

LION ON A WHITE FIELD

Glenna Holloway

Like the secret signs gypsies leave
on walls and gates,
I marked my lover:
Others would see only radial intaglios
at his eyes, a curious curlicue in his palm--
heraldry
from the banners of another age and place
when I watched
the escutcheons woven, and the red dying,
and learned what bearings to trace
on our return.

Early in the summer of now
I left my posturing suitors
at the bars sinister
astride their dark cycles
or encased half-couchant
in horse powered steel.
I mounted a blazoned stallion,
ensign of my long heritage, and rode
through armorial heat and flanching shadows
until I saw the mountain.
Halfway high, the stallion faltered and fell.
I crawled alone to the crest.
And no stranger held it, no unknown arms.
His standards matched my shield;
he reached out his hand
and called my ancient name.