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Sestina: Caina

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SESTINA: CAINA

We issued from One body.
 "O where is thy brother?"
 The Voice of his blood cries forever.

I

Damn Ezra Pound! In Caina, we pressed to our brother
 Breast to breast all purple with chill forever,
 Because the Voice of his blood cries slaughter,
 Because they gave us a gun to drop his body,
 Because we were told, "Your Fathers did rejoicing,"
 So we thought, might as well with purple mouth gnaw,

II

Might as well dance cheek to cheek, as the voiceless throat
 gnaw,
 Stiff-legged two-step dance-march with our brother.
 O from the woods Windigo, Windigo the Carib giant come, dance
 rejoicing,
 Dance coldly, Dance hand-in-hand, Saturnalia forever,
 Dance and howl, howl until the body,
 Howl until the moon drips purple, drips soundless darts of
 slaughter,

III

Drips holy drops purple from his like fat hog slaughter
 Drips, kiss his cheek, then caress his skull and gnaw.
 Brew his body, (Eat! It like vital will make you fertile), brew
 his body,
 In savage cauldron, boil, boil thy brother.
 Cough. The rising cloud-like-battle stains our lungs forever,
 While grinning eyes around, around barefooted rejoicing.

IV

Yama, Yama, Yama, sing the purple, sing the victory songs rejoicing.
 Sing the feast (like the Maori) praise the horseman Slaughter,
 Sing a ballad of the purple body, sing the stink forever,
 Sing, serenade the eternal chasm teeth-polished wide to grin, to
 gnaw.
 Feast. Send his eyes to your blind brother,
 With rifle butts and bayonet, spread his guts, dissect his body.

V

Sell the rest. "Lampshades for a dollar, pure gold, anybody?"
"Everything not delectable, everything useful," (cries the drummer
rejoicing
At the sale of one toe of thy brother).
But he is most proud of that leg (like Samson wrenched) "For your
next slaughter!"
"A bone for your dog to gnaw!"
Treadmill this drummer of annals -- Cain and Abel forever.

VI

Might as well the Voice of their blood cries forever.
Might as well (What difference?) stink the earth, stain the universal
body.
Might as well (What difference?) with purple-mouth gnaw.
Might as well bathe in flowing purple rejoicing.
Might as well stalk the world with Slaughter.
Might as well feed your psychotic desire, "O where is my brother?"

VII

Might as well they give you a gun to drop his body, the body of your
brother,
And your Fathers did rejoicing slaughter,
Did purple-mouth gnaw, Might as well die . . . Forever.

O'Ryan Rickard
Third Prize Poetry