

Two Poems

by Andrew Jankowski (March 2018)



The Running Bride, Odd Nerdrum

I. Captives

An example of captivity

And the passage of time

Fury on every side

With the bare hands of honor,

Sorrow at the raw hands of honor
Forcing their way.

And the joy of feeling death sit close

Even in captivity,
Even in the pitiful relenting
Of knowledge and generation,
A paradise of strength
Which was born

And yet was an echo of their nakedness.

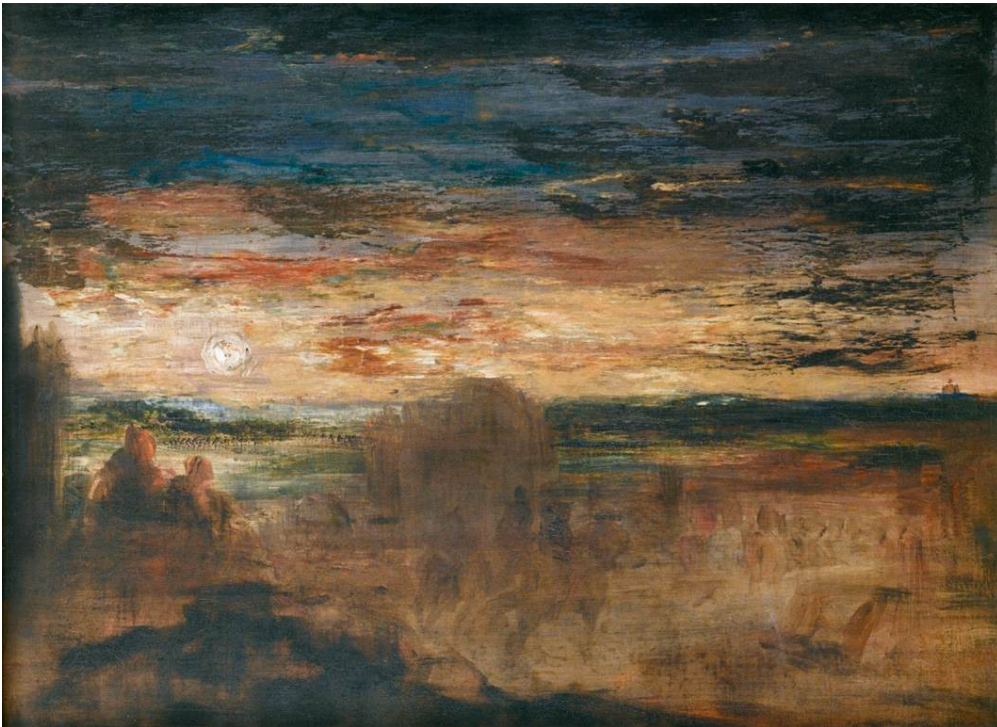
Reliving the love she breathed over his shoulder
Itself an echo of the breath that was grace.

Yet no new sacrifice
Recalls the creation:

Establishment of all natures,
Who makes things grow

The red-hot stone grazing air
Already dies, for him is dead,

And is living
With the tenor of a lie told cheerfully,
Dies humbly,
For the misery of these evils is
Not yet ended.



Shepherds Viewing Passing Soldiers, Gustav Moreau

II. A Dream of St. Anthony

Home to a growing death
A blank dream that sits dead and black
On the marrow of the soul.

A god already devouring

And devoured in the slick ruts of
Convenience, harassed by the time.

Subdued bodies well past the hour of
Intention; slipping into patterns unbreakable.
Unbroken bodies, untested anger.

And time hung from the old year,
From the neck in a satchel,

A demonstration not sound but
Softly reassuring . . .

But you cannot consider this from outside,
Or bring the flesh to heel
With your motives alone.

They burned like torches in the night
A poetic line from the great historian
Still remembered in the time of honor.

For they were men that burned,

And men that paced the tombs,
And slept along the hillsides,
Broke down the flesh
And brought the mind to heel.
Remembered then, having done honor
To an impossibility,
Their names a quiet legend in a
Dead language.

For some there is boldness alone,
For some, divine protection
For us a winter of choice with no consequence
And no conclusion
Slipping into patterns unbreakable.
Unbroken bodies, soft and tender skin—
Is it better to break their innocence with your own?
Or stand in the blank dream—
For there is no emulation without acceptance,
No dark symbol working in the flesh,
No knowledge without needing
All that seems and is felt to be passed.

Andrew Jankowski is a poet, satirist, and occasional journalist who lives and works in the Northeastern United States.

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