

The Fatima Mansions

"As I Washed the Blood Off"

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As I washed the blood off she yelled at me
though no blows had been struck
and she still looked so serene
then she started to cry
then she burst out laughing

then three sharp words in that warrior's tongue
I'd learned them well
through this night in hell

"I'm not ashamed of my body
I never said you hurt me
with your faithless wit and your aimless guile
and your [fall from] hands and your shame faced
smile
Everything you touch is gonna TURN TO DUST!"

Not a stone will stand upon a stone
Not a stone will stand upon a stone

As I washed the blood off she laughed at me
and asked whose reincarnation I might be
I said, "I'm not your father
or the-two legged beast who scarred you
though I have done great wrongs of my own."

They were long ago
so how could you know?

I never asked for your pity
That's just as well if you ask me
Then the lights went out
and a rumble built to become a roar
but she screamed, "It's you!
Every day you wake is gonna end in hate!"

Not a stone will stand upon a stone
Not a stone will stand upon a stone

I didn't know what to do
How could I tell her the truth?

I climbed up out of her hall
and went to sleep on the roof
When I woke up to the sun
her brother brought me some food
and we played cards until 'noon
Five stories up from [...?]

The pools of blood and the blasted rocks
and the children screaming who will never stop
and the blast of heat
and the stench of gas
and the lost dogs fighting over human scraps
and she called to us from the street beneath
"My footloose ways will be the death of me!"
and she took the hand of a drunk militia captain

Not a stone will stand upon a stone
Not a stone will stand upon a stone

As I washed the blood off she spat at me
and said it's about time you died
My outbound train gave a sickening lurch
and I hung my head and cried
For shame I sat and cried
I could not help but cry

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