Ekphrastic Reflection

by

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This piece of writing is one of eight ekphrastic reflections written by Notre Dame Creative Writing MFA students. Ekphrasis has been defined as a literary device in which a painting, sculpture, or other work of visual art is described in detail. Today, many contemporary writers use ekphrasis to translate existing visual artworks into new poems and stories. Does this ekphrastic reflection make you see the artwork in a new way?

Miss A-Bomb

Dark air, spectacular grotesque, metallic lipgloss: Miss A-Bomb accepts her sash and says this one's for the girls who put the thing together, the ones drowning in their own atom, letter's bloodlust, history's unspacious machine.

Her reigning duties include: spit and polish all gas masks, teach tweens how to pose like broken fawns, pay a hospital a visit.

Her blush is war-rouge red; she radiates.

Nevermind the sky's combusted exhale, its barbarous gnarling. Hum the anthem you know by heart, Miss A-Bomb. Shimmy the spangled banner cute; gyrate your erotic nuclear molecule.

There are shockwave women; women who come to your country bandaged from the blast zone. They get procedures to look like you. Tell them: You are a great surgical beauty. You are sexy and wife-like: a uranium glass teacup.

When the heaves of fission finally arrive stateside, it's a warm breeze.

Miss A-Bomb wonders if her mushroom cloud crown has a back or a front. Miss A-Bomb wonders if leaves flutter or ululate. Miss A-Bomb wonders if she should mourn or exalt.