

A Confused Heart

All right, I admit it, I'm to blame,
it's on account of me
the Messiah doesn't come;

I am the blip on the screen,
the cold spot, the dark area you see
with indefinite borders, moving sluggishly

crabwise, with a density all its own,
unabsorbed, indissoluble; the clot
in the body politic – that's me,

accountable by myself (though not alone)
for the tarrying footfall, for our
continuing bad name:

because of my imperfect faith,
my ritual omissions, my mistakes in form,
my little games of nor-care-I,

because I am stiff-necked, and push
the quarrel with God one step too far,
preferring to do the thing my way

rather than not at all (unable
to play by the rules to save my life,
unwilling to drop the ball) –

because I confuse having a part
with holding apart, and star with shield;
because I will always pause

in my studies along the road, to say
How fair is that field,
how fine is that tree;

because I have made strange fire
again and again, and lived,
and the earth has not swallowed me.

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