

*memphis dream #4*

*by Scott Caulfield*

awesome riverrolling  
city (sparkleless, muddy-guttered, myths of bluefish)  
and fences (ghosts heldIN  
neon  
ch  
ai  
ns  
.)  
a fleshy millrace churningturninggrindinghumanity,  
dumping creaking, wooden-slatted buckets of its offal  
in a hole  
where the wall is.  
on dirt-pitted stoops zigzagged gang tags  
FLUORESCENT  
where flybynights gather  
(as blackbirds fresh in windrows of fallen stalks of corn)  
drunk  
or not,  
and I spied their  
catlike moves across the bright felts, precise and smooth,  
backstroking english deriving arcs, splitting rainbows,  
causing in their chains of self-rolled cigarettes, in the end of it,  
a single (once more)  
lazy  
ash fleck  
into  
the  
breeze's grasp,  
tu m blll innnnggg  
o ver & o v rrrr finally  
diminished.

a black child  
whose flesh darkens as brass will do---scratches at  
intrusive streams of sunlight,  
yet blind is she, and  
holy (as all).  
a metal holy lady-  
in-waiting,  
waiting as eternity tracks her through alleys, across the wires,  
blind, she consecrates mirrors in trade for coin,  
polished from bucklesvalvesiron which  
sought her,  
found her,  
groping in salvage and familiar nightmares.  
on her left knee, swift hands (are her eyes)  
polish, with beads of stinking black-streaked salt tears  
creating sacred reflections of  
worlds she cannot see,  
yet life steals her away in spite, and  
each day,  
her eyes  
stay  
dead  
dark as new moons rising.

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Second Prize Winner of the 2011 Friends Baxter Memorial Library Writing Contest ~  
Adult Poetry Category