

Poem From My Grave

By Michael Lee Johnson (Version 2)

Don't bring the rosary beads

it's too damn late for doing repetitions.

Eucharist, I can handle crackers and wine;

I love the Lord just like you.

Catholicism circles itself with rituals-

ground hogs and squirrels dancing with rosary beads,

naked in the sun, the night, eating the pearls

feeling comfortable about it.

Rituals and rosary beads are indigestible

even butterflies go coughing in farmer's cornfields-

Cardinal George, Chicago, choke on the damn things;

some of his priest think it a gay orgasm or piece

remote found in naked scriptures-Sodam and Gamora.

But my bones in ginger dust lie near a farm in DeKalb, Illinois

where sunset meshes corn with a yellow gold glow like rich teeth.

My tent is with friends we say prayers privately like silence

tucked in harvest moonlight. Farmers touch the face of God

each morning after just one cup Folgers coffee Columbian blend,

or pancakes made with water, batter, sparse on sugar.

Sometimes I urinate on yellow edge of flowers,

near my tent, late at night, before the hayride,
speak to earth and birds like gods.
Never do I pull rosary beads from my pocket.
It's too late, damn it, for rosary beads those repetitions.

-2007-

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Clock on the Wall is a Crooked Clock

By Michael Lee Johnson (Version 2)

Clock on the wall is a crooked clock.
Soon the sun will cease being a light bulb for the world.
Transistor technology draws its last drop of energy-
tin cup beggars, quarter hounds, technology jumps
into silver solar power.
A speechless shadow transcends earth, blankets
with meditation, mumble scribbling with a black felt pen-
everything is in present tense.
We're all prophets of silence.
We're all a Jesus , sorted winds,
sprinkling vocabulary across the seas.

A new crop of creatures toss in a shaker new world.
The world now is a cylinder tossing out joy.
All is quiet, a new religious order forms from our groins.
We're all handicap stickers now, impacted
with the swelling of new songs, burning testicles,
naked napalm Vietnamese children,
waiting for the end, the politically created war.
Dance into the night with silver slippers,
dance into drench tunnels.
This poem is a late poem,
clock on the wall is its own diagnostic ear.
We're all a crop of creatures, undisguised, naked in foliage.
President Nixon and Johnson graze at the bottom of my urinal.
War is a diagnosis to its own ending.
The wall is cracking, it's own atomic bomb ticking.
Soon the sun will cease being a light bulb for the world.
Clock on the wall is a crooked clock-
and love is my literary genie.
Soon, you my children an image lost
in the face of the sun.

-1976-

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