

Daniel Whitlow, P-31994
Words Uncaged Submission
Poem

“Mask of Repentance” (2018)

The pain lies in wait for when I remove this plastic mask, and my face with it,
 but look beyond the reptile glaze haunting my blue, unfocused eyes
And while I crouch behind this threadbare, second-hand vermin maturity,
 I create my courage to whisper how your death stench gives me confidence.
—(as false a truth as I)—

Armed with my liar’s smile, my murmurs beckon with Melody’s muffled disease – Attrition’s soulless
 burn tolls in broken twos and brandished threes,
Awash in a sweetened sea of emerald trees, bowing to the divinity of wind – champion-turned-servant
 in a pathetic breeze;
Humanity’s potential for strength made all the more profound by its capacity for cowardice.
—(my blindness sees through the resentment I cling to, the obsessive dismissal I appease)—

We lay about our graveyard of stumps with nakedness and consumptive pleas, our dying breath stirring
 life in the fire we murdered our forests to build for one another,
Watch our lantern devils engulf the night; they dance distorted charnel reek and seek—a thousand suns
 of blood—to swallow the terror of invalids and dormancy,
Their malignancy blooms like thunder, across the miasma of smoke-strangled sky.
—(that means us)—

Poison, downpour-stained, buries me; lives to die; stares back at paths lost beyond a moon-spread
 vastness of regret and nurtured illusions,
Corrupt offspring of my self-loathing primacies, no forgiving nor forgetting in my image-important,
 emotional infancy, but I’ll try.
—(as false a truth as I)—