

crazy john

heat haze melts distant mountain sun
patterns my dress from second hand
store, there is no reason to cry but i
do. rust poles mark valley clover.
john's voice calls me, "theis coffee"
want some coffee. slowly, lifting
myself up from where i sit sketching
an empty church i walk toward
john's bright red and yellow home.
cypriot morning coffee served in
screened porch. he tells me his people
can live without water. he can live
without family. family always wants
something and people always need
something. so he lives here with
animals, one peacock he liberated
from the local zoo, kittens, baby
horse, pregnant dog, and newly born
donkey

"what happen to your leg?" i ask.
"ahh. two young people hit me when
i was walking. i lay on the ground,
my foot broken, my legs, my spine
slipped, i ask them, did you not see
me as a human being. why would
you run me over like an animal."

the young couple said they were
fighting over wedding invitations.
"ahh." john sighs, "when will you
marry." they tell him the same date
as as his daughter's marriage in south

africa. he tells them, "go, leave me here, go before i burn your house. do not tell me your name, just go."

i sip coffee and gargle water. he says, "my brother was 33 when he died of a heart attack. i lose my mind. i hate the old, the sick, why should they live and my brother die. ahh. but now i am philosophical." i tell john about my cousin, instantly dead from a heart attack. he tells me, "don't ask why." i tell him i believe God takes us when it is time. he smiles at me and says, "so, you believe in destiny." not sure what destiny means, i stare at mountains

"come. i show you the house you can live in for nothing." he insists, "not many do i entertain or ask to visit or stay or treat this place as their own. love you." he tells me twice

i am beginning to see rocks and hills and how much i love this wild man, this widened path to john's home. there is no reason to cry but i do