

RUMI'S BELL

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We might as well hang over a stonewall,
like the Tsar bell. Our small mouths

a molten bronze. The loud hush
of unrun lives, slowed to static,

as if a horse in motion which suddenly
rebels. *The wound is where the light*

enters you, says Rumi. I remind you
of this, brother, as you capsize,

slip into the depth of a now-fragile life.
Consider the shape of bells:

cup-like; wide neck & a flared mouth.
Consider the hollow from whence

their music gush. Swollen as they are.
Bent towards the world's metallic ear,

they sing. I want you to want
the stubbornness only a bell can wield.

In Japan, Buddhist temples ring bells
180 times, each one signifying

a worldly desire that must be overcome.
Consider your body's volition

to ruin, the rot in your eyes,
consider, even, this dark hour which

gives meaning to light. Abyssinian
Horse. Once upon the history of bells,

they were rung to summon men to God,
& then, to summon the devil out of men.

The constant: Polyphony. The sheer
ability of sound to seduce, draw the sugar

out of the sugar plum. Rumi was right.
It's a door that which we thought was

a wound. Like him, brother, I dare you
to emerge from the dank basement of your life.

I don't mean to sidestep your ache
but to remind you that a dying man is either

the world's loudest bell
or a bell in a tower ringing alone.