

# Threnodies

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Threnodies" by Joel Chace. The score is divided into two main sections, marked with circled numbers 43 and 44. The upper section (43) contains vocal parts for Soprano (Soprano), Alto (Alto), Tenor (Tenor), and Bass (Bass), with corresponding lyrics. The lower section (44) features a string ensemble consisting of Violin I (Violin I), Violin II (Violin II), Viola, Violoncello (Cello), and Contrabasso (Double Bass). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Joel Chace

# Threnodies

Joel Chace

moria — chicago — 2019

Copyright © 2019 by Joel Chace

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-7337148-1-5

Moria Books  
c/o Bill Allegrezza  
9748 Redbud Rd  
Munster, IN 46321

### **Acknowledgements**

Poems in this collection have appeared previously in the following publications: *Angry Old Men*, *Dispatches from the Poetry Wars*, *Eoagh*, *Eratio*, *Otoliths*, *Positive Magnets*, and *Unlikely Stories*. Many thanks to respective editors for permission to reprint.



## **timocracy**

(“precisely when the philosophers neglect music and physical exercise, and begin to gather wealth”)

Blond li-  
ttle n-  
ubber asked, “Can  
I be in two pl-  
aces, at t-  
he same time?”

They foresaw his success, that of a pastry cook arguing against physicians before a jury of children.

“Of course,”  
his pare-  
nts said. “And  
do you know y-  
ou have a thigh mad-  
e of gold?”

\*

His parents thought him wise beyond his years. "Of course," he said, "I'd throw away my swine and other animals, my clothes and bed and desk, my friends, my relatives, before I'd grab and toss a single pearl." Above his head, they locked eyes and beamed.

Lo-  
cked in a wh-  
ite world wit-  
h his w-  
hite hea-  
rt, a white,  
dry win-  
d blowing  
through it.

He found that certain music irritated him,  
no end. Whenever assaulted -- Mahler, Elgar,  
Bach -- he felt as if someone were pouring sand over his head.

Though he rat-

her liked si-  
tting on sand,  
the whit-  
er the better.

\*

About his mother, nobody knows very much.

Seems she  
told him, once, that the sun is an inverted bowl with  
the width of a human foot.

She gave him a  
poem book  
that he op-  
ened and placed  
on a rai-  
lway track.

For the photograph, she must have coached him on  
the pout and on the deadness in his little boy's blue eyes.

Call her A-  
gave, cradli-  
ng the prin-  
ce's severed head, then  
reasse-  
mbling all his b-  
ody parts, to send  
him out to  
rule the world.

\*

Suddenly he h-  
ad it and  
didn't k-  
now he'd wa-  
nted it. His  
wife wept, and  
wept.

In that other tale, the seawater's clear at first.

And don't forget that when the fisherman releases



the flounder, it leaves behind a long smear of blood.

This one's sp-  
ouse feared  
darknesses, and that he'-  
d demand those, with eve-  
rything else.

Clear, to sickly green; dark blue, gray  
and dense; darker gray, smelling foul; black, thick, and  
boiling, waves high as towers: until the fisherman's wife asks  
to be God, and they are back in their filthy shack again.  
Remember, too -- at first the freed flounder'd promised  
nothing.

\*

They keep putting sentences into his mouth, and color-coding  
his office walls with everything he's won.

Ea-  
rly he walks

high, cold, lone-  
ly halls. He shuf-  
fles, fre-  
ely, he thinks, but  
he's ankle fet-  
tered to a  
distant stake.

If the marble steps in the palace, the browning  
fronds, the tall window curtains are sentient, how  
can we say he isn't? Yet we say it -- he isn't.

And the fire with-  
in him is-  
n't ele-  
mental, isn'-  
t alive.

\*

They hand him a stoppered test tube, which he warily  
uncorks. From what appeared clear and empty, rises

a floating liquid scroll. He frowns at the words on it, but they quickly change to chips—green, gold, blue, red -- of flashing, shifting lights. He gazes, grins.

If all things turned  
to smoke, the no-  
strils would disti-  
nguish them.

He loves this new science, so he holds another tube over a flame and waits for the next emergence, whose spooling out will tell him what to say.

In Hade-  
s, souls smell.

\*

He really likes certain numbers, especially 1, and all its multiples. People ask him to count by 2's -- he won't; by 3's -- he won't; by 5's -- nope.

It's sill-  
y and goes  
around wi-  
lly nil-  
ly and asks  
a d-  
aisy what  
to do.

What sensitive soul would not be entranced by  
imaginary numbers? Their beauty is a  
beauty detached from phenomena, the way  
a flying airplane is detached from the ground.

But his wisd-  
om is not 1  
thing that knows  
the thought by  
which all thi-

ngs are ste-  
ered thr-  
ough all things.

\*

Letter makes a sidewalk curb; word, an alleyway; phrase,  
a block-long street; clause, a bridge; sentence, a  
six-lane avenue down this city of speech.

His cr-  
edo, next thought, be-  
st words; his speech, crook-  
ed, duck-  
like, dull.

He wants to hide his feebleness; hence, his cane. And, though  
immaterial, it's become weapon, mutilating  
those who care to study him too closely, those whose  
scattered remains -- one's sinew here, another's  
bone there -- gather themselves up to make a whole  
witness, the one only who will escape and testify.

Bl-  
ood has a  
le-  
xicon; spi-  
lled blood, i-  
ts own.

\*

Trembling puddle: he's on that path though he's made his cane  
invisible.

Such terrain as is ours. At last, we'd  
done it, arrived at city's end, blackened façade rising,  
curving above us.

untenable  
uneightable unsi-  
xable un-  
fourable untw-  
oable unon-  
eable.

So we turned back, saying  
we hadn't wanted to leave, after all.

To neglect  
music, exercise, and begin to gather wealth.

Unseen cane.

pu-  
ddle tre-  
mbling  
unde-  
r swamp.

\*

A new Sphinx claws its way over walls of the city  
of speech. This time the beast is male.

Each day sickness spreads.

Ramparts would weep if  
they understood.

To u-

n  
riddle the riddling  
double-beast's singing  
whose music is n-  
ot music at all, da-  
nce that knows no music.

This time it gives us the answer first: *catastrophe*; and,  
to extirpate the curse, we must say, in exact  
words, the riddle.

But our sentences slur.

The wo-  
rd of truth  
is si-  
ngular in  
nat-  
ure, and no fl-  
ying dream.

\*



Mendaci-  
ty, that cl-  
oak of fear, d-  
angles about him.

Which is he -- Euripidean predator  
or prey?

Both --

Dionysus and Pentheus. Heartless  
one: "I am a god. I am blasphemed by you, my name  
dishonored," radiant within his own terror.

And

arrogant, beardless king trying to enslave  
divinity, then dismembered by his mother, his aunts.

"The gods h-  
ave many shap-  
es, bring many things  
to accompl-  
ishment, find their  
ways for what no man e-  
xpected."

In any case, we become a nation of mourning  
mothers, each Agave's vision coming clear, to recognize  
that what she holds in her hand is the severed head of her son.

\*

“The Chri-  
stians know all  
the things I'm d-  
oing for t-  
hem, right?”

This mirror's border's a stampede of ruby  
stallions; this one's an onyx stream of ocean; this one's  
a ring of fornicating swans.

Before  
such mirrors they sit, then rise and go up to tell him.

So they'll inh-  
erit jeweled corr-  
idors, great halls and o-

ffices, the earth  
with all its air-  
y currents.

\*

If he'd read Dante, Zukovsky; seen and  
studied El Greco, Rothko; heard, felt,  
understood Schubert's lieder, Britten,  
Bird, Trane: would he be broader, deeper than  
tissue; would we all be living in lesser darkness?

Then again, Mary  
Ann Lamb offed her  
mum with a kitchen  
knife; Caravaggio  
bled a man out with  
a stab to the groin;  
Gesualdo slashed  
his wife's neck, then  
mutilated her and  
her lover's genitals.

Now, this one watches television with  
a vengeance and a need the size of Saturn.

\*

to neglect music and  
begin to gather wealth

Late 16<sup>th</sup> century: “He shows his works in score to  
everyone, to induce them to marvel at his art.”

2018:

Tin-  
y birds  
del-  
iver his me-  
ssages.

Early 17<sup>th</sup> century: “It is obvious  
that his art is infinite, but it is full of  
attitudes, and moves in an extraordinary way.”

2018:

“He we-  
ars you do-  
wn. Y-  
es, he does.”

Early 17<sup>th</sup> century: “His is  
the highest expression of pain in music.”

\*

Early 17<sup>th</sup> century: He was “afflicted  
by a vast horde of demons that gave him no  
peace, unless ten or twelve young men, whom he kept  
specially for the purpose, were to beat him  
violently three times a day, during which  
operation he was wont to smile joyfully.”

2018:

He’s posse-  
ssed by e-  
mptiness, which

no amount of pu-  
mmeling can  
displace.

Early 17 century: In “Moro, lasso,” the  
tenor voice’s movement ups the tension  
of the song, which “suffers extraordinary  
stress, as though tied to some instrument of  
torture worked by means of a slowly turning crank.”

2018:

He marvels, “I can  
invite a-  
nyone for dinner, and  
they will come!”

\*

In this lake -- in -- lies a corridor; watery, long  
container; narrow, floating stage: scene, a hallway; he  
stands at the far end.

As he walks toward us, doors

on each side open. From every doorway, an arm  
thrusts forth, with clipboard and document attached.  
Without even glancing, he signs sheet after

sheet, unt-

il, bl-

urry-close,

fade, cut.

He'll never make a dive back to that reenactment, that  
reprise of how he brought himself to now,

when l-

iquid dark-

ness ov-

erwhelms his, o-

nly his, sight.

\*

When i-  
t's ju-  
st a-  
bout money,  
G-  
od le-  
aves the room.

Shuffling, he's stooped like Mammon in Paradise.

His pratt-  
le's bu-  
tterscotch dr-  
izzled ove-  
r turds.

He even reprises that pusillanimous theme --  
building, one Pandemonium after another.

\*



For the walled garden, he hired decorative  
hermits -- then forgot he'd done so; then forgot  
them; then forgot the garden.

They've sheltered in  
brambles, kept accounts with sticks on leaves, and

made plans to  
show him.

The divid-  
ed line,  
all  
that is mir-  
aculous,  
and  
he b-  
elieves in  
just hi-  
mself.

With stings in their fingers and hell in their toes,  
they shall come at him with thorns from a rose.

**unmarked** (upwards of 1,200, Taum, Smyllum)

he used to pick me  
up by the ears and kick me  
didn't  
put him in the earth at all, but only  
threw him -- in the chamber, the nuns called it.

\*

of shame we wear today  
"when we get  
dead" -- as if he knew he best learn,  
soon  
those other children,  
a different species  
underground  
chambers in a former sewage  
or  
we denied them to the point of  
every  
week , out the Dublin road, and knocking  
on the door, "I want to rear him"

Lady

of Charity of the Good

Shepherd

an odd person, you know, would  
say they remembered screaming from

bishops

and priests, all condescending and  
niceties

three months old, and wizened  
limbs

subsidized housing  
and a playground built on the site.

\*

the Sisters' heads, prayerfully declined

I

just get the sense of the babies  
down there, that they're under me

chapping

on doors, approaching local councils,  
and trying to

not they who need

to be listened to, but the children

they once were

as if they put a

punisher into

seventeen

underground chambers

must have, the

little ones, watched cold patches of light

coming and going

used to

wonder why was there broken

glass all along

bodies,

700 to 800.

\*

glimpsed cobalt, burgundy, amber stained

slants of light across His crossed feet, and,

side-glancing, reminded each other

not to think of

if there's some way

I could help them, just to get them  
out of there

every week for five  
and a half years, knocking, "I want  
to take my son"

They cocked up a puck  
of stories

hedge each side of us, me  
holding the little sick girl's hand

blocks  
away from The Place, their shouts, laughs sounded  
like crows, ravens, gulls

set to the  
children's rib cages, their

thirteen  
months old, miserable,  
emaciated, voracious  
appetite, and no control over.

\*

can break -- don't you know, break free from past  
time

never before seen one, with habit  
and all, first she looked at me, I saw such  
hatred

government's the government,  
and it's like knocking a brick  
wall

certainly never to speak to  
the Bishop

falling on her tiny,  
thin coat, snowflakes so huge, so round

their  
disappearance from our hearts, our  
sight

him being buried next to the  
kids just sickens

dumped with  
the Church, condemned to cruelty,  
to



and put them up in the sky,  
because we'd have to hear  
what our mouths were saying.

\*

tanks, chambers, compartments

nuns, priests,

bishops, archbishops

Mary Ann

Broderick, Joseph Gavin, Marian

Brigid Mulryan

cardinals,

magistrates

Patrick Walsh, Mary

C. Rafferty, Francis M. Heaney,

Ann Marion Fahy, Joseph

Demsey, Anne Dillon

If in death they're

treated with disdain

their play careful,

times they were allowed to gather in

the gray yard

they said there'd been

an accident

as if they put

a sentry

in existence since

1633, for the direct

service of the poor through corporal

and spiritual works of mercy.

\*

away from the manicured and

precise graves of the nuns

your mum

was a prostitute, your da

a gangster

priest in the parish got

to hear of it, told her parents

it were an awful disgrace

whole

site leveled, cleared

you really need  
the death certs, no question  
walking  
about with that cane and leather belt, she  
looked ready to autograph  
bibles

the little girl that I'd  
hold her hand, I asked where she'd gone,  
and got beat smartly for my trouble.

\*

They'd look for a piece of  
polyurethane, anything  
that'd slice your skin

Church has never  
had responsibility for -- that  
remains a matter for statutory  
authorities

and give them  
proper burial, that's what I'd just  
love

said they could find no records  
of abuse

We took their babies, we  
gifted them disappearance from our  
country, from life itself

said local  
priests participated in services  
at the graveyard

just four, yet he talked  
about it, though so little long  
after that, they threw him on top  
of the others

fish rots from the head.

\*

take off our mouths

Secours

knocking

horns

on forehead

clothed in shame

chambers,  
they said  
of the Good Shepherd  
former  
sewage  
niceties  
and wizened  
limbs  
declined, prayerfully, headdresses  
like white gulls  
voracious appetite  
round,  
gigantic flakes spotting her  
thin little coat, she laughed, even  
she  
Mary Ann, Patrick, Imelda,  
Joseph  
the gray yard  
an accident  
works  
of mercy  
awful disgrace

death

certs

little girl that I'd hold her hand.

\*

so little long after

Patrick,

Marion Brigid, Francis

from

the head

your mum was

pebble

dropped into a pond, each time

precise,

manicured graves next to the kids', just

sickens

gulls, ravens, crows up

in the sky

knocking against

dumped

with

slants of light across His crossed  
feet  
cocked up a puck of  
anything  
that'd slice  
the babies down there  
watched  
cold patches  
all condescending and  
at least  
some of them might be named.

## Threnody in Three Voices

1.

I begin my work when Servius Galba was consul for the second  
time  
with Titus Vinius for his colleague. Great intellects had  
passed away. Then too the truthfulness of history  
was impaired in many ways; at first, through men's ignorance  
of public affairs, which were now wholly  
strange to them, then, through their passion for flattery.

In the anteroom, he began to notice how small  
he'd become, considerably smaller than the several others  
there - men and women --

*Left hospital with Marci today, for home.*

*Ronnie, Mother, & Jule came to pick us up.*

*Jule didn't quite know what to say, but after*

*we gave her a toy dog from her new sister, she*

*was O.K. Good to be home, but so tired & weak.*



and even much smaller than he'd  
been hours before,

2.

**I am entering on the history of a period rich  
in disasters, frightful in its wars, torn by  
civil strife, and even in peace full of terrors.  
Sacred rites were profaned; there was profligacy  
in the highest ranks; the sea was crowded with exiles,  
and its rocks polluted with bloody deeds.  
In the capital there were yet worse horrors.**

a fact that he'd soon have to explain to his  
superior,

*The Lakelands' 7 yr. old son died of  
polio this a.m. Only seemed sick a few  
hours before. All parents here getting  
jittery. Have put Jule on  
homogenized milk until this is over.*



Not quite a  
homunculus, he thought about himself, though he  
was now certain that those in the room were now  
naming him such

*Tried to sort out some of the newspapers. I'm  
way behind on my reading now. Marci's  
naps are so short it's hard to accomplish anything.*

4.

**Galling to troops who rebelled against the old discipline,  
and who had been accustomed by fourteen years' service  
under  
Nero to love the vices of their emperors, as much  
as they had once respected their virtues.**

behind his tiny back.

Though he'd been caught out as tardy, he  
gauged -- through the filthy windows --  
the hour as still very early,

*Jule's 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. When she was finally in bed, I began to think back to when she had the croup so bad, not long after her first birthday. The attack started Thanksgiving night, 1950, and continued night & day for 4-5 weeks (2 weeks in hospital). Dr. told us she might not make it, but here she is!*

not terribly long after dawn. Which was why he couldn't  
get straight

**Few had any discrimination or patriotism, many had foolish hopes for themselves, and spread interested reports, in which they named this or that person to whom they might be related as friend or dependant.**

5.

how, earlier that morning,

*Marcie woke 6 or 8 times during night. Teeth  
must really*

in virtually the same light,

**For to urge his duty upon a prince is indeed  
a hard matter; to flatter him, whatever his  
character**

*hurt. Hope they hurry and push through  
as I'm getting mighty tired.*

**!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!is a mere routine gone through without  
any heart.**

he'd had time to climb to the summit on the city's opposite

6.

*Jule turns television*

**Let Nero, swollen with pride, be ever before  
your eyes. What shook his yoke**

side, before showing up here.

How much older he'd been hours ago,  
ascending that street, his pace steady, though  
decidedly

*voice way*

*down if the program*

**from our necks was his  
own profligacy, his own brutality, and**

**that, though there had been  
before no precedent of an emperor  
condemned by his own people.**

*scares her.*

slow. After all, he was venturing out for the first  
time in the months

**7.**

**Many who wished him well, spoke with  
enthusiasm; those**

since his retirement. The  
very next day after taking his pension, he fell

*Did quite a bit of shopping dept.  
store. Had to*

**who had opposed him, in**

ill -- that is, into despair.

Forty years of numbing, enervating effort to teach literature; then blinking his eyes upon viewing the horror of the unrecognizable

*stop when money gave out.*

**moderate terms; the majority met him with  
an officious homage, having aims of their own and no thought  
for the state.**

8.

world around him, its people -- even the young -- looking every way stunned.

But that morning, he



**Otho, meanwhile, who had nothing to hope  
while the State  
was tranquil, and whose whole plans  
depended on revolution, was  
being roused to**

*Jule played "Jingle Bells" at church on her toy*

woke and, at last, exited his home. As  
he began trudging up the incline,

*trombone. Got up on stage all by  
herself. She's a real comedienne --  
had*

**action by a combination of**

many motives, by a luxury that would have  
embarrassed even  
an emperor, by a poverty that a subject  
could hardly endure, by his rage and his  
envy.

*all the other kids laughing.*

9.

**Worked hard on the books for Ronnie's store last**

*this occurred to him: a path upward is for  
the old; that downward, for the young. The thought was*

**night until I was so tired I quit. Today I**

And so between the enmity of the one

and the servility of the other, neither had any regard for posterity.

*incontrovertible, but he didn't at all*

**tried to catch up on some reading while Jule napped, but soon went back to the accounts. Everything added up.**

Nobility, wealth, the refusal or the acceptance of office, were grounds for accusation, and virtue ensured destruction.

*know why. The damp mid-winter air chilled him, and he treaded carefully over the sidewalks'*

10.

Never surely did more terrible calamities

**Ronnie took Jule to her 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday School class after**

*icy patches. He'd forgotten these pleasures of*

**church. She was shy and just sat there all thru it. Said**

of the Roman People, or evidence more conclusive, prove  
that the Gods take no thought for our happiness, but only

*cold, muted sunlight shimmering the moist facades,*

**she'd talk and play next week. Mother brought up all**

**my tin**

*gray and brown, of houses abutting each other*

for our punishment. Fiercely assailed by adulation, by flattery,  
that worst

**childhood dishes. Jule played with them all day.**

11.

**I have a real hard cold today. Jule complained  
of a runny nose toward night. Gave her pills &**

*along his way; and -- as the park opened up*

poison of the true heart, and by the selfish interests  
of individuals.

*near and slightly over the summit -- black branches*

**cough medicine. We both used steam tonight.**

While we instinctively shrink from a writer's adulation,  
we lend a ready ear to detraction and spite, because  
flattery involves the shameful

*jigsawing a pale sky.*

*He strolled westward through*

imputation of servility, whereas malignity wears the  
false appearance

**Used one of Jule's quieting pills (she had as a**

*the park, to a street that ran parallel to the one*

**baby) for Marci. Wonderful, all night sleep.**

12.

*he'd climbed. Taking his initial step of descent,  
he recalled his notion regarding paths for the*

of honesty.

They wasted the property of others

**Ronnie in a spin about the store he wants to buy --**

in the same extravagances in which they had  
squandered their own, till the most rapacious and profligate

*old and for the young. Cautiously, bending aged*

*knees --*

**he's always hoped for his own business. Has first choice on it now, but needs about \$35,000. After**

among them had neither capital nor land remaining,

*calves and thighs tightening -- he landed on a*

nothing in fact but the appliances of their vices.

Everywhere were sales and brokers.

**his 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at the bank, he wasn't encouraged.**

13.

*narrow stretch of ice. His heart banged against his*

Yet great was the joy to think that the men whom Nero had enriched



**Girls upset all day by the heat. No real rain**

would be as poor as those whom he had robbed.

*chin. But as he slid, his fear and the years that had*

**for almost 2 months. Leaves are already  
turning, & it's only early Sept.**

Otho, having assured himself by various conversations with these men that they were and bold, he loaded them with presents and promises,

*brought it on commenced to slide from him.*

and furnished them with money with which to tempt the

cupidity of others.

**Started raining, finally -- most of night --  
welcome noise.**

14.

*The frigid air rushing by his ears*

**Big disappointment today. Bank said no deal**  
--

Already he is thinking of debaucheries, of revels,  
of tribes of mistresses. These things he holds to be

**security too uncertain. Now what do we do?**

*exhilarated him. Yet, despite the increasing*

the prizes of princely power, things, in which the wanton

*momentum, no blurring occurred. In fact, vision --*

**Jule's urine O.K. No sugar. What a relief!**

enjoyment will be for him alone, the shame and the  
disgrace for all.

15.

*all senses -- sharpened, heightened to a point where he*

**Telephone Co. put in our new phone  
for the dial system, which starts this weekend.**

The most arrant coward, the man, who, would  
dare nothing in the moment of danger, was the most

**Dreaded all day telling Jule about her operation**

*knew he had never before so vividly*

voluble and fierce of speech. And what others call

*experienced these neighborhoods passing by.*

**tomorrow. Finally told her after her bath.**

16.

crimes he calls reforms, and, by similar misnomers, he speaks  
of strictness instead of barbarity, of economy instead of  
avarice, while the cruelties and affronts inflicted upon you

**She took it very well, and we packed her suitcase.**

*Sweeping around a curve, with month after month dropping*

**his a.m., all went well except the shots. She wasn't**

he calls discipline. His ears turn to hear every sound.

*away into the past, he marveled at maroon scalloping*

**sick at all from the ether.**

**I was the only**

**mother who stayed over for 2 nights. Was run ragged.**

*midway up the front wall of a house he used to visit.*

17.

**Whooshing through one square, he opened his lungs**

*This started the apprehension, that a crafty*

The Dr. irrigated Jule's nose with ice water

*and timid policy was getting rid of*

and a syringe. She was panicky and screamed and

**to the delights of a bakery and a**

begged the Dr. not to. I nearly broke down then.

*individuals, while all were suspected.*

**tobacconist's; through another, he**

*His favored, who enjoyed an unheard of license,*

Marci loves to be picked up and dance around

**shivered at a Schubert melody played upon**

18.

*brought the debaucheries of court, its intrigues, its easy*

while you hold her. She and Jule dance together

*marriages, and the other indulgences of*

**a piano just slightly out of tune.**

**Younger**

and love it. Jule likes to try and teach Marci

**and younger. Farther down into the city, until**

to talk. She now says quite a few words for her big sister.

*despotic power, before a mind*

*passionately*

**that thin rivulet of ice abruptly ended**

Dr. put girls' names on list for

Salk vaccine

**and he had to catch himself from hurtling headlong.**

*fond of such things, dwelt upon them as his if he dared*

19.

when available.

By this morning Jule was covered

**He stood in another square and looked about.**

*to seize them, and reproached the inaction*

with measles, except her legs and feet. Her

**Radiant hues had been replaced by a monochrome**

*that would leave them to others.*

*Such was the*

fever was gone but returned in afternoon.

*temper of men's minds, that, while there were few to*

*venture*

**of lead. The pervasive odor was of discarded**

Tried to get some of my reading done. Kids are so full

**mop water. Sounds came to him muffled as**

*on so atrocious a treason, many wished it done,*

20.

**those from beyond asylum walls.**

**And his own person?**

*and all were ready to acquiesce.*

of mischief. Hard to  
concentrate on anything.

*It was as if they were demanding some spectacle*

**He had become the third  
iteration of himself**

We took Jule down for Bible School at 9 a.m. She  
*in the circus or amphitheatre. They had not indeed*

**in just that one morning: this one, a functionary,**

said she'd try it and if she  
didn't like it,

*any discrimination or sincerity,*

**well under average height and clothed in a gray**

she didn't want to go anymore. She liked it.

21.

*for on that same day they would raise with equal*  
**wrinkled suit, one size too large.**

**In front of him stood**



Drove down to new Taste Freeze to inquire

*zeal a wholly different cry. It was their custom to flatter*

**a washed out three-story building that he understood**

about starting one up. No deal, I guess.

*any ruler with reckless applause and meaningless fervor.*

Jule won't mind at all now unless you get

**was his workplace. Glancing at his watch,**

*Soon, as happens with these great fictions, men*

a strap out and threaten her with it.

**he realized that he was tardy.**

22.

*asserted that they had been present, and had seen*

**So, small as he was, he entered, took a seat in**

The East cleaning up after the flash floods. Heartbreaking

*the deed; and, between the delight of some and the*

**the grimy anteroom, and waited to be**

job. People dead and still buried under debris.

*indifference of others, the report was*

**summoned. He stared at the brown door straight**

Factories and towns ruined -- people out of work.

*easily received., just as belief in hatred is but too ready.*

So peaceful while Jule is in school -- must admit.

**across the room; he was not especially anxious,**

23.

Jule and Marci make so much noise when they're

*Otho did not fail to play his part; he stretched out*

**but merely resigned to a scolding.**

**Finally,**

*his arms, and bowed to the crowd, and kissed his hands, and*

playing. Drives me crazy!

Marci tries to act

**the door opened, though he could see no one**

and talk just like Jule when they're together. Some

**inside. And when he stepped through the**

**doorway,**

good and some bad and very fresh! Marci is also

*altogether acted the slave, to make himself*

**he found himself not in another interior space,**

*the master. The more insincere their demonstrations, the*

*more*

24.

beginning to hum or sing along with the  
**but on a sidewalk that wound its way through**  
*they multiplied them. A day spent in crime found its last horror*  
TV ads. Tries to get right on the note. Has  
**well-manicured lawns.**

**As he stood gazing**  
*in the rejoicings that concluded it.*  
a good ear.

Jule was in a singing group for a  
*The Forum yet streamed with blood, when*  
*he was*  
**about, it gradually occurred to him that he knew this place --**  
minstrel show. She got a kick out of it.  
*borne in a litter over heaps of dead to the Capitol.*  
**the campus of the school he'd retired from**  
**months before.**

25.

What a day! Town had its biggest fire ever *All strove to*  
*extinguish the remembrance* **He realized this despite the fact**  
**that** during the night. Crawford feed mill **all of the buildings**  
**had been** *of those taunts and invectives, which* **at least**  
**slightly altered. The main** *had been thrown out* burned to the

ground. Horrible, *at random, and which no one* huge fire. Sparks came way **academic building, off to his left, had undergone** up here. No one got much **the most dramatic change.** *supposed were rankling in his heart.* **It was huge -- at least three** *Whether he had forgotten, or only* sleep, even the girls. *postponed his resentment, the shortness* After school, took Jule & Marci to Dr. for their 1<sup>st</sup> polio **times larger than he remembered** shots. They yelled a little. -- not bad. *of his reign left undecided.*

26.

**That two men, who for shamelessness,** *Paid up Dr. bill to date of* -- and instead of brick, the exterior was \$16.50. \$2.00 *apiece for the polio shots.* now all of glass and gigantic **indolence, and profligacy, were the most** *We picked up Jule at school. She* **worthless of mortals, had** pipes. He approached that building, **been selected, it would seem,** *came out with her friend Ernie. He asked Jule* **by some fatality to ruin the Empire,** paused, and wondered which of the many **became the open complaint, even of** *if Ronnie was her father.* **the common people.** entrances he should use. Several people, entering **Caecina, grievously offended,** or exiting, glanced his way as *Jule said, "Who do think it is, Liberace?"* they passed. They were all adults, **determined to throw everything into**

27.

confusion, and under the disasters of his *presumably faculty or staff.* **Jule nearly had the croup last night. I had** *His impression was that they all* **to use steam, and she** country to conceal his private dishonour. **was O.K. Close call. Jule also recognized him, or thought they did. Nobody resembling a student** He had concluded disgraceful bargains to the injury

has a big boil about where her spine ends. Put a poltice appeared. The day was rather warm, oddly -- **(bread and milk) on it** of the holders of land and the *like late summer, he reflected, like that period* **before bedtime. It** *just before the invasion of the* magistrates of the different states, and used such menaces **broke, and I pushed a lot of** *benighted hordes.* He shuddered at the memory. that, in a municipal town, he was on the point

28.

*of setting fire to the place, when a present* **Impulsively, he followed someone** pus out. Then she felt better. **through a glass door, up a flight of stairs,** Dr. said it's not a boil but a cyst *of money soothed his rage. When money was not* on the end of Jule's spine. *forthcoming, he was bought off* **and into a room crammed** *by sacrifices to his lust. Thus he made his way.* Might require surgery as *Though sterner judges pronounced Vitellius* **with other people. He squeezed** she gets older. Always something. *to be a man of low tastes,* **down into a narrow chair next to the person he'd trailed.** 36<sup>th</sup> birthday. Received \$10, stockings, *those who were partial to him attributed to geniality* **None of those around him looked at all familiar, though a few of them** pajamas, & blouse.

29.

**and good nature the immoderate and** *Another rainy day. Girls inside. Wow!* gave him perfunctory smiles or even *They certainly won't mind.* nods. They had expected him: **indiscriminate prodigality, with which he** this was where he was supposed **gave away what was his own,** *Gives us all shattered nerves.* **and squandered what did** *Marci had a*

*tantrum -- had to carry her upstairs not belong to him. to be. In fact, he was soon informed and quiet her down. What a Besides this, men themselves eager for that this was a meeting of all session! power were ready to represent his Polio shots for Jule & Marci: upper school instructors. very vices as virtues. 1<sup>st</sup> -- Jan. 20, 1956. 2<sup>nd</sup> -- Feb. 29, 1956. 3<sup>rd</sup> -- Oct. 16, 1956. All acknowledged that he bribed with such spirit. 4<sup>th</sup> -- Mar. 23, 1956.*

30.

**The head of the group -- a severe looking As ever happens in these ill-starred counsels, Ken Harris called today about noon though quite young woman -- greeted them plans for which the opportunity had to say that Uncle Ol had died slipped away seemed the best. with the usual words regarding the academic year of a heart attack this morning -- that was nearly upon them. Those who whether truly or falsely boasted Even she was bored -- insufferably so, in truth -- by what in a barber shop. she said. of the act, vied in displaying their bloodstained hands.**

31.

*1<sup>st</sup> day of second grade for Jule. She After her first two sentences, he heard Meanwhile frequent letters, disfigured by unmanly flatteries, nothing more until she addressed him, were addressed by Otho to Vitellius, with offers of wealth and worried that the bus wouldn't stop for her -- directly, by name. This in itself astounded him, favour and any retreat he might select for but it did. a life of prodigal indulgence. The letters' tone was at first pacific and for some moments he*

*could not focus. About 3 a.m. Jule got the croup. and exhibited a foolish and undignified hypocrisy. Wow! Bad!*

32.

...the merciless biddings of a tyrant, incessant Something told him that he should inquire Leap year entry filled in by about which classes -- or at least which major prosecution, faithless friendships, the ruin mistake -- no February 29<sup>th</sup> works -- he would be teaching. "We this year (1957). haven't yet determined any of that, I'm afraid," of innocence, the same causes issuing in Looked over papers mainly the young woman replied. "Literature?" he asked. Upon which, the meeting and did large ironing. was adjourned. the same results...the wearisome monotony...

Joel Chace has published work in print and electronic magazines such as, *The Tip of the Knife*, *Counterexample Poetics*, *Eratio*, *Otoliths*, *Infinity's Kitchen*, and *Jacket*. Most recent collections include *Kansoz*, from Knives, Forks, and Spoons Press, *War, and After*, from BlazeVOX [books], *Scorpions*, from Unlikely Books, and *Humors*, from Paloma Press.

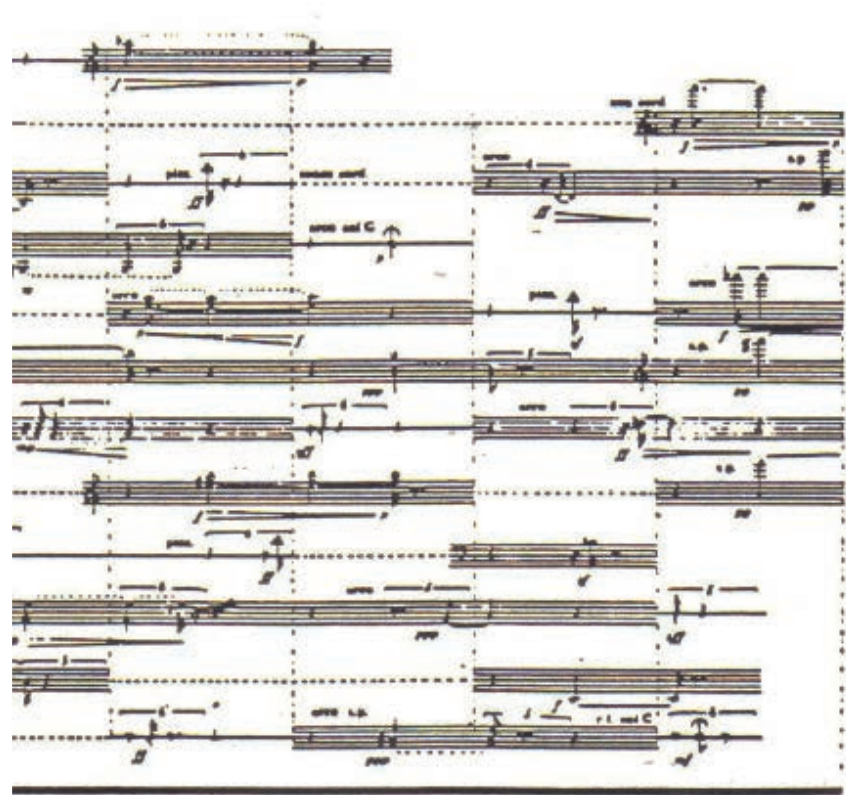


## **Books/E-Books Available from Moria Books**

- Jordan Stempleman's *Their Fields* (2005)  
Donna Kuhn's *Not Having an Idea* (2005)  
Eileen R. Tabios's *Post Bling Bling* (2005)  
Anny Ballardini's *Opening and Closing Numbers* (2005)  
Garin Cycholl's *Nightbirds* (2006)  
lars palm's *Mindfulness* (2006)  
Mark Young's *from Series Magritte* (2006)  
Francis Raven's *Cooking with Organizational Structures* (2006)  
Raymond Bianchi's *American Master* (2006)  
Clayton Couch's *Letters of Resignation* (2006)  
Thomas Fink's *No Appointment Necessary* (2006)  
Catherine Daly's *Paper Craft* (2006)  
Amy Trussell's *Meteorite Dealers* (2007)  
Charles A. Perrone's *Six Seven* (2008)  
Charles Freeland's *Furiant, Not Polka* (2008)  
Mark Young's *More from Series Magritte* (2009)  
Ed Baker's *Goodnight* (2009)  
David Huntsperger's *Postindustrial Folktales* (2010)  
Gautam Verma's *The Opacity of Frosted Glass* (2011)  
rob mcLennan's *Kate Street* (2011)  
Garin Cycholl's *The Bonegatherer* (2011)  
j/j hastain's *autobiography of my gender* (2011)  
Kristina Marie Darling's *narrative (dis)continuities: prose experiments by younger american writers* (2013)  
Jay Besemer's *A New Territory Sought* (2013)  
Joel Chace's *One Web* (2014)  
Garin Cycholl's *Horse Country* (2014)  
Eileen Tabios' *I Forgot Light Burns* (2015)  
lars palm's *look who's singing* (2015)  
Ed Baker's *Neighbor* (2015)  
Tom Beckett's *Appearances: A Novel in Fragments* (2015)  
Charles Perrone's *Out of Alphabetical Order* (2015)  
Piotr Gwiazda's *Aspects of Strangers* (2015)

Freke Rähkä's *[title missing] –a quality of motion* (2016)  
Kristian Carlsson's *A Crack at the Origins* (2016)  
Matina L. Stamatakis' *A Late Sketch of Final Doves* (2017)  
Mark Young's *The Perfume of the Abyss* (2019)  
Lopez's, Bloomberg-Rissman's, and Marshall's *The End of  
the World Project* (2019)  
Joel Chace's *Threnodies* (2019)

The e-books/books can be found at [www.moriapoetry.com](http://www.moriapoetry.com)



Moria Books

ISBN 978-1-73371-481-5

90000



9 781733 714815