

Twilight Marble

The men float along the *twilight marble*
navigate obliquely –

A gathering of languid shapes
their work now done,
or long passed into regret

Hands chat signals, encode *false fires*
lacking more direct affirmation for the solidarity of their situation

They glide – glide on together. . .
signal again, pace – then come about
sail on

Histories without destination,
laden with a precious fret of clutter
All circumnavigate edges of the alabaster question.

Formality of circumstance:

a dance as it must have been, before the world was round
each courting plaza light
before their motion pools into eddies of shade
dull mixes of confirmations,
hands clasped behind... still kneading the – *dark hand*

Waltz of an ageless contract,
which imbues its' presence with such intractable weight
There, the presumption of – *women's work*, an inequity of regard
implores from behind these shuttered doors...

Why have these women,
whose palpable absence,
been left-borne again the debt?

Here is the other image:

Cracked shop door, in passing –
Three old shapes glare out from under sullen lids
The central shape casts the larger and darker, sedentary Maria.

She forms the vaulted halo of stone – elbows splayed upon the counter

Adorning ladies at either side are paler –
less alive than even her black weight,
which has sucked in through this door slit
an accrual of ceaseless souls fleeting by –

As life's waning passes...
vanishing into generations,
a countless exchange, even before
the currency of time.

This fated embrace of covenants
seeps shadows,
presses fingers to ever lengthening thought,
pursues its' deeper addictions, while –
Absence patrols the *marble twilight*,
taps its cane,
scratches along the serpentine vein.

John Sturgeon ©2009
(Martina Franca, Cisternino & Ostuni, Italy -1998)