

Bukowski

Bukowski wrote
“what matters most is
how well you
walk through the
fire.”

he believed that –
that’s why he didn’t kill himself

he was not a hypocrite –
an exaggerator
or actor,
yes,
but not a hypocrite

he believed that
and it hurts me

it hurts me
because I do not do well with fire

I am a coward –
just like Bukowski

he hated cowards
so he hated himself
and he’d hate me

Bukowski didn’t walk well
through the fire
he wasn’t talking about himself
when he wrote that line
he was talking about
the people he idolized

my idol
wouldn’t
idolize me

Power

He had too much empathy,
and not enough power,
to play God with others,
so he played God on himself.

At the time of writing this

I have been up for a week -

partly because of the questions
that I will not ask you,

for I am scared,
 terrified,
of the truth,

partly because I can no longer sleep in
my
own
bed,

for it reminds me too much of you.

Montreal

wait
take a minute and come with me
see the way that I see
about this life

build
build me up carefully
love me carelessly
I need your help

life can take its toll
on the best of men
I see the way you look at me
the way you look at them

I will never fail to love you
hit me with my back against the wall
a cigarette will get me through
second addiction next to you
take me every year to Montreal

close
to this dream of mine
bed bugs and cheap wine
the final show

go
go away for a while
I'll write about my denial
rediscover you

practice takes some time
don't get bored all alone
I'll leave this art behind
my shirts and my cologne

I will never fail to love you
hit me with my back against the wall
a cigarette will get me through
second addiction next to you
take me every day to Montreal

Imprisoned

My cigarette's light matches the city's -
the city that is imprisoned by mountains -
mountains I can't see yet.

Is it imprisoned by fear or martyrdom?

I produced
a shape
on the window
with my breath.

The imprisoned people with no faces
told me that the shape was a heart.

I didn't care
what they saw it as -
as long as they saw me

and applauded.

That's what the naked question mark
with a ring on her finger,
lying in the hotel's bed,
warned me about.

When she came to the window
I asked her,
"Does it look like a heart?"

"Yes,"
she said,
"but it's almost gone now."

She rested her head
on my fragile shoulders
and whispered,
"Look at the mountains!
You can't even see the city."

When I looked back
at my breath on the window,
the heart was completely gone
and a penny laid face-up on the floor.

I let the penny rest
and wondered
if it would give hope
to someone
who wanted it.