

STENA and ÄLV

[Legend:

(*She*) her name is Stena/Stone/Death.

- Was once in love with Älv/River/Love/Fantasy but lost him and talks of him negatively -like 'I hate you Love,' or 'stupid child.'
- The reaction of Death losing Love is bitter, she resents him because of his power over her, like resenting nature.
- She thinks of him as a chess opponent she wants to play against and beat.
- She uses run-on sentences with strong words like 'You' and 'Everything' with few commas and no periods so it's hard to breath.
- She tries to get away from Älv, although writes directly to him.
- She is abducted twice, first tied to a cross becoming Idol, then fondled in a closet becoming Statue.

(*He*) his name is Älv/River/Love/Fantasy.

- Was once in love with Stena/Stone/Death but lost her and talks of her endearingly, positively, and resists competition.
- The reaction of Love losing Death is sentimental.
- She is not an opponent to him, she is his ultimate receiver, his greatest success.
- His language is simple, descriptive and modest.
- He uses short sentences and talks of Stena in third person.
- He is nostalgic, referring to Yesterday.
- He tries to feel closer to her.
- He is abducted twice, first abandoned in a storage room becoming Meaningless, then dropped off at a house in the woods becoming Freedom.

(*Narrator*) me.

- Because I need to find myself.
 - And suffering is a way of finding.]
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It's wartime. The city of Östersund emptied. It'd been snowing for a year. A layer a meter thick covered everything. Streets were unusable, doors to buildings buried, deserted cars cocooned. Everything suffocated in heavy white batting. Those who were left were fighters who grouped and contained themselves in hidden bunkers and secret rooms in abandoned buildings. All factions were at war with each other. Abduction was their weapon. They'd capture members from other factions out in the snow and bring them back to their holes and inflict programs of torture on them.

This is a story about them who were abducted. She named Stena/Stone/Death, and he named Älv/River/Love/Fantasy. They were out in the snow in the first place 'cus they were thrown out of their group when they broke the rules: No love between group members. Only with abductees. The rule was made to maintain love's sacredness. Since abduction-love was love

without Love they knew if members were free to love one another it'd also be empty. And they thought if you want to fill a void, restrict access to it. So it was forbidden. But Stena and Älv wanted a piece of the meaning made from the restriction, so they transgressed and consummated and fell in love 'cus they shared a fate. When the group found out, they were treated like all before and tossed out in the snow. Soon the deep white waistland engulfed them and they lost each other.

First time Stena (Death) was captured they stripped her naked and tied her to a wooden cross with ropes until her ankles and wrists bled. They froze her skin with icicles then burned it with hot rocks. Because she was in pain she berated them with obscenities and her body flinched and resisted touch. When she finally gave herself to her violators because her strength had faded they took pity on her 'cus she had absorbed their pain. Their suffering had left them and entered her body so they were free. They expressed their freedom by releasing the ropes and tying her with their warm bodies instead and falling in love with her. They thanked her for her sacrifice and pleaded her to stay and when she left they cried over their loss, preserving her blood on rags and hanging them on the wall by the floor so they could kneel to them and cry an hour a day and mourn. She, Stena/Stone/Death became Deathstone (Idol). After the abduction she wrote this:

Stena's diary, February 1

Dear Älv,

I close my eyes you're fucking me and horror graphics claw marks dripping blood men in masks sharp brown and white shapes ice and flames ravage me in darkness, flickering bare bulbs bald heads ropes and pain kidnap me dear god get me away from Love, and stop fighting the darkness overpower me take me away like the sea I am nothing but heat and sand release my energy into the void which is everything, tie me to it destroy me like it destroys everything, you're the opponent River and this time I win take your Pawn you want me more take your Bishop you deconstruct, your Queen you run red lava pulled down by the stone that's me and become me two person games are fit for harsh climates like this Love, positive negative ions heat and cold collide and Bam stone cracks thunder lightning shattered glass split earth electrical shocks make me feel alive.

When Älv/River/Love/Fantasy was first abducted he was taken to a small storage room between the first and second floors of an abandoned apartment building. He was locked in and left alone for a week. Completely alone with nothing, not even light as food. Only water entered through the tap. The abductors knew this starvation would lead him to Affliction, and this happened to Älv 'cus he was mourning the loss of Stena. Affliction, advanced Suffering, infected his nervous system and caused him to deconstruct. He broke down in this order: First he lost Älv (his name), then River (his noun), then Fantasy (his metaphor), then Flow (his verb), then Love (his, his...) he forgot what Love was. When his abductors retrieved him a week later and he asked them what Love was they claimed him a success and offered him membership. But he rejected and chose to leave and live without knowing. He, Älv became Meaninglessness (Love). After his abduction he wrote this:

Älv's diary, February 11

I dreamed of beautiful Stena last night. We were travelling from Abu Dhabi to Scotland in a big cargo ship, the kind my parents fell in love on. There were many girls. Stena was more

interested in them than me. I felt the cherished pang of possession in my stomach, like the splendid pleasure of hunger. I watched her from behind and vanished into the horizon. I wrinkled then shrunk to use a mop then became the mop and was used. From the corner I watched her forget me. Perfectly calm and happy, I was smiling, adoring her. She was playing a game like she loves to do called Vegas Strip with her new girlfriends. They were running these tight formations on the lower deck by the engine room, cackling, giddily mockingly. She saw me on the deck, not a mop but a puddle. Oh Fantasy, she said, look at you, you're just a festering puddle of water staining me. Me, a big beautiful stone statue. And she left me to evaporate in the fumes and I became euphoria - the air she breathed.

The Closet, for Stena (Death), written by Love

*So she's in this closet
It's got two walls and four floors
Someone put a mouth in her sock and whited out her eyes
Someone put a...
There's a flower in her closet covered with couches
With Yesterday laying peacefully upon it.
She stands erect in her closet
Although reduced by her head
So her belly-button gazes naturally on her eyes below
She slips around her closet with slow slong slides
On the mirrors there're walls with which she measures herself
Her belly looks slimmer than Yesterday's
She's in love with her closet
She never ever wants out*

Second time Stena was abducted they put her in a dark closet and told her every half-hour hands will come though a hole in the front and fondle her. So it went for days. The half-hour blocks of time became everything for her. She made a time-keeping method like a meditation routine. When she reached 500 by counting up by 13, they'd come. She sat still as a statue so the hands wouldn't miss her. She liked the visits, lived for them. They formed her consciousness. But after a few weeks they began arriving late. Then early. Then very late. She couldn't rely on when they'd come and even if they'd come at all. The time-keeping method that was everything was useless. She had to adapt by forcing herself to forget the fondles and form a structure for consciousness without them. So she started a numbering system that was cyclical to infinity and had no end point. The sets were complex with one number changing in each cycle, like the game of Telephone. 'Cus it lacked repetition it took focus to keep track of where she was, and when the hands came in to fondle her she'd lose her place in the score. So she started resenting them. The fondles that used to be everything were now a nuisance. She wished they'd stop. She, Stena/Stone/Death became Statue (Self-sufficiency). After the abduction she wrote this:

Stena's diary, February 6

Dear Älv,

I sit down lay down must make use of these day dreams by writing them down or they're good for nothing just floating fears and fantasies lift me off the ground, get me in trouble, confusing melting meddling with Me/Reality I wish you'd stop this fondling Fantasy/Älv/Love, I refuse to be your object I won't surrender to the power of your currents washing away dams of rules and order, you're empty Älv just water and gravity neither which have form or structure like

me so you're basically nothing why do you erode and force weather upon me, this is what gets people in trouble all those rivers of You/Fantasy flooding offices and TV stations drowning order and rules of engagement sinking boarders installed for good reason, doesn't anyone stand up straight anymore?

I knew it would fall apart too before it even began dive and drown I know how it goes River cus you drive towards drama, you're the rapids tipping the scales fighting flatness carving at security stability Me, you're an eddy orbiting a void you never rest Momentum and Gravity your only rulers but at what expense Old life? Paving a path of destruction you juvenile thing your energy never quits the child of flatland parents who gave you a steady ground not too deep nor too shallow, a childhood now driving to fanatic falls you go low Fantasy deep deep down, touching the dark undercurrents uniting everything and nothing you go up to pretend for a moment happiness is possible, but happiness is chaos for you you're all pretend stupid child you're the destruction of earth the Demon of change the violence forcing its shape upon me, I hate you Love I Death can live without you.

In the second capture of Älv they stuffed a sock in his mouth and drove an hour out of town. They arrived at a house engulfed with snow two meters deep. He was unloaded and gifted free range of it's interior with instructions to do whatever he liked inside, but a guard at the door would prevent him from leaving. It at first didn't feel like confinement at all. An entire house. Excitement and freedom met him in shear size. Possibilities for growth appeared endless. It felt like falling in love with Stena. He, Älv became Freedom (Death). After three weeks he wrote this:

Älv's diary, February 23

Sleep serves as the only escape now. Restriction as pure beauty. The charm of this rustic house is fading, snow lacking luster. Matte white blankness offers the void as only what it lacks. Freedom. I rest now, that weight on my chest, that body mass wrapped like a boa constrictor. Pressure gives me a deep peace I have never known before. It's the freedom of myself as a victim, the submission to passion. I feel large in this dollhouse, like living in a museum. Heavy air, heavy building, heavy history. And did people really used to be this small? I shuffle between tiny rooms with low ceilings, ducking under doorframes. My back curls over counters. Crouching. Compressing. Cramming logs into miniature stoves. Broken pottery cramped on crooked window frames suffocates with ash-dust. Oh it's so beautiful here. I wish Stena could see it. A layer of cigarette smoke hangs chest height crushing lungs. Oxygen scarce above, gravity takes over below. Splendid boredom floats everywhere. I found a sewing machine and fabric matching the bed sheets and curtains. I think I'll channel this lightness and make pictures for her. I guess I'm still trying to show her a way out. A peaceful awareness sets in now of nothing happening, like nothing happened today or yesterday nor has, I now realize, anything happened most other days of my life. If I didn't sleep every 16 hours absolutely nothing would happen. Sleeping is an activity where I travel to distant lands and learn things that can't be taught to me here. It brings me people like Stena whose love I must suppress or risk decomposing from it's fertility. And I do decompose here. Muscles in my thighs and hips breakdown from pressure. The deep ache of stagnancy. Love will stay here for now. I feel so close to her, Death. I want to run.

Emma LaMorte