

Deep in the Hard Part

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by Robert Bové (April 2006)

(Part 2 [here](#). “Them Bones” [here](#).)

Five Years On

Pride, sloth, and avarice prowl a pit.

Nobody penetrates that circle.

A walk away, righteous skeptics still profess

impotence, indifference, fear of truth

to distracted children.

Five years on, no faring well

here, but elsewhere

the architects of nada are

hunted where they live.

My Dearest Muji:

We sent our saints,

such as we produced,

to spread joy, convert.

First, you took their tongues.

We have forgotten

who they were, what it

was they had to say.

You wish we still knew.

So do we, at times,

the time between those

times growing longer,

our saints now born mute.

We, too, can be cruel.

We may be sorry,

expressing regret

unconvincingly.

But when it's over

(will this be over?)

we will not be friends

and you will know well

peace be upon you.

The Discarded

I have not seen you nest with

your wife, your girl, not lately.

You are each too busy with

other things to be gentle.

What would Omar sing, could he

sing again, of your mothers'

strapping bombs to your children?

What do boys know of virgins?

An Aside

For Omar

To be sure, we have misplaced Romance:

our troubadours now perform like engorged pythons

at their own electrocution;

our celebrities haunt the world like third-rate Dorian Grays.

But our soldiers, our soldiers, when they come home:

if you could but witness their families' embrace.

If we have misplaced Romance,

we yet can find it in books, in an old movie, in a flea market 78.

We still know how to kiss, some of us.

Our children still marry for Romance, though botch it more often than not.

But The Mujahadeen's Homecoming: A horror to contemplate,

its setting, a house with one book—and not yours, Omar, not yours.

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