

## NO NIGHT BIRDS

as there were a month ago at this hour, 3 am.  
i think how difficult it would be to discover  
the reason for this. as difficult as continuing  
this poem w/out any further thoughts. they  
stay away perhaps thinking i don't appreciate  
them enough. there's a grain of truth in this:  
i have indeed been cultivating oblivion, like  
a quiet black field these last mos. i have  
been seeking silent trees, w/out the terrible  
wind & song of recently dead relatives & a  
friend. but the sweet songs are gone too.  
i can stay drunk & hear nothing or get sober,  
try to save one song from another. what used  
to be idle music suddenly becomes a matter of  
life & death. my understanding of art becomes s  
a little sharper. i once heard a jazz musician tell  
a young student, you learn to play this in  
order to become adult. it must be the same  
for poets.

— Cory Monaco

Bronx NY

## 2 INSOMNIACS & THE CAT

i look out through the back door  
& once again notice that his light's on.  
he lives adjacent to this view  
& at 3 a.m. when i let the cat back in  
i see that his & mine are the only ones left.  
i wonder what he does up there at night:  
is he a madman?  
does he sing dirges in his dirty underwear  
while the neighbors beat fruitlessly on their walls?  
does he have a hot poker game going?  
does he drink himself silly & forget the light?  
i let the cat in & he expects a pat on the back,  
maybe a hug or two, a hint that he's approved of —  
instead i walk to the t.v. & flip the channels,  
flip the lighter & burn the tobacco.  
two insomniacs stare down at their feet,  
two so-called oddities of human behavior  
wait for the american flag & the national anthem,  
wait for some approval from their masters.