

Poems by Allison Grayhurst

Tearing Roots

Guilt that shatters
the skull of megalomaniacs.

Guilt that motivates early morning
extremes, pacts and dubious proposals.

He was paralyzed in the playground,
taking years to say a single
 no – A childhood
filled furies and thieves.
A child that carried sharpened pencils
in his pockets.

A child in bed, in a lucid dream
of horrid hands rising from the floor,
tugging his dangling foot, pulling
his hair and leaching
his pores of their juice.

Now he rides beyond the blasphemy
of his youth, beyond his
innocence murdered by a careless
tyrant's siege.

Out of his husk, his form
swims, pursuing a small but majestic
harbour
glow.

But the Waves of Savage Light Kindle Me

I do not trust
your ruse-dance, your guillotine
cutting mind.

I listen through the backdoor,
with both eyes
locked on the table.

Lies shut beneath
your playacting smile.
Sweet

encouragement with
a twist, like towels can
twist,

and limbs and laughter.
Metre by metre your muse is
measured,

scaled-down
to a keyhole
muted howl.

The streets are bleached monotone
by your analytical trumpet
pour.

The buildings outside
turn bloodless blue,
sold

to your calculated vision.

On Mortal Ground

Nothing, take nothing
only my starving hopes.
Save my brow from the devil's comb,
the false religious cry.

I am low on the ground
watching ants and spiders play.
I have been hit
by a barnacle onslaught storm.
My fingers are strands of straw,
beating back in time with the breeze.
I am alive, guarded by grief
and rib and brain.
My house is an egg,
a shooting simple firework.

Nothing, take nothing
the children are my shelter,
and their gifts of inspiration -
my wound, my blade.

Wide In His Chains

Under the cliff of
 winter clouds
his hands
 were born,
drunk on abstractions and
 a feeling muse.
Battleships soared through his
 ransacked-mind.
Impossible loneliness attacked like
 a vulture,
painting his jealous seasons
 morphine blue.
His was a tender style, loving equally
 the hideous and the brave.
He was punished for his ruthless poetry, exiled
 for his ecstasy-grip
Those hands were tendrils, latching on
 to what others feared.
His music drove on through
 bombshell screams
toward a prophetic morning,
 desired.

Forgive the Night

Let the heart peel
its iron crust.
Let the rainbow ribbon of this
spiritual dream
coil around my neck.
I walk the fished-fumed streets,
with mask in one hand and thoughts
of resurrection in the other,
balanced between mercy and reality's
ruthless blade.

Who will let me in, let me
name my thorn, give wing
to my smallest vision?

Alone, through May's
ripened night, through the dusk light above.
Grief shifts understanding
to a higher octave, anchors it in soft ground.
My hood, my sting, alone
waiting a certain tomorrow
when all will dig like a diamond
into my chest, leave no
forgiveness unappeased, no love
denied a brilliant wave.

I long for my enemy's hand
to bless it like we all
bless the stars. I long to shut
out hate caused
by hurt, by love incapable.

A walk through a cemetery.
Death invading an injured bird's
eyes. This I can bear.
This lockjaw, heavy drum of death.
But the dying - harsh struggle, grasping
claws, alcoholics in the streets,
violent children, worthless anguish...

Who will drain this venom from my

blood, blow my armour down?

