

Ode on Zografos Bread / Kenneth O. Hanson

For a year now
my bread has been made
fresh daily
by Zografos
Co.
Kalamaki
what wonder I
almost forget my original
birthplace
loaves pumped up by air
and preserved by chemicals
gummy
to keep them forever
like the pure
ideas of Plato
as if what's empty
ages
into something full
if it keeps forever

Zografos
you've got the right idea
hot from the oven
warm in a paper bag
a crust you can pinch
through the wrapper
so crusty it
pinches back
touch taste smell
keep
never
in a matter of hours
it turns into marble
so hard
you could build
a Parthenon out of it
this is what
monuments
are

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Anything you can say
about monuments
is true since in
monuments
perspective
doesn't matter
and where you stand
is unimportant
on
the other hand
much you can say
about life
is demonstrably false
since perspective
counts
which is what makes
talking of monuments
safer
and why
people sometimes prefer
to talk about life
as if it were
solid and monumental
not
given to moving around
like oil on water
the color
depending on chance and the view

for the most part
monuments
have no color
are heavy in the air
and grim
like the notion of collective
guilt which is also
gray and by those
who fancy it
must be distinguished from
guilt by
association which as we
all know even

now
can be rather colorful

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Sometimes
what ought to have
been an experience
turns into a monument
something
to break your teeth on
not something
to live with since
living is daily
and rarely forever
I think
of the friend of
a German composer who
said meaning praise
he was someone
for whom day to day
existence had
no reality
he
lived all in the spirit
keep us

Zografos
from spiritual monsters
pumped up by air
and give us
our daily wonder
which
if taken in season
delights and sustains
and if not
turns
stone
pure
stone
almost by chance
and changes
never