

Curt Hopkins

### Tahrir Square

*Which hands sowed / The heart's seeds of fire? — R. Jacobsen*

This flower with its petals made of bronze  
Refused to follow down the falling sun  
And made of fires and pyres a thousand dawns  
To light the darkened square while stars were questioned.  
This flower with its vines and roots of blood,  
Whose growth they sought to stop with iron walls,  
Climbed and dove and wandered where it would  
And spelled out freedom *en espalier*.  
Scatter seeds and flowers catch the wind,  
Gouge the land and roots grow deeper still,  
Burn it out and life will rush back in,  
What impulse turns to life our very will?  
The lodger of our soul turns dark to light  
And all the black designs of death to life.

## **They Will Recover My Body**

*For Joe Brooks*

They will recover my body in spring when the snow melts,  
They will discover my body in time for the funeral bells,  
They will uncover my body from the winding sheet when your hearts melt.

From beneath its sweet sleep in time the heart breathes,  
From the heart of the wheat sheaves a sweet singing rings,  
A sound from the sea, the salt sting of the deep,

Wakes us in our lathe-and-cable slings,  
Swings the cradle, starts it rocking,  
As we cry out again and again our name of names.

They will watch me rise as winter falls,  
They will call out to me when frost crawls across the panes  
And the pain breaks as the cracked carapace fails

And I spring to my feet and I cry to the sky,  
“Sky, crack open! I arise!”

## Contra Celsus

If A, then B,  
Whose face shook the backbone of the world.  
*Post hoc, propter hoc.*  
By Pharos Philo knew *Logos*,  
Israel the Seer.  
In time you feel the mind within the mind –  
Thank you, ma'am (the sign for fire).  
And without it and outside it and then it's *zoom*,  
And off go the angels,  
One of whom has got a gun (a Beretta 92 FS Inox)  
And lo! He carried in his right hand a sword.  
You who can see, lift your eyes to heaven.

Damned cold here on the metally edge of winter  
Where civilization fails and pine forests  
Fall into the frozen floes of blue rivers  
Who flow to northern seas where nothing's named.  
If A, then B,  
Never knew her, never raped her,  
Not *her* anyway.  
*Post hoc, propter hoc.*  
Trapped between philosophers and prophets,  
Historians and theologians,  
Never wanted nothing but a farm  
And to get off the dole and to get out of Rome.  
I've hated every place I've been  
And now I sense the rising wind.  
My end, if not exactly nearing,  
Is nearer than my beginning.

## Some Angels of Europe and North America

An angel bends the gleaming sleeve  
Bends the groaning sieve  
The angel who breaks the gleaming sleeve  
Broke the golden skin  
With its voice full of golden sand  
With its voice full of seed.

All across Central Europe  
Cold angels  
Rise from ledges  
Rise off of ledges  
In black and white  
With voices of silver crystal  
With voices of moonlit sand.

The tufa of the Transtiberina glows  
The golden horn of Trastavere  
Blows down Rome  
Stone by stone  
With a voice full of golden corn  
With a voice full of lions.

Here is memory become  
An angel of steel like a folded fan  
In an assassin's hand  
And here is the angel of our modern times  
Cutting herself with a broken ashtray  
Voice full of dirty feathers  
Voice full of wet silk.