

Invocation: the Cup of Blessing

Dedicated to my teacher, Eugene B. Mihaly 1918 – 2002

I was dreaming about Mihaly when Fred called,
it was a late dream morning. In the dream
I had asked Mihaly if he would speak at my graduation.

Certainly, dear boy.

I picked him up at a hotel, taxi cab,
there was rubble all about.

I had not seen him in a long time,
how young he was --

I never knew Mihaly in life that young –
young thin dark, the moustache prominent and already drawn.
He leaped over rubble as I approached.

I thanked him,

I thanked him again,
never mind, he said.

The event was some sort of passage,
in the rubble of existence that wasn't my making
something had happened, there was danger associated
with this place, what city I didn't recognize --
it wasn't Detroit not Jerusalem --
bare bulbs strung over the street,
emergency lighting.

He got into the cab, I gave him my hand
and thanked him again.

I had worked late into the night on my pieces,
who shall I read them to? I asked Mihaly.

*Give them to me dear boy, work them every night
in these broken places, look around –
write them for me. The best things I have ever written
are sealed in a shoe box in the rear of a closet.*

Dear boy, the work is everything. I'm right here.

Read me everything, he said in the back seat of the taxicab,
moustached, spiced, long before I knew him
he led me to our meeting.

He sat back in the taxi

lit up his pipe, *read me every piece*,
then the phone rang Fred and Mihaly said,
*quit belly-aching, dear boy,
wake up and write about it.*

james stone goodman