

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Bill Gainer: Three Poems

Bill Gainer · Wednesday, September 4th, 2019

The Reason Old Men Shuffle

Murderer
yes, I know.
A lifetime spent
killing
invisible gods.
Who knew
there were so many?
Their corpses scattered

everywhere –
the reason old men
shuffle –

trying to avoid
tripping
but still
now and then
we do.

*

Death of a Swing-Set

The guy from the Association
stopped by
asked about the swing-set.
Wanted to know
if it was safe.
I said, it's a swing-set man.
He said it could cause
a hanging
a suicide
something ugly.
Somebody

could get hurt.
Said it's dangerous.
There's no fence
to keep the kids out.
I said, it's a swing-set man.
It's for the kids.
He said it's gotta go.
Gave me 30 days to appeal
before the committee.
We tore it down
burned it in a pile
prayed over its ashes.
Now it's just a scar
in a yard
where kids don't play.

*

Sunrise on a Blind Alley

Getting that feeling – again
shoulder tight
eyes – slits leaking blue
teeth grinding
and just inside the ear
something screams.

We've already gone too far.
Stayed too long
broke all the broken things
turned the sun
into a savage
the moon
a witness
and the sky
a crack above
the rusting fire escapes.

In the morning
when the sun rises
its only reason
to burn another dream
way past ash.

It's sunrise on a blind alley
the windows closed tight
the shades down.
There's no way out.
Everybody's frightened.

Even me.

(Author photo by Douglas Hopper.)

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