1971

Van Gogh

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WHITE FIGURE

Out of my childhood appeared a contender in a white sweatsuit cruising the familiar hills of my forest. Aaron, his last name a strange spelling of a German city where after a war a notion of crime was established, the idea of "higher" loyalty, not to mention "common decency." O I know all about obeying higher loyalties, and the indecency of obedience. All is twisted. All is withheld. When I inquired I was told he missed the four minute mark and ran his mile in the upper three-fifties, still going. How could there be a mark of time? Hardly were those words spoken when out of Spiritus Mundi tumbled skulls, leg bones, brooms and handles. Out of my thoughts come white faces like mushrooms. There is no magic to clarify reflection. Love, make do with stupor and hurry, have courage.

VAN GOGH

I'm glad it rained yesterday. I needed some rain. I'm glad I ran that two mile race and came in fourth place. I needed to get sick to my stomach as I sought to stretch it across the flat. I'm glad my wife lay next to me in bed coughing last night. I needed to stay awake. I'm glad I saw you yesterday and glad you smiled and glad I keep getting everything I need. I need the light to become muscle, the god to uncover my passage, give me my talisman, the rain to come like money, my hands to compass the horizon, your tawny pasture, the weak to become strong, inward, and endure. The wind is a terror to dry leaves. The tree trunks turn blue. Engrossed by a woman black and green, approached by another, red, her apparel and parasol—tell me, love, which lady, leaf, red, green, are you?