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Trial by Fire

the ashen-white marble walls
are the colour of bones
bleached by the acid
dripping from the desert sun.
the ruined fortress
shimmers into mirage
above the asphalt highway.

the ground, throbbing with
the pulse of solar flares;
heartbeats of summer annealing
the very air
into undulating sheets
of plate glass.

here, acacia thorns
and the scar tissue
of sifting sand
suture the savage wounds
of history.

this landscape is ablaze,
an immense funeral pyre.
The earth itself is prostrate
like a burning sati—

molten flesh pungent
with death and sorrow,
with the heart
still beating inside the body.

smoke, tears, dust, ashes—
everything vanishes into the sky's timeless inferno,
and all else
is rubble.