

# Contemplation

by [Susie Gharib](#) (September 2022)



*The Funeral*, Edouard Manet, 1867

## Contemplation II

Modern hearses pass by my window everyday,  
not that I need to be reminded by almighty death  
that has become a salient trait of our modern age.

I think of the person whose body is lying in a box,  
of this windowless drive to a newly-dug plot,  
of the temporary solemnity of faces

that will see *it* off,  
some with sorrow,  
some with relief  
that the world population is less by one.

For how long will that memory withstand  
the erosion of egoistic times  
that dispense with the heaviest of burdens  
over a glass of wine  
in a pub with a salacious intent?

I wonder if people ever ponder over their own demise,  
the fact that they will leave behind  
property, belongings, and whatever has made them proud,  
and a name  
that some will bless  
and others may revile!

## **A Legacy**

Consumed by a legacy that runs in your blood,  
you spew your poison in my face,  
unabashed  
with spite,  
and renew your onslaughts  
that had tainted a childhood so full of fun.

The spleen you vented on my dolls,  
my wooden cubes,  
my books,  
takes a more sinister impact on me as an adult.  
As ever, you begrudge me the very air  
that enters my lungs.

Beneath your blows,

I reminisce over the milk I scooped out of Nido cans,  
the water I heated for your feeding bottle,  
but why should be surprised by your conduct?  
Didn't your ancient ancestors bury their infants alive,  
their new-born daughters?

## **A Pair of Stygian Walls**

Love that dwells behind dark glasses  
retains the distance its verve abhors,  
thus eloquent eyes are bound to be silenced  
when stumbling at a pair of Stygian walls.

The sun can't gild your fluttering lashes,  
but only floats on funereal pools.  
When so rebuffed on glass it bounces,  
its rays withdrawing with no discourse.

And the moon is reduced to frozen ashes,  
burnt out on a pyre of the blackest coal,  
eclipsed,  
obscured  
in the sombrest fashion,  
supine,  
it lies on ebony floors.

## **Malice**

The nails that tear at my shadow  
will eventually wear themselves out  
with relentless scratching at my amorphous ego,  
leaving no scars on a rigorous mind.

And effigies they chisel after my marrow  
to pierce with pins my battered spine  
will grow to be nightmares that harrow,  
infesting both their souls and hearts.

And venom they scribble on my pillow  
will perish for lack of words and rhyme,  
dissolving in the froth that daily dribbles  
from a vast arena of impotent mouths.

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