Inquiry | Inquisition

Jake Crouse
Apology from the Mind of the Uncreative
Hayden Arrington

I suppose by now you’ve heard that my trash poetry is only good enough for spoken word. Seriously. I wrote four sonnets and that’s the best I could create. Can you believe that? At this rate I’ll stay unpublished forever. Well “never say never” and all that jazz but my creative consistency changes with Carolina’s weather and I need some structure in my life. I need inspiration you know, that creative sensation? To branch out from limericks drop all the gimmicks write something worth celebration. I could drop the rhyme such as in a bad haiku I find that too crass-
The simplest form is the couplet I simply take rhyme and double it. Iambic stifles the creative mind I never know if I’m doing it right. My “dumb” simple lines are much too unkind for the seasoned ear and the struggling sight. I do not blame you. I cannot see it. And so where it is hidden I’ll leave it. My “potential” they call it, as if it’s true, that I can rise above, equal to you. The best way to end? Perhaps the epigram the easy way out is most often a sham.

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Uniform rows of conviction confine me to their symmetry. The white-washed blocks enclose the room in staggering levels, subtly breaking the conforming environment. Two distinct patterns, one half a block shifted from the next.

Us.
Them.
Us.
Them.

“Regarded as the most personal sacrament...”

Searching myself.
Mind peeking in corners,
afraid to search.
White noises rises
over the whispers.
I refuse.

“...is that of penance, or confession.”

Faces, juxtaposed, facing forward.
The ghastly blocks, glued together,
pastel shades covering bound gray areas,
hand in hand facing me,

 taunting me-
 red rover.
He’s nowhere in the rows.
He’s nowhere in the spaces.
“It is a process for baptized individuals...”

You can’t choose who you are born to.
You can’t choose anything until it’s too late.
I am drowning.

Youthful innocence requires that
we play with others,
grow with others,
sing with others
commune with others,
drink juice together,
chase ghosts together,
repeat stories together.
Seven deadly sins.
Seventy times forgiven.
Stories written by dead writers,
Recited by clueless pastors and bishops
and children.
They rewrite themselves in my head.
Seven thousand questions,
Seven billion vessels
Without an answer.

“...to, again, overcome guilt...”

I know it.
    He couldn’t care.
She doesn’t.
    She asked.
I lied.
    He doesn’t.
    Don’t ask.
The priests don’t recognize my voice.
The church sings with the organ.
The organ recognizes my voice
in shivering stanzas.
It mourns for me.
My pew, colder each service.

I watch the pastor
break the stale bread
as the wine transfigures
into water.

“. . . and receive the forgiveness...”

Blank pale blocks.
Blank pale faces.
Unable to fill the blanks.
   No one is looking.
What is this feeling?
Why am I scared?
   No one is looking.
Should I repent?
Should I confess?
   No one is looking.
Is that what Adam thought?
   Someone was looking.

He’s nowhere in the rows.
He’s nowhere in the spaces.

The stories of the apostles -
   found me here.
The proofs of the apologists -
   turned away.
The warnings of the apostates -
   vanished.

The mute apologies.

“...of God.”