

VILLANELLE

Steffen Horstmann

with a line by Agha Shahid Ali

One must have a place to store the darkness.
It can be no common house, no average room.
The heart will prove sufficient, a palace.

Where Eurydice stood is an abyss.
The emptiness consumed the stars, the moon.
One must have a place to store the darkness.

Sing of her once more, dear Orpheus.
What can contain the measure of that tune?
The heart will prove sufficient, a palace.

The song ended. The story went amiss.
The lyre's chord faded with the afternoon.
One must have a place to store the darkness.

They long for the past, its lost promise.
What will house it better than a tomb?
The heart will prove sufficient, a palace.

No wealth of love to which we raise a chalice,
Just a penance to which no one can attune.
One must have a place to store the darkness.
The heart will prove sufficient, a palace.

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