The Presentation

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Abstract

Here am I— The article Of fine coordination— (The sculptor’s swish of curtains The little ahs and ohs The flutter of dissection with the slivered tongue)...
heard a sharp little ping as a stone rattled into the ditch. They had passed her tree now and were gone. Laughter and soft chattering of bicycles blended with the other twilight noises.

The sun was red with a passionate hate, an unfriendly globe that scorned all living things. Helplessly, she beat her fists on the warm bark of the tree and watched it disappear slowly. The sky was blank, unchanged but for the fading ruddiness.

Tears hastened to her eyes, spilled over her lashes and scurried down her face. Only sissies cried, but— Her thin body shaking silently, she leaned back against the trunk and sobbed. And the sun was a blurry pool of red—red like a can of paint.

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**The Presentation**

*(For Russell R. Schultz)*

Keith Shillington, R. T. 3c

Here am I—
The article
Of fine coordination—

(The sculptor's swish of curtains
The little ahs and ohs
The flutter of dissection with the slivered tongue)

Note the copper skull
Its pressure dome of echoed pressures
Pumping through the eyes, the mouth, the ears,
Spurting the sight, the word, the hearing,
The sum of thought into its blotter world.

Note the spider hand
Dropped on its web of nerve and tendon
Clutching wildly at the passing life
Bearing fire and mouthing parasite of how
For its allotted crust—

Note the loaving body slab,
Its breathless lungs splashed with the captured air
For meshing lymph and cell,
Its fat merchant stomach
Peddling its wares in alleys and bypasses.

Note the pronged wye of legs
Its puke of life and future
That sees the body from the earth
And sees it back again
Nor leaving . . .

Here am I!

Search the effort well
That you may know what you are taking,
The flaws . . .
The little tiresome odors of the mind,
Fertility, the crawling muscles.
Weigh the voice, the bone,
Feel the firm flesh as one feels an apple or a grape.

And measure the permanganated blood
For full account
Nor let yourself be cheated of a single cell.
For life—
Perfection's search—
A trial fall
Through long and hollow cylinders,
The flash of stars in light
The spider grasping hand
And then the sleep—
Has its reward in its perfection's gain.
And I who know
The sorrow of the missing card from the new deck,
The broken crayon in the box,
And who have felt aversion for the spoiled,
Must realize Infinite's greater pain
For any but the perfect life—
The perfect set—
And I must ask you choose with care
Lest the automaton defraud you.
I have lain in nights of my creation
Planning every angle move of hand and finger,
Listening for my waxen voice,
Knowing I must meet the acrid winds—
(The sculptor's swish of curtains
The little ahs and ohs
The shifting of the sable and the cocktail)
Knowing I must mime a perfect part to please,
And so I planned—
Chalking the place upon this stage
And with my mirror of your retina
Fused the pose until I knew it right.

And combed the hair . . .

I know . . .
I know . . .
(The pause effective)
I know now my insincerity . . .

(The sculptor's swish of curtains
The little ahs and ohs
The clash of falling junk!)