

He said he's only interested if you hesitate. You're not sure if he told you to go and sit under that tree, or whether you've seen it before and that's why you find yourself under its shadow, joined in one colourless contour. Or whether it's just naturally from this position, looking out over the garden, that you can expel the dirt at the bottom of your soul, clean the floor of its narrow house.

Like he said, you slowly, finally, feel all the trouble raise itself in your vaulted interior. In the moment before it all starts happening, you think again about breaking some furniture. About how you never did, never dared, even just once, to hear the wood snap under your weight. How you never did listen, *in extasis*, to the sound of the beads scatter, breaking from their strings. Nor let the water pour, soaking into the carpet. In any case it's too late now, and as he often reminds you, you've done really well to find a place for the large desk, the chairs, the benches, and all his other various supports, inside of you, somewhere. You've done really well to arrange and rearrange your muscles, stretched, like so many others, to the shape of him. The shape of your distress. At least he promised you a storm.

And it's like usual, you're wet in only a few minutes. Heaving, hearing with every single hole opening, the garden slowly disappearing, it lasts for a while, you ask, 'When?' expecting no response, this theatre of cruel abandon, but then, finally, he says, like always, 'Take up and read, take up and read.'

And, like always, he's never actually there and so with more assumption than vision, searching, your eyes cut the flowers around you. You try and 'read' them, together joined in one soft, stifled scream.

The sky then clears and darkens, in one swift movement. So far, according to his promise, you're on the right path, draining the colour to arrive at something clean. At least you're doing something to keep his moisture in there. What never happened, never happened. I mean, like I said, he's only interested if you hesitate. And at least in his arms, heavy with crime, the whole world is your crying room. I mean, at least you're not alone with the labour of tears.

- Aodhan Madden