

## INGRID DE KOK / Two Poems

### On the hour

*Marblehead, Massachusetts*

At twelve the street, like me, is not asleep,  
not yet. Short careful steps stumble along,  
a low voice fidgets to itself  
some liquored reminder or recrimination.

At one, a flash of lightning in the dark,  
a motorbike rumbles away.

At two a racoon, is it, or skunk  
drums the garbage bin, something crashes,  
something with a tail slinks away.

At three, silent and cool  
a breeze lifts the blind, flaps its  
broken wing against the window frame.

Four is here and everywhere night's  
low point for the cruel, the brave  
and those praying for release.

At five, something fresh wafts upstairs,  
unidentified sweet foreign blossom  
insinuates into the uncertain morning.

At six, first light enters the room  
like an anxious refugee.

At seven I fall asleep.

## At the Rembrandt House, Amsterdam

*Drypoint etching: sleeping dog*

As expected, self portraits,  
magisterial brows and turbans,  
even when young, his inward gaze  
possessed by light and shadow.  
Other fleshy burghers,  
several struggling Jacobs,  
and ladders, thatch,  
pollarded willows,  
height in a flat landscape.  
But unexpected in a dark corner,  
this sleeping puppy  
at the foot of the stairs or bed.  
Tender fidelity etched into animal trust,  
the dog's curled form, his soft breathing,  
his puppy dreams 400 years old.