

Daniel Whitlow, P-31994
WordsUncaged Submission
(Poem)

“Newborn Becoming Effigist (Part 1 of *Becoming*)” (2012-2018)

The dawn awakes to many faces, places in an unorthodox order,
a dank smell, damp as moonlight—as obeisance,
to a filled sail, pushed against its will by wind unleashed to mount a thoughtless offensive
versus all enemies that corrupt the sky, the valleys, the mineshafts,

To a blazing fire upon which a body of charred flesh continues to burn with an eerie power,
a blasting intensity; a driving soaring burrowing diving humanity
that strips me of any respite I might have earned or owned or forgotten,

To a quiet lake, brushed by fingers of lazy thoughts, fins of fish, tails of otters
leaves of trees, brown and sleeping,
the dawn opens many doors;
A newborn still wrapped in the warmth of wombed invulnerability,
Still swaddled in the flames of unbreathing immortality
Not yet exposed to the cold, to the pain, to the defeat—

To the carnage, to the betrayal, to the violence that becomes his tool, that personifies his disease,
that sends mother reeling back—ears covered screaming maniac shrieking, bleating bloody murder—
“I only wanted what’s best for you,” *murder*, “only wanted you to be happy,” *murder*,
“only wanted you to touch the face of God and bathe in his light;”
Murderers unite and listen: I did touch his face and he told me to murder in his name,
to drink and eat his blood and body; *tear out their throats, separate the heads and bodies, rip open the gates of
hell
and send them to smolder;*

But I am so young; how could I not believe?
How could I refuse the voices, silken and symbiotic?
My peace torn asunder, thrust into arms of madness,
I could not resist, I could not overcome, the strength of fate, the weight of destiny,

The ripe squalor I realized was mine; my empty head was mine,
my blackened heart was mine; my hardened lungs were mine,
the last unbelievable, inconceivable, irrefutably daggered back was mine,

A newborn dawn awakens to many faces; ugly, pockmarked, grimacing faces,
intent black eyes focused on a bead of red sweat running down the frightened, screaming face,
that was mine,
a dawn awakens to many things, only to pray to go back, only to pray to idols, to statues,
to effigies doomed to fall to ash, to smoke, to dust, to death...