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The Warrior Class

Who can say what stories
Will survive time
To return to us and shape
How we recognize ourselves?

A Leicestershire farmer
Surrenders to the sirens
Beguiling his imagination,
Persuading him to come near:

Shards of pottery bubble to the surface
And rest on a mown wheatfield,
Leading him earthward, to Achilles fighting Hector
More powerful now than Apollo in his replacement gear

While Hector wears his foe's shining mother gift.
Achilles pierces the Trojan's neck with an arrow
And drags the vanquished favored son of Troy
In circles, an act of eternal desecration.

Britain's Roman conquerors
Set the Greek story of demigod-to-man combat
And warrior love in storytelling stones,
Stolen and put on display like Helen.

Like Helen, the story is taken
Taken back, taken again,
Placed, and proudly claimed.
The story does not seek rescue, apology, or correction

Even as King Priam
Seeks to pay for his son's body
In gold that rescues no man
But illuminates the hard and bitter end.

These stories sheathed in fertile soil
Bind the earth, feeding it precious minerals,
Becoming part of every harvest,
Part of our daily bread.