

Three Poems by Cathy Porter

Commando

This city sleeps naked –
Its junk an open invitation

Horny buildings
Sprawled over concrete
Streetlights spread-eagle
Corner to corner

As the night trippers
Gawk at the free show
Spew lewd comments
Into the foul air

How long before she gets
What she deserves -
How long before every orifice
Is violated because she asked for it?

Ash

The fire rose to the heavens,
as I watched just inches behind you;
your sobs stuck in my head,
hard as cement –

As the heat silenced the cold
on that December day. The shock
slaps our faces into distortion;
sirens and trucks become space,

My eyes smaller as the hoses
come out – an all or nothing shot
to the roof that once covered me,
in times that now seem innocent -

And have disappeared into a pile of ash;
I am frozen in this minute, never
to reach another hour; your arms
around your son, my brother.

As If

The sun has no meaning –
forgotten as days pass in darkness-
each one a story in hiding

The chair in your room – as worn as the body
in bed – stares at me with threadbare arms.
Autumn seems early this year; I smell it
outside your window

I light up my next smoke -
you laugh and spout off printed warnings
you failed to notice; your dinner untouched
on the nightstand

When I spend the night, I dread that chair –
and I'm ashamed to say I would rather be
anywhere else – but I stay and watch you sleep,
TV on mute; not a cure in sight. Nobody dies
looking hot –all those years of makeup wasted;
phone calls and paper plates, prayers recited, as if...

Cathy Porter's poetry has appeared in Plainsongs,
Homestead Review, Green Hills Literary Lantern,
California Quarterly, and various other journals. She has
two chapbooks available from Finishing Line
Press: *Dust And Angels* and *A Life In The Day*. Her
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