

iii. The Twelve.

(Mt. 3:1-8:25; Mk.1:1-4:39a; Lk3:18:24a.)

In the slowly moving flood
he stands beneath the darkening sky,
and lays bare, with rugged art
and haunted eye,
the longing and the lies of the heart.

The wicked and the good
all come to Jordan's bank. They confess
and let their grief be washed away.
Follow in their steps and, like a stray
and curious child, listen as they groan.

For their sake I would go with death
into the realm of nothingness,
but every movement every breath
of theirs depends on mine. So stand alone
and be my champion.

Wrestle with me in the sand
and let my love on earth break free
among the hills and valleys of this land
and on the stony paths of Gallilee.

Gather the Twelve and watch them boast aloud
of how Jerusalem will hail your warriors.
Take those champions and bring
them far from the gaze of the admiring crowd
to Genazareth's inviting shores.

Pay your fare and climb into the boat
and, with the water's rhythm, fall asleep
and rest until the waves leap
high and grimacing
and fear grips their throat.