

The Book of Blood, Ghosts and Screams

By Richard Paul

The army revelled around the ashes
Of the city they'd slaughtered that morning.
They howled and danced as young conquerors do,
Living the moment they'd long be mourning
Once their bloody-red ecstasy was through;
Consigned to their dreams in wisps and flashes.

But for my old self it was hardly the same
For I'd struck with my spells from a distance,
Too far from the victory's elation.
Besides, my Prince soon sought my assistance,
For he wished arcane commemoration
Of the kingdom he had chastised in flames.

He'd taken a book from the bed chamber
Of the slain king, and gave it to me,
His Priest of Leviathan, to twist it
To a whispering-tome of the glories;
Whilst the details lingered I'd commit
Them to the changed pages, to be preserved.

I took this book to our camp's crude temple
And implored Leviathan, in Her pride,
To remake it in an image that pleased.
She sent a spirit who would gladly bide
In the book and rule over what we seized,
Lord of a living story most-dreadful.

Together we meandered through the streets
As oft as we could for the next six days,
Ensnaring those hapless ghosts of the slain
And echoes which, on reddened stones, remained;
The spirit bore each one to a new page
Till the chapter of the dead was complete.

At night we would shift amongst the soldiers,
Calmer now and returned to piety,
They gave to the book their recollections.
An offering of unspeakable glee,
Thousands of stories of devastation
Gladly stored and shared betwixt the covers.

Once done, I returned this prize to the Prince
Who read such memories behind his eyes
And marked, in a trice, his army's fury,
And he mocked the fate of those he'd despised;
He gifted me land, so much was he pleased

And he has cherished that book ever since.