

at the feet of
 the emperor a cithern-
 player squats with
 quivering gold
 body
 behind
 the emperor ten
 elected warriors with
 bodies of lazy jade
 and twitching
 eyelids
 finger
 their
 unquiet
 spears

the queen of queens is dancing

her subtle
 body weaving
 insinuating upon the gold cloth
 incessantly creates patterns of sudden
 lust
 her
 stealing body ex-
 pending gathering pouring upon itself stiffens
 to a
 white thorn
 of desire

the taut neck of the citharede wags
 in the dust the ghastly warriors
 amber with lust breathe
 together the emperor, exerting
 himself among his pillows throws
 jewels at the queen of queens and
 white money upon her nakedness
 he
 nods

 and all
 depart through the bruised air aflutter with pearls