Apparition: Damage; A Man with Unclenched Fist

Jon Silkin

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APPARITION

DAMAGE

Is it the top has screwed from my head, like the cap off a grenade? Screams rise from me, who’s missing my lid. I’ll screw to myself, what I must find again. He throws the best cup in the house, not at her; the wall breaks into china the handle in pieces dribbles to the skirting. I’ve my hands to my ears, to scream, shaping to a question mark. I am trained into the serifs, ridges, and hollows of letters; I am a watermark inside paper. No, I am something;

the boy fastens to the back of the couch fingers like silent tongues. The voices of father and mother make of my silence this queston, who will be hurt most?

A MAN WITH UNCLENCHED FIST

They chase about the table, hate, that takes away gender. Her hair swishing cheeks, that was the darling of his fingers.

My brother will die of their shouts. He weeps and I must attend. But why won’t they stop, who have more energy than a child’s? Why is this night different from all others? How can the four of us, unforced, hold each by the waist to weep contrition and love? Unlovely mother
and weeping father, divorce, the church's legal knife. There were chairs and heavenly cups; a man, with unclenched fist blessed me and vanished;

it was as if I thought I could not die.

**Through Leaves and Fragmented Light**

Through leaves and fragmented light the cricket flakes her shaped notes off wings. Crouching by a woman in pain, in the hair on my arm, on wood, or its faecal ash, she has made visible the idea for a spring hardened to tear, slowly apart, our bodies. She is not that idea: a contralto, her oily discs twanged into our lives. If what it is to make pain, what more
to clash this soft battering consequence, lyric percussion, a pebbled softly rattled water, that unfastens the two selves of one mind, to stiffened facing flighted wings. I search for, find your body-sound flickering winter in ash's doldrums, the atomic drowsing in a hearth. And with you waiting is remembering, where none need rise in the dark. Tell her, it is so.

*for Margaret and Michael Mott*