

To swing the hinges, to
open one-eighty, flush
to the fence, open to all
of creation, or ninety,
perpendicular to the
public, to allow one's

To gain admittance after
the swinge of hope,
outsider to participant,
one's jackknife in hand,
one's blade tucked into
its slot and sharp in

To stanchion one's own
farthest arc, one's father
dead and one's son gone
adventuring, one breathes
in the spirit of creation,
to cut at ordinary wood,

I didn't dare observe the whole parade, or half the execution that burnt into one's memory, as sharp as torturous light meant to invoke eyes that see innocence, that could measure love within the width of one's hips, to watch with astonishment as one's son's blood, on hands that instigate and mouths that speak, in hearts that collapse, with arterial surety to grant one quick passage, coated and paralyzed one's tongue, licked raw and splintered as one goes to the fair in expectation of poniards and dirks and tall stumps, one's loins rubbing one wrong, blistered from one's finger after an odd night alone, seeking the field so one might carve a niche, fashion a totem and insinuate against the post and the recollection of one's umbilical severance, the impulse to sculpt and leave with a totem in hand, a stick to plant in soil fallow and ever paling, one's heart set on bleached vista, the disjuncture of skin from landscape, thriving in one's pocket, a souvenir of living in stiff solitude.

on recognizing one's
totem as one recognized
oneself in one's father's
ash between one's cheek
and gum, not to bring

GATE

skin, curled shaving
from source, one carving
unbarked post into
totem, with pocketknife
and not scissors or

of craft touched by
make-believe, one having
whittled more from
whim than plan, as if
hacking at one's weak

I don't storify to reduce nations to ruin, not to unwool sheep with my shears, without the tools to dress them, cutting my arm whilst stung with twisting loss, my blood sacrificed as fossil fuel to bonfire the tragedy of arrogance, the bravado of a craftsman but with the stabbing talents of boredom, wooden tongues wagged to hush my totem, this is the pith spine of any individual life, not to waver or relinquish the nerve of an original, ordinal, boy perch of one fleshed into song, a passerine mind placed atop a veiny country pole as allegory for epiphanal id, one's only dead father undaunted by the grave melodies delivered via a quartet of judgment and a choiring forgiveness, the aural massage of one's consciousness, for that dirge or that mass alone, or the frivolous, the ditty and the jingle of esteem, a surgeon's dream to scalpel into symphony, to slice an angel's soar, the spark that makes darkness wholly worthwhile, every dead tree having died twice, or a trillion times to excise the unnecessary sin of representation.

darker, but to reward
milling patience with
honing fun, subjective
waiting with objective
result, one carving away

for one's sense, one's
faces of belief stacked
for harmony between
soil and air, between
the two fictions of being

TIM
RAMICK

and accentuate the real,
a boy's dream to inhabit
the frontier of his
dreams and be surprised
by objects, to create is

I won't ever acknowledge what doesn't belong, an assignation of dusty chaff and nonbeing, compacted into a wad within the holy act, the saving of energy for the right hole, as if one were fond of a priori whittling, the gall to presume to know enough to carry in one's mental pocket the sprung urge, to limn with a nimble knife across idea and faith, not simply fabrication of visages for the ages, too big for one's trousers and gigantic history, that flattened triangle of dimension, but religious notions of transference here from posterity, neither ape x nor nadir, neither pure enough to sway the gods, to cure the present, to gusset one's heart-stopping murder of self, heraldic plating not for show nor procession of pride, not caring for the village, to docile men with one's death-raising, with the fortitude of angled webs and checkered pasts, the ardent chests of tame bears, to swing away from live comrades and tactile women, one curl at a time, one dark trinity patch, one's song sung for swift oblivion.

the hinges for a human
opera, the gods divining
our comedy, a well-deep
house-high stump in
need of new defacement.

standing tall for heritage
and horizon, obverting
one's shadow across
muscle and industry
and philter and death.

alive and one's father
gone adventuring, one
breathing dust, one's
heart gated against one's
own nearest unbelief.