

# CHRISTOPHER DEWEESE

## Three Poems from *The Confessions*

I was a borough lost to endless warfare  
through slow quarters, imperceptible

as a trick that spans its magician's career,

shoes noosed from telephone wire  
twisting a tragic abacus  
above the fashionable bayonets

night's last trains left behind.

From the front's neon lights  
to the discount tenements,

everything looked beautiful  
searching for a finer static.  
Even my fingerprints, bent slowly

as a strongman's love  
to tally some score from the breaking.

To match sunrise  
my body would be rewound in crime scene tape.

Pigeons exploded.

Debris stretched its own museums  
across your make-up, my citizens

dusting coupons from the major intersections  
with the shadows of your guns.

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I was a street chaunter  
yelling libelous broadsides endlessly,

my patter mostly period pornography  
stocking murders with handsome flesh,

additional sailors, love letters,  
and “signature wigs”

through the England of the England of the Sonnets.

I sold love garlands and penny merriments  
at park entrances,

my missives undershooting heeled gents and their pale brides

for the vanity of the lower orders  
who didn't mind trading sense for rhyme,

couplets abruptly comparing era bicycles  
to cursive letters the landscape signed.

A soft, behaved rain  
fingerprinted every legible window  
like literal translations of revenge.

The gaslights some citizens loved so famously  
they said “let's glow” dimmed.

My throat, that modest foghorn, was about to begin.

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I was a sheet music tycoon  
tuning contemporary tragedies  
into a balladry  
families could gather around.

My real estate was in music:

a scorched zeppelin,  
a tree full of violinists.

All the bravest orphans  
worked for me,

spines bent into notation  
for rolled chords  
as they lurched between disasters  
like real live ephemera.

Letters wept nostalgic shipwrecks  
over my covers,

pianos full of tiny fires  
and kidnapped twins  
filling our nation's parlors  
in endlessly familiar melodies.

Like some useless machine  
I sat giant, debating myself

as I ate money.