

It always seemed I would have to slay the dragon that was my father or I would forever sweep a square concrete patio, shoulders slumped, in the backyard of a home - perhaps not physical, but living in someone's sad, mute mind. And then become a story pulled out of the ether by a poet. One of Jean Toomer's women pinned with a nail to a porch in Georgia. Unspeaking. Unsinging. A living corpse, raw skull and bone, losing the memory of my own face. When I read Cane I wondered at those women and how many were my grandmothers, my aunts; were me.

until San Francisco swallowed us whole dragon's mouth the Bridge east we
drove one long slingshot stretch
reason to leave born in the end spring
craved companions earth and sky alone in a teepee with
wooden pallet floor unfinished monument
awakening to see the wide black arch welcomed us warmly
stay their land and shoot their guns ride their horses listen to
stories hunting and trapping in the wind next
night we slept I dreamt of nothing but grizzly bears
saw white wolf out the corner driving through twilight
as if we saw God we stayed with my friends married 50 years
watched woman losing memory
slowly while her husband walked the days
found miles of yellow grain and rolling hills crushed by the rush hour traffic
outside after empty roads and miles of quiet field and
sky coast swallowed our intrusion into cloud and fog
tallest morning ombre sky our return east wanderers
and travelers residence with good people who fed and kept us
the country that just elected the world did in fact hold
free land and sky but not surprised the next move to Another World
the island between Park and Madison trials tribulations
learned to survive claim right here