

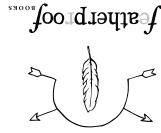


An excerpt from the novel
Failure to Comply

the long necked axe struck clean out of me my most beloved memories. Had my beloved been here with me, they could not have helped. There are things, I learn, that they cannot do. As for me, there was never hope for correction, as all my impurities have long known love.

There comes a time when the bad is loved so much it can neither be corrected nor lived without. Love is like a binding seal, a wax to keep the imperfection in, thick enough for water to skim yet never penetrate. Without the love, we become easy to replace.

Failure to Comply will be available August 6, 2024



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pageantry, and all whose ages did not increase and whose lives did not progress were the first of that coming year to be gone, to be axed away into elsewhere.

(do you understand the words belong to them)

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With the swing of an axe, one makes a citizens' arrest.
a process by which the one
swinging reassserted hisother
status as citizen by stripping

wrapped in a gauze that served no purpose but shame.

but I ahead myself. Know I was
transparent as

clothes turned when I wore them to a jokelike gauze,
even when the lids were shut. The opacity of a citizen's
translucent and white, all white, so white it hurt my eyes
uncitizen. Eventually I would receive a gown, light as air,
slated for replacement, I was naked: an

gone.

wake, but I would not know, because by then I was long
real. Nothingness wrong cool and sure in its

loved. Here I was at the brink of everything

This was final cut, the thing to separate me from all I
An axe turned me from a loved into a silence.

other things
When the eyes are on

What is to be replaced when the eyes are shut.

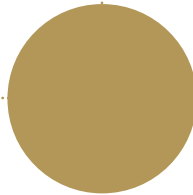
an impure body of its own

And what does that make me? I was a person

soon ago. Then RSCH saw me hide, brought
me back into the fold to be cast out once more. I am
trying to be clear with you but I can only speak in riddles.
I've lost all the meaning that lived in my memories. I
don't know which tense I'm living in. But this is not the
future. I've lost the words to say what I have to say. I
used to have a name. I used to have a place. I have a face
I shouldn't see. I have a body I shouldn't hold the way I
do.

I know this. In life, there are the directives.
there are those who obey, those who are obeyed, and the
non-existent in between. there is no love, I learned; there
is only power. Love is a means of pushing power down
easy, of opening the throat. It is said

i do this because i love you.
why do you do this there
are people who love you.



year. In the year whose end RSCH alone declared with
would likely need to be contained once more in a coming
they because

(so it was instead called
maintenance)

vested in the maintenance of
purity:

pure body and RSCH was in-
violent crime against the once-
ing, because chipping was a
chipping, definitionally speak-
(chipping by a RSCH was not

go but chipped

was to be let go, who was to stay, and who was to be let
at the containment centers as RSCH determined who
backlog of subjects for assessment produced yearly chaos
was cross-referenced with their birth data. The constant
the correct size, which changed each year. Their blood
first measured all over to determine their adjacency to
wardly as pure was brought in for questioning, they were
and also of detection. When a subject who passed out-
down. Immobilized as a means of torture and correction,

So it is said:

love becomes the direction and force
and frequency of power. transmuted. one
body to the next. Love is the soft touch
of power. Love is the RSCH to its citizen,
love is the perverse, love is the you're sick
please better for me sickbetter for all of us
sickandgetbetter let us be whole and love
again — let love be the blade.

And it is said I am a person been held
captive for all these long years, for none of which she had
a clock. She is i. She is me. She is in a holding cell. She
is somewhere else. She could not mark the time. She has
no proof. She has no body to speak of and no-place. So
she is many at once.

And lacuna requisites the whole

The beverage was blue, glowing quiet power.
Microchips failed in the face of whatever was inside.
Magnets dulled. Minds cracked. Metal turned to hot pain
and only flesh and blood and bone were spared. It was
an addition of dead-weight. Dragged, dragged, drugged