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# Prodigal

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AARON ROBERT ALLEN

## prodigal

Here is how I imagined coming home:  
Morning, clearing the low stone fence,  
Wetting my legs with dew towards the cattle,  
Letting them smell and know me  
and announce me  
In their lowing,

The hammer of my brother's eyes,  
And time again, among the swine.

Instead, my place again.  
What must I tell them after the feast?  
These who have never seen the Minuets  
Of my far-off country, with the spice vendor at  
evening  
On a bridge above a canal,  
And the choked midday street with the crush of  
the masses  
Moving like amnesiac Gods.  
What must I tell my father after the fatted calf?

Great, sweet man. I have only come to pay  
my debt.

Do not grieve again, or be sad.

Go now to your other son.

I will leave the way I came:

Morning, clearing the low stone fence

Passing the cattle with dew-wet feet,

Letting them smell me and know me

And forgive me in their lowing.