

The Necrophiliac



October 12, 19...

The grey eyelashes of this little girl cast a grey shadow against her cheek. She has the sly, ironic smile of those who know a lot. Two uncurled locks frame her face, descending to the hem of her blouse, which has been pulled up under her armpits to reveal a stomach of the same bluish white seen in certain Chinese porcelain. The mound of Venus, very flat, very smooth, shines slightly in the lamplight; it seems to be covered in a film of sweat.

I spread the thighs to study the vulva, thin as a scar, the transparent lips a pale mauve. But I still have to wait a few hours; for the moment, the whole body is still a bit stiff, a bit clenched, until the heat of the room softens it like wax. This little girl is worth the trouble. It's truly a very beautiful dead girl.

October 13, 19...

Yesterday evening, the little girl played a mean trick on me. I should have been more careful of her with that smile of hers. While I was sliding



into that flesh so cold, so soft, so deliciously tight, found only in the dead, the child abruptly opened an eye, translucent like that of an octopus, and with a terrifying gurgling, she threw up a black stream of mysterious liquid on me. Open in a Gorgon mask, her mouth didn't stop vomiting this juice until its odour filled the room. All this rather spoiled my pleasure. I'm accustomed to better manners, for the dead are tidy. They have already released their excrement in leaving life as one disposes of an ignominious burden. Also, their bellies resound with the hard, hollow sound of drums. Their fine powerful odour is that of the bombyx. It seems to come from the heart of the earth, from the empire where the musky larvae trudge between the roots, where blades of mica gleam like frozen silver, there where the blood of future chrysanthemums wells up, among the dusty peat, the sulphureous mire. The smell of the dead is that of the return to the cosmos, that of the sublime alchemy. For nothing is as flawless as a corpse, and it becomes more and more so as

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time passes, until the final purity of this large ivory doll with its mute smile and its perpetually spread legs that is in each one of us.

I had to spend more than two hours cleaning the bed and washing the little girl. This child, who vomits such putrid ink, truly has the nature of the octopus. For the moment she seems to have disgorged all of her venoms, spread out wisely over the sheets. Her false smile. Her little hands with the little nails. A blue fly that came from I don't know where constantly lands and lands again on her thigh. This little girl quickly stopped pleasing me. She's not one of the dead from whom I have any grief in separating myself, the way one deplors having to leave a friend. She certainly had a mean character, I would swear to it. From time to time, she emits a deep gurgling that makes me suspicious.

October 14, 19...

Tonight, while I was getting ready to wrap the little girl in a plastic bag so I could throw her in the Seine near Sèvres, as I am used to doing in



such a case, she suddenly emitted a desperate sigh. Pained, prolonged, the S in Sèvres whistled between her teeth as if she had already suffered some sort of intolerable sorrow over her next abandonment. An immense pity squeezed at my heart. I hadn't done justice to the humble, harsh charm of this child. I threw myself on her, covered her with kisses, repentant as an unfaithful lover. I went to look for a brush in the bathroom and began styling her hair, which had become flat and broken; I rubbed her body with oils, perfumes. And I don't know how many times I loved that child, until day lightened the window behind the closed curtains.

October 15, 19...

The road for Sèvres is the road for all flesh, and the sighs of the vomiting girl won't do anything about it. Alas!

November 2, 19...

Festival of the dead. Lucky day. Montparnasse Cemetery was admirably grey this morning. The

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immense crowd of mourners squeezed into its walkways among the glorious chrysanthemums, and the air had the bitter, intoxicating taste of love. Eros and Thanatos. All these sexes under the earth, does anyone ever think of them?

The night falls quickly. Even though it's the festival of the dead, I won't go out tonight.

I remember. I'd just turned eight. One night in November, similar to this one today, I was left alone in my room, which was invaded by shadow. I was worried that the house was full of strange comings and goings, full of mysterious whispers that, I felt, had something to do with my mother's illness. Above all, I felt she had forgotten me. I don't know why I didn't dare to turn on the lights, lying silent and afraid in the dark. I was getting bored. To distract and console myself, I tried unbuttoning my little trousers. There I found that sweet, hot little thing that always kept me company. I no longer know how my hand discovered the necessary movements, but I was suddenly captured in a vortex of pleasures from which it seemed



nothing in the world could ever free me. I surprised myself beyond the limits of imagination to discover such a resource for pleasure in my very own flesh and to feel my proportions modify themselves in a way that I didn't even suspect just moments before. I sped up my movements and my pleasure grew but, at the very moment that a wave — born in the depths of my entrails — seemed to want to submerge me and lift me above myself, quick steps resounded in the corridor, the door opened abruptly, the light flashed in. Pale, haggard, my grandmother held herself at the threshold and her trouble was so great that she didn't even notice the state I was in. "My poor child! Your mother is dead." Then, grabbing me by the hand, she forcefully dragged me with her. I was wearing a sailor suit, and thankfully the coat was long enough to mask the fly that I hadn't had the time to close.

My mother's room was full of people, but sunken in a half-darkness. I noticed my father on his knees at the bedside, and he was crying, his head stuffed into the sheets. At first I had



trouble recognizing my mother in this woman who seemed infinitely more beautiful, grand, young, and majestic than she had ever seemed until then. Grandmother was sobbing. "Kiss your mother again once more," she said, pushing me towards the bed. I brought myself up to this marvellous woman stretched out among the whiteness of the linen. I placed my lips on her waxen face; I squeezed her shoulders in my little arms; I breathed in her intoxicating odour. It was that of the bombyx that the natural history professor had passed out at school and that I had brought up in a cardboard box. That fine, dry, musky odour of leaves, larvae, and stones was leaving Mother's lips; it was already seeping out into her hair like a perfume. And suddenly, the interrupted pleasure took over my childish flesh with a disconcerting abruptness. Pressed against Mother's shoulder, I felt a delicious commotion rush over me while I poured my heart out for the first time.

"Poor child!" said Grandmother, who had understood nothing about my sighs.



November 5, 19...

People always say that those who love the dead are stricken with anosmia. For me, there's nothing to that, and my nose perceives the most diverse odours vividly, even if, like everyone, I am accustomed to those of my surroundings to the point of no longer being able to smell them. It could, in fact, be possible that the odour of bombyx impregnates my whole apartment without my even noticing.

The ladies show no signs of having any special trouble cleaning the antique store I inherited from my father. At the very most, once in a while, there's a vague grumbling over the old objects, the nests of dust, the fragile things that are so ugly even though new ones could be purchased for much less. It's only in my private apartment, on the fifth floor, that their behavior causes me to reflect. They stare into the corners with a look of prudent suspicion. They observe me slyly, and, most of all, they sniff the apartment's odour, shifting their eyes. They sniff and sniff, searching their memory, finding nothing that's



right; sniff again, until a strange worry spreads over them. Then they become hunted beasts and escape. When I try to get them back to work, they give me the most vague answers with a frightened look, shaking their heads if I offer to increase their wages. I put a new ad into the papers and the same story begins again. One day, however, one of the cleaning ladies had the courage to ask me why I always wore black clothes, even though I wasn't in mourning. Another, very young, already fat, and whose name I've forgotten, declared in a local store that I smelled like a vampire. Always this old and aberrant confusion between two beings so fundamentally opposed as the vampire and the necrophiliac, between the dead that feed off the living and the living who love the dead. I don't deny, nevertheless, that after several days, the perfume of the bombyx transforms itself into an odour like that of heated metal that, more and more acrid, thickens finally into a stench of entrails. Each of these stages has its charm — even if the last announces separation — but never would I



have the idea to eat the flesh of one of my friends, the dead, nor to drink the blood.

As for the concierge, for a long while now she has stopped being surprised that I don't have a "girlfriend." And since the slightest "boyfriend" has never appeared either, she simply concluded that I am a sort of Joseph, a real loner. All the better. There are certain truths that rudimentary souls would have trouble accepting. My boyfriends with anuses glacial as mint, my exquisite mistresses with grey marble bellies, I bring them at night into my old Chevrolet, while everyone sleeps, and I take them all back to the bridge at Sèvres or the one at Asnières.

December 3, 19...

This morning, while I was taking care of my correspondence, a client made a request that troubled me. It was a man of around forty years, with a ruddy complexion in the first stages of baldness, dressed like a lawyer or the director of a business. He looked over the furniture, the porcelain, the paintings, but mostly the curios,



seemingly looking for something. Then finally, approaching my table: "Tell me, sir, don't you have any amusing netsuke? It's specifically those of Koshi Muramoto that I'm thinking of." For a second, our stares met. How many know Koshi Muramoto, the master of the eighteenth century, who, in his Kyushu workshop, consecrated himself exclusively to macabre netsuke? The dead sodomized by hyenas, fellating succubi, masturbating skeletons, cadavers interlaced like nests of vipers, fetus-devouring phantoms, courtesans impaling themselves on the stiffness of a dead body. . . .

"I'm sorry," I responded, "but usually the people who own the works of this master hesitate to give them up. Nevertheless, if you would like to leave me your address, I can, if I happen to find something . . ."

He refused with a curtness that made me suspect that he had understood I would never sell him anything of this sort. The netsuke of Koshi Muramoto — I save them for myself! Only



a necrophiliac can collect these objects, and the man intrigued me.

“Would your prefer to stop in again?” I suggested.

“I don’t live in Paris. It’s very rare that I come here.”

He nodded goodbye and left. I wouldn’t have disliked discussing the macabre netsuke with him: offer him a few words — certainly vain — then smile at him knowingly. Not to offer him fuller knowledge, but to see if he would grasp that I understood. That’s all. For if necrophiliacs — they are so rare — recognize each other, they don’t look for each other. They have definitely chosen incommunicability, and their loves transcend into the inexpressible. Alone, we are not even the link between life and death. There is no link. For life and death are forever united, inseparable as water mixed with wine.

I cannot prevent myself from laughing as — without missing a beat — I remove from my vest pocket a netsuke that I carry with me constantly. It measures no more than three centimetres and

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represents two peasants fucking the sockets of a skull with great skill.

December 4, 19...

The visit from the netsuke lover brought back to mind those few unusual meetings in which necrophilia revealed itself in others. Frankly, nothing very sensational or frequent. I remember, for example, a funeral I attended when I was about twenty. I found myself there that time not out of taste, but convenience; it was a distant relative whose disagreeable appearance and repulsive disposition removed any desire to visit his coffin. It was during the absolution; the priest was chanting; some women were sobbing. In the private chapel, the air was scarce, and the catafalque took up almost all the central space — the perfume of flowers, candles, and incense revealed itself with the subtle hint of bombyx. I soon noticed that I wasn't the only one to notice it. I found myself in one of the miniscule aisles where the shadows were very thick, though not quite thick enough



to prevent me from making out an extremely banal couple dressed in mourning, whom I guessed — I don't know why — had come to enjoy themselves. No doubt the music, the funeral chants, and the bombyx had the custom of acting on the man in a specific way, for I distinctly heard his companion whisper to him a precise question on the state he found himself in. She used a vulgar word, something from an army barracks, of a crudeness that took me aback. There was, I believe, another outline of a gesture, but I wasn't sure. Either he was too timid to advance any further or he preferred the intimacy of his room, but the couple made haste to leave the chapel. The black clothes of the woman brushed against me as she passed. She had the milky, fixed stare of a blind woman.

These two were only watered-down necrophiliacs, and their preferences couldn't rise to the height of passion. But there are others that hesitate at nothing, and I remember a bad encounter at Montmartre Cemetery only last year.