

How Often?  
By Myke Bartholomew

How often does the burden lay  
    Weightfully in the hands of the troubled?  
    How many days will truth  
    Unfold unlovingly with alarm?

How much longer will the noise that scatters  
    Throughout the heaps of invisible matter  
    Pull my ears further

From the honesty  
    I have within?

Silence.

All I ever want  
Is a little bit

Of Silence.

    A stillness separated  
    Safely from the criticisms  
That clamor blatantly  
    Behind my eyes.

Have you ever seen a grown man cry?

    Not the kind of cry  
Where he tries to keep his strong.

But the kind of tears  
    Where he submits  
    His pride to the pain that's pushing it away.

As though he's nine years old  
    And thrashed his knee against loose gravel  
That's been sprinkled over freshly smeared asphalt.

I did once. Or maybe twice. I think it was twice.