

## **Portrait Of The Green-Eyed Monster**

There is a difference between love and muse. A line that though often blurred, can never really be crossed except in one's imagination. I know this now, so tempered with the loose uneager patience of gathering age. When regarded through wiser eyes than those of youth, it seems so obvious to regard the contrasting styles and contours of what is, and what we only partly wish could be.

To place someone on a lofty pedestal and view them from afar is to see them only in outline, rough and undetailed. At such height, we blot out their imperfect texture and sullied lines, concentrating only on the haloed figure we alone have perceived them to be. This is not love, only infatuation with an ideal we create within ourselves. It is this quietening realisation that, though so evident to me now, I wish for all the world could quench my wife's distress.

Jealousy is not an emotion one would think to attribute to so loving a woman, vitriolic and debase as it clearly is. Yet in my ignorance, I never considered that my occasional immersion in my art via that once familiar conduit, could produce in her so profound a sorrow. That day they found her in my gallery, her skin streaked wild with paint like blood, knife in hand and surrounded on all sides by freshly shredded canvas and retribution. Until that day, I would never have known how destructive my pursuit of artistic purity could be to those whom I loved the most.

Sitting here alone in this stark and warmth-less room with my head in my hands, I wonder if I should have seen this coming and spoken up sooner as to that which makes me tick. All too late, I long to take my wife's hand in mine, feeling again my pulse quicken at her tender touch, to tell her softly in words of heartfelt certainty that it is she alone whom I treasure above all else.

They bring her to me now, led patiently down barren corridors by attendants doing their best not to hurry her stupored steps. My loving wife, my sweet Ophelia, whose only crime was to doubt for a moment the love which I left unspoken and only now have come to fully understand within myself.

To immerse oneself in another and receive that which they give to you wholeheartedly though their fear may be great, that is a true miracle. That connection between two people brings a deeper seeded strength than any momentary spark of imagination can ever give. It remains long after muse departs and without its warm embrace I know now that I am nothing.

I take her hand in mine again, so desperate to bring her home and tell this one simple truth that I have learnt from her:  
Love is art, and the rest of our lives spent together from this day forward is the only canvas I wish to paint.