

Inner Turmoil

No matter how many times I sang softly to myself, the dark kept consuming me. My shaky voice calling to the night, the crumbling limestone walls staring back at me, unfeeling. Suddenly I couldn't stop the tears: warm and salty, sliding down my cheeks onto my filthy clothes. I curled into a tight ball, hugging my knees, shivering violently as cold seeped into my bones. The faint cries and shiftings of other inmates reverberating in my brain.

I longed for the touch of a mother, something I never had. Someone to hug me and tell me everything is okay.

When did it become like this? Since when did the meek street rat who was used and discarded like a rag, thirst for murder? Since when did the kid who was beaten every day, find someone else's blood on his clothes?

I felt the sharp reality of my actions lacerating my mind as soon as I did it. I felt the ice cold song of death calling to break me free from my inescapable sins. I thought maybe the salty water filling my lungs would drown out the voices in my head. The voices that called and sang and screamed. I was only fifteen, trapped inside my own head like a crazed animal. I wanted to be free. All I wanted was to be free.

It wasn't me that killed him. But it was. It was always me thinking *I could kill them*. It was never me in my own right mind.

It was a crisp and dangerous night, the kind in which wretches prowl, the kind where men go mad, the kind where murders happen. I had my farming adze in my hand. I was running my hand down the blade, mesmerised. Something in it had a power. A thousand versions of it shimmered with a thousand different possibilities.

I had spent all afternoon thinking murder, a homicidal impulse. What would happen if I killed the snobbish farmer's son? The texture of his blood running thick down my hands. All of the anger I felt built up over the years, stuck inside like a cork wedged in a bottle, was slipping out. What would it look like? What would happen? Looking, thirsting. World. Cruel. NOTHING WAS RIGHT. Lonely. THE FOOL DESERVES IT.

And so it happened.

I was trapped in a spiral, a miasma, of hate and curiosity and fear and jealousy that had cast me like a kite, thrown to the raging winds. Suddenly I felt myself spinning down the spiral. Faster. Faster. How long until I hit the bottom?

I had no time. Time. Time until I die. Time until the guards knock. Time until my neck is grabbed by a rope, a rope I cannot be free of until my body is still. Death. Will they give me a ceremony? Death. Faster. Tomorrow. Will I still be alone when I die? Time. Time to die. Time to die, time to die time to die time to –

By Charlie Lund