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Dear Camilla (On 54 Bones Gleaning the Storm)

By Eryka Fiedler

DEAR CAMILLA,

I HEARD YOU GO TO THE BUTCHER DRUNK. I HEARD YOU SCRUTINIZE THE MEAT AND THEN COMPLAIN TO THE BUTCHER. YOU WANT YOURS THICK AND YOU WANT YOURS RED. I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT TO A DEGREE. BUT THE MARBLING — A HAZE OF BOOZE WILL NOT DISRUPT THE SCRUTINY. I TOO INSTIGATE CHAOS. I CAN TELL YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND BUT WHEN YOU LOOK AT THIS PAINTING AND YOU THINK YOU SEE A HAND — YOU SEE A HAND. AND IF IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S TRYING TO PUNCH YOU IN THE FACE — IT'S TRYING TO PUNCH YOU IN THE FACE.

DOES THE OTHER HAND PULL THE PUNCH? — A BIT. AT LEAST ENOUGH TO SHOW THERE IS SOME DELIBERATION. SOME REGRET. I CAN'T TELL YOU EVERYTHING — NOT BECAUSE YOU WON'T UNDERSTAND — WE COULD OPEN THE TOPS OF OUR HEADS AND DROP MINE INTO YOURS — BUT BECAUSE YOU ARE ALWAYS GOING TO BE A FEW DRINKS AHEAD OF ME AND A FEW URGES CLOSER TO THE MEAT THAT YOU WANT, BUT ABOUT THE STORM. A HEAD AND HANDS. BOTH IMPORTANT THINGS. I BET YOU WANT TO SAY WHICH ONE IS THE THINKER AND WHICH ONE IS THE DO-ER. I DON'T REALLY WANT TO GO THERE. AS THE FLASH EYED MOTHER SAID, "EVERY HEAD IS A HEAD AND THERE IS NO HEAD WHICH IS NOT SUITABLE FOR ANY OTHER CREATURE."

THERE MAY BE MORE THAN ONE — ACTUALLY.

THERE USUALLY IS. HOW DO WE SEE
OURSELVES BUT IN RELATION TO OTHERS?
AND THINGS MATTER TO THE DEGREE THEY
DON'T. IT'S NOT HARD TO PINPOINT THEM
THOSE HEADS I MEAN — THEY'VE GOT TERROR
WRITTEN ALL OVER THEIR FACES — WHETHER OR
NOT YOU CAN SEE THAT FACE — THE WAY
YOU WANT TO I MEAN. THEY TRY TO
MERGE WITH THE ATMOSPHERE
INKLINGS. GRAMA, INKLINGS. AND TRUST ME —
YOU WILL FIND THE EYES. AND IF YOU DON'T —
THE EYES WILL FIND YOU. TURN YOUR BACK ON
THEM FOR A SECOND. TAKE THE ATMOSPHERE
TO BE UNKIND. TAKE IT TO BE A SHIT-STORM
TO FIGHT AGAINST. 54 BONES.
THAT'S ALL THE HANDS GOT.

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† Eryka Fiedler is a painter. She was born in Nashville, Tennessee, and currently lives in Nevada City, California.

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