

Inaction (or a disease of consciousness)

by Jack Nelson

There's the odd haired place in the shadow of the corner
where the time goes, un-spilt, mischievous, like a block of agar
glistening at the folly of ingenuity animating our lives.
If only it were an object de arte, a symbol imbued with meaning
unsettling our freighted conscience - a face, a phrase, a figurine;
instead, filigrees of distraction buzz around daring us to touch it.

Echoes of Ecclesiastes murmur in the shadow of the corner
where grout crumbles and the time goes, liminal, stillborn,
comforting us with its masked and blameless unknowing,
*"More weighty than wisdom or wealth is a little folly ...
there will be no work, no reason, nor knowledge,
nor wisdom in the nether world where you are going."*

When I will become that which regret crystalizes?
a precipitate drawn of breath and distraction
from a life's sling of pretense besotted
by an affinity for drink, deflection and heraldry.
Utter waste — the crest of one sad eye and old shoes
lodged in the shadow of the corner where time goes

hunched and explosive, a muscled, wrinkled diadem —
livid, and by turns, questionable, histrionic and implacable
like Giacometti's smile, El Greco's distortion, Richter's blur
Bacon's insistence and Richard Prince's stubborn riffs
emphatic forms of greatness re-lived with a familial pretense
If I could be (in) them, they would be my own recompense.

