

Inquisitor

by Roger Moore

He told me to read,
and plucked my left eye from its orbit;
he slashed the glowing globe of the other.
Knowledge leaked out: loose threads dangling,
the reverse side of a tapestry.

He told me to speak,
and squeezed dry dust between my teeth.
I spouted a diet of Catechism and Confession.

He emptied my mind of poetry and history.
He destroyed the myths of my people.
He filled me with fantasies from a far off land.
I live in a desert where people die of thirst,
yet he talked to me of a man who walked on water.

On all sides, as stubborn as stucco,
the prison walls listened, and learned.

**I counted the years with feeble scratches:
one, five, two, six;
for an hour, each day, the sun shone on my face;
for an hour, at night, the moon kept me company.**

Broken worlds lay shattered inside me.

**Dust gathered in my people's
My heart was a weathered stone
withering within my chest.**

**It longed for the witch doctor's magic,
for the healing slash of wind and rain.**

The Inquisitor told me to write out our history:

I wrote how his church had come to save us.

Author's contact information

*Roger Moore
Romance Languages Department
St. Thomas University
PO Box 4569 Station A,
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada E3B 5G3
rgmoore@stu.ca*