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The Face of Francisco Goya

Patricia Clark
Grand Valley State University

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The Face of Francisco Goya

He places his mournful face—
the turned-down, crooked mouth,
eyes that seem haunted and are yet
still bright. nose like a ship’s prow aimed
into the wind—directly in front
of the artist and challenges him: make
the image last. If his life has been true,
he cannot ask for mercy.

Still, he doesn’t have to be happy
about it. Eighty-two years old.
he keeps muttering to himself.

The self-portrait he sketched in red chalk
at fifty-three showed a gentleman in flattering
three-quarter view, wearing a top hat
and waistcoat, but the downturned lines
of mouth and eyes foreshadow
this face. Even as a court painter,
Goya was known for his candor.

In Madrid, 6 February 1799,
along the Calle de Desengano, his Caprichos
went on sale for 320 reales, hawked in shops
next door to those selling liquor and perfume.
He included the self-portrait—not for fame,
but to say, “This darkness is the vision
I see. Disillusionment and nightmares.”

Now, so many years later, he cannot doubt
what he reached for, wearing out his hands,
sore now from acid and ink, bending over a table
at his work. If he misses the raucous call
of the crow, the song sparrow’s lilting notes,
or the human voice, he doesn’t let on.
What’s done cannot be undone—like marks
etched in cheek or brow. He dares us
to question him—the journey
not yet over—and steps past us
into the relentless dark.

Patricia Clark is an Associate Professor in
the Writing Department. She has recently
published poems in Slate, Cortland Review,
Poetry Miscellany, and Gulf Coast.

Collaboration

These are the thoughts
lands, they’re
If they are not yours
not
(Walt Whitman)

When Sisyphus, in that
“existentialist” re...
Albert Camus, finally that
fulfillment of his origin: that his torment—pushing
uphill again and another
meaningful blessing, simple
structuring his otherwise endless
concept of collaboration relevant, poignant, and even
this could spite this new,
so it would be to separate him
seems so senseless to a
that they cannot even imagine
as, Sisyphus collaborates:
shakes on, and “we must absolutely happy.”

In order to comprehend
apparently profound, happen
that in the world of the
that we have inherited, deconstruc
building technique and principle
utters can be understood
that one does not utter; they
always seen as only one
round its unfinished and determinating complements, the
other halves, the entities of
ile, at the same time, rambling
zling directions. “Concept
mands, “deconstruction”...

This simple rule is also
Concept of Collaboration, promises an exciting archetypal...