
The Image and the Likeness

Ira F. Stone

Outside of Fife once, on the way to Tacoma,
I passed the rotting left-overs of a horse
spread along the side of the road, glad not
to have a blow-out there, and wondered
whether this horse too, open, now feeding crows
in twilight, was made in someone's image and likeness
the way I was made in the image and likeness
of God? Speeding, I couldn't wonder for long
before the road turned all the ugly thoughts
into the past and flung dust over them the way
I was taught as a boy to throw dust over the past:
"It's past, leave it alone." My mother would be more
concerned with what I was doing outside a place like
Fife, glad that I was, at least, outside not inside,
not like the dirty crows that were inside the body

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of the horse not giving a damn in whose image he was. It bothered me to think that horses would be made in no one's image, or that there wasn't an image large enough to fit us both. When I'm very sad I even wonder about the crows eating his body and think there must be an image and likeness of crows eating horses' bodies that includes the horse and includes me, an image that doesn't ever get covered by passing dust or words like "it is only the past, leave it alone." It must be some image, some likeness which goes by so quick it stays with you.

