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## Seepage (poem)

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J O H N   G E R Y

*Seepage*

Under the water, silence.  
In the air, silence.  
Above the deserted streets, silence.  
From the capital, silence.

Through the attic roofs not axed out,  
out of mouths of the infants, empty with hunger,  
below the crypts, sodden  
and grazed, at the bottom of highways,  
near the corner groceries,  
in the birds' nests, dangling now  
over stagnant pools, silence.

Silence for the benefit of the others:  
For the yellow-smocked men and women, taxed  
by exhaustion, drained of their brains,  
behind the shadows left by the high winds,  
inside the kitchens, dark with stench,  
outside the long rows of busses, rusting,  
within the laboratories, within the microbes,  
surrounding the still cat, curled on the deck  
next to the drain spout, its fur curdled from mercury  
absorbed in the water,

absorbed in the water,  
under the air where anxious onlookers, edging

toward the borders, crowd the brown basins,  
where not a breath of moisture stirs  
now, not the cusp of ease, not a camellia,  
not a live oak unblemished,

silence.

And still from the capital,

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