

To Find Oneself

By Tom Montag

one must go so far
into silence, into

loneliness, into
the woods of one's own

emptiness, and there
encounter sweet noise,

some warm companions,
and the thoughts that God

leaves to the likes of us.

Yes, God Said

By Tom Montag

I will give them math,
that they might amuse themselves;

and I will give them poetry,
that they might know themselves.

The Coming Light

By Tom Montag

Ah, the coming light,
like believing in God.

Wind rustles the new leaves.
A murmur of sinners

say their prayers, hoping
for grace. Broken morning.

The helpless stars.
We can go so far

and then no farther.
You want another day.

This is what you get.

Neitherat Evening

By Tom Montag

Presence. Absence.
Both are neither

in the dying
of this long and

layered shadow
and light. You hold

your breath. Listen.
The world is singing.

And So Death

By Tom Montag

And so death is
nothing to fear
if you don't believe

that the big bang
concentrated
beginning was

the beginning,
that the last black
concentrated

end of every-
thing is the end.
The universe

pinwheels. Stars
seem to spin
towards oblivion.

Out there tonight
nothing turns tighter
than this, the great

wheeling of light
and darkness, of
fire and ice, of

God's good mercy
and terrible wrath.
We see death

as an ending,
while death sees
us as beginning.

At The End

By Tom Montag

A small bird falls from
branch to snow, frozen.

Death is a gentle thing.
You go about your business,

Where is darkness? Where the light?
the only questions at the end.

Tom Montag bio: Tom Montag, Fairwater, Wisconsin, is most recently the author of *In This Place: Selected Poems 1982-2013*, as well as *Middle Ground*, *Curlew: Home*, *Kissing Poetry's Sister*, *The Idea of the Local*, and *The Big Book of Ben Zen*. Recent poems will be found at *Architrave Press*, *Atticus Review*, *Blue Heron Review*, *The Chaffin Journal*, *Hamilton Stone Review*, *Hummingbird*, *The Magnolia Review*, *Mud Season Review*, *Plainsong*, *Sand*, and others. He blogs as *The Middlewesterner* and serves as Managing Editor of the *Lorine Niedecker Monograph Series*, *What Region?*