

After the Curtain Falls,
Isabella Speaks in Achromatics

Dayna Patterson

*Dear Isabel,
I have a motion much imports your good,
Where to, if you'll a willing ear incline,
What's mine is yours, and what is yours is mine.*
—Vincentio, Duke of Vienna, *Measure for Measure*

What's yours is yours
and I am

{Cool Charcoal Slate}

/sworn to simplicity

he ignores my short white veil
chaplet of beads brown tunic/

not yours. You're silver,

{Nickel}

tarnished, a self-made
playwright-god, blocking
others' moves. But I'm

{Platinum Gunmetal Lead}

/not yet bride
of christ a nova
not yet postulant
awaiting knotted cord

{Eider Down Whale}

wimple not yet the serre-tête
black veil brown habit/

no actor. Throat open,

/saint clare sister
 savior patron of laundry
 wash me/

{Grey-green Blue-grey Glaucous}

would-be stage master,
 you will hear me.

/saint clare
 patron of goldsmiths gild
 my speaking/

{Metallic Franciscan}

I've already sworn my faith to

/saint clare patron of television i'm antenna
 to your signal enclose me in ghostly
 calligraphy/

{Dark Dim Light}

the One
 you've failed to impersonate.

/saint clare patron
 of needlework stitch me
 a center of winter/

You've un-haloed unholy
 angels, spared a sinner-
 brother's life. For these mercies

/saint clare patron of eye
 disease shield these
 orbs from/

{Fog Goblin}

melded, my honest
 thanks. But I do not consent

/saint clare patron of good
 weather blow me always
 january/

{Storm Sleet Jet}

to your jack-in-a-box
proposal. When you uncowl,

/grow me into thorned
rose my blood

{Cinereous Ash}

reveal a dull crown, I unveil
my answer, yank back crushed
velvet to declare:

frost to snow-broth/

*/I hold the Lord—
and I am held/*

{Smoke Marengo}

Wolf. I say No. I say