

## NSA Whistleblower Blues

Breach birth, fit of courage, hubris? Off with his head  
cry pundits in fits of apoplectic rage, they bring to mind  
the Red Queen, but her majesty's tea party

pales in the shade of this fandango plied as it is with Booz,  
a pole dancer and room service that gave way to Asian fusion  
take out. Edward warded data troves  
not in won ton soup or one ton trucks, but on a thumb drive.  
The back story to the bumper crop of meta-data - spooks  
grabbing more bytes than Dracula -  
is the purloining of our commonweal,  
Booz et al tipping the nipple,  
feeding from the public boobie,  
privatization, ovarian zip tit.  
Surveillance is a global pandemic, cavils unreel,  
la virulence. TERRORISM! TERRORIST. Who?  
Retort sir to deconstruct security - ice yurts  
rusty ice, city user, cry suet, cry use it, cut ye sir.  
Snowden ends now, send odd news of the tune  
he's singing now, this virtuoso elbow whistler.

## **Kaddish**

The night the Baal Shem Tov announced in a dream  
that davening in the presence of dark angels

and gathering the brittle threads of mourners  
are practices filled with iridescence,

I davened till daybreak on the lip  
of a cistern chanting the vermilion syllables

of the heart sutra. At dawn: the songs  
of chaffinches, an back-lit field rife with thistles,

a messenger who announces, "The charred  
remains of the last white rhinoceros

will be borne to the forest in golden bowls. "  
For these bowls, I made a nest of brittle bones

with no marrow, feathered it with sorrow,  
some thistledown and a handful of ash.

## **We Are Singing**

And so with the storm coming in  
we are holding hands and singing we are  
walking barefoot on the earth  
feeling for underground rivers with the soles  
of our feet with our pockets full of pollen  
we are walking among stones  
singing in chorus with the songbirds

we are standing on the bank of a rushing river  
singing to mothers in Ethiopia and Azerbaijan  
we are waiting by the tripwire singing  
near the bandstand in the park and offering  
food to strangers and to the men who are

back from the prison back from  
an explosion after the deaths of our friends  
we are singing

over cell phones we are singing  
on piers and in the back of pick up trucks and  
in ferris wheels remembering children  
huddled in doorways and tent  
worms coagulated in trees we are singing we  
are singing looking straight

into the eyes of investment bankers and  
peering into the hollow souls of politicians  
we keep singing and singing

as ice caps disappear as floating islands  
melt beneath the bellies of polar bears and  
harp seals as the desert grows around us our new home  
we are singing

while the ocean dies faster than our breathing  
we are singing with improvised explosive devices  
scattered all over like pollen in spring  
with plastic growing from our feet  
we are singing louder and louder  
even when no body listens we are singing  
we are singing and holding hands  
searching for doors in the dark  
as the storm roars in around us.

*after W.S. Merwin*