

This Is My Design

Nadia Lee

Abstract: In this free form poem, Nadia Lee, a wheelchair user and a first-generation student at East Los Angeles College, illustrates how she navigates through tribulations in her life using biblical imagery and metaphorical tales. Lee begins this ongoing saga by alluding to a frail two-headed lamb, a rare phenomenon of genetic deformity, as an allegory to herself and her disability. As this journey ensues, Lee learns to overcome bastions of insecurities and mercenaries of betrayal with the aid of friends and family. Lee concludes this chapter in her adventure by rediscovering herself and finding solace in the uncertainties of life.

Two-headed lamb, frail and meek
Plagued at birth, none to fault
Loved by kin, blessed by God
Coddled and swaddled
Praying for a brighter tomorrow

Upon the desolate night
Young lamb lay wake in fright
As fear and doubt plagues its mind
A deadly disease without a cure
Will poor lamb endure?

O Weary lamb, could not sleep
Up til dawn, so miserably
Stuck in thought, way too deep
Out for a stroll, in Fiddler's Green
As it tumbled,

d
o
w
n
the hOle
Broke a leg, cracked their soul

Offered that deathless death
Didn't take it
Body pumped full
And shallow breaths
Intoxicated. Medicated. Sedated.
The bitter pill of fate...

Play the game
Roll the dice
Surpass all odds and try again



True or false
Take a chance
Prove them wrong, all over again

Past phosphorescent groves
Stands the illustrious Nursery
As sheep flock over in droves
Towards its halls of ivory
Although the Beast patrols
Make haste, toward sanctuary

Our own Chamber of unity
A place made for thee
Granted great knowledge with certainty
Promised safe haven without a fee
Entrusted with a veil of secrecy
Bestowed prestige in camaraderie
Pledged loyalty unquestionably
Given a rare gift, but tossed aside with ease

A shattered teacup
Broken into fractions
A bitter taste of betrayal
Driven to distraction
Left with star-littered scars
With each and every interaction

O Weary lamb upon the hill
Broken and vulnerable
Fearing the inevitable
Reciting old stories
To relive dead memories

Fresh meat for the grinder
Fodder for the slaughter
A commodity, another maggot in the feed
Conviction burnt-out
Used up, thrown out
Dead meat, let it bleed

Leave the flesh to rot in peace
Let the decay run its course
Allow the soul to decompose
Engulfed in sweet release
Content without remorse
In a state of comatose

Can't remain the prey
Become an equal, in every way
I know what I am...
Behold, the Wrath of the Lamb!

Adapt. Evolve. Become.

Carefully curated
Meticulously crafted
A mask for any occasion
Perfect for every persuasion
Brand new alters to assume
Palatable treats to consume

Bon Appétit

Hail weary traveler
We beckon thee
Take brief shelter over yonder
Gather under the Great Oak tree
Be engulfed in laughter and joviality
As we bond in misfortune and misery
Canonized in everlasting camaraderie

Tinker and tweak at my design
Twist and turn that feral mind
Spiral out of my disguise
Am I crazy or just blind?

Look in the mirror
Who do you see?
Familiar figure
Is it still you? Or is it me?

Outlined in fear my reflection stares
In a hall where walls lay bare
And with this line
Dead or Alive,
I shall survive

For this is my design...