

MARK GOLDSTEIN / from *Schwarzmaut* (Blacktoll) by
Paul Celan

1

WE LAY

already deep in the macchia, when you
finally edged into view.
Nevertheless, we could not
darken out to you:
ruled by
lightduress.

2

WHO FOUGHT FOR YOU?

The lark-figured
stone from the fallow.
No tone, only that mortalbrightness carried
within.

The height
whirls itself
out, more violently still
than you.

3

REFLECTIONLADEN, among the
celestial-beetles,
at the mount.

The death
that you owed me—I
take
it.

4

FREELYGIVEN at this
start.

Bowsongcycle with
Corona.

The dawnrudder responds,
your ripped-
awake vein
unknots itself,

what remains, angles itself,
increases in
pitch.

5

FROM THE FORLORN you poured forth,
masked fittingly,

where eyelids
fold with
your own
eye fold within you,

the trace and the trace
amid this gray straying,
finally, fatally.

6

WHAT THREW
us together,
started apart—

a worldstone, asunder,
hums.

Blacktoll is a translation of a cycle of poems written by Paul Celan and published in a limited edition as *Schwarzmaut* by Brunidor in 1969. It is a continuation of my transtranslational experiments first begun in *After Rilke* (BookThug 2008) and continued in *Tracelanguage* (BookThug 2010). Where *Tracelanguage* exemplifies a “shared breath” that seeks to break with tired translational orthodoxies, *Blacktoll* attempts to embrace both old and new methodologies as singular. Whether one approach is wider or deeper than the other, I’ll leave to the reader to decide in full knowledge that there’s no “poem” there. By this I mean that words are encampments around an absence—a field of energy beyond description.