

Nina Nastasia "Jimmy's Rose Tattoo"

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Jimmy Rose owns a tattoo parlor
Three times a day
Cooks a spoon of powder
I wash the dishes piled in his tub
If I wait too long he may never stand up
Up

He lies awake on an empty canvas
And tilts his brush
Watching brilliance drip circles on the floor
And I lay his shirt on the bed
I fall inside picture frames
Breathing in his oil paints
He doesn't see me
He wanders in
His mouth looks thin
Like a child who stands there shaking
I can feel his anger choke me

Jimmy Rose works from twelve to five
To pay off the doctor that he prescribes
There's kerosene in the wishing well
And I throw a penny still holding on to his hand
And I watch him drift, close his eyes
I fall inside picture frames
Breathing in his oil paints
He doesn't see me
He wanders in
His mouth looks thin
Like a child who stands there shaking
I can feel his anger choke me

Under the gun
Under my clothes
He's feeding me
I'll never know
I'll never know
I'll never know
He wanders in
His mouth looks thin
Like a child who stands there shaking
I can feel his anger choke me

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