

**VISAGE : FOR MATTHEW VON BAEYER**

(9/30/1932, Hamburg – 11/22/2006, Montreal)

The honesty of your gaze,  
illness stripping all but what-is:  
*it's today, all of yesterday*  
*drops away*

A gaze directly at me,  
one eye tired and tender,  
the other cool, aware,  
no fooling

Lips of a word carrier  
lover who whispered,  
your naked face  
soft and strong  
burns me, holds on  
then lets go

At the memorial  
a photo in white tee shirt  
holds a face of aching kindness,  
the poet grinding his ink into words:  
Wait for, hope, remember, love

He left daily poems on the phone,  
his spirit getting ready for wings  
after brutal rounds of chemo,  
quoting Neruda's *Captain's Verse*:

*I do not dare/I do not dare to write it,  
If you die/I shall go on living  
Because where a voice has no voice  
there, my voice...*

10/28/2007, revised 5/2022