Liturgy

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Abstract

In the rattling death-hours When time shuffles Unnoticed underfoot And the drugged head Stares dumbly past the fact of its petty existence, The aromatic eunuch Repeats his shop-worn orgies with blighted stars...
Liturgy

by Tessie Pappas

In the rattling death-hours
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Unnoticed underfoot
And the drugged head
Stares dumbly past the fact of its petty existence,
The aromatic eunuch
Repeats his shop-worn orgies with blighted stars.

Oblivious of the psalms and cloying dissolution
That stain the underbelly
Of stubborn half-night,
A child tugs, undaunted,
At a stiffened scab-brown nipple,
Moaning wordless protests to ethereal chants.

A faint mallet-smile
Betrays the eunuch’s eyes.
Reverently, the suckling child is purged of this display—
The stark
Vulgarity. . .

Methodically dismembered,
The God made manifest
Is swallowed,
Devoured
Upon a white-hung table—
Offered, a tribute to the still-reluctant stars.

Again the wind is still
Ethereal psalms spin on
The ebbing miracle:

Agios o theos
Agios eis chiros
Agios athanatos
Eleison eimas.
UNCTUOUS CIVILIZATION,
Turgid with inundations of the white lamb blood,
Swoops down to lick its staring wounds:
The rubble of another
Cyclotronic
Absolution.

While underfoot, time
Shuffles a tattered rhythm
Across the washed sands
Of a more lucid grief.

Boy On A Bicycle
by Bernice Black

NEMANYA wheeled down the road, his bike making a hot wind. This had been the third dry summer in a row, and smoke from forest fires over-cast the sky, dimming the sun but only intensifying the heat. He pumped up a hill; the bottles rattled in the bike basket. Every ten yards a little yellow mark slid by. The paving crew had been through this