

A PAGE NEXT TO WILD GEESE (FOR ROBERT)

BY NOLAN JAMES BRIDEN

ROBERT SHUMANN

Hardly a day passes I don't get stuck in here
in the asylum: younger hurt more older

than I am now, trudging mountains I watch
through madness towards a home that may not be there

Everywhere in this worldly place, thought
explodes out of itself, as can, shifts—

could not. And now I question unquestionably
Something so frightening: who am I. And

how the world clings to worlds crossing
though crossroads, sticking to stones earth

like lint to the familiar skin-cloth exchange.
Hardly a day passes I don't forget life outside,

think of him: nineteen years old, fresh up -state
spring in Germany was spring in confinements-solitary

and he has just met a way of doing time.

He turns the corner, and ages into chambers hell, 37

he scrapes the dirt from his face, thinking, while
he runs the dark tiers, once again, of prison asylum. | NJB

NOLAN JAMES BRIDEN WAS RAISED IN PORTLAND, OREGON. HIS ROOTS BLOOM FROM RICH CULTURES, BLACKFEET AND IRISH. HE WRITES: "I'M JUST GETTING TO A POINT IN THE EXPLORATION OF WRITING TO BE ABLE TO SAY IT IS A RELATIONSHIP THAT I UNDERSTAND; THEN, I READ A DIFFERENT STYLE, FORM, OR WAY OF WRITING AND MY JOURNEY RESTARTS TO UNDERSTAND." NOLAN IS A MEMBER OF THE LAKOTA OYATE-KI CULTURE CLUB AT OREGON STATE PENITENTIARY AND HE IS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE GROUND BENEATH US WRITING GROUP.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A photocopy of Mary Oliver's poem "Wild Geese" was hastily made out of the book *New and Selected Poems*. It was a haphazard job, as the poem was simply intended to be read before a writing session in the Ground Beneath Us group, and as a result it included a bisected copy of Mary Oliver's poem, "Robert Schumann." Nolan was unable to attend a few of our sessions, so poem was passed along to him to keep him company and provide him comfort. He says that he needed more to read, so he constructed a poem from the fragments that read only "Robert" at the top to make this poem. When he returned to our group, we were able to share a bit of the composer Robert Schumann's life and his struggles with mental health and the fact that he was institutionalized. For this edition, Oliver's writing is in italics and Nolan's writing is in plain text. | TDS