

Amanda Merdzan

"Esther"

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Esther was born in Mile End where I stayed back in
September of 07, with my lover, at his half brothers
shared house that housed roughly about too many
people for it's smoke stained walls to hold.

And the carpet had tyre tracks that lead their way out
the back to a yard no larger than two king beds, where
a chair quietly sat, wearing pennies like a hat
displaying the change that can't be spent.

Esther married a man they had six kids, six of them
hers, five of them his. Still he raised the other man's
like she was his own. And maybe it was curse for the
sin before the birth, is what my mother always heard
Esther painfully say.

Cos Geraldine was the daughter of an American
soldier, and he never got to hold her, she never heard
his name. She never heard a thing at all, she spoke in
signs but how her voice roared when her sister took her
life and made five four, but not the first to go.

You see Pauline's body quickly wore down like my love
for London Town. The filthy tubes, the hot underground
and the welcome to London cold. The bodegas on
every street selling everything but what I need. Just
give me pills, her pills weren't cheap, more a thief than
a disease.

And as she's lying in her bed, I hang a paper crane
over her head. Too young to know to the full extent just
what is coming next. And Esther's lying in that home
with the stench of neglect and memories gone, saying
Pauline isn't well can you keep your prayers with her.

But Esther doesn't have long to go, so she goes in
peace they don't let her know; your daughter was
buried a week ago, and we're all broken but you won't
be. Esther was born in Mile End, where I stayed back in
September of 07 with my lover.

