

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Bill Gainer: Three Poems

Bill Gainer · Wednesday, September 4th, 2019

### The Reason Old Men Shuffle

Murderer  
yes, I know.  
A lifetime spent  
killing  
invisible gods.  
Who knew  
there were so many?  
Their corpses scattered

everywhere –  
the reason old men  
shuffle –

trying to avoid  
tripping  
but still  
now and then  
we do.

\*

### Death of a Swing-Set

The guy from the Association  
stopped by  
asked about the swing-set.  
Wanted to know  
if it was safe.  
I said, it's a swing-set man.  
He said it could cause  
a hanging  
a suicide  
something ugly.  
Somebody

could get hurt.  
Said it's dangerous.  
There's no fence  
to keep the kids out.  
I said, it's a swing-set man.  
It's for the kids.  
He said it's gotta go.  
Gave me 30 days to appeal  
before the committee.  
We tore it down  
burned it in a pile  
prayed over its ashes.  
Now it's just a scar  
in a yard  
where kids don't play.

\*

## Sunrise on a Blind Alley

Getting that feeling – again  
shoulder tight  
eyes – slits leaking blue  
teeth grinding  
and just inside the ear  
something screams.

We've already gone too far.  
Stayed too long  
broke all the broken things  
turned the sun  
into a savage  
the moon  
a witness  
and the sky  
a crack above  
the rusting fire escapes.

In the morning  
when the sun rises  
its only reason  
to burn another dream  
way past ash.

It's sunrise on a blind alley  
the windows closed tight  
the shades down.  
There's no way out.  
Everybody's frightened.

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Even me.

*(Author photo by Douglas Hopper.)*

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