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Samuel

John Grey

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Samuel

by John Grey

It's been years
since he's spoken.

Not even pain or joy
can inspire that mouth to open,
his tongue to flap.

He sits out in the warm sun,
pokes his finger in the snow.
Neither is cause for an audible response.

It's not that he can't speak.
It's just that he doesn't
want to or need to.
Does anyone not know
the feel of the summer on the skin,
or the chill of winter in the veins?
He no doubt figures
he can't add anything to that.

One day,
there'll be no one left alive
who can remember back to a time
when he did talk.

If only someone had thought
to record him.
But they didn't.

Nobody bothers to give him hell
for not speaking anymore.
They're all resigned
in there being total silence from that direction.
He's still around
but, ironically,
this lack of sound
has finally made him less visible.

His disappearing act has been perfectly orchestrated.
It just didn't need an orchestra to do it.
These days, he could be the quiet in the room,
and you wouldn't even hear it.