



POETRY

Submitting Survivorship

Rosiel Elwyn

A forest looms inside my mind, memories in rows.
The shadows cast of white bones and headstones,
trees marked, stark and waiting,
cut into survivor-ship masts.

This pain waits for voice,
encased in darkness, silt,
and silence.
This bodymind carries volcanic scars
restraint, confinement, self-starvation, blood, violence
comas, restarted heart,
hospital gowns and locked doors, grinding shut.
I write to an unknown audience across a sea:
these are a few of my dangerous dreams.

I follow a recipe to soften me
boil down, simmer, blanch
into objectivity.
Red barcoded bracelets were cut into my soul -
select the perfect adjectives for horror
reduced, enough
to render molten lava digestible.

Hollow, hollow, hollow
how I lift up this pain, make it palatable.
When do word counts fell these trees,
deface these crosses?
How does a line struck through my text
stab deep into my chest?
Does rejection of this voice raise violence in these memories?
Desecrate, create, re-write -
adjudicators and reviewer gravediggers above me.

I transform these agony howls and grit

in to a 150 word abstract,
for critique.
Knowing that the rest may be skimmed and flicked over,
I scatter ashes, ashes, dust.
This marrow picked and discarded
mind and skin burnt, bruised, broken, lost.
Unspoken pile of manuscripts,
a mass grave of pages.
Pain unread.

I practice necromancy in this forest -
unbury remains and bring life into these limbs.
Breathe light into fossilised wood, unconnected roots,
cast searchlights over words, spoken existence,
(im)mortality realised.
We learn from stories, ancestry, the places other souls have tread,
re-live red pain in collected sacrifice.
We leaf through these volumes and turn up the sound, the earth
trees fall,
there will be witnesses.

Cease to hide – I seek and seek sanctuary, understanding,
belief, relief,
compassion.
Armor on the doorstep, sheltered heart laid in wait for arms,
for solace.

This pain wanted voice

Madness turning restless, at last
finding rest and refuge
in
Madness.