. The earth mother to whom we are entrusted acts as her surrogate. She receives vicarious pleasure from each new born human soul. The mammalian instinct crosses over the celestial borders to reside innately between delight and discovery. With the intimacy of lovers, small murmurs of purity are exchanged and

the bond that reaches to the end of the ages is formed. Fisted and unfisted like the blooming of a heart, we utter “I love you mummy.” This love may be interrupted but ...we always return to Mother.

My first and only friend was AnnMaree Donnelly in grades 1 and 2. Death separated us. She was shorter and cuter than me with a big smile and peachy cheeks that every old lady would love to squeeze. This was a time when people really knew each other. We held hands walking into school and always played together. After she departed, I felt less alive than before my first breath. Underneath too much salt lay the clean, swept, trumpet heralding path of loss that was waiting, just waiting to eat my bloodied baby steps. I hope the beigeness and baldness of life never talked her into asking twice. You are the one truth deserving infinite symmetry.

I run, walk, swim and ride across cinematic greenness that belongs to me. This place encompasses an ocean where currents take and weigh down my willing self-consciousness and drown her in the river Acheron. That part has suicided. The flat surface closes on me like a sarcophagus lid. It seals between the horizon and airbrushed blue. Now I am safe from the world above. It continues to break and bleed but it leaves me alone feeling quite smug about it all. Shiny and Sparkling are my new best friends – always wanting to tag along. I flourish here. I fit. From the landed manor a woman watches: a stranger with the eyes of a future lover. The attraction of before meeting is happening. This coquette slides a sidelong, subtle glance across my vision. The tease! I will play hard to get. That lasts a nanosecond!! The pheromones have seen to that. The thought of not being rescued from this discovery is delectable. We could be designed for one another. This is like New Years Eve, glimpsing something that is not quite at fruition. So the dance begins.

SSSHH! Finger to her lips. The impossibility of not talking is deliciously achieved. In the absence of words there is some air spare to yearn and be filled with anticipation. There is room for idealization, instead of the usual verbal pollution. Every part is alive. Fantasies are the only universal space to free the imagination. Here, expectations are met.

Fingers long, white, slender, hover lovingly above nothingness. A row of patient black and ivory faces turn towards the kiss of empty hands, the blessing incomplete. Noble heads bow and lend constructed notes ready for their confirmation. Side by side the clergy reverently wait to be struck softly by inspiration – their only purpose

in life. In that lull, that pause, energy is the future ambition of genius that's about to come. Warm currents abate: correction unrequired in this still, whole moment.

There is no such thing as writer's block. Those glaringly empty pages are not in the way. This is time for expression to organize and settle itself. There are no critics here. Invisible thoughts leave one's imagination like little paratroopers. They nervously queue in formal lines ready to jump one by one into sanctuary and land, intact, onto fertile landscape. They see a rawness here but wounds or bruising are not found. Art strides past them all declaring "I require neither safety or harmlessness." What a brave boy. The sub-story and unreported lay alongside muses Sappho, Homer and Sylvia. The quill pauses above parchment. It is a haven for unidentified excellence. It's where words halt, take a breather with their hands on knees before getting back to all the adventure, romance and mischief. You may see nothing in this miniature Utopia but a hidden democracy exists. Anything can go there – what freedom! This spot shelters the vulnerable and shows respect to patience, ideas, the unsaid. Creativity makes everything plausible. If I write unheard music, an unread poem or book, does it really exist? It is accurate then.

Perfection is being in awe of what's in front of you.