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No Alibi

by Lou Beckerman

I have no alibi for turning a blind eye -
none that you'd buy;
neither ignorance nor inexperience
nor deafness-to-the-cry in my defense

Sun, moon, Mother Earth and I
stood by
while a nation's insanity ditched its humanity;
suspended its charity
Hence, there is nothing to imply my innocence
I who in safety lie under skies where no missiles fly
see only doves and pigeons winging by

onwards to one other sullied sky
over townships of tent where
'temporary' equals permanent
Where, as if to mock,
feathered flocks assert flight as right
while migrating effortlessly
out of sight

He, she, refugee -
it could have so easily been me
displaced, disgraced, effaced, wrong race
no privacy, no dignity, enforced immobility
no date in a diary
no society
no grace or space
for family

You see I really have no alibi
not one you could easily identify
No explanation or justification can earn
my absolution or exoneration
I was here
not elsewhere in another sphere
and I failed to find a solution

He, she, refugee –
it could have been my destiny
I, with no appropriate alibi
or adequate apology
am undeniably
guilty