

Burn

A single source of colour is present, differing itself out from the suffocating white, and as the flame flickers the oranges merge with yellows merge with reds. Colours splitting and melting over each other¹ in the flame: Yellow mixed with red, Red seeping into the orange, hues and shades mixing and diluting each other. The mixing of yellow with orange and red. The mixing of orange with red and yellow the red with yellow and orange yellow merged with orange split room engulfed. Lashes flicker hands scrunch orange split. Yellow overtaking hands stretched orange overbearing. Tears fall² orange grow yellow die. Hands red more tears yellow back orange dead. Red pain yellow hurt orange tears all lost too gone all orange. Tears fall black yellow too bright too orange nails bitten hands sore red. Forever yellow suffocating orange red dead.

That's all I remember, the searing pain of burnt hands reddened³ and dead skin. The flowing red pain against yellow sky⁴ melting away into the blackness of the night. Despite efforts it is

¹ I was never very good at colouring, colour-blindness sets you back like that. But when you're a kid, no one pays attention. They didn't know that I coloured the wall behind my bookcase yellow and red, stretching up into orange until they changed my room as I'd grown... By then I'd forgotten too.

² My mum didn't cry much. I saw her once at Christmas, Dad had forgotten that she'd wanted a present too. She cried a lot when I was taken away, but the nice man who put me in the yellow car said it would be fine.

³ It was high school that I discovered drama, I was forced into playing the role of Lady Macbeth. For some reason, they didn't let anyone play their own gender. I remember the line "Out, damned spot! Out, I say!" most.

⁴ Just like the times when me and Katie would set alarms to watch the sunrise. The blackness fading as the sky births shades of yellow, orange and golden. Katie would always stare at the sky... I chose to look at her instead.

forever burned into my eyes, my skin, my nose, hands, mind, hair no part untouched I still recall I remember the scars and the hurt and the smell and the scent⁵ yet I have not sinned I did never not once turn the sky red and orange and yellow with pain. I confess nothing I have done good only good my feet do not burn when I walk in the church⁶ I am honest. I do not deserve this pain so make it stop. Please.

The flame never dies. Hues smash together as fragments of colour lost shades pour blood stills, the mixing of the red and orange yellow back with the pain suffocating surrounding my skin the burning room⁷ shattered tears fall lives⁸ gone black less yellow orange fighting red dead floor alight yellow overtaking red spilling orange too much orange ceiling gone black

⁵ It was like when we went to Grandma's and she'd made cake. Mum said you always came back of "the damn house smelling of smoke" but I only ever smelt the sweets. Grandma would always tell off Grandad when he tried smoking.

⁶ I didn't like church, but I liked getting dressed up. A little suit jacket and shorts, it was nice in the summer. I didn't feel like I was allowed in there. Murder is a sin. I don't believe in God anymore.

⁷ The room was engulfed in flame, the orange reaching up to cover the bed and the curtains, the rug on the floor burnt black while the flames climb higher, unstoppable. Blackened possessions removed and spread across the green as they turn red and blue against the cold lights of the van.

⁸ My life was happy, home was fun. I loved my mum, and my dad. I'm sure I would have loved my sister, too.

red tormenting pain⁹ large screams into black. Forever unforgiving pain too orange too red yellow growing and pain not dulling eternal.

It's a single inescapable terror that's stalked my mind for years and shows no sign of mercy, no retreat, and no escape¹⁰ escape impossible trapped by fear hope lost the black is back growing stronger with infecting touch must battle. Every day is a battle against my memory: the lack of amnesia or forgetfulness – it hurts me. It's a sick twisted play of death, but as all plays do, it comes to an end.¹¹ Curtains fall and its instantly like the black of night. A sturdy blanket of blackness until yellows grow and oranges split across the sky with red roaring up attacking the black with black fighting tears falling orange swelling pain more yellow house orange spots with outstretched red tearing walls down.

Orange spilling from hands replacing¹² red with yellow burning tears fall red dull eyes staring light hands engulfing room red growing orange dead yellow back splitting black. Flames spreading orange overbearing too much yellow no break aggravating black attacking.

Orange spilling from hands hues merging elixir of shades my hands my deeds my sins orange

⁹ The searing pain of fire crawling across your skin as it taints it red, with more red pooling on the floor- only to be later mixed with tears. Blue water mixing with cold red. I didn't cry much, I was like my mum.

¹⁰ A wall of fire standing between me and the door inspires me to go back and attempt to fix my mistake, only to see the curtains be eaten by the flame. It tried to absorb the rod, too, but failed and let it go. It fell, and then more red as I said goodbye to my sister. Mum cried when she found out then, too.

¹¹ Although I had been on many stages, I never got used to how dark it was once the curtains closed, I couldn't hear any applause and was too focused on getting out.

¹² There was a show I used to like called 'The Replacements' where the main characters would replace any character with one they liked better. I asked my mum if I could be replaced with my sister, but "it doesn't exactly work like that, hunny." That was another time she cried.

growing yellow dying black eternal. Red pain orange gone yellow gone only pain more pain more red dribbling flowing pressure not enough more red more pain more dead no yellow no orange but fading black. Black is back and black spots fading in out leaving not gone more pressure more black red flowing hurt more pain more pressure black overtaking possessing me not enough red more pressure dead red dribbling not enough¹³ but pain red dead flowing more and more black suffocating black surrounding overtaking red.

It's a memory I won't forget. I don't deserve, nor want, and can't forget. The way the blackness grew¹⁴ and how the colours stretched up into the sky. A sturdy blanket of blackness dribbling over my vision, it was all I could see. Like when I clutched the burnt teddy- the person in the van with me tried to take it away from me, I yelled¹⁵ at him. I clutched it close until all I could smell was the regretful smoke and my eyes only saw how the soft pink had been turned to black with disgust and mistakes. I made a mistake.

I've paid for that mistake through a life¹⁶ of guilt and self-hatred and I still can't forgive myself. I have sinned, and no number of tears, hope or guilt will fix that. The memory will

¹³ There was never enough pain to deal with my past, suffering is accepted as suicide would be an easy escape and she did not get that.

¹⁴ Forever growing pain as I try erase but the overbearing orange merges with the red and the yellows of unforgiveness and I can't undo what I've done as tears fall with pressure black is back and growing help room breaking world shattering.

¹⁵ Screams of pain swallowed by unforgiving blackness as the colours the reds merge with yellows and leave only black behind, a sea of black that absorbs all while the orange bleeds and the red grows overbearing and painful as yellow consumes all.

¹⁶ A life I wished to give away instead of see the world in just red and orange with dots of yellow before it leaves and becomes permanently black at night, the suffocating black that is all that remains when the colours finally evaporate, only to come again the next day or the next hour or the next minute or the next second and then the reds are back and oranges fly around because they're free and yellow starts to play again.

continue and replay itself in my mind serving as a constant reminder of how my past is painted with the colours¹⁷ of sin. Apparently, it wasn't my fault... but I was the cause of the fire. My payment is the insanity that I get brief breaks from before the colours burn me again.

¹⁷ Red and yellow merging as painting happens with brushes of pain and death which colourblindness cannot stop as the colours split and combine, merging the shades together.

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¹⁸ I'm sorry.