

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Lilly Nelson: Three Poems

Lilly Nelson · Thursday, January 19th, 2023

### Winter

Exhaustion burns blue circles under my eyes  
craves the blood seeping into my mouth  
from my broken lip I've been chewing on for two hours  
like a pack of big league chew bubble gum  
my nails claw into my forearm's flesh to distract from the iron  
that coats the back of my swollen throat

I'm stranded on the last train to midnight  
sulking in the caboose, musing sips of hot chocolate, bones  
slumped against the iron window frame  
staring at the man in the side aisle across from me  
enveloped in the blue corduroy jacket  
as he sews amber letters into the back of his leather notebook

He is planning my funeral in December  
scattered with needles, under the pine trees  
my empty casket  
hinges sealed with black ice like a kiss  
from death, white snow mixes with the smoke colored ashes slipping between his worn fingers  
He chose death before me, but I'm too exhausted to care

\*

### Smoke Break

Permission lit the cigarette  
sleeping between my lips

Cockroaches crawl over my raised  
skin as nicotine sends shocks  
to my receptors.

My thoughts crave numbness.

I count the ten seconds till my next hit,

but it feels like infinity.

Smoke architects  
my conviction as  
addiction takes me further away into space.

I have a theory that chocolate takes  
the pain away from loss if you eat  
enough of it.

I ground the cigarette under my boot,  
and sulk to the candy aisle.

They wanted to prescribe xanax.

I pop packs of M&Ms.

\*

## Pleurer á Paris

I thought love was supposed to stay remnant like the gerber daisies in my mother's garden, yet my trust is  
waning like the snapping of my twig-like wrist under my own body weight  
The migraines and gravity force my slothing body towards  
the cold tile like wine glasses shattering  
Jealousy drives the virus coagulating the blood in my veins

In November, I wanted to be your illicit love affair  
What if you tasted like strawberries in an autumn breeze?  
Or your embrace- the warmth of sex after a movie  
Your eyes, pools of copper consumed my consciousness like a puppet ripped from its strings  
Your nails digging into my waist, pulled me towards the riverbed  
I would have drowned in the Seine if you told me to

But I can't be your midnight addiction.  
Not when your blood is my amber and my tears are the sweat you're wiping away from your body  
You left me with water colored eyes beneath the embers of the Notre Dame.  
River flames drowning the scent of the insults you whispered against my neck  
Degrading my worth till I hit the wall begging, pleading "don't stop"  
Shoulders pressed against the walnut dorm frame, yellow blemishes engraved into my chest  
You should have stopped the memories from slipping away, but my memory is decay past 1974

I still stay up all night grasping for your name

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