

THE SMOKING RUINS

The foot slipped, buckles rattled.
For down below, the rumbles of an avalanche.
Up above, a steep face.. bare rock.. no foothold.
Back a hundred feet, down my rope, I slid
looking left, looking right: looking east, looking west,
I saw the tract.
Perhaps longer, perhaps winding, perhaps rocky..
yet another way there has to be.

The murmur of a thousand voices,
The sticky warmth of a million breaths,
The search for air, a test of a lifetime,
Asphyxia, the sure prognosis.
But like the fauna in the rainforest,
in scramble for sweet sweet light
of the tropical sun,
I felt a surge forward.. trusting a power within:
An arduous, trying and desperate search maybe,
but forward it has to be.

Then the thorns,
and the pointed blades of the spear grass..
and all around the top of the high wall,
the refractive glitter of the broken glass on it's edges,
a menacing assurance,
that the captive within
was there to stay,
But through a tunnel underneath,
by my own hands dug good and long,
I made fast my flight
to my first breath of freedom.

Adrift, in the winds
of the heavenly bodies,
melodies sweet, melodies pure, come to take me
to a life everlasting, a life neverending,
my heart leapt within me.
My tired eyes wandered.
And atop the clouds, beckoning my soul,
sat a halo.
And I knew it was time.
Yet I could not rise.
Then, looking down, I saw a chain:
a long heavy chain, tied
as anchor to ship, turning me object, of it's grip.
Then seizing,
in a last show of strength, a great sword from my captors,
broke that chain into two.

then the body collapsed, but the soul,
saved and salvaged,
rose in triumph to join the choir
of sweet melodies.

But it was at the sight
of the smoking ruins and heaps of spent shells:
Corpses decapitated.. giant green flies at feast:
A little face half-buried in the rubbles,
parched lips.. dried teartracks an it's ashy face
defying even the thundering echoes
of heavy mortars, whose proven marks of efficiency
is left for all to see.

A chess game without end,
fallen heroes.. towering conquerors,
hawks of intrigue.. masters in logistics,
an ugly concoction amidst the smoking ruins and the spent shells
the giant green flies and the frail little body
choking in the rubbles.

It was at this
I felt a clamp around my throat,
a sharp pain in my nostrils
balls of tears in my eyes... lips trembling in rage.

Then I saw the sides poised to start
all over again,
the vicious game of death.. and from the corner of my eyes,
I could still see the little face in the rubble.....

Then the clamp dropped
The tears rolled
My lips opened.
And raising each arm,
In a single cry, I cried out
P-E-A-C-E.
And alas! All was still.

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