

Cynthia Hilts

Emma's Light

There is still a cormorant, snakey-necked bottom-heavy T
That flies up the Hudson against the wind, close to the water
There are still clouds and the sun can burn my nose in the afternoon
Three thousand people died and disappeared in a half hour
Two miles from home

The corollaries keep appearing, one more person tells me one more story
Some days I disappear in hopelessness
This is too big, I realize the world is too big for me
I thought I was striving for good, I was working to be the biggest heart, the most
 loving realization of possibilities
Nothing can be enough for this
Disdain shows up for the waste it always was
Petty as the aggravations that it bellies up to
I have disdained politics and news that was not clearly in the path of music
The world is too big, I'm afraid that is the bad truth
And I am too small and weak of spirit to take up my part
Back to the dilemma of g-d that created everything, and why we are so many on this
 planet that we are nevermore to be a working equation

Our hearts are beaten and our minds are bewildered
One more person sucker-punches me with one more hateful plan for retaliation
One more person rages with ignorance I perceive to surpass even my own, known
 better in the glare of the expiring light of three thousand dead in one half hour
Two miles from my home
Some days I am wooden with rage at someone else's boiling expressed grief
Some days I am only this far from the most stunted existence ever - ten bucks and
 a trip to the liquor store
As if I had never learned about loving myself-the-world
Some days I believe no one loves me
Believe my friends are not friends because they are grieving and raging too

And what kind of god wants me to be grateful that I am still alive
That I did not see people jumping to their deaths
That I did not see their faces looking out the windows from the
Fiftieth sixtieth one hundredth floor

That I didn't see them waving sheets out the window - save me oh god I surrender
save me

That I did not watch a thousand times as the news vultures made a music video
out of the explosions

What kind of god receives my prayers with grace

What god is the harmony that I seek and think some moments I have found

What god unites hearts in prayer and grief and gives men the sickness to create these moments
and eternities of hate and sorrow, bewilderment? Is that a
thing to call god?

I feel too weak and small, and I'm shocked to see myself in this light

And this darkness

But

Today a little girl I once showed some things on the piano

Is now twenty and dancing "Alleluia" on stage, to rhythm, with lights and costumes

Tears rolled down in thanks that I am somehow worthy of something

Because I see her as love, and worth, part of the solution of peace and spirit

And I helped, in some little way

I helped her grow to this

Cynthia Hilts 10/01