

*R. Nemo Hill*

## **An Icarus**

A firm deliberate step. The *once upon a time*  
of opening—there, beginning—thus, and then it’s done  
and cannot be undone by the uncertain rhyme  
of this slight pathway, linked to, and yet lost far from  
first heel and toe. A length of tattered string, it lies  
already buried by the sand, its trail of crumbs  
devoured. This is the sort of path a breeze desires,  
or a trans-seasonal leaf requires—. And yet there comes  
returning now, retracing vanished steps and sighs,  
a man—whose heavy bloodstained hands hang down,  
whose gentle steps, though heavier still, scarce make a  
sound.

Man sees a boy in the extinguished lantern’s light.  
A man looks back upon a boy; the boy looks up,  
straight up. Astride the path, stone still, boy’s eyes burn  
bright,  
while man’s eyes blur the rim of each tipped cup.  
They turn now, face to face, mid-path. Their opened eyes  
now close, that twin lids might reveal near-twin tattoos:  
one iron hook, sun hot, on shores denied the tides,  
one anchor hauled up dripping from a depth of blues.  
So meaning moves, bound round an unturned wheel—.  
The child,  
now captured by it moods. The man, trapped by its tasks.  
“How travel to a place that one includes?” each asks.

Dear man, at work at dawn, busy unraveling  
the gilded fleece that morning lends your flock of sheep,

why be deceived? Each loosened thread is signaling  
through widening gaps—toil's frayed ends bloom like maps  
    of sleep,  
dark sleep, dim falling pattern of a pathway, vein  
and crack that leads the lens back to the aching eyes,  
to moist cool ground where last regrets are grain  
in gardens watered by a boy who carries ice—  
an Icarus shouldering one white wing of crystal rain.  
So man unlearns road's dusts—returns—to where one  
    boy's cries  
are all the firmest most deliberate step implies.