

'I don't wish to sleep for fear of nightmares' - Olivia Ipkendanz (16)

When night comes Charlie leaves us,
shutting his eyes and transcending to a realm none of us can see.
A world of caverns and chasms and holes in walls that go on for miles in the dark.
It's a playground of sorts - rusted,
the hauntingly beautiful skeleton of a child with unfulfilled hopes and pipe dreams.
Charlie flies here.
No rules,
no social norms or
societal constraints.
I suppose that's what happens when you have a place all to yourself,
you become limitless simply because the concept never existed.
All is authentic here:
no worries of a falling facade
no copyright lawsuits filed by petty kids who know no better,
everything is made in the factory of his mind as the cogs
churn
in his sleep.

You've tried to find it haven't you?
The kingdom of Charlie's mind.
You joined the king's quest to retrieve the lost boy,
a reward of pride too tempting to surpass.
But
there is no map to that location,
because there is no
set destination.
His world is a gypsy caravan he intends to ride alone.
Why would he return to something he wishes so deeply to get away from?

However there are tales of a rare species,
that seize the palace as he travels there by night and turn it into some city in a nightmare.

Cesspools of darkness flood the town,
vapours condense into tears that crawl their way back into the eyes of lost people.
Even in his head it will always find him.

It's said that once they were inseparable,
but as time went on things remodelled,
and the 'other' became something to fear.
Charlie pleaded for it's toxicity to end,
but by then it was too late,
his nemesis had nested itself in his thoughts.
The hourglass had flipped,
few grains of sand were left to fall,
no time left to break free from the nightly cycle of depression.

So night by night he dived into his ghost town's playground of wants,
hoping someone would come find him,
wishing he's left something behind,
a sign,
a warning,
instead of an empty promise to return come morning.
But up top his family were forgetting their son they treasured for so long,
slipping away into their own dreamworlds.

Torture came in the form of a mockingjay, copying the sweet sweet voices of those whom he loved.

Despondency was a thing of below,
above there was one who still tried.
His brother who hadn't lost sight of it all,
who trudged through the mud ridden jungle,
clambered through vines and swamp,
weaved through the labyrinth of Keros
to get to the portal of darkness,

guarded by the other he'd see fall.

They battled and cursed like warriors,
but one victorious won,
a brother who'd fought against evil with only the power of love.
He spoke into the void : 'where are you?',
was he too late for it all?
But out of the ether stepped Charlie,
the boy who'd been lost for too long.