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# Pro Rege

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## Polonius Syndrome

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# The Polonius Syndrome

John Van Rys

I'm convinced some days  
I'm becoming Polonius,  
in fiction fixed—  
art without matter  
manner without heart.

I feel his rich robes, my body  
grown portly, fingers ringed  
to the tips, scratching at  
waxy ears. His courtly countenance  
becomes me—though jaws flap  
their jowls destined to join  
chapfallen Yorick, his face  
fleshless. I am a mask  
over an ape's grin, dingy  
yellowed fangs bared—bestly behavior,  
don't you know?

A preacher of truth to his self, he would  
be an infomercial today, with stylish  
Danish accent, a self-help program,  
available on cassette or VHS—the price  
his soul and yours. Buyer beware.

True to his self he was—sneak,  
meddler, scolder of queens, a Jephthah  
to a loving daughter, a rat slain  
while couched behind a bedchamber arras—  
an ass.

Who am I, though,  
to talk? True to my self I am  
too often. Sick I am of the tidy  
equation of my asinine self. Come,  
let us seek together, crushed  
between opposing forces,  
the unsettling Way  
of the Other.