

# Sapokanikan

Joanna Newsom

The cause is Ozymandian.  
The map of Sapokanikan  
is sanded and bevelled,  
the land lone and leveled  
by some unrecorded and powerful hand

which plays along the monument  
and drums upon a plastic bag.  
The "Brave Men and Women So Dear to God  
and Famous to All of the Ages" rag.

Sang:  
"Do you love me?  
Will you remember?"  
The snow falls above me.  
The renderer renders:  
"The event is in the hand of God".

Beneath a patch of grass, her  
bones the old Dutch master hid.  
While elsewhere Tobias  
and the angel disguise  
what the scholars surmise was a mother and kid.

Interred with other daughters,  
in dirt in other potters' fields  
above them, parades  
mark the passing of days  
through parks where pale colonnades arch in marble and steel,

where all of the twenty-thousand attending your foot fall  
and the cause that they died for are lost in the idling bird calls,  
and the records they left are cryptic at best,  
lost in obsolescence.  
The text will not yield, nor x-ray reveal  
with any fluorescence  
where the hand of the master begins and ends.

I fell, I tried to do well but I won't be.  
Will you tell the one that I love to remember and hold me?  
I call and call for the doctor  
but the snow swallows me whole with ol' Florry Walker  
and the event lives only in print.

He said:  
"It's alright,"  
and "It's all over now,"  
and boarded the plane,  
his belt unfastened;  
the boy was known to show unusual daring.  
And, called a "boy",  
this alderman, confounding Tammany Hall,  
In whose employ King Tamanend himself preceded John's fall.

So we all raise a standard  
to which the wise and honest soul may repair,  
to which a hunter,

a hundred years from now, may look and despair  
and see with wonder  
the tributes we have left to rust in the parks,  
swearing that our hair stood on end  
to see John Purroy Mitchel depart

for the Western front where our work might count.  
All exeunt, all go out,  
await the hunter to decipher the stone,  
and what lies under.  
Now the city is gone.

Look and despair.  
Look and despair.