

## BARRY MCKINNON / Excerpts from *Into the Blind World*

into the blind world—  
the *new life*—the essential tremor /refusal  
of diminishment

I see in a double  
space—conjunction & irony, that part blind I'm made  
to see. it is not Dante's forest exactly. more—  
so a sense

/a kind of open door  
is beginning /closing—dark turning  
—light I didn't expect.

old flesh renews, that the dim  
eye makes almost nothing matter. *looks to*  
*what I find ahead.*

*I believe—*

fear kept  
me speaking, or all would cease to be. so I spoke & the forest flew by  
& city lights distorted—the cold stars of love and dark—the beginning, a journey, a  
descent

the ghost of myself still  
alive,  
to address the infected world, to stall & cease advance, to the forest one fears  
to enter

sad desire/ without a mask—  
to journey solely at night dark to the armies  
circling themselves—the forest of knives  
invisible to those who never make it

or recognize

*desire*: one heart to pull  
the other retract—that the gap maintains its depth & distance  
to hell—the hidden road & the river one dares

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now monstrous bonds to bear

*no delight*

distorted drunks, demons, the dismal—

*drunk*, & *glad* to be

—in the wrong room, singing

a tavern full of...

*no hope*

the crack head whore—the one-eyed man, bound &  
thrown pleading to the ground.

*shame*

*necessity*

no music in the desert to cohere.

*these* synonyms when I write *these days*  
are sisters: *incoherent*, *unrequited*  
and *incomplete*

the empty holds their beating wings, quavered voice  
these conditions we sense no journey could amend

the moon is bright, the stars cold, clear ends

*delete return*

—my mother's womb  
the words & what I see—bones, & pulp  
weeping—

recognize some other self as me  
to guide where I was once before  
is it onward on that dismal road,  
when the traveler's journey to the end  
*becomes* the end/the bottom of the universe?  
no laughing matter

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I'm still alive in the splash—  
gray light. but my guide seems gone  
a life

space curved to return  
itself beginning as end ( weightless/unmoved—  
I listen for the horn ahead. well past the forest  
whose sticks I gathered to make it shore to shore  
was the horn my driver  
or the invisible direction of the future riven to wait until  
it comes to me? *this hole*, this...

/hell is its *nothing*  
to give  
or bear.

*time waiting*

in the celestial vestige—

if I could see or write this speech

illuminate

the fox trotting on the road ahead

the sick & dying

the snowball's chance in hell

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*happy in hell?*

what other world?

the woman—a configuration, that she wait, call, be?

in all what was

I was?

detained, to wait, to see/

the bullies/demons who *could not* out wait me gave up?

*release* to give me release to an interval

that shows the beauty of what it might contain: gold leaves/September breeze—the outer world—that I saw *all* first, and then *heard* its speech, & music

when I quaked?

*that* world. there was no other, as there is *not* now?

an earth to convince light versus dark?

my father *really* gone, his last breath, *where?*

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oh where

in any where—range of... I know I was

to the sight

of *what* it was when the quaking shook me to  
my fractured prayer. *hell* no release, nor appeasement,  
*no way out.*

these thoughts, a burden, yet contain me,  
—accuracy or mistake, that I could not see beyond  
/ to whatever world I could retain eludes me or gain?

this the sum of another matter, stupid thought of totality  
when the grim prospect makes it final—*held*

a button pushed. I saw, what looked human to be  
gloom. *worse* than gloom

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I thought this in the outer world and still think it here  
unsure on a string of faith, the driver will return

*in the hope I have*—this blind ascent to...

what time and light ahead