

The Face of Evil

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He began, “The problem with this country...”
I ceased to listen. I grow weary
of scapegoats, cheap rhetoric, and answers
that promise much but cost me nothing.

She said, “Can’t we agree
that all lives matter? Why must
black lives matter more?” Because
until they do no life matters enough.

He said, “Let’s make this nation
great again,” and had a plan.
And I wondered at what price
greatness, and can we pay the cost?

The time is past for grand gestures,
for blaming great vexations
on vivid Devils. We must look
evil directly in the face.

You know the face I mean—the one
that fears the stranger, believes
its own truth truest, and knows
it must grab for all that it can get,

that thinks the past can be forgotten,
the future staked as claim,
that mine is mine by right
that it is someone else’s fault.

You know the face, but not the one you see
among the anti-heroes in the news.
Monsters dwell no more beneath the bed
but in the mirror.

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