

After The Sirens, Prayers As Donations

I'm tired of seeing you boxed up
in cardboard and army fatigue, threadbare in 20 degrees.
And I'll be walking around you so lightly,
hoping that you won't disturb me
from making my retreat, from making my retreat.

A long time ago, we paved our cities over bones.
We made cadavers into roads,
and when we gave prayers, we gave them as donations
and lingered with impatience
as the casket was shut on your fingers.

You lost your face in the elements
but God, I'm no sociologist
with the ways and the means to recover this.
But I'll stick my hands in the court of injustice
with five bucks for some AIDS orphans I've never met
or for median-vendor veterans.

So will you give me what I came here for?
Forgiveness, nothing more.