

ENGLISH: *CREATIVE WRITING*

The Shadower

Lost within the artwork that lay before her, whereby her vulnerabilities were painted before her in a portrait so damning to the mind, but liberating to the soul. She yearned for a touch, inclined to heal the suffering evinced through the single shadow of a man, a man whose scream paralleled by the one inside her. For minutes she stood, fixated upon the desolate portrayal of an artist who seemed to know her. This discomfited her.

Her undivided attention broke with her gaze. She peered around the gallery, ensuring that no one would realise the intensity of emotions which overcame her. For each day she came to view this portrait, the more her eyes would swell with tears as she saw the face of a man whose shadow is all that defined him. "Shadower", a voice whispered. "Shadower...", she turned to find an elderly man beside her, dressed in no more than a brown, oversized, threadbare overcoat and tattered black slacks. His silver hair had receded four inches, face stained with what appeared to be charcoal and attributed a distinct scar across his left eye. "I'm...sorry?", she questioned, unsettled by his sudden approach. Steadily, the aged man extended his arm towards the portrait, "the painting, it titles 'Shadower'".

Perplexed by this interaction, for she usually never talked to people in art galleries. It was a place for her to avoid such troubling things as conversations. Her eyes perused the portrait. No title, no signature, no accreditation for a piece that had ever so grown familiar to her, how has she not noticed? How had she not realised that this artwork was anonymous? This was a new puzzle to add to the overload of things that puzzled her already.

"And to whom is this portrait accredited?" she pursued with the conversation, so emotionally inclined to be familiar with such an artist, her inability to formally construct conversation was overlooked. The man reached again for the portrait, caressing its silver-plated frame, "This, *pièce de résistance*, as the dejected would say, is the portrayal of an artist whom himself may fall prey..." Moments later he ceased, then further pursued to capture her face between his begrimed hands, forcing her to centre her gaze in line with his, as so to induce a connection; a connection as though it was manifesting into an encounter with a kindred spirit. "For the artist who is accredited to such a piece, remained nameless as so to speak. An identity for which he owes to himself, is not an impersonal representation of life itself." Gently, he released his clutch, allowing her face to fall free, but the gaze remained strong. "For those who seek to uncover the means, analysing the artist, not the portrait, to suit ones seems. However, the identity of he which they wish to expose, remains a shadow to the prejudices behold."

She broke the gaze, only to find herself exploring the portrait once more. "Himself many fall prey...to suits ones seems...shadow to the prejudices's behold...". All these words, resonating in her mind. A man whom is a stranger, can speak such truth. A man whom I have never met, can explicate such truth to human nature that I, myself cannot truly denote. How oddly profound the effects of a small connection with an elderly man had become. She turned her attention back towards him. The torrent of words disoriented her, but led her to one conclusion. "You painted this?" The aged man spoke not one word, but merely grabbed her hands within he placed a small creased note before departing from the room.

Unfolding it she read "for he may be I and I may be him. Whatever it may be, just remember what thy old man said, it's better to be a shadower, than one of them."