

The Book of Hurt by Sophia Sandelson L4

Forgotten? She denied it. Let's settle on
hidden;
Hidden at the back of her slow moving
mind;
Hidden in this library, in this attic,
Centuries made it impossible to find.

Slogging through fragments of memories,
It wouldn't float up itself;
Through this cavern of dust,
Until, yes, of course, a familiar shelf.

Brown, dusty covers seem to be
Soaring into the sky;
A blur, not books,
Skimming over her eyes.

Perhaps with some help she could just...
No! This was hers.
A mission of will, her will,
To find this book first.

The challenge was there, no question.
Once-real opponents slicing through her,
The day at the pool: the race,
The prize of those yellow carnations.

They were so clear in her memory,
Their bright colour,
So real it made this book look a dream,
Faded, duller.

Running through every aisle,
Back to the search, now a race,
Dismissing book after book,
Trying to attach a time and place.

Would she ever find the thick volume,
Bound with her pony's hair,
Golden pages fluttering,
Ripped by the whipping air?

When would she take from her shoulders,
this suffocating mesh
of pools and mums and hurting;
longing to breathe air which is fresh.

But then, a small shake at first,
A tremble in her knees,
Falling, falling, down she went,
What did she need?

How fast was she running? wondering,
Why was she here?
What were those pages?
That buzz in her ear?

'They disconnect from their surroundings',
The doctor had said,
When diagnosing Dissociative Disorder,
And examining her head.

The book was somewhere else,
Now she was sure,
As she rocked back and forth,
On the bathroom floor.

Her nose bled steadily,
drops of red flashed
spreading as they hit the floor,
and splashed.

Dancing along the filthy tiles,
tiptoeing through the grime,
crashing into beer bottles,
mirroring the wine.

Echoes of her mother's drunken shrieks,
resounding up the stairs,
tripping over to the door,
to slide the bolt and chair.

Her mind was as blocked as her memory
As she watched her thumbs,
Twiddling and fiddling,
What had she become?

A machine controlled by trauma,
Or maybe just a shell,
Of what she was before the pool,
And what she did, as well.

The first time she saw it,
her own mother's smile,
not fooled by alcohol,
not covered in bile.

Winning at the pool,
just a little race,
Made her mother feel so proud,
A cause to celebrate.

Now she wasn't stupid,
Now she didn't doubt,
Her mother had no love for her,
And drank to block it out.

Her life, the noise, her headache,
Her daughter's need for her,
And most of all this clawing,
Just to disappear.

Now the wine makes this child unruly
an ambassador of cruelty,
suffering, revenge and hatred,
truly.

So much wrongdoing;
How could she bear
The weight of her actions;
She followed her mother there.

Confusion and anger,
A land of lost searches,
To find her book,
A mission never deserted.