

Keeping Our Practices: A Walk Through Crown Hill

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How am I to walk through the plots of those who will never break their silence?
Without kissing my knees to the grass
Without joining my hands—palms pressed and fingers laced

How am I not to chip away at pieces of limestone?
Pocketing fragments of the infamous
Dillinger fame

How am I not to pause at the strange exchanges of closed eyes and bowed heads?
Mouths bound and veiled in black fabric
Softly spoken metaphors—*where you'll find them now*. The fluttering of monarch wings

Am I not to feed the dead?
Recipes etched into their gravestones
Ginger snap, crumble, and Annie's strudel

How am I to add to the legacy of the Children's Poet?
Place a coin among the small stacks of pennies, quarters, and giftings of ever-green wreaths
A stone slab encircled by columns atop the highest hill

How then am I to keep you?
Am I to strike a match and add a burning incense stick to the amber-colored jar?
Watch it trail off and hold the silence—smoke slips away

Am I not to help in keeping these practices, whatever they may be?
Until another match flickers and the next stick burns
Nag Champa floating up into the air and over the graves