

White Weld Short Story



The childhood space had, in her mind always seemed to be the deepest, and somehow even though she was a child, darkness held no sense of mystery anymore, it had been used up too many times, had been pounded on too often, each crevice noted and stored in a memory bank piled high of unassuming forms and other fragments of life's' detritus.

This particular space was nothing but a stairwell with a pathetic window, a pathetic door and another wooden frame equally as plain. To the left of the window she had sensed a sharp movement from the wall and jolting her out of her thoughts she sensed the darkness closing in around her, enveloping her small frame and penetrating the innocent space of her mind. For a moment the swell of the gloom turned black and quickly formed a giant knot controlling her every move. She pushed open her eyes wide to spy what she could inside the darkness and allowing herself to enter the space; she took note of the warm body of fear standing close that insisted on bathing her face with hot sponges of anxiety.

The void opened up to reveal a silent act appearing larger and bolder than the next, each scene lurked, waiting to pounce, folding relentlessly in on itself from the triangle corners that went nowhere, to no other place in particular.

At that moment the decision to harness whatever movement she could, fell upon her like a truth and she channelled every sense to focus on the intense activity that seemed to emanate from the vacuum. A faint yellow glow enabled her to grasp the entirety of the image. Small at first, she perceived a tree rapidly growing, so that by the time she had closed her eyes and begun to open them, the trunk had climbed, half prostrate up the wall. The boughs stuck out large and thick diffusing a soft moistness that clung to her skin, which in turn made her lick her lips.

The young girl stood limp while the forest of her mind sat waiting in sadness. Suddenly there was the thud of a door and the sound of footsteps walking away, then the slam of a distant gate and then silence. Paralysis was her blanket of warmth, if she moved she might tear or worse still, rip open her body into a thousand pieces, scattering remnants across the floor like stars in the night sky. She stayed still for some time, frightened, she fixed her arms across her body pulling tighter and tighter, aware of her fingers digging deeper into her flesh.

She waited for the darkness to descend like a guillotine and cut off her head. At once she could see her body running in circles in the form of a chicken. The chicken stopped dead in front of her gaze, the tiny stump of a neck turned to meet her eyes, then bowed down and dragged out of the shadows a rectangular trunk, not that dissimilar to the suitcase her mother owned. After pausing for one or two seconds as if to consider his actions, the chicken pushed the trunk towards her so that it touched her feet and with much gesticulation beckoned her to get inside.

The young girl cowered slightly and smiled sweetly at the strange image just ahead of her, then reached across to open the case, leaning further she caught hold of the edge and flung back the lid, exposing an interior of heavy duty card, dark yellow in colour and embossed with a tweed pattern of various yellow, brown and red tones, completed by thick leather brown handles. Looking sideways and back over her shoulder she immediately stepped into the case pulling the lid back up over her head.

As she lay down in an embryonic fashion, she dragged her knees up to her chin and at once felt relieved to be free from the spot she had been standing on for so long. She lie huddled and tight, imagining herself to be safe, the atmosphere she slipped away from, had inferred she would expire, dry up and become nothing but dust. The container was her ready escape and so she felt liberated by her instant camouflage.

Inside the trunk she was aware of the warmth which was steadily rising; she could hear her breathing and feel the stickiness of her skin inside the clammy palm of her hands.

The container was too small for her to feel comfortable and she realised that she had managed to fit inside because her body had been taut and with the rush of adrenalin that coursed through her veins this had allowed potentially, a whole manner of ambitious contortions to engage throughout her small frame.

Her body relaxed for a moment and she quickly desired to move and stretch in order to dispel the sharp pains that had begun to creep through her legs. As her body pressed against the inside of the lid she heard the soft click of the lock snap shut.