

## Writing in the Dust

### *The men taken in hypocrisy*

*'The scribes and the Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act." Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? ... But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground'*  
John 8.3-6 (AV)



The beating of a swallow's wings,  
A stone jar poised as if to fall,  
A fierce and unforgiving sun  
That beats upon a whitewashed wall

That finds and tracks each human flaw  
And reads the writing in the dust  
Of broken hopes and powdered dreams  
And love reclassified as lust.

Where images of shameful death  
Describe a life defined by blame,  
The beatings of a swallow's wings  
Above a place of public shame

Are like the barest breath of grace  
That stirs the unforgiving air:  
That shifts the gaze and leads the eye  
Beyond the camera's fatal stare

To where one writes in grit and dust  
– Of dry bones in a bone-dry place,  
Of broken hopes and powdered dreams –  
The unseen, unhoped, words of grace

Which free accuser and accused  
And spell out where that way begins:  
A motion like a breath of grace  
The beating of a swallow's wings.



