



THE DARK

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RIDDLES

*I am that which is something, if you do not know me.
And that which is nothing, if you do.*

I am a riddle.

Bang

“Let’s go.” Atropos snatches my hand.

After the gunshot, calamity engulfs the wedding reception and echoes off the marble interior. We quickly pass an intoxicated couple on their way in as we exit. We run into the night, behind the towers, and over the hills of the city park.

Paris calls to us. “Wait. I don’t think he is following us.” We slow. We stop in the grass. We pause, catching our breath.

“He killed her,” my fingers slide between the strands of my hair. My face is the transition between disbelief and anger.

“We cannot stay here.” Atropos states.

“No, no not now.” I whimper.

The shadow cuts through the night with a darkness thicker than empty space. The epilogue of our descent into the void begins to weigh upon me like atrophy. The dark winds like ink through the sky blotting out the memory of hope.

“I said, they are not behind us.” Paris attempts to comfort me.

“No, it’s coming,” I stumble backward.

“He’s not following us.” Paris catches me by the arm.

“No, the shadow of the rainbow.” I point into the night others see as blank, “it’s coming.”

“Wait!” Paris steps back, “You actually believe that fable. That there is a—”

“It’s always there.” I start to run again. Atropos follows.

“Helen, stop.” Paris darts after me.

It collects, like a thunder cloud of disillusion, consuming the array of aurora galaxies. Streams of prismatic light wrapped in tar and eradicated. It reeks of rot and an electrical fire.

I scream as it surrounds us.

“It’s here.”

“I know.” Atropos yells.

A nimbus swallowing a nebula.

The insatiable silence.

“No one believes me.” I bury my face in my hands, terrified.

“I believe you.” she grabs me, shaking my frame. “I believe you.”

“You do?” My eyes water.

“Yes,” Atropos holds me, “because I released it.”

“Why?!” I scream.

“Because we needed it,” she responds, unwrapping her neck from her blue scarf, “here.”

“That won’t stop it.” I cry.

“I never said we could stop it.”

Like a whirling whisper, the shadow speaks in riddles.

Erebus is the voice in my head.

Stare into the void. Try to not go mad.

With the absurdity of it all. With the emptiness.

With the inevitable chaos that will consume everything you attempt to build, save, and grow.

Can you feel it?

The undeniable hollow you desperately dig to fill.

Can you taste it?

The unfathomable hunger you stuff full of desire and demand.

I am that which is put in a vessel that makes it lighter.

I am that which lives only in the light, yet dies if it's shown on me.

I am that which grows as you watch, yet makes you witness less.

*I am a hole.
I am a shadow.
I am the dark.*

Life was never about finding:

Happiness. Love. Balance. Meaning. Order.

Life was never about:

Suffering. Existing. Creating. Living.

Life was always meaningless.

“What are you doing?” Paris yells as Atropos snatches his hand and plunges his finger into the golden ring that matches the one I already wear. “That story about Erebus. It’s bullshit... right? She is fucking crazy.”

“Shut the fuck up!” Atropos yells. She locks our left hands against each other, each holding the other’s wrist like lifting each other

from the abyss. Wrapping the blue scarf around our grasp of each other, she tightens it and forces us to our knees. In a great sweeping motion, she drapes her black cloak over our bodies.

We both scream. The darkness enters our bodies into our nervous systems.

It devours us from the inside.

We fall into it, more jaded than death.

We despair past it, longer than losing a child.

We follow it, deeper than oblivion.

We feel it...

The whole world ends and then, I realize it already did.

The singularity collapses into an instance and stretches against forever. The insanity is laughable, but undeniable... inevitable.

I do everything I can to prevent it, and nothing mitigates the ruin.

Erebus thunders into my mind.

Mature and admit that there is no god.

Realize and accept that heroes require villains.

That evil is necessary.

So, I became evil. The Evil that Heros needed.

To imply a purpose to all this.

To supply you with a cause.

To give you meaning.

To give you a monster to fight.

*I am the golden treasure that is hid,
inside a box without hinges, key, or lid.*

I am an egg.

My reality is scattered like stars.
My mind remembers only a whisper of the agony.
My memory holds only of the light erupting from the shell I
called myself.

I awaken to my Paris: motionless and cold.

The thick tar along my spine is black.
The tears in my eyes like the humor of melancholy.

“What have you done?” I struggle to remove myself from
Atropos’ grasp.

“I bought us time,” she pulls the cloak back around her body.

“And what about him?” I weep and point at Paris’ body.

“He paid the price,” she wraps her scarf back around her neck.
“the price he was made to pay.”

“The cost for what?” I yell.

“The cost for giving your sister a reason for not giving in.”

“Is it over?” I desperately ask.

“It’s just begun.” She wipes black sludge from her hands.

“Over there,” a crowd shouts in the distance. I know it is Zeus leading a search party.

“We cannot stay here.” Atropos states again.

“Where are we going to go?” I request.

“Where everybody knows everybody knows.”

So, the two of us, we run. We run into the dark.

An echo of Erebus rumbles across the horizon.

Life was never about searching for meaning.

Life was always about searching for me.

I am that which ruins. I am that which destroys.

I am that which grinds the world to voids.

I am the inevitable. I am the dark. I am the universe's tomb.

I am the yawn. I am the start. I am the empty womb.

I am the pain. I am the hollow.

I am the rainbow's shadow.

I am hope.



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Without freethinkers.
Without major changes to the way we educate ourselves.
Without empathy.
Civilization, as we know it, is doomed.

But laughing at the absurdity and darkness,
we gain perspective.

Because it is only when we suffer who we are
that we will suffer for whom others want to be.
Because if we can't grasp to be pulled from the mire soon,
we'll be irreversibly buried in our own egoism.

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compel uncomfortable reflection and
with others, lively, if heated, debate.

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