

The Voice of Your Brother's Blood

Harold Rodinsky

I wonder
where is the outrage,
for the dead boy in San Antonio?
I see Berkeley burning,
and Ferguson rebuilding, honoring one

I pause to think
about university presidents
lying on the floor of their homes chanting "I can't breathe"
about classes being suspended
so students can march across the bridge, to honor one

I wonder
where are the demonstrators? the fire starters, the bottle throwers?
a few friends of the dead boy gather
to hold a prayer service
and carry signs about justice, no burning, no throwing

I am amazed
that these three were all killed by police
but two demand national attention
two demand national violence, national headlines, national outrage
and a dead boy in San Antonio is forgotten in a moment

I am saddened
by the unravelling of the fabric of consensus
as the threads loosen and become separate
no connections to the other strands
until the ground is littered with indifference

(his name was *Cameron Redus*)

Bucket

Ken Hada

I don't know if I'll be able
to write an elegy for my mother.

There is something timeless
about her, something death
cannot cure.

I was raised with commandments
stapled to my heart

and I feel
them fixed still, filed in my cluttered life.

But honor is such a fishy word
flopping and splashing, slipping
out of your hand time and time
again ...

You've got to grab it
by the gills—but what damage
can be done in your flailing attempts
to grasp it, to hold it just right

floating in the bottom of a bucket
a vessel that will not decompose
though littered with holes—brittle,
broken, and oh so baffling.

Reading *The Guardian* Before Heading to School

Hank Jones

I read about 230 girls abducted by Islamist militants in Nigeria,
As I look out my window and worry about the weeds growing
in my yard.

The disconnect hurts me. I wish I didn't know about
Such troubles an ocean away.
After all, what is it to me? I cannot affect Nigerian politics;
I'm not naive enough to imagine Bruce Willis
Leading the charge as young American men
Do what is right in countries that have lost all semblance
Of order and control.

And yet now that I know their terrible story, at least the beginning,
The moment of their abduction,
I can't stop imagining their cries,
Can't stop the knowledge that all that is left of their lives will be rape,
And, if they're lucky, death.

I want to say I weep for them, and I feel such emotion in me,
But in reality, their reality is too distant from mine.
I will clean up my morning dishes,
Brush my teeth,
And head to school to teach children,
Many the ages of the abducted girls,
And we will laugh and cajole our way through this required class
In technical writing,

And periodically I will stop, and a shadow will cross my mind,
And I'll shake my head in some kind of despair.

Honky Tonk in Cleveland, Ohio

Carl Sandburg

It's a jazz affair, drum crashes and cornet razzes.
The trombone pony neighs and the tuba jackass snorts.
The banjo tickles and titters too awful.
The chippies talk about the funnies in the papers.

The cartoonists weep in their beer.

Ship riveters talk with their feet

To the feet of floozies under the tables.

A quartet of white hopes mourn with interspersed snickers:

"I got the blues.

I got the blues.

I got the blues."

And ... as we said earlier:

The cartoonists weep in their beer.