***The Purple Butterfly***
settling upon your face
illumines the yearnings within your soul
coded in a message of strobe lightning

it was an inauspicious beginning
three men on the hunt in a Minneapolis bar
spitting piss beer and leering at the dancing dames

i sat there taut of body, howling in brain
14 months on the inside yard primed me for that moment
i chewed the air with a sucking breath
as pretzels and chips crumbled under foot

it was a time of savaging fear
i walked with Lazarus, worried about my stench
who would touch a man from the grave
or deign to gaze upon the mangled and mashed instrument
of his wet dreams?

it was not your beauty nor this painted insect on your face
no, it was in the decaying bathroom
where you chased me away, answered
that *i cannot*, could not be yours this night
*Oh!* i ached for the dawn

in time, you brought a basket full of fruits
some fresh, some moldy, some without pits
picnicked in the attic for a year
charming the ants, making mad rituals
attempting to lure healings from our shaman bones

when you left me for dear ole Columbus
i cursed his ship and wanted to declare
you already sovereign territory
but you sped away on a snorting motorcycle
flying the flag of the jaunty buccaneer

now that you have braked for a brief visit
that attic in my heart sealed ten years ago
once again
has opened for Spring cleaning

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*Ah!* i am relishing the memory of odors
the sweet taste of your intense tears

in every bar, around every corner, in every hotel
in every city for every day
i had peered in anticipation of that dancing prancing butterfly
but now I know that it flits about
only on the beat which has always been
our hearts

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