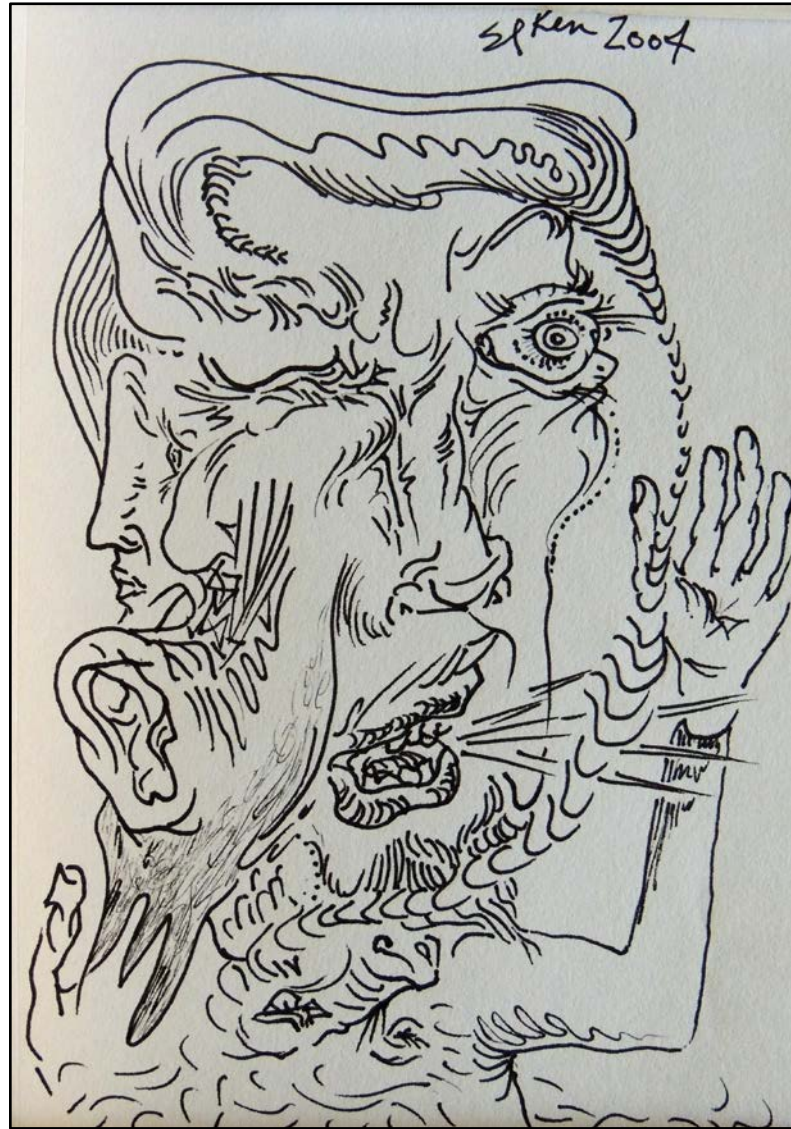


MY NAME IS DILAWAR



Street Preacher by John Elkerr
4" x 6"
Ink on paper

i.
my name is Dilawar. I'm an unschooled man but I know about the rocks,
know about the land. I'm a farmer from Yakubi and I drive a taxi across the
wheat fields of a heaven called Afghanistan.

ii.
my Toyota Corolla, my pride and treasure, I drove it to Khost for my three
sisters. on the way back home with three men in the car, I drove by Camp
Salerno, into the maw of a bottomless pit.

iii.
I spent the first night chained to a fence. the air was cold, the morning
endless. You pulled black cloth over my head. I could not breathe, so you
gathered around me and began to kick.

iv.
you hung me from the ceiling, my hands turned to stones. you spun me
around with blows to my knees. you laughed when I groaned. I stood five-
foot-nine and I weighed 122 pounds. when I cried God's name, you laughed
outloud.

v.
I dreamed of a scarecrow tossed by the wind. I looked down at his legs, they
would not bend. the bruise was his face, my face, and it grew up and down
my legs. your blue fists grew into thunderclaps and I prayed to my God to let
me fall into the storm.

vi.
I saw my wife, I saw my little girl, I saw a bumblebee hover above a yellow
flower. My heart is a roundstone of hot manganese. My head is a downpour
over enchanted fields of wheat.

Text by Stephen Eric Berry