

Victor M. Parlatto

I do not want your flowers
when I am dead

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my hope isn't that you find this book—rather I hope this book finds you.

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the genius of the next street

Bella,
this fucking city is a poem.
it reeks of indifference
and change; stink eyes and
harsh yellow grins.

the only constant is
the word—

be it from the common 17th poet
or the genius of the next street.

"you look terrible."

Bella,
they have spat
they have chewed
they have torn
every inch
of my name
my
soul
my baby black bird.

and when a new one comes,
with her pretty smile, pretty eyes,
native hair, natural skin, make-up
make-up and false lashes,
she will see what is left—

"God fuck, you look terrible,"
she'll say.

baby, you
try it some time—
loving the right person at the wrong time,
the wrong person at any time,
or simply just being gnarled at by
the things that creep at night,

with their pretty smiles,
pretty eyes, and
all around pretty souls.

then tell me
who looks worse for wear.

a poem K. Isabella

Bella,
my girl is about to be 5
and that's not yet old enough
to know good from worse
but when I play my music
or work the typewriter at my desk
she sneaks up behind me and sits on
my lap, placing her toys there,
smiling wide and beautiful,
no sense of the danger
outside or the man I used to be.

baby girl,
one day,
you will be old enough
and I will be much older,
much slower, much
stupider.

less love then
than now.

but I want you to remember
how much love I have for you
now