

Eden Alive

by Alexandra Corinth

I am being,
I am a being,
I am being a being, being eaten alive
by mosquitos,
mosquitos in a garden, gnarden garden, Eden,
mosquitos in Eden eating my skin as I live in the words,
in the woods of words of love and fairy godmothers
and words and fairy lights and
cigarette smoke in my hair,
my mouth,
my skin,
eaten alive by mosquitos in Eden.

Eden of idea, of life, of wasps humming overhead,
a threat for the girl without her EpiPen.
Music in Eden sounds like anarchy in a thimble,
golden folk rock halos given, no questions asked.
It smells like dog sweat and
tastes like the quiet protest, *I'm not a role model*,
whispers behind a smoke screen,
my head bobbing with the offbeat drum beat,
sounds like wailing, like trailing off
into the midnight,
the midnight siren waiting to tempt us
until the beer has settled stale in back of our throats,
tastes like howling, like fowling, like bobbing heads.

SUMMER 2018

I look up to the sky, for headspace in the stardust,
waiting for the quelling seas to
take my bones from the skin that's being eaten alive,
bruised by the leaping limbs of ninjas,
and there is cigarette smoke in the air, the hair on my arms,
my clothes sticky with sweat,

and I wonder if Eden could ever have been anyway,
been in the way I am being right now,
and if it existed, if they had half as many stars
to light their path, to guide them back.
I bet there were no mosquitos
to thief their blood
or writers to hand them fragments of
poems written on a typewriter in the grass.

There are chiggers on my ankles,
gnawing wisdom into my joints
and there is Rita's laughter,
echoing west, down the highway away from us,
and I want to ask them to stay in touch
but how can I when
we've barely touched at all, strangers really,
even if they feel like my lost lovers
from another life?

How did I get here?
How did I come to shave the underside of my head
and how did I become a friend when, when—
trailing off again—
trailing off as I drive past one am
on my way home to a bed with
a husband and two cats curled into one another
with a space saved for the shape of my body
to curl into them,
and they scratch at my mosquito bites for me
because that's what love is,

because tonight is what love is
and for the first time in too long
I would rather be eaten alive
than some kind of dead.