

tired, teetering between the tides—still life in Venice

by *Francisco Izukiri*

From the airplane window, I caress
 a little fish of stone and cement
 emerging from the lagoon
a bittersweet smile;
so charismatic, nostalgic
drenched in cursed beauty;
a diamond of a fallen republic
 adrift among the waves,
 like a plastic bottle
tired, teetering between the tides.

I step into your heart,
leap from one ventricle to another —
from hotel to Airbnb.
No one cares for you to feel loved;
they want you to be a whore
 at the mercy of their gold,
 to be used, drained,
 until the inevitable collapse.
A ruin, useful as an elegy —
from protagonist to backdrop
to sell paintings or pride.
And in part, I understand you, my dear —
abandoned among the waves, you and I.

I trace the red bench with my fingertips
sink my feet into the canal
 frosted by the fine rain.
Looking for timid white clouds in the distance,
 I abandon my back to your *fondamenta*
as I once did with my past
 upon the Bridge of Liberty.

I wrap myself in your palaces,
 my silky duvet of salt and stone,
so I can fall asleep certain
 I will wake in a dream.