

a 4am kindness

a 4am kindness leads me to this room

me, a mumbling dangerous drunk

*

i slide down hard streets in a white sweat

trying to out-hustle a blackout

(just before the birds, i stumble home)

*

outside my place

(that is outside a cop precinct)

leans earl

black and bones

and busy resting hard on my building

he pushes his stink into my cement

then proceeds to smoke crack

matter-of-factly

*

"damn" my soaked mind says to itself

"don't he see the law, just across the way?"

and as i watch

he hits it hard

*

this is the first time i have seen someone smoke crack

the first time i've seen crack smoke someone

(the lamplight unshades his ashen face)

and for a half-breath i am sober

meaning: the loneliness is on me

so i say what i do (and do not remember) but enough to hustle him along

(i know that)

i strangle his arm until we're inside

until we're safe my crack-friend and me and we drink

*

i pour and we drink

and i talk and he drinks

and i am drunker

and i spin about how i'd kicked
(i point to the pipe)
and he nods, believing
(because he does
or maybe just wants to)
and with adrenaline
or hope
or something else
he pitches his pipe
crashing it into it's useless parts...
and stares

like i imagine all crackheads stare at their broken selves

"i don't believe i done that, man."
(he eyes me
a long hard
vicious "fuck")

* * *

did i?

did i give him my number
before he left (still sore and seething)
did he call it
*
did we talk (who knows how many times)
in my drunk
did he detox
did i make that call
to the state
in my drunk
did he go
did he get clean
did he live
did he breathe

did he breathe clean air

does he

* * *

i don't know

i only have my story on earl

that i only saw a flicker of

because i was drinking a lot

not just then, just before the birds

but back then

before i got the room to breathe in

the roads of heaven are littered with children

the roads of heaven - are littered with children

little angels - little bodies

blown up by bombs

becoming numbers - meant for numbers

meant for cameras

for body counts

focusing on

“notice us”

spot light on

“we

are dying here”

*

interview views

for world news

becomes - old news

becomes - refuse

as eyes blind and turning

as the bodies dead and burning

learning tools of oppression

built from building blocks

broken and built

rebroken and spilt

by hands torn and battered

and branded - extremist

rebranded - terrorist

how about - cause - and effect?

how about - 'our turn'?

their words - screaming as their bodies burn

*

but no one - is listening

*

the air waves - are not free

they are owned and

loaned out by power brokers

brokering power - not peace

instead we have two sides colliding
no duck and hiding
there is no end in sight - to this madness

*

from behind west banks and missile tanks
"with their fists they fought their bullets"
children - holding sling shots against rifles
knives against grenades
hands against stronger hands
choking their lives away from them
their bodies - lifeless - but their eyes - defiant
no mercy begged for
only death - welcomed in martyrdom
a child - indoctrinated in hate
is told stories - of god's glories - and then traded:
their number - for their numbers
and still
no one is listening

*

when one side has the guns
there is no compromise

*

this problem isn't west bank built
it is human

*

if you hold all the cards
then you hold - all - the cards
then compromise - is a word for other people
and peace processes - are pieces of paper
wafer-thin and transparent
they mean
nothing

*

still

i scream

“stop the killings now”

i dream stop

the spillings now

but no one is listening

eyes dancing the rapid

i see butterflies lately
between words
folded in the exhale
in eyes dancing the rapid

*

and in their wings
hold orphaned rags
take my tired mind
to the no never mind
of white picket fences
(mother, doting)
(father, proud)
of christmases
and birthdays
and kitchen table laughter

*

lately, they close my eyes
imagine me a neverland
of tom sawyer friends
and summertime fishing

*

they hold me, in the slipped in silence of unlifted lids
outside of words, they take me away from the cloaked out blackness

*

they whisper warmth
"hold on
there is music here

just a little further"

peace is

my fear is externalized
from internal eyes
that voice inside of me
that hides me
resides in me
that sits behind and not beside me
back seat driving my ambitions
into walls of
inhibitions

*

my fear sits in trusted eyes
that prophesize
about my failure
failing to understand
we are judge, jury and executioner
of our dreams
choosing to erect ceilings
instead of high beams
to walk instead of chalk
murdering dream scenes

*

so easy to be rip apart
works of art
that are words apart
from your own
but where are your pieces?

*

you can choose to breathe
the rarefied air
of i don't care
what others think
head out of sand and
understanding that

standing is harder than sitting
quitting easier than trying
to add, to dad, to father your thoughts further
finding where peace is

*

so where are your pieces ?

lying in circles

we wear masks to hide our faces
our lives - not hours -
but lifetimes of disjointed
faceless, tasteless lies that lie behind closed doors -
down pours pretend to be shelters
sheltering your outsides from your insides
and your insides to your inside eyes -
smothering and covering up your cover ups
until you don't remember - what is real and -
what reels are just tape playing tricks -
shell games that shame your eyes from mirrors
- too scared to reflect truth

*

we wear masks to pull faces without traces
of what faces - we pull underneath -
pulling fast ones and slow ones -
wool over eyes - blinded by inner lies
"here lies" spell an end
without pall bearers
barefaced lies - your eulogy
because no one will speak ill - in death -
breath taken, truth at half mast
masks tainted and repainted and tainted again
- in truth: too scared to reflect

*

we hold hands in circles
claws of dirt - from earth, salt and secrets
hidden under nails, confined shut, confined to ugly
hiding in circles, alone and lonely
we hide in hands, outstretching
bile rising as others reach out to ours
"leave me alone - i am different"
each hands screams as each hand grabs onto another
for comfort

*

so we lie in circles, lying in circles, arrested in circles
unrest in circles, chained in and dying from blending in
and standing out and
crying to blend and not to blend, depending on the owner
of tears
but all eyes
cry

*

and the circle
continues