

**After**

After the first beautiful blitz of death, rain  
and a tenderness he forgave  
in every breathing thing.  
Hyacinths. Marshes. Garlic.

He could see that the world  
continued in its ignorant mirage,  
its traffic and horns— limousines  
disguising death  
as something wrong  
instead of different, the world  
with its games and time,  
holidays and baths.

He circled the similar towns,  
somnambulant spirit unable to speak  
or to alter any outcome, in sympathy  
with martyrs, the uselessness  
of war, the dwindling forests.

Only the variousness of his isolation  
pursued him: a carcass in a butcher's  
window, pink streetlights after hours,  
a spatter of water rounding a corner, then gone.

The weather of death was not a place,  
not even a planet— yet the world kept on  
turning its raincoat collar, rubbing its  
damp hands as if ruin were certain.

There was no death after his death,  
just a frequency, unfamiliar—still  
his voice would not go back;  
he could not reappear to tell them  
that he felt the old Sunday desires,  
that he was unprepared to cross—

Nor could he tarry forever  
entangled with matter  
in the weight of earth's  
uncanny dimensions,

where ruin was futile,  
finality, nowhere.

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