

Poetry Workshop I

Playing with Fire **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.
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.
The moon glares through the jagged hole cut
in the glass. A pale thumb
traced the cruel, piercing edges,
slicing the skin, releasing
a bead of blood, rolling down,
and falling off the thumb.
Drip...drop...drip...
Spilling and splashing
on the cold, white hand
laying lifeless on the floor.