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## Withdrawal

*Robert Manaster*

*... and Aaron was silent.*

— LEVITICUS 10:2,3

During the service, forget ritual—  
For it has fallen aside like unnoticed  
Resistance of the decimated.  
Forget the gestures of residual glory  
Where standing by is the silent order.  
For the moment, forget sacrifice, holiness,  
Service, worship. Forget the name and nature of God  
And all conceptions of naming God. Rather, listen.  
Listen for charged oblong beginnings, the center  
Of dark holes: listen for the core  
Of grief acknowledging withdrawal.  
Oh, for the moment, listen  
How God is silent too.

Robert Manaster *has work published or forthcoming in various journals including Many Mountains Moving, Image: A Journal of the Arts and Religion, Judaism, and The Literary Review. He has also been a finalist in book competitions at Story Line Press and New Rivers Press.*