

"Heidi"

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Word Count: 325

Ash grey, stone cold, hazy sun, days roll and blur
Whispers whine through the fractured clay mortar
"Jewish scum!" words jab, scrape, emotions stir
Biting tongue, nails dug, their spit is vulgar
I grow in illusion, grow in silence
My back bends despite inward defiance

Nazi rule turns playful sunny days
Into a game of tag with my own shadow
In strangers' basements, no running away
A darkness lurks in heart's hollow
I see purple caves in momma's glazed eyes
When she cries, my heart is paralyzed, I cry

Months pass, dreaming, sleeping, falling ill
Everything is one of the same rotting feeling
Visions of wild edelweiss and rolling hills
Fade, anger morphs to aching, throbbing
Hearts left to ponder "why?" to ponder death
The damp, shallow air leaves me out of breath

Mama's baby comes, my little sister
Wailing, bare, and blue into an ash grey world

Frail Heidi, soft and sweet, I kiss her
On the top of her head, and curl
Her in my arms, solace in sober cries
A soldier knocks down the door, I see the sky

Long whispers broken by a scared babe
On lofty shoulders hang guns and fury
Our shy cove turned into a death parade
Blood, broken glass, and half-swaddled Heidi
Pushed and bruised into a teetering rail cart
Our worries melt us together, one heart

With sweaty palms I reach, grab mommy's fingers
My eyes trace evergreens and frosted branches
As we near, the scent of burning flesh lingers
I lose my balance, the cart advances
Toward smoke and withered standing bones
We creaked up to the camp, at the drop zone

Divided into groups, in mud spattered marches
Down to wash in strange metal showers
Earth devoid of color, steamed, in agony
My mommy's tears fell in final hours

Fresh drops fall from her cheek, first rain drops then a storm

Then the calm, limp taken away to be ashes in the wind, reborn.