

Daniel Whitlow, P-31994
WordsUncaged Submission
(Poem)

“the price we pay” (2018)

—skeletons of cosseted glut—

nailing coffins shut with lips wet with bondage,
emotionless, sewn-tight legs atrophied by wasteful fretting,
alive in ritual insect defects; scurrying in the drain, across porcelain skin;
screaming scuttling dreams swarm, congregate to pull apart ailing flesh like

stripping down to a rusted, fly-infested naked swollen host,
a wriggling steaming pile of coiled kinetic disgust,
leaning longing sated over the sink
rotting teeming pipeline leprosy,

—curtains of groveling suet—

So are we drunken fools, lost to bland excuses, stumbling
verses that go on and on to claim void, like chants
to watch the executioner’s axe gradually
the lethargic limb thrashing of time,

along, bleating bumbling songs laden with elusive
wrought from blood, choruses sung and denied, doomed
draw ever nearer to our exposed necks? condemned writhing below
beneath the inescapable sole of Reality’s boot heel. I am aware nothing

—sweet touches my tongue—

pieces together; no light
deranged abyss—the rhetoric of
shook like dying leaves as I wrapped myself
I never-will-be-no-chance-can’t-possibly escape from

No pale paints my chest with rose red pressing faces; no fell gaze holds my broken
covers loose hills beyond my sight, or evades the colorless confines of my
collapse. I scarred my thighs with slits of silver cries. My hands
in guilty sorrow—I pled for reason. I sought to hide.

—myself...I owe you as much—