

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

Ekweremadu Uchenna
METAMOPHORSIS

returning in different costumes
I play to please the playwrights
who lounge by the hourglass
to check me with frowns and smiles

after a hundred acts
I come on stage again
and the pages turn over
to a new heaven and earth

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

MARINA

she made her colours and scents
solely for his senses

she tended her trees and fruits
just for his delight

but now like a flower
frowned upon by the sun
she has withered
and her mirror
badly contrasts with her calendar

she's all alone when she's sick
while he revels with another *chick*

the long cold nights
prove a hotter hell for her soul

to him she's a punch bag
the least demur costs her a slap
or a hit on the jaw
her black eyes and puffed cheeks
are the scoreboard

she spends the day moping
and dreams of Prince Charming
at liquor-sodden nights

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

AT THE SAHARA TAVERN

After all is done
We sit by trays of deserts
Stroking our bushy beards
Gloating at the maids
As they dance to the flutes and strings

While we compare scars and blisters
And jeer at cowards
Our horses in the backyard
Recall brave acts and neigh in delight

As the aroma of strong tea and opium
Clears the fog in our brains
We chant odes to the genie
Whose breath upsets sand dunes
And to our compatriots
Who offered blood for the cause

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

REVELLERS' CHANT

we will not haunt the youths
that will ball with our skulls
nor the dancers
that will drum with our ribs

spare us your crosses and marbles

your hymns won't appease us

drink from night to morning
when we die

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/3

STATESMEN'S COMPLAINT

while you snore from dusk to dawn
we sit up to build paradise for you

we need rare liquors to grease our coarse throats

and dainty palms to kneed our aching joints

choked by sufferings we groan

burdened by your cares we wane

rather than track our trails,
why not build for us gold coffins

rather than query our indulgence,
why not store up thankful tears
to water the flowers that will grace our graves