

## NOMADIC GRAVES

Nomadic graves have been seen.  
Their location is history.  
Their headstones read  
that our dumb warm skin smells  
of the mask fallen from the face  
of a frightened child.  
When we put our ears  
to their turned earth we hear  
the recitation of all faith's names.  
Yet unbelieved  
the dead keep on travelling.  
They know how well  
we cope with disappearance.  
They know we bury everything  
in what the heart digs up.

## ONE HUNDRED O'CLOCK

Asleep in your body  
I dreamed of a war  
that never started.

Your wife was turning  
her hands in the garden  
they planted in darkness.

At one hundred o'clock  
the dogs uncovered  
the bones of fact:

*In truth*  
*we all dig for a lifetime*  
*in the same spot.*

## MARKS ON THE HORIZON

Marks on the horizon  
become bodies.

Veiled carcasses  
of distance.

When the disaster is broken  
in two, this remains.

The hure left  
on the war's fencepost.

## THE HARVEST ANGEL

A mute siren...  
a bird that never closes its mouth,  
the bites she takes of us,  
automatic.  
For that is it, surely,  
she eats slowly while planning the atrocity  
of how we can serve her  
(her purpose).  
In the golden darkness, the air rehearses  
her flight.  
The trembling is immovable.  
Her wings, day-lined, the flotillas of noon,  
as for our whiteness,  
catastrophe comes.

## FINALLY THE BRANCH

Finally, the branch  
reaches the water of the lake.  
Writes there, the wind always  
told me it was this way.

*The sky we listened to.*

## DAY'S FIRST EMBER

*for René Char*

Day's first ember  
is that lion of a man.  
His mane in flame.  
His dying light raking ash  
in the grate of non-existence.  
Night defies itself  
in the heart-vault of his poem.  
Coming out of a stone  
he roars unseen.  
Nowhere are signs of his life  
untouched.

## THE MAN WHO IS THINKING

The man who is thinking of death  
grabs the shovel by the blade.

He has no tomb.

He has a job.

## OUR RETURN

We hear the song for cradles  
fade into the song for graves  
which we cannot hear.

Though we see ourselves banished  
an imaginary dream  
dreams our return.

Into deeper red  
the flower flees itself.  
It is the rocks and trees that howl.  
Never the wind.

## IN CHARGE OF AN ANGEL

I find myself  
in charge of an angel.  
It was born  
along with me  
and glows there, in my palm,  
though I use my hands  
all over.  
Sometimes  
I put my lips to it  
and it reappears  
in a smile  
or kiss  
and occasionally in a word  
if I am speaking  
from the restlessness  
of necessity.  
The angel has no argument  
with my sovereignty.  
Knowing I am a ruse  
it does my bidding  
in order that the world  
can disabuse me.  
It is during  
this wonderful confrontation  
that the angel sleeps.  
I am the dream  
of something divine.  
Delicate and indomitable.

## HOW CLOSE

The angel told me  
I can change many rules –  
not maybe but possibly.

He said the mind  
is for making the mind  
important.

He saw me think.  
He touched me.  
He saw me with the place  
between his eyes.

He said people don't know  
what angels are.

He said some people need  
your concern and others  
do not.

On the back of my hand  
and on my wrist  
he placed his finger.

He kept asking  
'How close am I?'

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