

In Front of St. Thomas

You are in your Joseph-hued jacket, the material light for slight wind
in early Spring & for the camera your smile is, without doubt,
before that small church.

How many little towns are there of such saint-named buildings
filled with as many mothers for which bells toll one day?

During work hour ablutions I hum with your image & this question
as if praying. Memory's lens, however, recollects also fear.

Mother, to have a gay son in the world then was to carry,
at least for you, inexplicable woe aging tripled after being labeled.

If your death could be reached past I would re-baptize you with hope.

Here is another watercolor: picture my husband on the couch.
He is crooning to a parrot, feathers cradled by strong biceps.

I sit across, ignoring the TV's laugh track, my nose, as usual,
stuck in a book.

Turn the pages like acanthus slowly beginning to bud
& eventually comes groves. No machetes have found us.
We are sealed pure as sweat forming monarch patterns
from shoulders pressed hot against cloth.

What an invisible shroud could be found when the liquid salt dries!

I'd dip it, sponge-wrung & rinse, bringing wine to your lips.

Now we can stop mouthing about the body, the blood,
the hole from the staff, the holes from the nails.

Can't love be the miracle flowing out & in as a really witnessed belief?
Can't this poem be heaven enough glimpsed through His skin?

Yes, forgiveness whispers, voice to voice across our delft.