

Cease Life
By: Sarah Banas

She was dead.

He watched as she slowly fell forward – down... down she went. The world stood still. She had taken several dozen bullets for him.

The bullets that were to be his judgement.

The others – they were all dead before she fell. His anger murdered them.

But his heart, though unharmed, was dying.

He caught her a moment before she lay forward, a moment before her consciousness ceased.

She looked up at him and smiled weakly. She coughed up blood. He was accustomed to such a sight, but his own curled under his skin.

This was not supposed to happen.

He attempted to wipe away the blood, but it spread. What once gave her life now drained her.

He cried out in disbelief – oh, horror... horror! His soul, his essence, it was all weeping.

The gods were mocking him. They were torturing him, taunting him. This had to be a dream.

She gently touched his mask and gave one kiss upon those cold lips.

He never dared to take it off in front of others until now.

As he stared at her with watered sockets, she leaned over and kissed him on those lips she desired for so long. He returned that kiss as it was given.

His heart pounded; he begged, he pleaded. But her eyes – those eyes he loved so dear – became sullen.

She was dead, and so was he.

The world's roses never bloomed again.