

AGAINST ANGELS

Doren Robbins

Somebody asked me
but I'm not going
to argue about
the topic of the soul—

deduce or repeat
inductive facts
for its evidence.
It is what

the Alsatian poet meant
when he wrote of
the "precision of
the indefinable."

And I have risen
in the plain rinse
of that precision
before, and before

that. But my reason
or imagination has
no depth for angels.
Not Lawrence's angel

which he thought was made
when a man's soul
and a woman's soul
unites. And not Rilke's

angels—their beauty—
which he believed
was nothing but
the beginning

of a terror
he could just
barely endure.
I think there is

something somewhat
neurotic about
the prestige
and rarity

of angels. No,
I will stay
plain—a sparrow
among herons

and sandhill cranes.
And I would be
cautious of angels.
Constantine the Great,

for instance, contracted
leprosy after dreaming
of an angel pouring
water on him.