

THE RAPE OF PROSERPINA (EXRPT)

Proserpina: 17. Female

Proserpina stands on a 5x5 plinth in a pool of water. A bright light shines from beneath her feet.

PROSERPINA

The dirt is so unclean. It was not before, before unclean.

Unclean deeds done to undo clean.

From the dirt I could see stars, and not just any stars but the stars...the stars of generations of dreams. But now the dirt is so unclean.

It was not before, before unclean.

I remember laying on the dirt looking at the stars. That's what i remember most. At first, at least.

I remember Orion on a particularly clear and mildly chilly December night. He was big and strong and covered my sight. I thought about the generations that laid where I laid. In that clean dirt. And dreamt what I dreamt after seeing what I saw. That's what i remember most. At first. At least.

Seventeen unclean. Seventeen before unclean.

The stars, Orion and he. The he, beside me, holding my hand and laying in the clean. I smell the grass and the dirt and the sky and I smile. I feel the earth spinning on my back and watch Orion ski and I smile. All this night needed was a smile. Perfect night. Perfect smile. And I am seventeen. Seventeen before unclean.

Digits ride a tide of warmth and shallow breaths. They creep closer and closer and the warmth spreads from my breasts to my cheeks and to my ears and my teeth and lingers.

My hand to his hand in an attempt to spin free and lay in the clean. My hand to his hand in another attempt. My hand to his hand and locked.

And it is stopped and and I'm warm and barely in the night's light I can see his eyes saucers of milk smaller than before. An eclipse.

He plants marigolds on my lips. Blossoms in December I resent.

Unclean.

Locked hand to hand metal chimes and leather announced through the night. No one to hear.

Another set of digits rides another tide of warmth and shallow breaths Too deep. Too deep! Too deep to be seen. No one to hear.

Words escape in protest. Unheard. Unseen. Unclean.

And i smell his sweat; titanium and sulfur. It drips on me.

Unclean.

It burns my skin and upon the breach i am affixed to Orion's three. Words escape in protest unheard. And he covers my sight, unseen. Little left to, barely in the night's light.

Words escape in protest and and suddenly sunlight. Heat that stings, a light that obscures the stars. Metal chimes and leather and protests announced through the night. Unheard.

He climbs the tree, one limb at a time. They squirm to break free.

One limb at a time. Unclean.

Protest songs smothered by flora and spit, titanium and sulfur, metal chimes and leather.

Unclean.

My eyes, giant, looking for he that once, when we spun free, held my hand and smiled. Perfect night. Perfect smile.

Unclean!

Grounded by his weight, the ebb and beg, no longer spinning but a motion foreign to me.

Unclean!

beat. She begins to bleed.

PLUS ONE

Prisoner: An undefined human. It wears shorts cut off at the knees. Its knees are bloody -- this is the extent of its physical damage. It is thin. It is unclear how long it has been in this room. There is a black cotton bag over its head.

Smoking Man: 30. He is very clean and striking of military, but wears no uniform or identifying items. He is muscular or maybe a little fat.

LIGHTS UP

Prisoner is sitting in an upright fetal position, sleeping. It is dark except for one light over a 4x3 table in the center of the room. The door opens and the Smoking Man enters. He carries a yellow notepad. He closes the door.

SMOKING MAN

Okay!

SMOKING MAN (CONT'D)

Hi.

SMOKING MAN (CONT'D)

Yes?

SMOKING MAN (CONT'D)

yes

SMOKING MAN (CONT'D)

ok

PRISONER

(whisper)

help me

SMOKING MAN

I'm sorry?

PRISONER

Help me.

SMOKING MAN

yes. help...yes. Help!

Picks up the pen, places one finger on the small device, clicks the pen...

SMOKING MAN (CONT'D)
Help. Ok! Okay...

PRISONER
I'm sorry.

SMOKING MAN
yes...

PRISONER
Sorry.

silence

beat

beat

PRISONER (CONT'D)
hello?

SMOKING MAN

PRISONER
hello?

silence

beat

beat

Smoking man takes a deep breath and holds it and then pushes the button on the small device. This immediately causes Prisoner some discomfort that gradually builds to excruciating pain. Prisoner tries to hum "Favorite Things" but struggles.

Prisoner struggles against his restraint

The pain grows more and more and Smoking man continues to hold is breath and begins to experience the same pain. They move in unison.

Prisoner begins to hum "Favorite Things" again and this time is joined by Smoking Man until finally it stops and Smoking Man exhales and Prisoner collapses.

Smoking Man writes something down.

Beat

Smoking Man begins to laugh that builds to uncontrollable giggling. He composes himself.

SMOKING MAN
Okay?

PRISONER
I'm sorry. I am sorry.

SMOKING MAN
Yes.

Smoking man takes a deep breath and holds it and then pushes the button on the small device. This immediately causes Prisoner significant pain. The pain grows more and more and Smoking man continues to hold his breath and begins to experience the same pain. They move in unison. Until finally it's interrupted by the smoking man's exhale. He beats the table in frustration.

beat

SMOKING MAN (CONT'D)
ok

He clicks his pen and places it perfectly back its spot. He takes a moment... pulls out his handkerchief and wipes his brow and puts it back. He gathers his things in the order in which he set them down and almost exits the room.

PRISONER
hello?

SMOKING MAN
yes

PRISONER
help me.

SMOKING MAN
HELP ME! Okay? Help me! Yes? Hello???

PRISONER
I'm sorry.

SMOKING MAN
help. yes... yeah.