

Five Poems

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St. Peter by the River

Limit, you whisper to a wave. Inside it, where water is most industrious, surges sound, very informally. Splash and snap and slur: a weather broken, voices left alone. The stone does not care; with every slap a pebble distills from form,

expands its reach. Not a limitation, then. Not a sound caught in the throat. Echo covers, uncovers. And you are upside down. Only the air, surging to the banks, is convinced by this act. A ripple begins, rousing suspicion among the infidels.

Sunday

That the mind is tender. Summer weather
and a sliver cutting into the rock,
which is the dawn's. What I have done,
Pontius thought as he stumbled into waking,
is find more reason for mornings.
Murmur of servants flit past the curtains,
breaks his attention. That the day
would seem immaculate
despite that new silence that splits
his will. Outside, the sky kept starting:
faultless and blue and one stark cloud
whose shadow startles and cools
the sheep on the meadow. That
there felt no end to his peace.

Continent-making

A scaffolding, lofts. Why must
the makeshift be ridiculed and
calligraphy propounded? Intricacy,
the stuff of art, also of genetic
speculation, loses to ether, every
time. I mean, there's little to see here
unless you want to stay a bit, sit,
wait for remuneration. Think of
the kindness earth has afforded to
ice—that kind of hold on water,
a twig of better use to the dove
were it not for the idea that deliverance
arrives in pairs. There must be
two arks. A minuet, the wind
that starts it the ripples.
I meant harmony back there.
I meant a fresh start.

Schematics

Just so the strategy is preserved,
I tiptoed to the fridge and broke
a biscuit. The dove has been
by the sill for some time. I thought,
before remembering company
is also a dismissal, that we were
sharing space, shelter, sorrow. I was
smoking; it was breathing into the glass.
Easy to claim I did not plan any of this.
But everything on the verge soon loses
form. None of majesty when wings flail,
no confession without the priest.
Instead of encounter, awkwardness,
a communion of bread and rain and saints
ascribing death to symbols, as had St. Benedict.
Meaning, where went awe
was that I once had it, passed it on
to no one in particular.

Noah's Couplets

A commitment, rain.
Not a symmetry, not

a constant. Forty-day
downpours could

extinguish all lungs.
The fire is not

in place as all drift-
wood have lost

where. I am pairing
lines: A sea caught

sick, a grandeur
with no audience.

Am I too abstract,
asked the break

in which a sunray
slipped through

as though light
were a fill. When

the leaf arrived,
a couple of

striped antelopes
held two breaths

on the plank, leaped
into aspect.