

Ray Gonzalez

THE MASK

What have you saved?
What have you given up
so there can be dust
in the clarity of things?
When the soundless dancer
is the first thing you see
in the morning,
something has changed.
You are no longer frightened
by unexplainable grief.

There is an endless moon
in the sky but you gave it
a different name.
What have you saved?
What passes for a voice
in the magnified moment
of crying the way
the cricket sings?
The iron mask on your wall
is missed by the mummy
shrouded in earth.
When you helped others
dig it up, the air was cold
for an instant, but it was
something you could believe.

How sharp should the color
of a knife be?
When you handle it,
the story you carve
in the tree has already
been told, your late arrival
expected after bits
of the night came
apart in your hands.
What have you kept?
How have you lived?