

BORDELLO

Michael Fantina

By that old house once hateful,
Where the farmer and dragoon,
Waited eager and so grateful
Under a crescent Moon,

That ghost house now is ready
Beneath the silver eye,
The wind swirls in an eddy,
Beneath a charnel sky.

The girls call to the garden,
The men the stairs ascend,
Their specter hearts will harden,
And specter money spend.

Harsh laughs are heard, not cooing,
Under the eaves in rain
Their work is tough, and wooing
Would leave them all in pain.

Once I heard them crying,
Gray ghosts in graceful form,
I thought they must be dying
Under an Autumn storm.

Each man takes a lover,
Each ghost to ghost is lent,
But no love will discover,
Their ghostly money spent.

Each harlot younger, older,
Will spice the air with musk,
Baring breast and shoulder
Will ride the wind at dusk.

And sometimes in the dawning
I can see their swirling hair,
And yearning, stretching, yawning,
I wish that I was there.

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Contemporary Rhyme Vol. 3 No. 3 2006