Forecast

Dean Rader

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A storm is blowing in from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such a violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

Walter Benjamin on *Angelus Novus*

I.

Origin is the goal.
II.
A weathervane
    all a-spin on the roof;
points everywhere at once.
Drunk with wind,
the angel keeps going in circles.

III.
The world’s screen saver clicks off.
Everything reboots.

IV.
And you with rain on the inside
soaked beyond bone, beyond
    the beginning of bone,
refuse to open the window.

V.
Don’t worry, it’s already here.

VI.
We know the past
only in relation to itself—
    the future on the other hand,

VII.
The new angel seems to rise
and fall at the same time,
like a sequence of events inverted,
    thunder and lightning,
then back again.
    the reverse,

VIII.
Evolution is more than growth,
it’s a mix of conservation
and revolution.
What does not happen,
cannot.

IX.
No match for the winds.
The angel’s wings
beat at the storm the way the heart hammers
against cessation.

X.
Stop.
Just for a second. The tornado
will carry you wherever
you want to go.

XI.
The prediction calls for
darkening skies, more wind,
heavy turbulence.
Though we
are advised to remain grounded,
we take flight.

Previous:
Sea-Level Elegy

Next:
An Illustrated Almanac

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dean Rader

Dean Rader’s debut collection Works & Days won the 2010 T. S. Eliot Prize, and his Landscape Portrait Figure Form (2014) made the Barnes & Noble Review’s Best Poetry Book of the Year list. He is the editor of 99 Poems for the 99 Percent: An Anthology of Poetry and the recipient of the 2015 George Bogin Award from the Poetry Society of America. He is a Professor at the University of San Francisco.