



Apollo's Kisses

Flash Fiction By J Bennett

Rose shielded herself from the encroaching sun by pulling the blanket over her head. She closed her eyes and searched through the shadows for repose. A sleep like death; like Juliet's coma.

Her body would not submit no matter how still and dull her heart felt. She probed for it with her mind, found her rib cage desolate, and surmised that her heart may have sunk far below her breast, perhaps lodged in the large intestine or liver to slowly burn away.

Rose took in a deep breath, met the musk of body and blanket soaked up in days of wallowing in this broken mind, and threw off the coverings. Slanted rays of sun cut through her closed eyes, and she imagined Apollo stroking her cheeks. He would have red hair, like fire. Hot kisses. They would blister her shoulders, her belly, her breasts.

Rose longed to touch her body, probe the skin for the remembered hot blushes of the time before disease, but now she felt bruised and sticky.

The door opened, and Rose knew he must have been standing behind it for long silent seconds, gathering his strength, working his argument and generally feeling hopeless.

“I want you to get out of bed,” said a voice from above. It belonged to soft, tired husband. Heavy husband with balding pate and squinting eyes. If she did not respond he would go away. He always went away.

“You’re disgusting. It’s two in the afternoon. You’ve got responsibilities, you know. Not to me. You don’t give a fuck about me. Fine. But what about Hunter?”

Apollo, Apollo, she thought and whispered, “Don’t touch me.”

The air of his sigh squirmed in her brain, so Rose turned her body away from him. She heard his feet turn, the creak of heavy bones. Unhappy husband.

“Take the pills Rose. Just take the pills.” The door closed, and it was the best sound in the world.