

A Disregarded Proverb

If once you do wrong
nothing obliges you to repeat it
is a saying in Arabic
me, I have to think of this every day
I should consider myself lucky
to have disregarded this in a notebook

but I wonder, what might have happened
had I memorized this brief translation
or prayed it each day, morning noon and night
like my three meals, my breaks or diversions
instead of looking into the mirror

this fire that singes my understanding
the poker tongue stirring up scintillant
auto-empathy that led to an auto-da-fe
an oil fire on the baptismal waters

perhaps I should have looked into your eyes
and spoken gently to you thereafter



David Francis has produced six albums of songs, one of poems, and Always/Far, a chapbook of lyrics and drawings. In addition, he has written and directed the films Village Folksinger (2013) and Memory Journey (2018). His poetry and stories have appeared in a number of journals and anthologies.



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