Amsterdam Diaries

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Amsterdam Diaries

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I'd die of shame if anything like that (selling
my body) happened to me.
Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl (43)

The tour guide leads us to the house where Anne
Frank hid from the Nazis (1942-44) before her death
in a camp at Bergen Belsen. Blond Dutch belles and
old dissenters squint with us, feeling words from Anne’s

Diary, taped on a wall: I dream of someday being a
writer and helping to make the world a better place.
An old woman by me shudders, the words wrenching
her mind to midnight raids. Outside, a statue, sentinel

for lost lives, hallows Anne’s life haunted for two years
by Nazi devils; it stands—a slim miss, body and black
hair set in stone. On the next street we see the down
east of legal prostitution: waifs with eyes blank, for

four long city blocks punctuate the night. In glass cages
on swept streets, Asian, Greek, and Syrophoenician
girls primp and act out a script for pimps who lurk near
and drool for their loot. Lithe and lean, fed their fate

like beasts in heat, babes are sold to rubes and rogues.
Dutch laws now solicit this midnight charade where
lasses who pin their hopes on the wind, dream of love
but are bought by suits of lust as slaves on auction.

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