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## Exile

Errol Miller

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# Exile

by Errol Miller

The arts will live again  
but not you, child, nor your purple cheeks  
puffing out illiterate sonnets of Eastern cities  
boarded up, of erotic death, of maidens  
standing by the gate of Hell.

Gothic Southern authors have spoken of  
a puny voice incessantly chattering through the night,  
the newsprint of morning booming out a story  
of people rubbing their wounded eyes  
with salt and creamy salve.

Dawn, and it all seems so clear  
and so distorted, tea leaves in a white porcelain cup,  
green vapors seeping from the kitchen  
as midwives prepare a stew  
of alcoholic eggs.

In that delight, that reverse magic,  
you ask for Mama and water and advice and clarity  
and writing paper and home and a good wind  
to blow away those troubles stacked  
in neat rows of trivia.

Leaving your number for a return call  
and waiting as streamlined trains lurch across  
your writing arm, your pride, on the other shore  
one red light blinking solitary and lonely  
in a sad café on cypress stilts.



*Photo (detail) by Joel Kendall*

