

Burning Memories

Do you remember?

No; how could you? These are not yours though it is because of you that I carry them.

Chains—like those worn by a criminal.

But what was my crime?

You have your own burden and only the luxury of feigning innocence—an innocence which in itself has become a deadweight upon your soul. The lie that was to give you the illusion of normalcy; the lie that has now eaten away all your defenses.

You don't need to tell me of the panic you sometimes feel. Let those others talk behind your back and wonder what you're still searching for—what they think is something you cannot find. Just never let them ask what it is that you know you've lost.

(I see you . . . lying in your stuffy, overstuffed bed; lying and listening to lies, and sometimes just listening . . . listening for the rattle and rustle of dried and dead leaves, as the wind blows them down the alley—past your window, past *you*—and finally just past).

That is me you hear, crackling with rage while crunched underfoot. Dried now . . . and curled, twisted; a different shape and texture—all life having fled even as I fell. Waiting.

Hoping and waiting to be pressed between the pages of a pompously thick book; and unto it I shall render a dignity and meaning it could not have had. Still . . . forgotten and discarded for endless years . . .

Or do you act and toss all that once was me upon a moldy pile, to await the cleansing flame? Dispersion down to the smallest atom and iota with no more substance now than a plume

of white smoke; no more touch than a tickle in your breath, even as you breathe me in . . .

(Neither created nor destroyed).

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And so now shall you give up breathing? Is there a filter less false than the standard
mores that can strain out the spores of all that I have been? Can you move far enough away—take
in gulping, gasping, breaths of purity from some far distant lands that never we knew?

And what of the ashes, my love? Spread them over the placid and flaccid waters of our
dreams; seal them in some impregnable container and bury it deep deep into the cool cool earth?

There will still remain . . .

Memories you can't quite recall, lurking on the fringes of what you choose to call your
“life”. These are not yours either, yet it is only when they flit and flicker in the dark recesses that
reside about you—only then—can you name your own name.

These are not yours . . . except for the tears.

At night; when so truly alone.

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That is all that is left of me, carried by you in a part of your soul that you won't even
admit exists.

It is all I should have expected . . .

(Now do you remember? No?)

You will . . .