

One Picture A Thousand Words

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I have this image stuck in my head of a beautiful girl. She's sitting on a park bench in a light rain. It's autumn. Her coat is pulled tight, but she's not overly cold. Her hat and gloves protect her. Besides, most of her face is hidden by a scarf. Don't ask me how I know she's beautiful -- half the time she is wearing sunglasses as well -- but underneath it all...

I know that her eyes are glittering and bright. Her lips are full, and her cheeks are well defined. Oddly, I don't know the color of her hair.

I have tried to write a poem about her -- several times in fact -- but...

Well, perhaps it is best to let you decide.

Beautiful in younger years,
She sits in the rain,
Feeding the pigeons,
And staving off pain.
A no one -- forgotten:
A tear streaks her eye,
For no one will notice,
No flash bulbs will shine.

It's not a true likeness. The poem portrays her as older and sadder than she exists in my mind, but there is something to the words. They portray a desire for a more complete story, if nothing else -- on her part and mine. So I can see myself -- or the narrator

if you prefer -- being of the paparazzi, sitting down beside this beautiful lady, and reading her the aforementioned poem.

“It’s not very good,” she might say. And he -- or that is to say, I -- would have to agree. And perhaps he might even offer a bit more by saying, “Luckily, I have another.”

Hiding behind clothes, on a cold autumn day,
She sits on the park bench, wasting away...

“Is that how I seem to you?”

But no it is not. It is me as a character trying to find a story, a plot, a direction. An in this desire, lies the seeds of... mediocrity.

It is easy to see the narrator -- a photographer, one of the paparazzi -- following this starlet around or happening upon her by chance and surreptitiously taking pictures of her in hopes of selling them to the industry rags...

Or perhaps it is I, a writer who sits alone in a park, who stares across the way, doodling in a notebook, and in between the crap and the wasted words, I have come up with another line, another rhyme.

She sits in the rain,
Hat covering her eye,
Picture -- a tear,
Brings windfall
Notoriety -- delight.

You can take from this all what you will. There is a story in there somewhere. We have the principals and the place. But if a story was made of it, it would all be a lie, for there really is no story. Just a girl resting on a park bench, and my mind, my heart, and my soul at work -- trying to find links and reasons, where there are none.

But even more than all that, there is the realization that long-long ago, way back when: there was a girl who was happy and for

whatever reason I have gone and made her sad -- as if that would make a better story, perhaps something easier to sell.