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## Gypsies

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KAREN BULLOCK

## Gypsies

The smoke curls, obscuring your face--  
you could be anyone in this dim  
graffitied haven, any man.

I breathe deep and listen for the  
crackling bubbles, the ground  
murmuring on the pads of my toes.

I catch him in a stare and silently  
smirk, return the admiration in  
his eyes while I'm on your arm.

This is the black market of love,  
the tainted twin called lust, the  
alcoholic aunt of affection. I pull back  
my spindly fingers that have been  
creeping away from your touch,  
reprimand and remind the rebels.

You have a vision in the night of  
my fanciful transgressions--your mind  
has tapped into my frequency,  
picked up the signals in the chilled  
midnight air, and my heart shudders,  
quakes as only the guilty heart can quake.

As I trace my lips with a teasing tongue,  
I watch his pupils dilate as you suck  
down the bitter smoke, watch your  
lungs turn black with suspicion in  
the humid evening. The air is  
saturated with longing, and I can feel  
your hope spark and catch fire that  
it is you I am reaching for in this heat.

A tapping foot, another deep breath  
drawn in, and your cloudy vapor puffs  
out in circles, framing my intentions  
clearly in the lamplight, rings vanishing  
at my fingertips. My limbs are lit with  
secrecy, deceit flowing through each  
artery, pumping the lifeblood of sordid  
adventure from my heart outwards.

His forbidden-fruit lips meet mine  
in my mind, but your hand still grips  
my forearm lightly, a leash on my  
siren song calling to his skin.

This fantasy will remain only that  
for tonight, and I will wake guilt-free  
with the dawn, but these deeper  
desires will inevitably surface again.  
A dream here, a poem there, and  
in my mind's eye I return to his arms,  
encircling me like smoke rings.