5-1-1997

Moon and Night, This Air of Memory

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Recommended Citation
Lucey, Jason (1997) "Moon and Night, This Air of Memory," The Promethean: Vol. 5 : Iss. 2 , Article 5.
Available at: http://commons.cu-portland.edu/promethean/vol5/iss2/5

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Moon and Night, This Air of Memory

Tonight is not like other nights. The air is soft and thick. Breaths come slowly with purpose. This humid air makes itself known to the skin and lungs. I feel it across my tongue and sliding in and out of my nostrils. I feel it riding upon my back, sitting upon my shoulder whispering quiet mysteries of the night which I can’t understand yet know are true. It wraps its dark shawl around me and holds me close to it. The night pours in through my window, gathers about my feet and slowly fills the room, and me, with its temptation - with its thick sultry air.

I have recently taken to walking in the evening down the cobble stone streets which are so common in this area. At one time they had been common black tar streets used for automobiles, but now they are blocked off to motor traffic and used only as stone walk ways.

The city becomes another place under the calm veil of twilight. The business of the day is done; the mind of the day goes to rest and a new one - a night one - begins to awaken. This makes itself known to the skin and many things, many youthful things. Like slides in and out of my nostrils. I feel it surround me now. With the coarse hair on my head and the hair that grow out of my nostrils, I feel the coarse hair on my head and the hair that grow out of my nostrils. It wraps its dark shawl around me, and I feel it is a potential blood stain. Here struggles - the moon - for what seemed last week I saw a horrible thing - for what seemed to be a memory only I can see, a name only I know.

And so on my evening walks sometimes I feel very secure. Other times I don’t. Last week I saw a horrible thing on my walk. A women was killed by a bus. Her body lay on the sidewalk twisted and red, limp and seemed filled with a false sense of comfort. It was a catastrophe; it was frightening. The simple fact that she was hit by a bus was not what frightened me, it was her blood - the amount of blood. The blood alone made it horrible. Her head hit the bench and cracked open. Her blood ran like crimson water across the sidewalk and into the gutter. A crowd gathered around her, staring, silently. Others had run off, unable to look. But many stayed with eyes gaping and mouths grimacing to watch her blood run upon the stone.

Now there is nothing. This road, this cobble stone road that I walk upon every night, is like me. I know how it stares into the night but feels the past at its back. Millions have passed over it and millions more may still pass over it and to them it means nothing. But the road knows and remembers.

The moon put all this into my head. On my usual evening walk, days after the bus accident, I had been walking this street thinking of how the river may move on, but the road never does, it only hides. I looked to the sky to see the progress of the night’s advance. There, high in the wine dark sky, I saw the true whiteness to our throes and struggles - the moon - for what seemed the first time. The whiteness of our crescent reflected off the burgundy waters of the river, but the sky so much more could be seen. The greater part, the secret part, the part which is dark and slowly revealed during the month was visible. It did not take care to cloak itself completely. I could see the whole of the orb, the light and the dark, the open and the closed, what was meant to be seen and what should not be seen. There were no more secrets in that moon, no more hiding. Why should I be allowed to see so much? I stood and stared like a child, like a voyeur, at the nakedness of the moon.

There are very few people left in my life. Some have died. Some have moved away to far off places long ago. Some are better kept at a distance, but there are a few that a person needs to keep close. Family is the most needed. I have not spoken to my family in years, not since my sister died. These bricks of time and emotion lay thick over the memory of my family, and of my father. I saw this in the moonlight, when all things were revealed, and the river was quiet and still, not giving any distraction, but letting the air, the heavy damp air of that night, seep into my heart.

I turned around and went back to my house. When I arrived, I sat down immediately and wrote this letter:

Father,

I know we haven’t talked for a long time, and I know that we’ve been...
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hard on each other. Her death was too much for me, but now life, and loneliness, have become too much for me also. Please let me say that I am sorry, and that I miss you. It has been too many years. Let us move on now. You exclude the people you need most. At this time of year let us remember love. I'm coming home for Christmas. I'm coming home for Christmas.

Jason Lucey