

Partings

After Alberto Burri

Matt Daly

I.

A bright fissure in an uneven plane
is both an opening and a scar. The earth
comes out of itself to make new
earth and to press again more firmly
into its molten search for more
appearance and offering, rocky shell
caressing fluid core. We could consider
the fabrication of an artwork
as a metaphor for self, or we could step
out into any number of snowbanks to feel
how, even as crystals, water holds
itself as shapes in motion, and how we too
are held. Or we could listen for the deep
gasp of snow when underneath it cracks
from our weight. A storm cloud in the dark
season opens without any intention
to let go of the evening light.

II.

White clay needs no guidance
to fracture. Any clay, really
or anyone. Negative space
reveals shapes in their unique
geometries and familiar

in their stillnesses. Let's get quiet.
We trace the deepening creases
on one thumb knuckle with the pad
of the other thumb, a gift of touch
we give ourselves. We live a life
as best we can, taking in the dark
air until the morning cracks
another day open to whatever
comes simply by patiently turning
in the space open to such
revolutions. Our layered selves need
the unexpected consequences
of tension to spring them toward
that which resides inside them
restful and beautiful and unspoken.

Matt Daly is the author of the poetry collection, *Between Here and Home* (Unsolicited Press), and the chapbook, *Red State* (Seven Kitchens Press). His second full-length collection of poems is forthcoming from Unsolicited Press in 2024.