

Of Promise Unspent by Rich Norman © 2014

What dream is Man?
What imagining twice broken
Summons the eye to blink
Drawn away from the sight
Of light, twice stained?

The dawn drawn up as linen
A quilt swept beneath forgetting
A promise as yet unspoken
A dream mute and forgetful
An imagining unsure of itself,
A smear of rouge and light—
So is our pain but a folded dream
Cream and light swept up as forgetting
A spatter of rouged light, twice warm and unknowing.

The ages of twisted rope, stretched and taut
Choking upon its own weight
Twisting in ugly jerks
The soul of Man as twisted meat
Jerking upon cruel wire and war
Heat and burnt metal
Soot and ugly yellow fat
Burnt heat and crooked stains of torn hope
The knotted fingers of kindness broken
The child left to die
Tugging—Twisting
in cold broken wind
Filled up with choked cries, and sticky blots
Of empty silence... then—
No more.

Victory.

Is this not our dream?
The dream of Man?

A trillion silver sparks
The flashing teeth of time and space
Torn in two and burst.
A tiny secret
Ripped in half
The smallest places—held—
And wounded.
Snap!
The sky is torn

Light bursts from pain
Tears are burnt up into ugly wind...and vanish—
A wound more painful than truth
More true than suffering
A fact twice pungent
Becomes—nothing.
So is hope—the hope of Man
For now we know...too much
Far, too much.

The sky is torn and silver
White and roiling
Spitting opal swirls of amethyst and anguish
The heart of the world split and fused...into light
—and pain.

Soft waxy flesh sloughs from innocent arms—into dirt
and burnt light.
The suffering of a million millennia
Distilled
Into a single wound of heat and crushed light
Hope—now burst.

We soar as birds
Cutting the sky
Slipping her heart through
With white hissing jets of spray.
The jets, cutting the lens in two
Tearing the sky apart
Hissing through space
Ruining
Cutting
Splitting
Tearing Beauty open
—and leaving her.

Where are the jets going?
To do what?
To whom?...never mind—Why.
Only know—it is.
We are tearing the sky open
Splitting her tender heart and hurting her
Listen—Look—and know
Know—what we have done.

Bodies wash up
Tugged and bloated
Washed up upon the shore of Time
Purple knots of bruise and gristle
Circle dead necks
Where fingers once pinched and closed
Until the spark was choked away, into black.
Planes circle the heavens
And spit death, upon life
Heat, upon cool
And make burnt, all
That is our finest unknown
Now soiled and burnt up
As sticky yellow fat is burnt
And burnt off.
Ah!
Is this not our dream—
The dream of Man?

*We might hope that all of Human history,
Is a pre-history
A dream spilled before waking
A silent whisper before the fact
An imagining
—of promise unspent.*