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The Hole

Katsion: The Hole

Claire Katsion

It's shadowless; an endless haze of pure darkness sapping my power away. Once in awhile a stray light catches my eye and provides me a view of my prison: cylindrical walls—probably just one wall that wraps around infinitely—that stretches into an eternal void or conversely closing me in until I suffocate. All hope is sapped from me instantly knowing that I'm alone as I curl into a ball and sink further into my hollow self. The air is damp with the nostalgic scent of fresh earth. The dirt that forms the walls springs at my touch, though it refuses to crumble under any force—impenetrable. The caked ground, like cement, chills me where I stand and stings my fingertips when I attempt to make sense of my surroundings. The ambient air, exuding warmth and humidity, is my only company—a sweet reminder of something living besides myself. Every now and then, I'm graced with the majestic presence of a distant star. A speck of light no bigger than the point of a pencil that lingers an eternity away. And as much as I dream, even my potent imagination cannot pull the light closer.

But then he appears. Gentle and nurturing; a familiar presence shimmering with sunlit hair and scintillating eyes that captured the ocean. The air's weight turns to dust and flies away as tiny spectacles of luminescence turn our small universe bright. Light sweeps softly, and the once-constricting walls seem to shy away. They weren't so close, after all—there is so much room to rest and to play, and no longer must I restrain myself to curling into the corner. With my hands safely in his, warmth and life courses through me, all my pain dissolving and dissipating through joyful tears. This—all of this—is worthwhile now that I have him beside me. I have never known pain, and I never will again. The semblance of sky has been pulled closer—a bountiful profusion of stars within grasp. We can view them as though we're resting on the ground just below the sky's canopy instead of reaching desperately from a cavern. Comfortably in his arms, I bequeath my dreams and wishes to the stars, and he does, too. He takes my cares as I take his, and I don't once wonder why he's here.

Suddenly, a ladder, woven expertly and generously in rope, dangles from the sky. A clear, definitive line wraps around the top of the ladder, manifesting an opening to this hole I've fallen in. A circle dug into the earth which lies now just within reach. Could it be? I can escape at last?

As light ebbs
the distance,
me tricks,
flashes of a
But who
For the first
My legs
strength to
the shivers
from me like
But then my
his warmth.
seek his eyes.
simpler, he
for me to go.
know he can't



and flows in
my eyes play
teasing quick
silhouette.
could that be?
time, I stand.
display the
jet me away;
of pain depart
fallen chains.
hand recalls
And I turn to
With a pained
knows it's time
But we both
come with me.
desperately—I
comforting,
my left hand
practical, safe,

Oozing
Photography
Martin Johnson

Courageously—
keep hold of his
warm hand as
rests upon the
but thorny, rope. What could I choose? Life? Or sadness beside his comfort? Getting up, he pushes me forward, cradling my hand between his, cherishing the last of our interactions. Closer and closer still, he inches me, his mellifluous warmth straining my heart and clenching my throat—my knowing all too well how dearly I'll miss it. Suddenly, the rope is between my two hands, swaying quietly in the breeze. A burst of fresh air—a beautiful marvel of the outside world—greets me, beckoning me closer. Calling me to ascend, for it's my time to shine. Hot tears pour from my face, scalding my skin. His arms wrap around me breathlessly; a gentle nudge of his head rests upon me for the last time. And, with a plaintive whisper backed by love and confidence, he sends me off.

“Go now, my flower. The world is waiting for you.”