

The New Criterion

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Hindsight

by Bill Coyle

A poem by Bill Coyle.

*But is it really necessary I
renounce all of his works? Couldn't I just
renounce the vast majority of them?*
We were out walking, you were explaining why
you couldn't quite convert. I was nonplussed.
Theologically, I could condemn
what seemed to me a clear misunderstanding
of the relationship of good and evil,
but in aesthetic terms I understood:
Given that you imagined God commanding
all that was light and airy and the devil
all that was dark and dangerous, pure good
had to be lethal, both in life and art.
I think I still believe that, in my heart.

Bill Coyle is the translator of *Dog Star Notations: Selected Poems 1999–2016* by the Swedish poet Håkan Sandell.

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