

Heart

A cage of convenience is now my home,
a bag leaking air my bed and lying
on theirs are two women who say they miss
me whom each has given a lamp. By one
I read my heart through the life of a man
out of fashion; by the other I write
about my times by adding to their lies
my life's fictions through which but a few will
glimpse their own voice that cannot be exchanged
or refunded. So I enter one more
winter the same way a boy used to turn
a street-corner at night and find himself
walking towards dogs with flames in their eyes
and all he had between being savaged
and reaching home were his last wick of fire
held lightly between two knuckles, his eyes
of sharp fear, his feet bluffing a path through
the dogs' pause of grudging recognition
of a brother who had dared to survive
one more day of being stoned by children,
and his dark voice that could outgrowl them all.

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