

PATRICK PRITCHETT

FROM *REFRAIN SERIES*

In the small rain the homes
of the drowned and their lost
dogs go white in the wake of the eye.

No one sees this.

Everyone sees this.

The pain of the world travels
over acres, cities, seas,
and frequencies. Beneath
the bonds of lyric
everything wants to burn.

The solar ocean
under high noon's arch.

The children cavorting
on the naked street.

The maple that sheds
its coughed grace.

And the ghost who sits
at the right hand of evening,
humming "This Wheel's on Fire."

We row on a dark river
whistling past the images
of emptiness to assuage
our loneliness, as Creeley says.

The dreams that come
before first light
invade us with the hope
for a resurrection of perfect sex
and the one book written
in a language of fading fire

that could rescue the earth
with a handful of letters
signing the air
into fantastic signals.
The heat and dust
of another defeat
drifts to larboard.
All I have to give
to this world is
my brokenness.