

Poetry Workshop I

Fireman's Waltz

Joe Bruner

Smoke billowed out of the windows
like a voluminous black cloak.
Inside, a charred chair trembles
in the corner, the feeble, scarred
legs barely able to support the weight.
The wispy curtains,
ragged and torn,
smoldering at the edges,
flutter at the merest breeze.
Windows shattered,
silvery shards still
reflecting the glint of the flaming carpet.
Two black boots appear, crunching
the shards into fine powder.
The scent of smoke crushes him, heavier than
carrying the world over shoulders,
but he wears a mask to
help with this – whsssh, whoosh –
just like Darth Vader.
The boots take a step,
pause,
take a step,
pause–
in a waltz with the fire.
They swing around, toward
the tapestry on the
wall, burning tiger
in the night woven mystically together.
Hacking and chopping
through anything in his way,
large chunks of burning
furniture fall to either side of him.
his goal becomes apparent
as the boots go *squish* in a puddle
of red goo,
and a slender, pale arm
reaches out in a crooked angle,
cold, lifeless.
Too late, but the body is saved
as the boots splash droplets of
red goo everywhere, the fiery spirit
of each drop fading, cooling against the wall.