

Apocalypse Now

*Do you smell that? Napalm, son.
Nothing else in the world smells like that.*

Now when I feel
the world folding
me to stuff me into
a cardboard box
fixed with yellowed tape,

now I can see
I am not one of those
soft-handed little men
enveloped in gray suits
languishing in faceless shadow,
bladder shy pissers
sporting pajamas as they
sleep on periwinkle sheets
dreaming of every day
stifling contralto cries
into pillows reeking of flop sweat,

now I can tell
I am roughhewn oak,
splinters for tender skin,
yet resplendent –
adorned with a king's
feast over my bulk,

now I can feel
my animal heart grown
too large gnawing
to burst forth
with fangs dripping
blood and saliva
like Polyphemus
burbling wine
and bits of man-flesh,
single eye monomaniacal
in his cave home,
iridescent glare
from the darkness
while the shipmates
rend clothes and hair,

now I know I will
not my quietus in quietude
make but yawp and bark
and drink the green
exploding round,

now I burn to ashes,
sometimes the flame,
sometimes the gasoline,
but always kinetic,
always ready to devour,
orange yellow
red blue tongued,
to eat and be eaten,
voracious and delicious.

*I love the smell of napalm in the morning. . . .
It smells like victory.*

– Jeffery Greb

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