

COME EVENING



HOWIE GOOD

Please recycle to a friend!

ORIGAMIPOEMS.COM
origamipoems@gmail.com

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Origami Poetry Project™

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'd call my representative if I knew who it was, the impatient ringing of the phone sounding strangely like sobs. Now everything I do is treated as a violation of a secret provision of the law. Like this morning, I counted four deer – or four people disguised as deer – just standing in the yard. The sky began to bend and stretch. A boy on crutches hobbled away. When the phone rang, I thought it might be you, but even before picking up, the only voice I needed was the voice I already had.

Lash Marks

Can't quite get things in focus? Give a stranger a smile, as if all things were curable with tenderness. There are people I know who don't know the stars are visible. Seeing is a neglected enterprise. The six o'clock news consists mostly of dogs being hit by cars. A window covered with raindrops interests me more. Press any button to continue.

The Mirror in the Mirror

An angel had descended uninvited via a system of ropes and pulleys. "Who would you rescue," the angel asked the first few men he met, "if you could rescue only one – your wife or your children?" He beat and kicked the men to get them to answer. I covered my eyes. Others less resilient chose suicide. "I'd much prefer to be drinking coffee," the angel commented, but then invented jokey epitaphs for their tombstones.

Cyanosis

Any questions I ask are received coldly. I forget birthdays, but not phone numbers, a natural consequence of living under intermittent video surveillance. Somebody hands me a petition to sign. "No!" my three grown children yell. "Stop!" Is it evening? How did it get to be evening already? I take long walks on the boardwalk, clutching a description of a lost love that nobody matches.

Come Evening

Myth, Ritual, Symbol

It was many years later, but we were still searching for something of ourselves, the sky erupting in abrupt reds and purples like God's own fiery flesh, until the city was a vast museum of trash, and our faces were flecked with a harsh, prosecutorial light. The souls of old friends were getting uploaded to the Google Cloud. Their glasses went into one pile; their shoes, another. "Hello?" I repeated, only louder. There was never an answer. I consoled myself by slowly rubbing my parts against you, the warm noises we made serving in lieu of prayers and incantations.

Cash Only

You couldn't get back to sleep. After about a thousand years, it was dawn, napalm on wildflowers, the flames wavering in a lost kind of way. There was a time when slaves were shackled to oars and forced to shit where they sat. Only cash was accepted. The ushers wore white tops and black bottoms and were required to stay for the entire performance. I bet you if it was today, the pain would be about the same, and the smoke so thick you couldn't tell which world was burning.