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## Sonnet for Redentore

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# ARCHIPELAGO; SONNET FOR REDENTORE

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## Archipelago

There are other lives I might have led  
crouched in the foothills of Pordenone,  
meandering along the shoals of the Piave,  
stabled in a farmhouse in Maser, impatiently  
pacing the platform at Ponte nelle Alpi.

They are lives crouched over endless rounds  
of bastoni, played in a truck-stop bar  
in Refos, or Castion or god-forsaken-Trichès;  
an ever-mounting Tarot deck of

forgotten images:  
here we are thugging about in Chioggia,  
here we are kissing  
beside the grotty cathedral in Vicenza.

I am tumbled from this archive,  
strewn across the cool marble floor.  
I stand marooned on private islands  
of uncertainty, potential:  
a vast, sweeping, uncharted archipelago.

## Sonnet for Redentore

Dark shapes bob in the kiss of the bay,  
and moorings jink a metallic symphony.  
Corks pop and cutlery scrapes away  
late dinner. Across military pontoons we  
Jesus-step across the sea towards Giudecca;  
looking back, the soot-black cupola  
of Salute looms, a Baroque full-stop to  
plague days. Overhead we hear the whir

and fizz of fireworks, a cascading,  
coloured fugue; the sky adrip with  
Pollock flicks of dying embers, falling.

Centuries of mundane death transform  
in streaks of neon-green and yellow-white,  
an orgasmic and torrential rain of light.

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Venzo is a poet and lecturer working in southwest Victoria. Over many years he has published in the areas of media and communications and literary studies. He was recently conferred as a Doctor of Philosophy after the successful completion of a manuscript of poetry about his relationship to Venice and the Veneto titled *Archipelago*, which was accompanied by an exegesis exploring aspects of his poetic practice, including self-translation.

