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Atlas

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Atlas

BY BOB CANARY

Upholding the far gates
by his giant suffering,
brothered to us sweat for sweat,
he stands holding back the unthinkable
collapse of the world
by the unendurable
pain of the flesh.
The other day,
three blundering
scholars and wise men set
out in a boat to find him
on the edge of the world
and found him standing
in the incomprehensible flesh.
And they,
muttering,
"we will yet
make a symbol
for the world
out of his simple
straining flesh."
Attached labels
uncovering
the meaning of his limbs, and yet
these shamed him so that he
let fall the world,
a risk we run when we
deny the flesh.