**Medusa**

**By Sammaneh Poursh**

I see you.

Eyes see you.

The eyes of gods see you.

A crowned council upon the mount

Golden skinned and silk gowned

Surveil us through lenses lenses tinted by their

Petty pretences and small jealousies.

Directors of our little comedies and tragedies.

We are little more than expendable and forgettable follies of fancy

Every cloud that surrounds the mount

Like a mantle made of mother’s milk.

Tears swell in the eyes and

Fall in rhythm with the tides

Hostages to the gravity of 14 moons

Are your irises green or blue?

I swear once they were the colour of Neptune!

In the father’s house

The mother can strike you down.

Serve in the shrine

*For thine*

Violations of vestal virgins

*For thine is*

The seal is broken

*For thine is the kingdom*

There are no secrets here

*The power*

I pray the wine-dark sea

*And the glory*

Does not take me

*For ever*

Forever

*And ever*

Gods and Men

*Lead us not into temptation*

The body is a temple

*Deliver us from evil*

Look in to the whites of my eyes

*Amen*

Gods and men make no amends

For unsolicited advances.

There is steep price to pay now for stolen glances!

My body’s a temple

My head is a palace

Where each room is rented to a castrated phallus

New notches created on bedposts each time

And epics narrated to boast in rhyme

‘Bout each conquest checkmated, each man I destroyed

Now what do you make of that, Herr Doktor Freud?

My body is a temple

Each bone in my spine serves as a rung in a ladder

That ascends to the spire which is my head,

A roof from which to observe the cries of gods and men.

Have you seen the whites of my eyes?

My body is the Garden of Eden,

Elysian Fields that harbour something serpentine

Are your irises blue or brown?

I watch him shuck oysters for their pearls

And gulp them down

Wreathed in a garland briefer than a girl’s

In your body is where I’ll build my temple

Of cold, cool marble

A doorless fortress

The curved arches of your windows

Look out to a garden

Your erection is a grave stone

The blood drains from his face;

I have finally become the master mason.

Are your irises brown or hazel?

In the hall of mirrors you avoid my gaze

While you think of trophies to present in court

And dream of Versace and luxury.

Reflections

*Lead us*

Inflictions

*Lead us not*

Decapitations

*Lead us not into temptation*

Severance

Deliverance

*But deliver us*

The blood he spills

*From evil*

Is my blood

My body becomes undone

The abject horror of my headlessness

A defused bomb doused in perfume

Another gash to overcome;

Another orifice to invade.

My head is the brave flag you wave.

A site that bleeds and breeds

Things of fantasies and teenaged dreams;

Winged creatures spawned from me and divinity

When pure waters mingle with the blood Red Sea.