## Lacrimosa James King

I thought you were dead.

How long had it been since you or anyone else set foot in my room the one you call, ironically, living?

There used to be a girl, right?

I could tell from her touch that her visits were obligatory. She was cute and dutiful and oh so consistent: When thirty minutes were up, I'd feel a puff of cool air chase a happy diminuendo of footsteps.

## There was a boy, too.

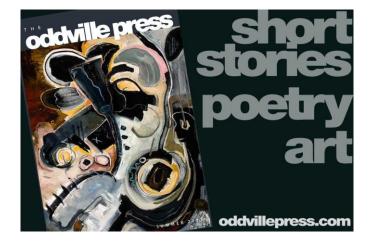
His first visits were painful, but I endured because he was intrigued. We started talking and eventually, wonderfully, we began to sing together. He knew how to treat me. Where did he go? What did you do?

## And you?

So determined at first to make us work. Years of the same conversations. And then, the grand hiatus. Only recently have you started visiting again, but the pauses are long. I feel your touch but I sense a longing for that nocturne you used to play. Badly.

## Me?

I need you. But, please, try a jaunty invention. And you do know, don't you, that Bach wrote more than one prelude? You might consider a peppy sonatina or bagatelle. Let's keep our distance from jazz, shall we? It was never in your wheelhouse. And whatever you do, nothing in the key of E minor. That's when you grow silent, and I get the feeling that at any moment, the front door will bust open and two burly men will enter, armed with a dolly.



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