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FOUR POEMS

by *C. Allen Moore*

REFLECTIONS FROM A DILAPIDATED BISTRO IN TULSA

Persephone and the dragonlady sit
 At a yellow marbled slab atop wrought iron
 In their unmatched chairs.
 They look through each other:
 Past the paint and decadent glitter.
 The lady in black veiled once-finery
 Spills her phosphate with her thoughts—
 Just a little—from shaking.
 The morning's sepulcherment thus digested with the others,
 Small pain filed with the rest.
 Their no longer lustrous jewelry mirrors much and little.
 After small reflections of loss in their ancient diamonds,
 They crow and cackle about money, aches, and doctors,
 And other pettys, and sit watching the old snow beginning,
 And sit.

MY MENTOR

My mentor sat: coffee and candy at hand.
 He spoke in riddles—paused—answered.
 Slowly he led me down a rich thought-loud path.
 The walk was comfortable, casual, and wonderful.
 We walked among the oaks and the fallen leaves.
 The oaks were laden with very diverse fruits.
 We walked toward the light and studied the fruit.
 He said something about the light; be ever illusive.
 Unfortunately, my mentor could lead only so far.
 I will continue the journey for him, for me.

THE FACTORY WORKER

Humdrum—Humdrum—
Follow the beat of the
Master's drum.
Humdrum—Boredom—
Do your part—be good—
Complacency.

The struggle: a sixty-hour
redundant week—
So their children can eat.
So their children can Eat.
Be a good Bee-o-knave—
Minion, monger, madman—

They told them with Unions
came prosperity.
Yet, they live in crystal palaces filled
With gold and silver.
The minions are confined to
their aluminum boxes

Their politics are shady.
Their tactics transparent.
The minor-Masters are
Animated marionettes..
The string-Masters are
Animated marionettes.
The string-Masters shrewd
MoneyMongers.

But, who cares?
Dickens is dead!
Humdrum—Humdrum—
Follow the beat, beat, beat of
the MASTER'S DRUM.

A SLAP IN THE FACE

Yesterday, Middle America stood up
and slapped me in the face.
So I moved to another world:
I viewed depravity and degradation,
hopelessness and the unholy,
middle-class gods and upper-class demons,
a little charity and much cruelty...
Today, depressed, I returned home to Weatherberry.
Today, Middle America stood up
and kissed me so sweetly. ■

C. ALLEN MOORE is now a 3-M employee who has finished a Master's of English Education degree at Southwestern. His works have previously been published in WESTVIEW, and some of his more political poetry has been published in the NEW YORKER.