

ghost/i slip into neuroses

Jared Price

my grandpa is not much of a prophet, but
his friend died this morning
and grandpa told me that he dreamt of him last night.

and today i saw a ghost behind me in the mirror
when i woke with a start and
tripped to the bathroom
down the long moonlit hall
to splash my face with cold water.

i'll tell myself it's bullshit, but
sometimes i feel like these secrets have been passed to me
by a white salamander crawling from a hill.

in a history full of floods and strange knowledge
(sacred and profane,
staves and stones,
fire and finality),

eli, eli, lama sabachtani
are the only true words i ever heard.

and the mysticism gnaws as i jab a dowsing rod
scrounging not for water,
but for an adequate canteen i can pour myself into
and a holy of holies that won't
strike me down
when I peer around the gentle curtain.

people tell me to calm down
but i can't be the only one
growing anxious.