

The Wire

Also by Michael Zand

lion : the iran poems

The Shearsman Chapbook Series, 2012

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Alan Wall : *Raven*

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hors de série

Shira Dentz : *Leaf Weather*

The Wire

& other poems

Michael Zand

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For Thomas Kian

The Wire

January

Little Gidding. The village is in mourning.
They form an orderly line.
For once, there is snow. And it bunkers.
Shovels. A few words.
Clenched.
An intensity of birds round the highest house.
Paper, scissors, stone.
Reflections of clouds against the ice make the air seem blue.
Blurred.

The Nene is part frozen, part broken.
Like a barrier. It barriers. There's also a lock here.
Boats that were first moored in the dark.
Memories. Of her, Brother.
Distanced.

Inside.

The bathroom mirror. Cracking now, like tundra.

I'm the Old Testament.

I'm Jerome looking startled in candlelight.

And aye, we were there, in our thousand-year coats.

As you say Brother, it's the Middle Ages.

A dead honeybee sits on the sill.

"Always give them what they want", you tweet.

In my mind's I.

It helps me realise, y'know. You.

It helps me realise that when you are, when you are.

It helps me realise that when you speak.

It hurts.

Like the limes of Jericho.

Later and alone.
A ghost in the VCR. I rewinded it. Rewind did it.
To see little Isaac singing nursery rhymes.
The voiceover tells us.
Tells us what he's learnt, what he'll learn soon. But he looks up.
The pictures stop.

I know we would have loved him. Perhaps he would. He would.
Have loved too.
The Earth isn't ours, Brother.
Together, we sigh. We feel the weight of it all and all.
It will cease. Soon.
She will bring down the little birds.
And I will bring down the little birds.
A gorgeous oboe takes us back on a shard of light as if we are—

February

London. On a Sunday train, men and women.

Wellies are on the seats.

The world thaws. Straddling the tracks.

Fingers weave fingers.

More fingers weave fingers, on a beach in Marin County.

Gael and Diego. They've come to remember sweet Maribel.

They light a fire and sleep happy there.

Tenoch rises. Embraces them.

Some days pass. A reading at the Swedenborg.

I am alone amongst poets.

Like an egg on the end of a thread.

Eyes drop.

Tinnitus.

You agree to meet me, Brother.

Soho House is teeming and fecund.
Dervishes play billiards in perfect circles.
We devour the Brie. You know I hate Brie.
Emma Watson sits by us. Her friend wants it so bad.
Or not.
You break first.

You say, "I'm an actor too, of fire and water".
As you drink white wine.
"Waking nature. That's the rose of it.
Like lichen beneath the Arctic ice, it remains. Or remains."
She looks impressed, or tired of pizza.
I suck on an empty straw.
Only the faithful hold this place green, Brother.
Only the faithful hold this place green.

As you drive me home, you pause.
You tell me that you admired me, even envied me.
Something about lifelines.
The remnants.
The soft glow of the Northern Lights in an age of Mongers.
Or some other pish.
The moon bathes nude in the black.
I long for Judah.

The whirr of the road gives us and around us gives way.
After a while, we hear strings.
A cavernous hymn.
An echo of sounds sprawling, Brother.
Estranged.
Or it could have been a—