

ORNAMENTS

Bring down your ornaments. Bring down the attic dust.
Bring down the leaves, the husks of insects, the grease
From windows. Bring down the clothes, shovel them,
Shovel them over the bodies you long ago brought down.
Bring down the silver, the screaming, the cries of love:
Bring them down and beat them. Bring them down to the street,
Take a broom, and beat them: Let the dust live in the sunshaft.
Bring down their tiny planets, beat them, free them—
Those bodies. You wanted them once. You asked for them.
Now bring them down, bring down everything you've wanted,
Shattered, or soiled—some flag, some country you
Loved once, some child you lost. . . . Bring them down and beat them,
Down to your streets and beat them: There is peace in it.
There is peace in the beating. And bring down the poems you wrote,
Those strong feelings, the voice you had, so sweet,
That beauty too, its lies, those centuries collapsed, of stoop, of musky stone:
There was such promise, then, such future: Bring them down to your streets,
Take out a broom, and beat them. The dust will catch fire in the sunshaft,
It will light that light—it will burn it. Bring down those angels of glass,
That hell, those whispers in your ear: they say bring down
The shame they died in, the suicides' longing, the bloody sheet,
The first hard cock, then the mothers' skittish love,
The hazel of her eyes, bring them all down, bring them down
To your streets and beat them. Bring down your fathers too.
Bring down how they drank and drank, how they beat you
With their drinking and the wars they took you to, how you sat there
Cheering so long ago, centuries now. Now you must take them out to the street,
Drive them like mules to the street and beat them, so you
Can take down the house itself, sweep off its skin, its muscle,
To get to its galleried bone, to its teeth, then tie a string to the doorknob,
Slam shut the door, and bring them all down. Pull out the floor,
The windows, the walls, the twisted nails, the light
That held them all, then finally the door: Bring them all down
Into your streets, take out your broom, and beat them: There is peace

There: When the dust rises in the light of the sun, it will come alive,
It will take your shape, sparkling, adorned; it will rise over streets now
Filled with you, over the villages, the cities now filled with you.
Its eyes are your eyes and it follows you in wonder:
It will bless you. It will look you in the eye and bless you.