

Hollos

Words by Lea Carpenter Images by Mark Luscombe-Whyte

Fins

1.08

gripoja

"Freedom" is a word you use a lot when you're young, they will say. Freedom was the idea to write on the anarchists, ahistorical. Which was ironic given history never buy. Which is in the end the essence of our power. was happening all around us at the time.

They will say there were no girls but most of us lost our virginity there. I lost mine on 18 January 1971 which was a good night to celebrate. She'd asked to see where we slept so I brought her there, intending to get stoned and read her poetry but she had other, more ambitious ideas. She said her grandmother was one of Bismarck's mistresses, "the prettiest one." A girl will say almost anything to get what she wants. Wouldn't you.

Zwei

Dre

They will say we were running away from studies but we felt we were running towards something far more important than reading, writing, and arithmetic. We felt we were taking a stand, that our small acts of rebellion were signs of a kind of grace. And so while to steal a pig is not quite to take France, it is something. We saw ourselves as warriors and this place was our barracks, not our prison. This place was our command post, our star chamber, a refuge from which we could, and new mythologies. When the arrogance of youth tells you, you can be anything, you believe it.

No scom

Ardn

ICHE

no

MP

They will say it was designed for punishment but for And they will show you our engravings on tables and us it was a place for play. We found, on those nights, an paintings on walls but they won't illuminate the poems escape and a release. A forum, A forum for freedom. we inscribed inside table legs later used for firewood. Teachers arrived at night and told us the people were afraid of us. We gave them fresh grapes and wine and walls. We thought, what would it look like to crawl in exchange they would say that, secretly, they envied inside a writer's mind? What we really wanted was us. That our rules, as they called them, felt free. They to be heard, only no one wants to listen when you're may have thought we were pagans but because we were young. We were children and we felt ancient. We were young, we would always possess something they could

Later, when one of us was awarded a Nobel, he referenced our paintings in his address before the blacktied crowd in the grand Swedish hall. Once, we ran away from grand rooms. And the thing is that while we were running away, we failed to stop and study actual poets, too busy trying to prove we were poets ourselves. If we'd lowered our levels of arrogance. If we'd opened the room to humility. If we'd done those things, we might have seen that our prison was as much prison as Marie Antoinette's petite hameau was simple cottage.

Sechs

We were told there were barbarians at the gate but we failed to understand that we lacked not only arms but also experience to guard against them. When you're young you believe the barbarian will bring something better. When you're young you can't decide if you're Achilles or Aristotle. When you're young you say you're losing your virginity to the granddaughter of Bismarck's mistress. Because when you are young you in repose, set new rules, write manifestos, draw maps have a truly open heart. Rilke told, see the princess in the dragon. We saw dragons in the princess. We were always under siege. We were heroes.









