

The Idol on the Square

By Kristopher Miller

There stands the Idol on the Square,
Glistening in its glazed, gold splendor and so-called glory.
It sun does not shine on it because it is important,
The sun shines on it because the Idol is simply there, simply there to bask in it all.
But then come the first tribe of people who walk into the empty square,
Who walk into the Idol's city looking for company.
All they see is the Idol, a figure firm and masculine
Yet it is also lean and feminine.
All who see the Idol's seductive stare,
With its crafted eyes narrowing a little like a graceful serpent's eyes
Believe the Idol to be holy
As it glistens in its glazed, gold splendor and so-called glory.

The first tribe looks above, hungry and hopeful
They sit down in front of the idol, as they are taken by its chiseled, serpentine form.
Then the second tribe comes in and notices the first tribe eyeing the Idol.
The Idol eyes the newfound fans flocking by the handful.
The second tribe sits down to gather around the Idol and forget their long journey
To wherever they were supposed to be or whatever they were supposed to do.
Then tribe after tribe leers in line and take their time from the wilderness
To bask in the Idol's wisdom of wasting without worrying,
As it glistens in its glazed, golden splendor and so-called glory.

The tribe members sit around the Idol, looking up demanding peace
From treading arid deserts,
Walking through moist, flesh melting jungles,
And venturing in bone biting arctic winds
And forgetting the larger presence around them
That lead these folk from the danger of this place
And what would lead them away from the Idol.

The tribe members dance around the Idol.
They blend their blistering, bruised bodies close to the Idol's golden platform,
Against each other in a violent orgy of screams, moans, and demands for where they are
In their mortal life and for the realm beyond the weary bone and flesh they inhabited.
They ask constantly of what they can do for the Idol,
All while forgetting of a larger purpose of their own god
And of why they were walking around the wilds in the first place.
Instead, they are entranced by the Idol's mute music
That rings in their heads, which screams from the closed mouth of the Idol
In its glazed, golden splendor and so-called glory

The shriveling tribes bow down to the Idol's grace without individual care
Of their rib cages poking and of their mouths dry with drought.
In their weakness, the tribes goad the Idol
To perform a miracle of strength like or more than their own god,
Or even more than each tribe member can do.
Yet their minds are sinking into a haze of ash
From the fire they burn around the Idol to hopefully bring it to full life
And their skin is black and charred from pouring all the goods and money
Into the ring of fire surrounding the Idol
They give their nourishment to a being built on the basis of needing no sustenance
Except its own and the lives it is stealing from the people around it.

The tribes holler and howl for the Idol to answer their wishes of a safer haven
Than the barren one they are frivolously wasting in now.
They desecrate their individuality with conformist chants used to glorify their god
But instead are used to glorify the Idol with ragged throats.
The Idol still stands, blind, deaf and mute
To the tribes' kisses,
To the tribe's prayers,
And to the tribes' outstretched arms grasping for salvation.
The Idol basks in the tribes' ignorance yet ignores their ignorance
In its glazed, glistening, so-called glory.

The Idol on the Square
Stands in a pool of starved and dying bodies
Still pleading in weathered whispers,
And still gripping the Idol's platform with bony fingers.
All these tribes, all these offerings to the vultures
Perching on the tops of buildings, on the lamp posts, and on the city gutters,
They were once followers of their own god,
And of their own destinies,
But they are now the followers of the Idol,
The Idol of Death,
The Idol of Damnation,
The Idol of Starvation,
And the Idol of Lamentation.

They are followers of the Idol on the Square
In its glazed, glistening, so-called glory.