

No Refuge
by Michelle McMillan

A chimera roams this falling night.
Her vestments trail
in shifting shadows muffled
under a cloak of velvet,
soft as staghorns moulting.

The sheen of raw silk ripples
across wet pavement strewn
with gold filigree and diamonds,
the crimson flesh of roses,
a splash of pooled silver –
Holy sacrament.

I came here for refuge.
Here where it makes no sense to wander,
where watery darkness bears
the familiar shape of things
and present melts into past
with a steady drip.
In this uncertain place
I find him.

He is continental drift that folds rock,
phantom rain never touching earth,
vibration in my empty hands,
rare eclipse of sun and moon,
shadow ringed in light,
a mirage shimmering.

A flash of chrome splashes my gaze.
Red lights soak through the dark wash
of crushed leaves and shattered glass.
No wedding cake.
I am a cry of joy in a matrix of asphalt.

I was never safe here.