

HOW TO CRAWL OUT OF YOUR GRAVE WITHOUT GETTING DIRT IN YOUR MOUTH

First, set your face to stone as you sit
silently captured above the fold,
soaking the page in those sensationalized words
has become fatal to the victim, and your defense, now being argued.
Peers they claim, looking on while being absorbed paper
towels listening to some half-assed forensic facts;
sounds surely snapping the neck of the accused;
breaking your bones and their news being rushed out of the courtroom;
same as an execution is a judge's elocution
pounding those retributive nails from the bench.
Then the shovels come out; good and interred, those camouflage deeds.
So hold on tight to the lowering ropes
as they do help prevent all that sliding around the state box
on your long, lonnggg way down.

Second, don't assume the present or the fetal position
and curl-up like a cornchip, which you'll be eating
for the next 30-years; oil is flammable!, you know.
This will be useful when fumbling around in the dark
striking matches; the glow of Hope and a desire
to become a lonely human wick is practical.
Let me assure you, as each empty day languishing
down here only reveals the truth of it all
that's come—and gone—simply leaves you guessing:
How much ~~more~~ could possibly be left?
Or maybe right? As the sweet spot of damp decay
and harsh justice hasn't revived anyone yet.
Just the cold lid that's been holding you down.

Third, stultified time works both ways for revisionists
and zombies alike; counting all those green moldering years
turned to dust in your same defendant's clothes.
But then...decades later, crushed and rusted,
a gap, a seam, appears at last!
So you squeeze. And you climb. And you slink
as a worm moves through loam, avoiding roots and stones
and old license plates, and especially your former life.
Now examined. "Why?" They want to know.
Useless to explain to someone in their tight shoes.
Besides, it's not the same size or price as yours anyway.
Best to make some shit up and say what they want to hear.
Just keep inching your way upward, clawing toward a world
WAY MORE violent, chaotic, divided and disturbed
than when you left your rolled fingerprints upon it.
And when the grass tickles your eyes, and the sand cascades
and the pebbles fall from your lips and chin,
and when the gunfire grazes your skull—
know that you've finally arrived back,
although smelling like Bishop's long-rotted Fish, of course,
but back nevertheless—among the living again.
Welcome!