

Eli Gray Nations

“Holy.”

In that chapel I was taught fear.

That it was holy.

Smoke and altars behind coats and smothered words, mutterings of silent praise.

“He is more than you. To be as He is an impossibility, to reach a sin. This is truth.”

The truth was the Lord walked down my hallways and stalked down the stairway, blood already in his hands. The Lord roared behind his locked and closed doors and beat down the temples of my mother and sister. The Lord was all but content in preserving his word. For God was holy, sanctified- there was no son, no spirit within his walls. Only the father.

How strange it is, to praise fear. To uphold tear-struck eyes with wonder. As if this was deserved. As if any words of dead prophets’ matter if spilt on tongues tasting holy wine, that blood of Christ.

As if mercy was anything but a choice.

I have long since stopped my prayers in my throat, for they have been heard and answered. I will choke on them and fall silent. Nothing holy deserves to last.

~

“Guilt”

I hear myself say “no, this ends with me.”

But my hands still open mauled scars-

And the blood refuses to pour out.

It sits, congealing, unchanging-

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Waiting for him to return.

I am drunk on the lies that remain on my tongue.

~

“Light”

I used to be afraid of the sun.

I loved the clouds, their shade. The gray that would sweep over the world.

I loved its neutrality. That anything could be mute, hidden. Left alone.

I loved its rain, the feeling of raindrops on my skin, of comfort.

I loved when the world became someplace that was finally safe.

There’s someone leaning next to me.

I think the sun is okay, too.

~

“Mantra”

I can’t stand the thought of someone ever caring for me-

Because it means I was loved wrong.

That someone could try, could even hope to feel-

Means that the wounds I carry aren’t even made from delusion.

That I am not a broken person cannot be true-

Because why would this happen to anyone normal?

Why would this happen to anyone at all?

It keeps following me-

It keeps eating at me-

It keeps killing me-

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And yet it doesn't know where I live.

All the panicked scratches-

All the times I beat my own skull-

All the moments I believed this was true-

Drips down from a lack of luck.

Am I just unlucky to be alive?

Please.

Please let these lies be the truth.

~

“Mature for your age”

They told me I'm just a kid.

But you're supposed to care to kids, right?

They're young. You have to teach them. They don't know how to learn on their own.

It's not their fault.

Wait, wait, wait, they said. Like I haven't. Like I've broken the rules.

My fault for sticking out.

I know I'm behind. I know I'm not ready. And I'm scared!

I don't know what I'm doing!

I colored between the lines! I waited my turn in line! I wrote down my name!

Your name.

But I cried.

The tears ruined the colors. I ruined the picture.

The tears held me back, people walked around me. I was left behind.

The tears made it hard to see. I stumbled into someone else.

It wasn't you.

I waited long enough. I've done everything right. I'm the model son.

All I ever did was fall down.

I just asked for help.

They told me I'm being too loud.

Sorry. I'll ask again later.

Goodnight. I love you.

Okay. Sorry.

“Hiraeth”

I was born running.

My blood is hot and flowing. It is a thump, thump, thump in my chest.

I can't sit still.

The world spins and shifts and it scares me.

So I run.

The wind rushes past. It cools my skin. I laugh and scream and tears whip past.

I'm not yowling. I'm not in pain. I'm living the way I know.

I run.

Sit. Stay. Down. Commands, when gentle words don't work.

I bite. Not deep, not enough to cut, but it's over once they look down.

With bared teeth I growl and hunch forward.

But I don't stand my ground. I ran from the corner I backed myself into.

~ 5 ~

I wasn't born kind. I wasn't born to run.

There's a name for me I don't know because I didn't stay long enough to hear it.

Maybe somewhere there's a word explaining why I refuse to stop.

One that isn't the one that flows through me more than blood.

For why I run

Someone who bolts from anywhere that could become a home.

Coward.