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Diorama

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DIORAMA

The love-whips pause and in their place
 screams; passion and
 the gods pass now and the soundless deaths
 prove back the loving living boundries

Machines and passionate pageants
 all cut from amber winds
 with ice for crystal form the buildings
 of priests:
 Hand rubbed in blood and the living
 the wind rocks and their gray warriors
 set in their pattern of defeat are gathered
 drinking; waiting for the love again

But the pageant shifts and the
 river moulds the hills and,
 forming valléys for the warrior's homes,
 floods them, their hands and food,
 and rises in contempt to the
 crystal and fluid air
 driving the soft old warriors back
 again:

their axe hands raised the weapons
 form themselves to the only purpose
 And the ice-wind fortress raises from
 the frosted hills, now again among gray rocks
 and listening earth

With the resurrection then the songs
 and drinking and the purpose
 of new cleaned armor—
 Death rides through the ice-wind room
 in the presence of the living
 Singing itself to the glory of time;
 to the mask of the prophets;
 to the cry of the bloodless
 and the forceful strength of battle.

—DON IVERS