

CHARLES SIMIC

STONE

Go inside a stone
That would be my way.
Let somebody else become a dove
Or gnash his teeth inside a tiger.
I am happy with a stone.

From the outside the stone is a riddle;
No one knows how to answer it.
Yet within, it must be cool and quiet
Even though a cow steps on it full weight,
Even though a child throws it in a river;
The stone sinks, slow, unperturbed
To the river-bottom
Where the fishes come to knock on it
And listen with eyes of dead roosters.

I have seen sparks fly out
When two stones are rubbed.
So perhaps, it is not dark inside after all.
Perhaps, there is a moon shining
From somewhere, as behind a hill;
Just enough light to make out
The strange writings, the star-charts
On the inner walls.