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VORTEX

by

Luetta Colvin Upshur

Whorling into stasis the circle of fire forges
Into oblivion both wonder and oneness,
To torture a world into a mad churning
Of angry heat, unlike Prometheus' love-load.
Waiting not, wasting all, the unblinking rage
Swallows the Sistine and ravishes the rose.

In the unmoving, turgid core careen
The aborted sonnet and the mute symphony.
Frogging into the craving cavern leap row on row
Of dreams and hopes and promises and pleas.
Slowly drawn into the concentric whirls of white heat
The mean music of human tears thinly trickles.

Waiting and weighing, the cursing corpses
Glance greedily to grub some wormy grape.
Eddying toward endless whorls of fire and wind,
The grey, strangled, fetid foetuses fix
Strange stares on tumescence of denial and desire.

The whirr and whish of whirlwind force
Tocsin too shrill for putrescent ears.
Like Leda, they hear only the whip of wind
As it obfuscates deadly thrust of bird.
And undulating flames spiral to weave
Cerement for bitter ceremonial and convoluted pain.

Bloody foam frothes forth from mouth
Meant for murmur and for music.
Burned stumps end Michelangelo's mighty wrists.
Wriggling worms cavort in holes where wonder
Might have enchanted prismatic Cezanne.

Stasis holds the golden note, stilled in silence.
Quicksilver fish fight to free their flash
From flame revolving and revolting.
The core of concentric rage lashes out to enwrap
All who trust and hope by fire.

THIS PLAYER, OTHELLO

by

Luetta Colvin Upshur

With blackness I will have no further friendship.
This Moor will whitewash the ebony of his face.
It is my sable coat that sent sweet Desdemona
To ferret out the fair Florentine.

So I will lay over this pall of night
A day-color more seemly to suit the wench.
With marbled cheeks she will have cheer
And blue veins do mark the blood's hot way.

So could it be for all things dark.
Pull aside the curtain. Let in the light.
Allow the mirror to mock all seeming,
And the play to portray the pith of life.