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Mahler's Shed

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above the radio tower. A city listening to rivers. A mandives from a pier. The sea falls asleep. Lorries flit through caves of light; traitorous sky, mornings shaped like desks. A whore shoos the pigeons from her stoop. The plangent chuckling of the waves at curfew. Ships leaning with their cargos like catatonics. Dockhands diving from docks into indolent slips. A broken taxi pleads with a tree. A bed stares at a bunker. A young boy named Paul Morel scuttles down a rutted lane on his bicycle.

**Mahler’s Shed**

The word order of trees outside the shed signals a silence inside the head of Mahler, a white door. A child holds an orb, palm-sized dream of holding nothing. We are each of us dressed in our quiet according to a noise, on the meadow’s further side, where earth’s narration is noticeable. How can we be human sitting alone in a rectangle?

The quiet is not the sheer quiet of sounds falling like pebbles through a shallow pool. A plop, and ripple, fall in silence, rest in silence with their brothers, foreshortened by the concentrating mind. I am not saying the mind at work is like a forest pool; but the forest pool is a mind at work, in the worded quiet of the wood.
There is another problem: 
the ending falls short of the doing, the thinking 
asks much of the being. The release is never 
sufficient. The day is a season of the mind, 
with its changes, 
recollection of other seasons, and hurry 
to compare, hurt lengthening beneath its joy, 
its invention of the timbres of relief towards evening, 
the dream of perfection’s phrasing 
reaching half-perfection, partial naming, sleep.

These are the two ways of not having, 
or merely existing 
in the insufficient city; 
though sometimes seeing how the sides of things 
float by, in the logic of their time.

LEIPZIG

He must have known, by his first maturity 
at Arnstadt, that today is a variation 
on yesterday, with its snow and fish, 
and immediately set out to write 
our heroic littleness, in thema fugatum 
and over-heated rooms, for kings, 
to convey the intricate news of being, 
subject to something, yet apart, 
commissioned to praise, a kind of servant, 
used to the difficulty of weather, 
standing reverently to one side 
of his fabulous industry, like a baker. 
Give us our daily bread. Multiply. 
And knew that work, like prayer, 
would release him from seeing 
too much around him that didn’t fit, 
the boring plentitude, and save him 
from the loneliness of being 
John Sebastian, Visionary, Technician.