

Poems by Allison Grayhurst

Walk on Fear

It appears in the grip
of ecstasy, in the
idiot abstract of failure,
and sometimes, love.

Illusions coating
the sides of eternity
with shrieks, illusions
crawling out of the mouths of

of gods and myths. Trains
pass all night through offices,
apartments, trains packed

tight with a cargo of dreams.
No one is strong enough to say goodbye
to the world, shave their heads
without feeling. No one is here

to shout spontaneous, to endure
the striving tongue and bone. Electrical
flies on the wall. Cockroaches scanning
the fridge - oxygen, dancing couples,

standing naked
before a window, skyscrapers
stretched towards
a crippled sky, and then

long ago, a child
sitting in a forest,
singing
to each tree.

Lately, it is has been hard
to hide - undressed,
divorced from direction.

Lately, I've been watching
the furniture, screaming

aloud when there's a knock
on the door.

But my house is forever.
And the urgency and hunger
that overpower my pulse
has never cried for peace.

Nocturnal Souls

Those pure, breathable love-notes
written on Japanese paper.
Our house, rain-cold
with dawn dying in every corner.

When you sleep
I believe I am made of ice. I travel
in my frozen figure, spiralling,
drilling up
into God's domain. While you, flat
amongst the covers, breathe slow like
roots, touchable, sacred
as the shadows of my mortality are born
then perish in the wind's mute philosophy.
Loneliness infects us all. You have told me,
there will never be a simpler tomorrow.

Cut flowers lean their bloom on pale walls.
I drop my mouth like wine dripped
on your shoulder.
You wake and find me,
hauntingly yours.

Kaita

It is sort of colourless,
the Earth. Though
I can hear the voice of spring,
I cannot help being disappointed at the slow
blooming flowers, that grow up
pursing the sun
to no avail.
Then I see the long boneless bodies
of angels
ascending like arrows
into the depths of a starless sky,
and I think to myself that he
who has gone into
shadows, hissing a private song
is much better off with his visible scars than
their invisible wings.
And I wonder, will he come home
or pass like water between unwebbed feet, to the ocean
where all that is written
is washed away with the sand?

Sister

With your random intimacy, you gather
like a fresh season
in my unchanging days.
The letters I write you
turn blue with sorrow, yellow
with self-lies.
I am a woman
bearing this seed of false explanations.
Am I meagre? Have I calculated
truth and love, inch by inch
as severable, solitary desires?
I am sinning beneath a half-moon, wanting
to shape my thighs perfectly,
but I have only two hands to mend this wound,
and even their double skill and devotion
is inefficient for such a task. It is better left
to trust, to fate,
to an open-hearted ruin.
I believe in your perfect happiness,
your nunnery in a Montreal duplex, your discipline.
I will join you someday, look into your priestly eyes
and feel once and for all
upright.
My mind is whitewashed.
Your smile is surfacing
like a cleaned glass swan.
On the shore or in the sandpit
we will arrive,
whether it take over night
or lifetimes.

The Man and The Snake

Fused, in flight
he dove with haste into the sand pit. So little now to feel,
but hummingbird fear, crushed pebbles and bitter pride.
He danced in the yellowish crevice, swinging
religious aging arms;
as if invisible like the silent atmosphere
of stopped clock hands and snowflakes falling.
The cobra cocked its head. Suspended in the shadows,
its boneless beauty shone with lust.
He touched its tail first, then tongue; rolled
like thunder down its fleshy throat,
kicking his heels against
the interior shell of the snake being.
Breathless, he begged for poison,
or relief. The snake hissed -
 Tonight you return to the womb. Close your eyes
 your sanctuary is complete.
His eyelids folded over like petals in a frost.
He kissed the dream, then followed his fate
home.