That Thing

Rose Gitlin

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval
THAT THING

Rose Gitlin

It was taken from me forcefully at first
Her hands gnawed at the heart strings until they snapped with weariness.
“We can’t hold on.”
They whispered to me,
Their color fading from red to charcoal as she burned a road
Through my manzanita forest morning and into me.
After the first logging, the road remained.
So that the second time, he had me easily.
The strings were used to moving;
They offered up ghosts of whispers at his back as he left.
That was well after the fact.
The third time was unremarkable.
The drawbridge to the heart
That once belonged to somebody
Opened of its own volition,
Before commandments were issued,
Before the issuer demanded rights to squat on my body.
The earth was cracked here, dry and barren,
The winds howled lonely empty threats to all who entered.
In the end, they whispered a good-bye to the body gratefully.
The fourth time,
His words came out of my dry lips,
A eulogy to the barren hole there.
“You deserve this.”
I said, simply and comfortingy, as if in solace to the dying.

My hands buried the body with triangular jags of rotten tongues,
All gone to waste from lounging too long in a mouth unused to speaking.
The body was not dead.
It stayed stagnant there instead of rotting.
It held up pieces of sweet sugar cakes for all who entered.
As the soul watched lazily,
The mind went mad.
It could not walk.
It could not defend.
Pieces laid strewn about in turmoil against the road
So that every step forward ached with memory.
After the fifth time, I stopped counting.
It was taken from me forcefully at first
Her hands gnawed at the heart strings until they snapped with weariness.
“We can’t hold on.”
They whispered to me,
Their color fading from red to charcoal as she burned a road
Through my manzanita forest morning and into me.
After the first logging, the road remained.
So that the second time, he had me easily.
The strings were used to moving;
They offered up ghosts of whispers at his back as he left.
That was well after the fact.
The third time was unremarkable.
The drawbridge to the heart
That once belonged to somebody
Opened of its own volition,
Before commandments were issued,
Before the issuer demanded rights to squat on my body.
The earth was cracked here, dry and barren,
The winds howled lonely empty threats to all who entered.
In the end, they whispered a good-bye to the body gratefully.
The fourth time,
His words came out of my dry lips,
A eulogy to the barren hole there.
“You deserve this.”
I said, simply and comfortingly, as if in solace to the dying.

My hands buried the body with triangular jags of rotten tongues,
All gone to waste from lounging too long in a mouth unused to speaking.
The body was not dead.
It stayed stagnant there instead of rotting.
It held up pieces of sweet sugar cakes for all who entered.
As the soul watched lazily,
The mind went mad.
It could not walk.
It could not defend.
Pieces laid strewn about in turmoil against the road
So that every step forward ached with memory.
After the fifth time, I stopped counting.