



The day the Cloud reigned

Michael R. Burch

*The sky was clear on Hiroshima,
sealing her fate.*

*The few innocuous clouds did not refrain
from abandoning the city.*

*Only the silence, monstrous in its complicity,
regarding man's error
acknowledged the horror.*

*Only the small, astonished victims
understood the immaculate heavens:
the inconceivable light
igniting their bones;
the Cloud, all of a sudden,
billowing unbidden,
and then the apocalyptic rain
descending again and again.*

*So that where white chrysanthemums
had once whispered with bemused tongues
instantly only ashen ruins remained
the day the Cloud reigned.*