Hello to The Decadent Review,

Thanks for considering these Meta on Meta poems. One addresses some underlying patriarchal aspects of Baudelaire’s masterpiece “Une Charogne”. The other is a sonnet using the elements of and commenting on a poem by William Carlos William, “Sonnet in Search of an Author”.

You published an ekphrastic poem of mine based on Beethoven’s 7th a couple years ago now.

Bio:

*Michael Perret is poet and translator from Austin, Texas. His work has appeared in AzonaL, The Decadent Review and Wild Musette. His translation of the short novel* Octavia the Quadroon *from Louisiana French was published in 2021 by Éditions Tintamarre. Most recently, his work has appeared in the anthology* Beautiful Tragedies 2 (*HellBound Books), and a selection of his poetry is forthcoming from The Horror Zine.*

Thanks again,

Michael Perret

The Patriarch

*after Baudelaire’s* Une Charogne

Remember, my love, that carcass we found

just off the path, without warning?

*Surprise!*  – I bet you’d meant that spot of ground

for me that warm summer morning!

I might have been game, but that day I learned…

But, hey! – More about that later!

Remember how the sun had cooked and burned

it’s skin? Remember the crater

Between its legs excreting larvae, or…

birthing them? – Spry nature coursing,

Like a fertile girl, with life from a core

that’s putrefying, and forcing

New life into the light? Its legs were spread –

Remember the smell? – *Unnerving*,

Right? It had such power, for something dead –

A brown juice came out, preserving

The maggots covered in its putrid oil –

I joked and you almost fainted,

When I pointed to a space in the soil

suggesting you get acquainted.

Was it the reek though? or was it the womb

that this fresh nature had chosen?

Or was it the fear of a “groom-on-groom”

that held you there as though frozen?

Because *that* carcass had once been a man

though now it looked like a woman;

There was a breeze that, gently, like a fan

raised the hairs off its abdomen.

And even though it was headless, its chest

was intact and flat and hairy;

Scavengers had come and left us the rest

to gawk and stare at, and tarry.

I don’t know about you, but what I saw

there in the grass, dead and rotting,

Was the patriarchy, *at last*, withdraw,

with all its unconscious plotting.

And the sight of that dead patriarch splayed

made me question *your* conniving

To get me behind those trees, to get laid –

a design not worth reviving.

We turned our backs and, regaining the path,

felt our relationship changing;

But it’s not just us, in his aftermath

the whole world is rearranging –

Sonnet on W.C.W’s “Sonnet in Search of an Author”

*“Personally, I’d like to start by saying, don’t write sonnets. The line is dead, unsuited to the language. Everything that can ever be said from now until doomsday in the sonnet form has been better said in twelfth-century Italian…”*

*Letters,* William Carlos Williams

Was it a dream – an impossible thing –

An old man with “nude bodies” on his mind –

Peeled logs like skin, like the odor the rind

Releases to the senses, like the spring

That, like laughter and wet clothes, seems to bring

The odor of excess, the sweetest kind,

Relentlessly, returning, just behind

The trailing woodbine, the pine needle’s sting

Beneath the trees, in full excess, the smell

Of a woman, undressed, pressed, of a man,

The odor of the ground, the trees that fell –

What an old man can’t, an old poet can,

Sometimes: conjure up that odor, be young…

You left your sonnet artlessly unsung –