

LION ON A WHITE FIELD

Glenna Holloway

Like the secret signs gypsies leave  
on walls and gates,  
I marked my lover:  
Others would see only radial intaglios  
at his eyes, a curious curlicue in his palm--  
heraldry  
from the banners of another age and place  
when I watched  
the escutcheons woven, and the red dying,  
and learned what bearings to trace  
on our return.

Early in the summer of now  
I left my posturing suitors  
at the bars sinister  
astride their dark cycles  
or encased half-couchant  
in horse powered steel.  
I mounted a blazoned stallion,  
ensign of my long heritage, and rode  
through armorial heat and flanching shadows  
until I saw the mountain.  
Halfway high, the stallion faltered and fell.  
I crawled alone to the crest.  
And no stranger held it, no unknown arms.  
His standards matched my shield;  
he reached out his hand  
and called my ancient name.