

Wilderness House Literary Review 9/2

Peter Victor

The Death of Alyssa

To say Alyssa was beautiful
Is like saying
The sky is high
The sea is big
Winter is cold

She embodied beauty
In a strange kind of way
She was not pretty
She was
Simply beautiful...

Like those stunted flowers
That grow above the tree line
Fight their way up through frozen ground
To blossom out
In a breath-taking explosion of life and beauty
A couple of inches above rock and snow

She lived her life
That way
With downcast eyes
But all knew
None were fooled
You could feel it
She was watching
She was aware
Of everything

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The slow smile
A brief upwards glance
The smile spreads a little wider
"Alyssa!
Can you stop that...please?"

I heard her call
Twice
And knew
Then waited
"Hey, you know who died?"
A black explosion
In my mind

It changed
Everything
A small clip in the paper
But it is known
Everywhere

In the falling snow
In the angry
Roaring sea
In the bitter cold
All know
Alyssa is dead

I hear her
Now and again
See the slow smile
A brief glance
The smile spreads a little wider
Feel the light punch
As she leans in

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She whispers words

Smiles again

Pushes me

And backs away

Fading

Then gone

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PNEUMA

An ever-moving ever-changing spirit
Sweeping through open mind's eye
Sweeping into open hearts
Filling souls with warmth and light

A beautiful apparition of both worlds
She is what she has always been
A fleeting light-filled shadow
Of the greatest significance and weight

A beautiful empty crystal
Not bound or weighted down
With earthly things of this world
An unworldly dancer in the dark

In the open field under moonlight
Beckoning the stars
To come down and join
Them in a dance

She pauses in the dim light
Looking at him in the night
Waiting and watching
He holds his hands up high

Bringing them in front of his face
And then watches in the stillness
As he begins to break up becoming
Dust blowing away into the darkness

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His hands, arms and legs returning to dust
Her head turns following a cloud into the blackness
Turning back to him – a question on her face
He stands impassively - arms wide

A mound of sand under a violent desert wind - disappearing
With a quick rush
She is in his arms
They are spinning away into the nothingness

They are suddenly nowhere
And everywhere
Together
Forever

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THE DANCE

He could feel it coming
The deer jerking up her head
Looking directly, but askance
While continuing to chew slowly

It was this type of awareness
It had been approaching for a long time
Watching
While he fell in love

Again and again
Knowing he knew
He needed to be alone
For this dance

He had been preparing for a long time
While listening to hollow words
Noting beautiful faces
Ducking to catch the eyes

While the cards
Continue to slide out onto the table
With one hand
He moves his chips together

The other smooths his coat
His mind listening
To something afar
Coming quickly now

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The dancer stands poised
In the shadows
Silence and stillness
Embraced by self

Waiting for the words
"It is time"
The curtain rolls back
A flood of lights

A myriad of blank faces
Hearing, she begins to move
Time is gone
It is here

All that remains
Is the dance