



COTILLION

Cherene Sherrard

The chorine flirts with the mob boss
who splays her atop the white-on-white
baby grand as the Duke plays “Black and Tan
Fantasy.” With each chord she begins to sweat.
Her sugared artistry melts. Her slick updo
meringues into the look for the second shift
at the Savoy. Her beau wears pinstriped
pantaloons. They whirligig the circumference
of the ballroom. The mobster plies her with roses
whose crisp edges curl as brown as her patina.
The photographer waits at the back door while
she exits through the front, a borrowed fox draped
askew on her bare shoulders, *I got this in Saratoga*,
he murmurs as he adjusts the glittering eye, *a lucky shot*.