



Hurricane Irma.

Christopher Bernard

Storms

Across the darkness of the gulf,
the rose spins, majestic,
unfurling and expanding,
flower of destruction
scattering behind it petals from the fist of the wind.

The ancient gods have returned.
They stalk the world in rage.
They grew in the heart of man
and now they take their revenge.
“You placed yourself above us!
Now you are lower than the worm!

We are the mirrors of your pride!
The mirrors have shattered, and you dance on the shattering!”

A small voice rises from the wind:
“Take pity, o gods, in your anger!
Wrong-doers you have not harmed.
The poor and weak and defenseless
have borne the brunt of your fury,
all unjustly. Take pity!
Man’s evil lies upon them.
Do not add to their suffering!
Take pity, o gods, on them!”

But the rains fall, unhearing,
the gods are deaf to the plea.
The water rises in destruction
the petals of the rose of the seas.

Christopher Bernard is co-editor and principal of *Caveat Lector*. His new collection of poetry, *Chien Lunatique*, appeared in May 2017.