

Audrey Rose

She woke up, heated her soup in the microwave in her closet then carried the soup to the bathtub and ate it. After breakfast, she sat on the edge of the sink and peed. In the kitchen, she washed her body, hand foot, rib in the sink with dishwashing detergent. She dried her body with a towel warmed in the oven. Once, in a hurry, she broiled the towel to warm it faster, but it burned.

Her clothes lay in piles on window ledges. She slept on the floor of the closet. At 5:33 am, she would climb out onto her fire escape where she would dance naked as the sun woke up.

Her fragrance was mocha, which clung to her like an abandoned child. She used to make drinks at the coffee shop, but she didn't listen to people's orders. She listened to their eyes. The people did not like this.

Her boss liked the sparkle in her eye. She didn't complain if he groped her, so he kept her around. Some days she did nothing but dance. There were always more customers when she was there.

After her toes tired from dancing, she wrote. Her pen pressed so strongly into the paper it curled. The page was a bucket to be filled. If she didn't fill it then she imagined a town would die of thirst somewhere.

She told stories to children, wrote poems to sell on the streets. Sometimes she fed them to stray dogs. Sometimes, if she was really hungry, she ate a few herself; the poems, not the children although she thought about that, too.

She didn't like fluorescent lights, so she went to the recycling center and stole paper for her notebooks. When it became an empty wasteland filled with dirty diapers and giant cockroaches. She couldn't go back. Her notebook filled but her words spilled over onto newspapers and napkins. On black napkins she could only trace the lines of her thoughts. She wrote on her walls where stories intersected and began anew. When her pen ran dry, she would use ketchup, mustard, eyeliner. Condiments slowed her writing. Each letter required gentle attentions and effort as if she were learning each line and curve for the first time. The walls filled, so she sang and screamed the words which echoed back softly until they filled her streams of blood and consciousness.

She opened heart and legs with no thought about it. She danced in the closet with boys and men. Her face at their feet, tickling and pulling their toes, as they tickled her insides. She made the boys who pulled out cum in jars that lined the walls of her closet. Later, she would dip her finger in and write secret words on her walls.

Some boys left little bits of themselves in her womb. She let their sperm wriggle inside her, tiny dancers. They always died there. The boys left. Her heart hurt. She drew hearts in bright red lipstick on her mirrors, then masturbated with a bar of soap.

She forgot rent. Her landlord threw her out, but not before he danced with her in her closet. His toes were hairy. He yelled at her for the words on the walls. What the hell did they say? She painted her apartment with red paint and a toothbrush. The landlord took her to the closet again. His toenails had grown.

She danced her way through the streets, kissed her coffee shop goodbye and took some snow with her. She danced into the woods. She ate berries and wrote poems with pine needles. The poems blew away. She climbed trees to pee and hid stories in the river. She told secrets to the sun.

She turned wild and forgot.

The winds turned cold and chilled her. She danced harder but the winds turned icy. She spun and twirled till finally the winds gave up and carried her away. When she tired the winds, they set her down in the mountains of Colorado.

-Do not attempt to recreate the events of Audrey Rose's life. They will result in internal and/or external death or at the very least a yeast infection.