

## If the language

If the language were of death,  
would you better understand  
the need for care-  
ful measurement,  
retention of a solemn respect-  
ful tone, the decency  
of boxing it in and laying it  
down; the red-eyed need for stone  
memorials with proliferate moss  
overgrowing the text?

Or, say the language were of  
sex rather than of law, would you better  
comprehend the passionate com-  
pression and timeless ritual  
of the essential exchange, the rising  
quest for satisfaction; rhythmic  
moans, intensity of  
bondage, stifling control, ramping  
tension and euphoric  
release of another miracle  
of everyday transaction?

And what if  
the language  
were of poetry, my friend,  
would law turn  
to its arms and seek  
to be buried there forevermore?



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stap | e

## Appearance

The dice await  
 me, the words  
 roll. Each face  
 a crown hope  
 dips. A dozen  
 inferent arrows sent  
 presumption sleeps  
 her ignorant sleep.  
 The sheepish rush  
 from contemplation to  
 condemnation brings

*Hacting hon information  
 received, Hi harrested  
 the miscreant dot dot dot*

blank falls, my arrow  
 hurtles home.  
 What is cast connotes  
 my guilt. I'd swear  
 my wager fixed.

## An order is sought for the destruction of the stapler

The athlete takes up position in the apparatus,  
 prepared for several circuits. Tension  
 cranked up, the pain of those late  
 extensions can be anticipated  
 already, and it's only ten o'clock.

The press bench empties after one  
 murder; eleven men beat their partners; fifteen men  
 and women drive drunk, one injures  
 a passenger; methamphetamine, indecency, cannabis,  
 methamphetamine again; two benefit fraudsters;  
 then a cheque fraudster with forty-seven  
 charges, forty-seven informations, forty-  
 seven repetitive notations to make; defended  
 bails, and it's lunch-time already.

The athlete checks with the trainer: how many  
 still to go? Thirty-two. But there were twenty-nine  
 at ten and we've done heaps more than that.  
 OK, a special Police operation so we'll be here  
 until six, maybe longer. Could top  
 ninety today.

We are on the river now: the mind must assess  
 each stroke; the arm reach in each case, dip  
 for the law, pull powerfully, cleanly. The river  
 maintains a placid surface, seemingly serene  
 in relentless flow, while the athlete  
 sweats at the sculls, exercising the iron  
 craft, evenly, evenly, achingly, to day's end.