



1973

# Periphery

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David Marovich

PERIPHERY

out here  
it's too dark  
to read signs  
my singing  
pounds the emptiness  
my only company  
a yelping steer  
who doesn't read  
newspapers  
i can urinate freely

a half peach moon  
swings over these  
cowering farmlands  
i can hear the slow boom  
of the battlefields  
no, the mines don't stop working  
the earth gurgles  
all night

even the stars are scratched  
by my penstrokes

the war goes on  
televisions perch  
in treetops  
vague beacons  
to these quiet men  
with sparks in their faces  
who leap through cities  
at midday  
taking the afternoon  
by surprise  
roaring through playgrounds  
blurring the shiny lips  
of sweating statues  
with my eyes wide open

they move like trees  
through the darkness

oh, they've forgotten someone  
lying quietly  
trading juices with the earth  
ice  
glitters in his ears

steel hammers  
cracking my teeth

winter comes at last  
snow  
roars louder than cannon  
i can walk through  
the ruins  
at noon  
statues crumble  
softly  
behind me  
dust on their cold lips  
dust whispering down  
the hot street  
dust on the cheeks  
of black children  
their wrinkled legs  
their bloated bellies  
standing wide-eyed  
with microphones  
in their bleeding hands  
looking back

## TRISMUS

I wanted to write a poem this afternoon  
 about a soft gray light  
   on the polished  
 tabletop  
 about shadows with no edges  
 this cold appearing on the back  
     of my hand  
 these quiet faces  
                         in the sky  
 that move  
                         vaguely  
 like  
     the passing of afternoon  
 steel wires are being drawn  
 to be used as clocksprings from my stomach  
  
 the white punctures  
 faces of emptiness  
  
 my ears battle  
 the thrusting seconds  
 but nothing makes  
 a sound