

Deep in the Hard Part (2)

DEEP IN THE HARD PART, 2

By Robert Bové (May 2006)

(Part 1 [here](#). "Them Bones" [here](#).)

Ready, Steady

*The story we are in comes
as we go to meet it
in smoke, in dust, in sand,
with nylon ropes lowered
into caves of twisted metal,
into bunkers, tunnels and wells.*

*So many hands on so many threads,
so little water, so little light.*

*On the steps down, disappearing behind us,
commerce, luxury, the weary—
up from below, echoing, foot falls.*

Vectors

*Clear blue skies released seeds
of perdition, parasites driving
jets.*

*That much is known. This, too:
some here, on the ground, turned
their backs, ran away, back to*

*news desks, classrooms, film sets,
to concoct prognoses reassuring
to those addicted to constant comfort,
convenient for those predisposed
to contempt.*

*The sons of perdition find them
open, compatible.*

*The favor is returned—one virus
shaking hands with another,
a mutual recognition of intellects
grown cold.*

With Caesar in Gaul

*They are not like us, the ones we face.
No uniforms, no flags, no enlistment centers.
The ground we take today
we took last month.
We race from fire to fire.*

*Here, no victory is complete—and we know it.
Here, we find no allies—just defectors
rotating in and out of our camps.*

*The local people face us with uncanny unity,
formed of religion—a mutual understanding,
now weak, now strong, born and reborn,
despite their own quarrels, enmities and betrayals.
Do not read too much into their opposition to one another.*

In the School of Hate

In primary class

*walls are papered with
scrawled lines from Koran,
copied by children,
selected by teachers,
and hung with light chains,
student necklaces.*

In phys-ed classes

*the walls are hung with
sets of heavy chains,
sizes short to long,
and flat knives reserved
for the most special
anniversaries.*

In chemistry class

*fertilizer sits
to be studied not
for agriculture
but for properties
useful to bomb making—
and there are more chains.*

Biology class

*is reserved for boys
who want to grow up
to be physicians
to the self-flayed
and to the women
who survive beatings.*

In Georgraphy

*we take up the mosques
of Amsterdam and
minarets of Rome,*

of Ile de Paris.

*We dream new borders
for Eurabia.*

In Media Lab

*we are taught to run
Le Monde, Der Spiegel,
The Guardian, and
BBC, for that day
when they plead, weeping,
Take it—don't hurt us.*

*Here, in house of hate,
whip a man, and he
will remember his
lessons for a week.
Teach a man to whip
himself and he will
apply his lessons
forever.*

Quiet, Now, in Brooklyn

*To recall what beauty in the world
reflects, if only in a moment—
first frost melting, warm fall morning—
and beauty from beauty
remade with human hands.*

*To recall what we are
who would project our eyes
our blood outside solar system to see
planets up close, and more stars—
despite those who would blind us.*

*Sleet now glistens on
maple flowers under lamplight,
morning star unseen
behind overcast—
all under wartime.*

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