

1976

Chagall

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Chagall / Linda Pastan

It is snowing
fiddle notes
on the village of Vitebsk
where brides float up
like the wicks
of sabbath candles.
In the kitchens
the dough cries out
to be braided,
or is it the hair
of the youngest daughter
newly washed
in ochre?

The Last Page / Albert Goldbarth

Sometimes, often, the tragic surface
lies. When I was ten, I gave my mother a Hardy Boys
mystery, she told me Who Did It
after one chapter, I was—just like the dumbshit chief
of police on every last page—thunderstruck. The
man without eyelids was innocent, appearance
having misdirected: the blood-soaked rope in his coatpocket

only a leash he walked his wounds with, the six gray
bullets in the revolver-barrel: only his abacus
for tallying joys, etc. Did I learn? Do I want to
still proffer handkerchiefs numinously as fire
department nets below whole megalopolises
of sobbing, sponge up each moan? Do
I. But here comes the man without

eyelids, has to weep to keep moist—his tear:
his sustenance. For some chiefs, it's never one chapter