

TO BUILD A CATHEDRAL

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What is done and yet undone

The need is always with us
what is needed also there
Bruckner built cathedrals
careless of his congregations
who might come later in the spaces
empty at the building

There were others building and more fortunate
so they thought a populace around them
to congratulate a need fulfilled
so they thought
the taste turned dull with time
a blade that darkened and no longer cut

Later there were those who entered
not quite trusting where they were
the silences of what was left
a need in part fulfilled.

Where did time go unanswered
'The mornings of genius are long'
length is no answer to ask
such a question impossible
none at all
of days there are others
of quality to be accounted
ah the count goes awry

Where did we go in a time
of no limits? answers pose questions
what there is not serious
as is
where and the why
the days and their fragments
miniscule as their length
nothing to measure and of quality
which is is not or in description
what can be expected of genius?
not from its mornings or later
its twilight such length
or dimension
to build a cathedral.

What will sustain itself through?
through drought and drowning

It is needful for the builder to go back
inspect foundations to go back
what he has built may sink at places
places where the ground's uneven
bedrock faulted

It is needful to return with caution
to return to not to revise not wisely
a matter of *re* vision

Bruckner listened not always wisely
to those who would mend what they found faulty
incongruous unsafe often they were wrong
the builder listened at peril building
on ledge that appeared and then vanished
through drought and the drowning

Needful in return to go quickly
to the structure itself and wonder
how it could come to be.

The cathedral is never finished.

A sheltering
as a sheltering is never finished
it is a structure incomplete
wards off the rain and yet the rain seeps in
the structure rises and obscures what was open
sheltering a view arcane a beginning
seems to be is not complete
pediment to spout a gargoyle
to divert the rain and still seeps in
a water which returns is never finished
cathedral passes in the midst of being
builded of no finished stone
is not to be its finite ending
coming late as the builders sensing
what their forebears could not
concerned with building on a ground not solid
what might seem to be
a business that outlasts its tools
in ruins of a sky around it
a shelter for the moment but outlasting it.

A gap distance which conceives a presence
how it might cohere in separation
Bruckner could not know always where to go
hoped for connection a spark to leap
across remain and yet continue
not always so the stone may falter
fall completely into void or in reverberation
repeat its fall or make of it a spark
flaw is not in the stone or placing
mis placed though it may be a certain turn
makes something other of it the gap
a certain tenderness returns to air
as air surrounding the flaw is in mistrust
the builder must not listen to the well intentioned
voices hands that would correct a making
those that mistake the building contours
where to go? the simple going
not to interrupt the going ask no end
melodic as the several airs they reach
due time to sound and sound in other ways.

The stones of many shapes the stones of being
close to the source the ground once chosen
as a ground for building cornerstone well placed
should not be taken from its place needs only
that another stone should reach it a congener
in shape and size a stone of being
others from a similar ground aligned and placed
as relatives to what is already there erratic
the builder sorts them always aware
that what he builds is larger than himself
extreme humility accorded both stone and tools
nothing to be scanted surprises in the ordinary
the effect is natural to become effective
hard to define the boundings what is built
has been there found by one who picks it up
miscalculation that the stones may not rise
their weight denies them and a ruin stays
as what must remain unfinished open as a shelter
to what is alien in the structure jackdaws
piling in their nests a distant fancy.

A night sky remains
above the ruins of that sky
above the places where the alien things remain
things to see not seen still seen
the focus of another sense
night sky before its darkness
what are towers? battlements?
an outline of unfinished business
where are the towers?
best to come in against the rain
not every stone is in its place
the ruins of the sky remain as blocks
another building not this one
the builder may return but not to build
he must remember building in farewell
those who come may pay a due respect
he shakes his head not his concept
not at all the failure only his to know
other grounds
another place to build.

To conceive an arch is not to build it
the arch is built already there
but not apparent to more than mind's eye
of a builder able to foreshorten
change the lens nothing more apparent to those
who come later claim the arch as theirs
to see what is not there the impossible
made apparent how it stands against
a disbelief 'it is never done this way'
or 'always done' the arch apparent and its distance
from a concept how it holds or does not
to support a weight the tiers of block could not
the builders's instinct knows what he cannot
only in a part of knowing what the mind's eye saw
the builder helpless not his own design
Bruckner knew and could not know 'misterioso'
easy and at times a joke locked into building
that the arch preceded what was done with it
conception *may* have been the fact of it
mistaken though once claimed the means a sensing.

To put it out of mind and let the stones fall
where they may the hardest part that the work
stands away from itself the builder as if
he had nothing to do with it the fall of stone
as rain later to color and congeal
a mass of form still hesitant out of mind
or out of wind to put it out
a chance among the many others the breaks
no form is perfect perfection in its lapses
out of mind no mind needs be to find
what can be found? worded as a question
where no question asks put out of mind
it *seems* of mind and question the stones
still falling but then the builder meddles
asks advice of others arches at a stone's throw
no arches made by design ulterior
nor was it of intent proposed not understood
merely thought to be no suffering in the end
there are the minds of others at wild guess
and only in those lapses what was mind the mindful.

Bruckner did not know
beyond the stones he lifted into place
that surety in their falling might be haphazard
not sure there in the false step
it is not a step to avoid the builder stumbles
fortuitous in mis stepping the many steps that wind
they take the breath away from the building
these are the strands of faith what is believed
belief is for the builder what he builds
is more than any faith no longer his
he moves away incredulous
his single faith is not enough he did it
all that should be known not knowing
apart from what was imagined *not* the cathedral
the builder owns no power it flows through
beyond him subsides in what is built
it stands aside careless of its means
not to be remembered the structure as is
Bruckner did not know what he had built
a cathedral is never finished

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