



## Fabrice B Poussin

### Acid Campfire

It might be Tuesday in the midst of June  
a calendar droops from a rusty tack  
confused in its crumbling sepia tones  
they can't quite recall wo placed it there  
or when, yet they have a vague impression  
of a silhouette similar to theirs, decades before.

Someone set fire to a desk in the living room

to make a feast reminiscent of their teens  
when they escaped to the dark forest  
and sat around the makeshift hearth as magicians  
when their dreams were still puerile  
they could laugh without retribution.

It may have been twenty years ago or perhaps one  
they have not ventured to the streets in ages  
subdued by an existence without imagination  
they slouch in boneless bodies  
glassy eyes into landscapes no one else can perceive  
they might well become part of the wooden floor.

They are five, perhaps twenty without a will  
to stand or change the channels on the antique screen  
they did laundry once and left it to rot  
it was weeks ago, should they ask the neighbors?  
but swimming through inches of dirt  
wallowing in remnants of forgotten orgies they lay.

Someday their abode will implode  
for a mistake under the expected influence  
all who have survived will finally find a brutal end  
in the flames of oddly concocted hallucinations  
for a life without debt in a pricey world

too weak to face the humility of decent days.

## Beauty Masks

Beloved child she stumbled on a limelight stage  
wearing heels made for a mother  
cheered on by strange adults with fancy cameras  
she pursed lips in what she thought a smile.

Frail legs swayed with newly found pain  
hoses, mascara, and other devices  
prescribed by an ambitious manager  
she is six, might as well be twenty.

She traveled many ages and numerous cities  
on luxury transport and first line air  
sniffing caviar, Havanas, and cocaine  
forms preserved by chemicals and a little touch up.

She recalls those days when it felt so good  
to show angular curves bathed in two pieces  
of thousand-dollar fabrics per inch  
before the party to celebrate her twenties.

A monument now she feels nothing  
under the artificial layers tailored for a future  
walking to cheer on her replacements  
so artificial the mirror reflects a stranger.

It has been many visits to the sterile rooms  
under bright lights again and silent walls  
as she tried to recover a youth not her own  
and succeeded so in looking like another's ghost.

## Little Thing

She looked at the giant a million miles above  
attempting to escape on all six in the dirt  
it had not been a moment as she thought  
since she had devoured a particle of dust.

The monstrosity continued on its merry way  
moving mountains at the bottom of a sole  
infinite in its blind power to achieve oblivion  
upon a world suspect only to its gentle kin.

A tremor soon shakes their home like a quake  
so strong to swallow all things, redemption  
the killer has collapsed under an unseen thumb  
pressing on a life so feeble in its illusion of invincibility.

Within the carcass a little thing crawls  
warm in the home of these shrinking entrails  
it seeks a place to raise its immense family  
food aplenty in the bounty of this fleshy planet.

Tomorrow will see another light  
a dimming sun will become supernova  
victim to its own appetite for eternal strength  
it may even beg for a respite.

Sitting atop the cozy enclave of a palace  
he contemplates the cadaver of a brother  
stabbed in the heart by such a little thing  
another sun's life shuddered by a tiny moon.

## Fabrice Poussin

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Fabrice teaches French and English at Shorter University. Author of novels and poetry, his work has appeared in *Kestrel*, *Symposium*, *The Chimes*, and many other magazines. His photography has been published in *The Front Porch Review*, the *San Pedro River Review* as well as other publications.

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