

Joe Bruner  
Poetry Workshop III  
Partner Poem – 3/25/2015

**A Darker Shade – 3<sup>rd</sup> Draft**

There is a flower that grows, deep  
within the Redwood forest,  
where the fog  
wraps  
around the trees. It blooms only

in the midnight of a moonless  
night,  
under the darkest crevice of a cracked  
and fallen pillar.

The clouds drift over,  
rolling, ominous, thickening darkness  
matched by the petals  
midnight-black, dripping  
with viscous oil that seeps  
into the Earth, a burning,  
toxic ooze.

The sky starts to rain, but it is  
not a kind rain, nor  
gentle.  
It is acidic, searing the land-  
scape with its silky  
poison.

As the winds pick up, and  
batter and beat  
the flower, the flower  
basks in its hellish glory,  
soaking up  
pain and misery  
through the roots, clamped  
into the rock itself until  
the rock  
withers into a pile  
of pebbles.

The winds die –  
suddenly. Stars peek

out from behind their velvet  
veil. Words whisper in  
the wind, an ancient  
promise glows brightly  
in the stone ribs of the Earth.

As dawn breaks over the cloudline,  
the world is

quiet.

In the morning air, the flower  
blooms, sparkling intensely  
obsidian black,  
reflecting the depth of  
the soul.

Dewdrops cling to the underside  
of each petal,  
a darker shade,  
quivering and delicate,  
surviving,  
like wind chimes drifting  
across a meadow in  
the afternoon sun.