
SAMPLE OF:

MEGIDDO

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On Where I Am Now

What is left at the end of believing?
Too often, I'm scared
to ask anyone—*manic* or *maniac*,
you might say: *these things aren't real, stop*

*scaring yourself over Sunday school.
Do your homework, and leave
the folktales to fiction. Owls
aren't really wise. They're birds
that eat and defecate.*

I roar back like a tidal wave, but
I'm looking at a pond and it's 4PM
and ducks are wading on the water.

*Owls don't have to be "wise"
to be important. They're beautiful
already. Stop trying
so hard. I'm*

a boy writing some poetry—get off on Main St,
liquor store and sushi, get off
on the sound of my own voice, *egomaniac*.

I need you
to listen, to see how certain I am
of our demise, so I'll keep talking—

an ass hee-hawing or a prophet
speaking. And the Starbucks
printer paper dean's list diet coke daylight
can't keep me down. *In pictures,*

*owls' eyes seem to glow in the dark, but that's
just their eyes reflecting the camera's flash. And
that's enough. I hold out, borrowing the harvest*

moon, just for tonight, and a little warmer, just a little less certain,
I glow back, gleaming lantern, orange in the night.

Losing Religion in New England

And He said, "Do not draw near here. Take your shoes off your feet, because the place upon which you stand is holy soil." (Exodus 3:5)

But the people walked around
in plastic sneakers,
cigarette butts caught in their heels. Morsels
of fried Oreos and beer bottle caps littered the grounds.

Short barriers had been assembled to guard the graves
and shape a cobblestone square,
a somber yard
for prayer. A woman,

earning her daily paycheck, stood
on top of the northern wall, speaking
through a megaphone about the interesting ways
townsfolk had become corpses.

Mourners had laid hedrons into the walls,
inscribed with the names of the dead,
to remember their lives and their

deaths. But the touchstones were becoming rocks.
The people sat down on the letters
to ease their tired legs
and their pant-sweat slowly sloughed off the letters, fading.

They had created a memorial, a sanctuary, an asylum
for stolen souls. They had planted trees and headstones
and bodies. They had written down names and lives
and deaths. And they had built a courtyard so the living

could grieve. They had erected museums and food stalls
and porta potties: a first-rate free-of-charge attraction
for kids and adults alike! They had lit up
prices and graffitied expletives
and blurbs on the residents' gruesomely
fantastic deaths. And they had fashioned a hall
of mirrors so the living could forget about their lives,

and they did.

Perspective

The leaves trembled before the darkening sky.

They were frightened of it, and they shivered like moths.

They asked if it would eat them whole.

The sky began its descent to settle the matter.

It saw bats flying in the air, and they flew like darkness.

It asked if they were leaves.

The leaves looked back at the weakened sky.

They were aware of it, and they jostled like fluid ghosts.

They asked if it was ready for them.

The sky had a red splinter in it from somewhere.

It looked down to where it had been, and it saw,

darkness rises.

It asked when the leaves became darkness.

Megiddo's Inauguration

Like a dream, it falls upon us: no triumph
in its mighty wake. We ride into it
like a pneumatic fever, an airplane sinking
sideways in the swamp
in your backyard. The passengers

around us sleep, but seeing quicksand
wrench us lower, we groggily open
our eyes, we fevered few, and faze

onto the dewy ground. *Look*: there's the you-
themed park you knew, but rides
are closed. Damn,
bars are too. You think you might
need some medicine. Perhaps the pharmacy has feverfew,

so you walk on down to ask
for some, soundless asbestos undertoe. No
pharmacy, just empty stalls, but silence wanes,
and phlegmy whines

slide from their own tar-bound airplanes. They talk
like crackhead rabbits, humping and giggling: what could a
Messiah do, and how the fever flew.

I try to pray, and a lion rises
from its tomb. It goes to see the children and
they slit its back, mane
to tailbone, fill its husk with coals.
Shoddily stitched, it
walks to me slowly. Afraid,

I hide, but it asks me not to
fear (this makes the atmosphere purple
and gossamer). It teaches me
to beg better, as it has done
forever. Stuttering signal, it stumbles
back into its grave. Heeding it, I beg

you, and finally, Moshiach Tza'ir, Kohen HaKohanim, you listen. *Too Late*
and the sky breaks
open. From the base
of the rift, Dark light. Evil

showing. Creatures swarm
countries. The children return: fallen angels, Nephilim, demons. And Lilith's

question booms
from *every* human, *why?* Because He surrendered omnipotence, gave
those pieces of the power away and trusted us.

TWO took the Stone Blade as we tried in vain, and She
killed God in an instant, done. She breathed, but She had forgotten
Her other sibling, she who died consensually. What of her soul?

What of her soul: it listened and from its perspective,
the source's song had gone wrong. So it immolated,
destroying everything but the source.

And the source started it all again.