



JACLR

Journal of Artistic Creation & Literary Research

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Decadence

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Decadence

Pale smooth drapery covers me, caresses me as I am taken out of my previous slumber. I hear faint voices of wonderment and surprise as their delicate hands almost touch my body. Appropriate courtesy and good manners try to hide the envious nature of their ignorance, but I bask on the praise nonetheless. How well received, they must have exquisite taste—

* * *

Startling laughter and an air of festivity impregnate the air around me and I can feel stares with every new half-breath. Perception clouded by thick smoke and loud bustling makes it difficult to discern the number of people revolving around the room. Clinking china and sparkling champagne cascade over the mood of the evening, slowly becoming more hushed. Hurried soles and almost whispers between star crossed lovers make my time worthwhile. I can feel the scrape of a secret note laced with perfume right under—

* * *

Where is everybody? Only a dull, monotone breath is near me, and while I appreciate the company I'd much rather have the audience I've accustomed myself to. I can't seem to find that solace lately. I am always more of myself when surrounded by warmth and wonder. What will be of me if I am not to be appraised? Only the placid turn of frail pages is heard. It must get interesting, because an incessant tapping against solid wood becomes more and more anxious until—

* * *

Tickling my insides with a soft plush feather—

Again the caress—

Laughter. What is happening?—

Scolding harsh words against the timid bodies that once held me. This is the most action I've had in a while.

* * *

Satisfied, mature fingers slightly alter my body to match the current fashion, tilted towards the cold. Little wondering stares are placed upon me, followed by a run-down of my intricate anatomy and exuberant colours. But the glances once laced with excitement soon turn into indifference and boredom. I cannot stand to be disrespected, but I remain still.

* * *

The unfamiliar room feels stale, the air is thick and still, and only a small breeze enters way above my delicate head, not reaching down enough to make my colours bleed. I hear faint but decisive voices, and I can sense that they are talking about me. Why am I here? What is all of this about? They approach me, examining my very core, shaking my insides and playing—

* * *

The same stuffed room, brimmed with other outdated rejects that emanate dust, is the only place I reside in for a while. I've learned to satisfy myself trying to figure out who goes and who stays when I'm next conscious; and I've surpassed all of my companions. No breath is heard besides the old ragged one that makes sure I'm still living from time to time. I hope I'm not here fore—

* * *

A brightly lit room opens up in front of me, I can feel the warmth of the ones surrounding me. I still feel cramped, but now I can hear many more steps and whispers and

feel the stares I have craved for so long. I don't know what has changed, but I welcome it with excitement, it could be a party!

* * *

This is another room—

What are they doing?—

Talking about me. I feel the happiness on the ragged men's words when he talks with an excited and naïve delicate voice. I feel the warm breath and the wondrous caress of soft skin in my body and then ... the deal is made.

* * *

My parts are dismembered, I am nothing but my bare old bones, deposed of my glass cover. Strong substances corrode my body and it hurts, I never thought I could physically hurt this much. It lasts a while, but afterwards I can feel myself shining through my pores. The thick layer of dust has gone, and now I feel sharper, more present. Circular movements seal my head again, and that too has changed—

* * *

I am present more often. Cosy afternoons with hot sweet fumes and quiet turning of pages. Lover's breaths intermingling quietly in the nook directly under my reach. Lively parties that bring again that interest upon me; not of performative admiration of exoticism, but of genuine interest for the unusual. By now I've realised that my time had come and gone; I was no longer precious in myself. But in spite of that, or perhaps because of it, I feel more myself than ever.

Bioprofile of the author:

Elena Espada Serrano is an English Studies undergraduate currently studying in Complutense University of Madrid. Awarded with the Scholarship for Academic Excellence in 2017; her interests among English Literature include romantic poetry, feminist literature and criticism, young adult contemporary novels, and science fiction. Interested in working in publishing, Elena also enjoys writing short stories and poetry.

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