

Daniel Whitlow, P-31994
WordsUncaged Submission
(Poem)

“Drowning” (2015) * *Author’s Note: As my grandfather lay dying, Parkinson’s putrefying the inert connections of body and mind, the swarming awareness of his mind, and inability to voice it tormented him. He was unable to tell my grandmother how much he loved her. I wrote this to lend strength to his weakened voice—to eternalize their affection. I love you both.*

Atop his gilded, ghastly throne,
the dying king of fallen walls,
 of folded hands and faded voices,
 solemn in his silence,
 shrouded beneath a deep misery,
gently called upon his love:

*“Sleep deeply, my queen,
my priestess of painted eyes,
 of punctured veins and perfumed embraces.
What we do not say will be felt,
 will be known,
 will be echoed by great distance,
 resonating across ceilingless skies,
to return to only us,
as haunting summons from ghostly depths.
I pray your slumber be not filled by static,
nor verdant dreams deflected by angst,
 by its chiseled hand of ivory.
Lay with me, pressed against the soft earth,
as the moon touches our faces,
with opalescent wings;
sleep deeply, my queen...”*

Slowly, pain-stricken, the king of descent,
the liege of absence, of joyless folly,
falls to his knees.

“Do not stand,” the voice rings out, scattering,
clattering brazen in the thick air.

“Stay as you are meant to stay: broken;”
A thousand pieces,
Adrift...