

The Ancients

Dark moaning jazz vibrated throughout the world, deadening movement, zombifying heartbeats, entrancing minds, matineeing the past with free admission. Hands shook, hearts swelled.

I was warm in my apartment, comfortable in my thin charcoal sweater, hot tea warming my tongue and throat, warm chest. Across the parking lot I could see a dull faded car. I was warm, they were warm, but I could feel the cold distance outside between our closed windows. A single candle glowed in my windowsill. Why could life feel like this? Why is it beautiful when it's silent, slow, lonely, not happening? Why does the movement of the day make life too bright, too unmanageable, too ugly, too distant? Cold hearts pass each other, almost putting each other's flames out. The lights atop straight poles laid out in formation across the gray parking lot seemed to glimmer in unison with the candle. The tea's hot steam rose out of the cup, dancing like a miniature ghostly apparition in the darkened windowsill. As I took my bath I could hear the rain waltzing on the wide lonely lot. Getting out soaking I looked into the mirror to see if I had become beautiful by the thoughts I had sitting alone. With wet hair I slid under the thick blankets and cool sheets. I fell asleep listening to the rain. I awoke. I decided to go out into the night. Earlier on campus my old roommates said I should come over to a party at their house.

The cornucopia of music and voices mingled together like a swirling fire; as the flames of music burned below, sporadic voices burst forth like crackling embers. It smelled like a beach bonfire with wet burning logs burning passionate, worshipping flames into the dark night. I stood in the cold knocking on the stiff pale front door, waiting. I was waiting for nothing, waiting to finish out my fate of growing old alone, waiting to grow bigger before I shrank, and tonight waiting to empty a bottle of wine. As the door opened, music and voices billowed out over the

comfortable smell of rain on my sweater, into the cold night like a hot stove opened up for dinner.

She was across the room and upon seeing her, fields of flowers in my chest began to bloom. We ended years ago, not in a breath but in a thousand. I felt flimsy in the maddening distance between us now. Scraping memories put my head in danger. I tried to forget that I now lived in a dungeon without walls. I tried to ignore the sentence of being shackled to the shame of who I am. Pulsating red lights were pushing through my chest. I was frozen in her paralyzing beauty that once was mine as she looked up noticing me. Her eyes released swarms of crucifying rainbows. I felt ugly, matted and perverse; the dust on an angel's wings when she came over. Her blue perfume rushed through my blood like cocaine. There was a flickering screen of adopted lives in the room. She was neon desire rushing over me. Silence of an empty subway station filled the room. Nothing mattered right now, everything had shut down. I used all the energy I had to feel, to absorb the moment. It wasn't my doing, not a choice. It was natural, a reconstructed part of my undiscovered being; a Loch Ness monster surfacing in my heart, a mysterious part of us we haven't analyzed, corrupted, learned too much about, dissected; it was free, untainted by man's fears. It glowed in every cell of my body, subatomic explosions going off everywhere inside me. I erected my weakened body, covered my face in plastic confidence, and tried to give a cool smile. She stood there with glimmering pixie brown eyes. I went to say hi but a thrust inside pushed my lips against hers. I fell into inner space, a black inner arena of darkness, falling inside. No one else in the room existed, even her ambitious boyfriend in the kitchen disappeared. It was us again; two souls becoming one, swirling and penetrating, a majestic abstraction. Suddenly everything was colored again. Gray, colored, gray, colored. My hand floated down onto her soft hip as my lips squeezed her bottom lip, releasing. We came

apart, mixed, there were colors everywhere. A frightening confusion slammed over me. I lost myself for a minute. I had forgotten what living felt like. I looked up at her with heavy wonderful eyes. She was gorgeous in her silence.

The voices and music began to filter in again. I could start to make the words out and meaning of what was being said, I could feel the sober ground again. I looked up and she was gone, I was gone. I stared at the gray walls. I could hear the rain washing down the roof. My feet were cold. I laid there until the sheets became uncomfortable. I laid there until my mind gave up. I fell asleep listening to the rain.