

Theresa In Ecstasy

After the sculpture by Giovanni Bernini

Bernini's beatific
mystic, humility's folds
tucked into her robe

like the tubercular vow
caught in her lung.

To martyr the self in its rash imperfection
is an urgency no virgin would know.

But Theresa's the bride of Christ
flown into trance, mantle flung back,

violet eyelids
low and euphoric, fluttery
tensing of fingers and toes,
fever

blessing her muscles,
oxygen fog in her blood,
bones strung

in loose modulation
like notes of Gregorian chant,
a hum off the moon

as the voice of the Spouse
sails down through the bell-
shaped shadows

where her raised index finger
trembles
inside the marble

and molecules swoon
through lavender-pure
and murmuring
stone.

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