

The Disposable Humans

Tabitha Lean

March 2021

I am a disposable human.

My blood courses with my grandmother's stories, every one of her fears and 232 years of her rage.

My mother's songs are nestled in my mitochondria... my DNA carries all of her hopes and dreams never realised.

The tragedy of her death is etched upon every one of my bones, scars that serve to remind me of the inevitability of my death – a memento mori, if you will.

My spirit is restless...dispossessed...fragmented, even. I straddle two, sometimes three worlds, never quite comfortable in any.

I am a criminal.

I am a woman who has been deserted on the bottom rung of the two tiered justice system you call morality.

You pulled me apart piece by piece, limb by limb and flashed me across your newspapers in the name of public interest or to gloat, or both. My life became a magazine that anyone could thumb through.

You cast me out of your cage into the world. Your shackles became strings that hung from your custodial belt. I was the tethered man being dragged by my feet beside you as you rode atop your colonial horse.

Every cut I made into my body bled crimson pools trailing across sacred soil. My blood mixed with the earth that contained the blood of my ancestors that was spilt during the war you waged on my people.

I swallowed your pills choosing delirium over death and lit fires across the surface of my skin trying to cleanse your filth from my body.

You tormented me in the name of decency. I became the deviant you constructed for my kind.

Then, Mother Earth delivered unto us a virus that you couldn't contain.

I'm watching our Mother steal the breath from your lungs, the same way you have stolen hers. She's burrowing into your body and making her home in the throats of many, squeezing and strangling the life from them, as you have done to her. She's going to flick you off, one by one, like fleas from a mongrel dog's back.

So, while our country sighs a big sigh and the planes are grounded and the city slows, and the borders close you stand alongside the landlords and let them line their pockets with our meagre silver. And while you quibble, we sit here as your disposable humans...risking our lives with every inhalation of polluted air, lining the streets - man by man, woman by woman, child by child- desperate for entrance into your welfare kingdom...petty pieces for a fucking CRN.

The supermarket shelves are empty and Karen's out the back helping Rob fill the car boot with toilet paper, while Mary the pensioner walks with her cane and limps through the empty aisles, and Harry bows his head when he can't even find a dozen eggs...are we all your disposable humans?

And while chaos ensues, and the people cry, you stood with your flock and raised your hand to the sky calling on your almighty creator, breathing in your own fucking righteousness and the breath of every one of your brethren.

So, as I sit in the wasteland wasting away with all of my disposable brothers and sistas, your shackle around my leg, the scars of incarceration etched into my body...I wonder...

I wonder, when the revolution comes, where the fuck will you hide?