

Michael Minassian – Three Poems

November

The crows on the fence
in the backyard
solemn as Druids,
nod to each other
and call out
crazed incantations.

The sky as blue
as a glacier's heart—
cold wind cracks branches,
leaves fall from trees,
and whip across the yard.

Better to hunker down,
lock all the doors
thumb through old books,
and watch the slowly
sinking sun.

Stay away, you want to cry—
the world outside
unfurls like an angry lover,
who, too late, realizes
the affair is over,
& pours poison in your ear
while you sleep.

While I Slept

It stormed last night;
I heard the wind
drive the rain
against the windows,
a noise like horses' hooves
rattling across a wooden bridge.

In the morning,
a parade of black birds
crossed my lawn,
the grass wet,
their feathers shining

like armor as if
they were ready
to take back the world.

History an invisible tattoo
itching under the skin,
lurking while we sleep.

How We Bury Our Dead

The Mayans buried
family members in the home,
knocking down walls
and digging up the floor.

In ancient Jordan,
children who died were placed
in clay jars and stored
under the floor of the home
to keep them
in the family circle.

In Egypt, mummies were buried
with a golden tongue nestled
in the jaw bone:
the tongue made of gold foil
meant to help the deceased
converse with Osiris
on their way to the afterlife.

In the computer age,
the dead keep their profiles:
emails, texts, and messages—
while we wait for someone else
to hit the delete key,
not knowing how to mourn
while anniversaries and birthdays
return as reminders when all
other symbols are gone.

Michael Minassian is a Contributing Editor for Verse-Virtual, an online poetry journal. His chapbooks include poetry: *The Arboriculturist* and photography: *Around the Bend*. His poetry collections *Time is Not a River*, *Morning Calm*, and *A Matter of Timing* are all available on Amazon. For more information go to his website at: <https://michaelminassian.com>