

Mirrors of Serenity

by

Audrey Sloan



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I Followed You

I followed you
You leaned on me -
You squashed me flat.
Looking up, my eyes
were full of the worsted
of your sweater.
I peeled myself up
off the floor.
Seeing no more than you -
I - but a memory.
You laughed at my paper,
but it was my first.
I want
it is enough.
I am I am I am.

Archaism

Arc de Triomphe
What do I do?
I'm not me - I'm not you.

Look for constants.
Am I fat - thin - lost?
Was Atlantis real?
Is this room?

Astronaut around the world -
Lena starved to death in space.
Men only count for men.
What is this place?

Kennedy is dead, NASA
is the saving grace -
Cuba - Cuba - Cuba
Ah, the angry face.

I don't care.
What do I do?
I'm not me - I'm not you.

Young Love
Married in Lent
Soon repent.
Quarter break - it made
sense - ice storm.
Is this love?
Is anyone in there?
Legs - arms - slobber
Do you really care?
Work - School - Sex -
this is it? Passion?
I think not,
just the sleep hex.
Legs - arms - sweat.
Where is life?
Where is purpose?
Lost your deferment.
You're not in there.
I'm not me - I'm not you.
I don't care.

Path - reality
Reaching up from the muck
a hand held out -
 illusion.
Followed I Merlin or de Fey?
 A bridge - illusion.
Was Merlin Morgan -
 Morgan Merlin?
Sucked down
 impaled on the
 skull of the future.
Ethics are not
 unless owned -
 unless lived.
Followed I Merlin or de Fey?
When I could not follow me.
Another's beliefs - sacrificial lamb
Obedient to the end -
What difference Merlin or de Fey?
What difference the swamp or precipice?

Compassion
Winter's cold - easy -
I am used to it.
It hasn't touched me
in fears -
I mean years.

Those touched by violence
are stronger -
aren't they?

Perhaps, numb.
Strong is going on.
I go on.

Spring, so pretty, so soft,
so frightening.

Are eyes filled with tears
the only ones that see?

Compassion without
empathy is a sham.

Passion

In the translucent turnings
of the crystalline prism -
prison.

I want you - don't touch me.

Earth green - brown - green,
Soft yielding - life.

Can I possess you - what is
trust between friends?

Impious, impertinent implications.
Imponderable implosions -
Imposture of reality.

Who would want the reflection
when they own the mirror?

Once longing to possess, never
feeling desire.

Imbalance: no water ... no wood -
all metal fire.

Philosophy of love

You have explored the East,
yet keep tuning West.
I would be one with all
You would merely understand.

You quote the Classics
of the Tao Te Ching.
I only feel - I, the one
trained to dissect.

You, the one trained to feel,
are enthralled by the
mechanics.
What illusion of oneness
could we create?

You hiding yin behind
Yang - me, still searching
for the promise of yin.

You told me not to cling
I loved you once.
What happened?
When did we forget
how to laugh?
how to talk?
Too many hours waiting -
not knowing
wife or widow?
as you forgot the time
again, again, again.
You told me not to cling.
Did you ever know
the aloneness
the fear
the emptiness
of thinking you dead?
You said, 'Don't worry.'
So, I learned - as I always did.
But not to worry meant
not to cry
not to care
and something in me
had to die.
And now you ask why.

Twisted Sheet

Make love to me or war
it is the same.
Here within your darkest pit
- the evil of your being -
Here the heart to sing to mine.

I curse you; delighting in
the shadow of your being,
Your dark side calls to me
deep within, it rushes to the fore,
where I wait.

Embrace the fear, the sweat,
embrace the anger, the hate.
Our war, centuries old,
is born to life again

Cutting knife, flesh to flesh
The odor of blood -
drink - here is the fire
Destruction - creation -
in anguish from the abyss
to soar.

Lover

The smell of you,
Carnivore.
A primal awaking -
barbaric
sensuous -
the smell of blood
of the dead seeping
through.

Passion Dance

I see you through a prism
where black hair is red
and blue eyes green.
The prism moves
You are him - he is you.
Nightmare to dream
He is you - you are him.
Turning, loosing illusions,
tearing seams.
Are you him or you or me?

Coupling

When did we begin to lose
our self?
Were we always you
and me -
Never us?
Surely there was an us,
there are too many things
labeled 'ours'.
Too many things.
There isn't even very much 'we'
left - just you and me.
Didn't I ever know your
thoughts and you mine?
Is memory all imagination?
Can it be the memory
isn't mine at all?

Life - Death Dance

With daggers drawn
to passion roused.
Love and Death are one.
Then twirling in between,
who feels the cut
until the thrust be done?

Divorce

We were one once -
not really.
It does sound good
though.
Were we happy
or just think so?
We misunderstood
so much.
I thought - you thought
too.
The dreams were so
different.
Did they once sound
the same?

Memories of Youth

Daisies in my hair
Should I care?
Kant, Marx, Engels.
Prose takes poetry.
Five body bags on the plane,
Life's not long enough for a name.

Daisies in my hair
Are they fair?
Medicine's the future,
Art's the seducer.
Five body bags on the plane,
Life's not long enough for a name.

Daisies in my hair
Are they there?
Che, Mao, Darwin.
Science takes art.
Five body bags on the plane,
Life's not long enough for a name.

Daisies in my hair
Should I care?
Gandhi, Selma, King
Dark poet laughs at logic
offers roses for my daisies.
Five body bags on the plane,
Life's not long enough for a name.

Daisies in my hair
Roses there.
Lenin, Ho Chi Min.
Poet lost deferment
Lost roses, lost song.
Six body bags on the plane,
Life's not long enough for a name.

Daisies in my hair
Still there -
Should I care?

Unknown, yet sought - wedding poem

Unknown, yet sought
The chaos of the cosmos
rose.
The one are two
The two are three.
Then cry aloud the cosmos
THAT I AM.

The choice to the created be.
The two to follow three.
As laughing deep -
a ripple in the stars -
Then cry aloud the cosmos
THAT I AM.

Haiku

1

Dreams pursued
are not illusions but
Crystal flowers

2

Silent snow, bare branches
Yet in the heartwood
Life still flows

3

Spring, beside me
Does the winter
of my life touch you?

4

The green vine
finds the tree. And this is
as it should be.

5

Once known
there is no separation
oneness is all.

6

Once found, it
cannot be lost. Lost, it was
never found.

7

By touching he could not
find me -not touching
you did.

8

The spring I never knew
is what I cannot
give you.

9

I am the closed tulip
showing one
side only.

10

Trust that spring will come.
Too much. This idea of trust. First
Trust that dawn will come.

11

How quick suspicion.
Speak not what I need to hear -
rather from your soul.

12

All Life holds something
secret. View the flower's feet
and the flower dies.

13

Spring's dream - illusion -
that belonging to myself -
I am mine to give.

14

Winter snow - which hides
the dreams, hopes and lies of all -
must, in its time, melt.

15

Tell me winter is
spring - I wish to believe - but
will freeze all the same.

16

Hope is illusion.
Droughts of summer follow spring.
Tell me I am wrong.

17

Whispered dreams - are
they real or melodrama? Is
the past illusion?

18

What is, is not and
what is not is. But what was,
was very real as well.

19

Spring holds the silent
memory of winter, but
life grows just the same.

20

When I do not speak -
think me not cold - your pain steals
the words of my heart.

21

I feel your fear - it
is my companion - found by
my side forever.

Tell me to be brave -
go beyond my unreal fears.
I tell you the same.

22

For years the tree was
gnarled and broken - this year
there are white blossoms.

23

Why does the splinter
in your finger hurt me more
than the knife in mine?

24

Small and helpless child
My hand reaches to you - cold to
my touch - the mirror.

25

It is not war nor
death, yet ruins of cold hearts
touching are not life.

26

Beauty in the fields.
A flower picked in bud
never blooms at all.

27

O my ragged cloak
Why can I not cast you off?
Must you always be?

28

When does my testing
stop? When can I believe the
trust I truly feel?

29

Each year the roses bloom,
beauty I have waited for.
I cut one - it dies.

30

Doubting, I protect
you from myself. You are not
frail - my lack of trust.

31

You think I don't
know the price you are willing
to pay, but I do.

32

Each seeing self through a
dark glass, the other through a
prism - which is real?

33

See that mountain there?
I can sit and theorize
or go and try the climb.

34

All hiding winter
fog, are you reflections of
my own mind or real?

35

Affection? If I
don't sleep with you
no owning - no betrayal.

36

He seemed to hear
and be, as you do. Then he
closed, will you, too?

37

If neither lives, can
either be ought but walking
wounded? Cast no stones.

38

Always hedging - some
way back to where I was - safe -
I never lived.

39

Always shades of gray
now a few colors - beauty -
searing pain - of life.

40

It is not your fault
I see only feelings and
being - not your face.

41

On one leg, birdlike,
she shivers - not even one
hand held out to beg.

42

The heartbeat of the
bird resting on your hand - hold
lightly - do not crush.

43

The swing bent the branch
over the years, but each spring
white flowers bloom there.

44

This flower you have
seen before - I have not. Do
we feel the same joy?

45

Respecting all life -
no knowledge of how to
respect any one man.

46

Never knowing peace -
how is it you know the quiet
peace of selfless self?

47

What is this pain - joy?
That more than mere life, I care
that your soul should fly?

48

I touched your face
by accident I was there
and there felt the Tao.

49

I see the secret -
to not wait each day for death
or life - just to live.

Understanding your
secret, I still care for you.
Does this frighten you?

50

Walking the rope with
stubborn care, are you certain
the abyss is real?

51

I believe flowers
bloom each spring, yet at each death
I always find grief.

52
It is hard not to
hold on tightly, but love should
keep no prisoners.

53
No soul should know chains.
Do I forge them when I grieve?
I cannot help it.

54
So gently you show
me my hypocrisy, can you see
yourself in me?

55
What price compassion
when measured? If there are
limits - incomplete.

56
Finding the bud, I
wish for the blossom and
miss the joy of now.

57
My mingled past and
present - nightmare chains. Is there
Life in madness?

58
The crystal vase, made
beautiful by having one
flaw, is discarded.

59
Flowers do not bloom
in shade. Fish who feel the sun
live but a moment.

60
The first opening heart
clutches at the closest as
does the blind turtle.

61
The moon and sun each
in turn. Duality of man
also alternates.

62
Which more beautiful
to fasting mind and body -
the cabbage or rose?

63
Icicle, painful
reality to my touch,
vanishes in light.

64
In experience -
find compassion. Empathy
means I must be you.

65
Illusions are the
gossamer chains leading to
every phobia.

66
I want to trust, and
I do, but remember, please,
the scars do not heal.

67
Are the dragons I
see now merely reflections
of the past or not?

68
Long past, the demon
clutches me tainting my heart
weaving through my words.

69
Dragons in the sky
Do they hide the sun or do
They mirror the past?

70

The door - always -
limping toward it, no one
else can open.

71

Flower reaching up -
pink spring, Nymph goddess within
born to bloom without.