

I Never Asked

Maria McKee

It has occurred to me my love
I never asked if you would sit for me
I was so taken by you and swept away
I never asked if it would be okay

And this volume that I have drawn out
The binding wears and pages frail
Now tear between my touch
Diaphanous and whisper light
I clutch and turn with fever'd hand
And pray that I may grace you
In a way that you will somehow understand

I try my best with solemn care
To capture all I see of you, so fraught, so fair
Are my words worthy of your ways?
I ask this of myself, lo, these fanatic days

And this language making use of me
As yet may be unknown to human sound
And dwelling in the space between
With all unspoken and unseen
Unquantifiable, profound, not in, not of
Up, down, nor lost nor found

And oh, as I soften on the vine
Darkly sweet I'm held to linger
Where the beauty of the season
Turns from gold to bitter grey
And oh, what aching colors you have spun
Around me where the grinding hum of sameness
Held me just above
Where I kept my heart at bay
Where I kept my heart at bay
Until, against my will
It chose to languish here upon your face

I kept this dove cupped in my palm
I spit blood upon the pearl the grey the white
Thrown back into the yawning flame
To flash and mold a crucible of my device

And what figure comes forth from the molten pit?
A form hath shone by mine own hand, my eye
Captured on a linen sprung
And taut and stretched and ready rip't
With gentle strokes and longing writ
And wrought with fits and fainting
And YOU, sweet phantom of my making

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