

## **fog**

I watch the thick fog settle  
    into the field, scarred by erosion.  
A family of skunks parades in  
    and out of the garden.  
A fat armadillo digs for bugs,  
    leaving deep holes behind.  
And I can almost believe Rumi:  
    my hopeless desire for God  
    is already the surest sign.  
The crescent moon, curved and thin  
    as a fingernail clipping, shines golden  
    across the soft back of the fog.  
It is chilly and damp.  
It is time for me to go inside.

# **runes**

-- cowritten by Mark Hansbauer

stepping out of the grove  
I look for a name  
that gets away  
for the mud  
gray and gummy  
as potter's clay  
when watered  
by the sky  
bone hard when baked  
by the sun  
broken into geometry  
when innocence withers  
in the meadow opening  
wide below me  
welcoming the doe  
bounding on the circles  
of the noonday sun  
over the Johnson grass  
tall and thickly bunched islands  
hiding the tracks of floods  
successions of floods  
that have washed away  
sweat and breath  
leaving runes that pass  
unpronounced underfoot  
as I rush by fearing  
they may never speak  
for themselves  
as the fawn goes  
her own way today  
into the brush dark  
and secluded  
I follow the cracks  
and ask: why me?

## March 25

on this day  
the voice of Gabriel  
was heard  
on this day  
the Spirit's shadow  
passed over  
her soft body  
for the end is  
in the beginning

there are no parades  
out our windows  
no presents for us to open  
no mention of a holiday  
on our busy streets

on this day  
noontime darkness  
fell across the land  
on this day  
his back faced the city  
as his head slowly  
bowed  
for the beginning is  
in the end

this is the day  
we have lost  
our forgotten New Year  
the first day  
and the last day  
of the story  
we do not tell

## **Medusa**

*After "Head of Medusa" (1906), Gabrielle Dumontet*

I wind my way through  
this old building  
until I find her  
I stare into her face  
long known to be  
a most dangerous act

but she is the one  
who is frozen  
in black bronze  
her eyes empty  
holes where nothing  
is to be found  
her brow furrowed  
she screams  
her mouth open

like the twelve mouths  
of the twisting snakes  
surrounding her head  
angry disciples with wide  
open mouths  
and inside each shines  
a small lightbulb

twelve mouths offering  
artificial light within  
this is the lightening  
tossed by Zeus  
this is the fire  
stolen by Prometheus

*Electricity...*

moans Medusa

*Electricity...*

her face contorted  
like the evil twin  
of Saint Teresa

*Why didn't I  
think of this?*

## **Reading Hamann Before Bed**

Is it our radical heterogeneity,  
a sad world that can never satisfy,  
that is the salt whereby we are salted  
as sacrifices belonging only to God?

Or when you lick the milk before it drips  
from our baby's chin, when we touch one  
another within, when we know by smell  
we are in love, is not the salt our own,  
what is left on our skin after our sweat  
has dried like dew under the sun?

Tonight I belong to you.