

Masks

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People say we hide behind masks,
Walking around in a masquerade of pottery and clay,
Pretending to be something we aren't,
Faking goodness,
False kindness,
Failing to be honest.

Optimists say that we carve masks of beauty to give us a goal,
A dream of a persona we hope to achieve one day.

Pessimists say that we've wrought sculptures to hide behind,
Hiding flaws and imperfections behind painted skin.

I do not agree with either view.

We do not create these masks for us to grow from,
Nor do we craft these works of art to hide behind, no.

We've burned and carved our lies and falseness into our very skin,
Making ourselves a masterpiece,
A web of how we wish to be seen.

We save the masks for what we really are,
A physical memoir to the person we were,
Before burning a new image onto our face.

But we hide them where no one will find them.

My mask hangs on my wall,
Wishing me a good morning when I open my eyes,

And watching over me as I fall asleep.

I feel its eyes following me all the time,

Judging me with contemptuous eyes,

Silent and strong in its eternal vigil.

I do not hate my mask,

I only hate the fact that I made it in my likeness.

No amount of denial will hide the fact,

That my mask looks like me.

My mask has blue skin,

From where I strangled my feelings.

It has black lips and a silver tongue,

Sharpened from years of telling lies.

The eyes are red and bloodshot,

Puffy from the tears I wasn't allowed to shed.

Scabs and scars decorate the clay,

Puncture wounds to mark the hateful words.

Yet even though I want someone to see my mask,

I will hide it until the day I die.