The Night Journey

Borne aloft by fifty thousand pounds of thrust
I hover between wordlessness
and sleep, under the moon
whose luminescence, light without heat,
has nothing to do with burning
or so the authorities repeat.

Though not the moon that burns, that blinds or
drives us off our heads so that we plunge
into the channels of the night,
flowering waters of black rain
driving across portals of cold plexiglas,
what it is, is far from clear.

*

Recite,
The glowing channels of the night
*Los canales que brillan intensamente en la noche*
where, by starlight, through the pillars
ore flows
irradiated by a heatless light
in the southeast

Repeat,
*El sureste*

It was near Ararat
*La nuestra patria está allá*

Say, Ararat

Say, our homeland
*Da ist unsere Heimat*

I will see angels dancing in the fields
and trawlers churning white the sloping waves
of phosphorescent seas
as Blake saw choirs chanting in the trees

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What is depicted there
on a satellite radiograph as a streak of light,
whose glowing radiance belies its outer feature,
whose dull shroud conceals its inner nature;

Say, clay, it is only clay.

—whose radiance belies his nature,
who, in the roads, meets Elijah
and Yusuf, each given half the beauty,
who flies by night between the shoulder
and the ear of Allah
conversing with the powers
holding up the heavenly throne,
who is the measure of all things,
whose limit is by him unknown?

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Say,
Time has gone dark, and night
blows up from somewhere in the east

Recite
a hollow sun beneath the rain and stars
has gone out
to rest in the trough of the sea
as shells rest on mountaintops
and the billowing world, also
to its shadowy bed

We are not,
are not meant for this
acceleration under pressure,
displacement without motion, without measure
onward, without measure
a golden hour of heartbreak
dawning without measure
no instrument of time
will accurately read the hour

*

air-conditioned wind, slurry
unspeakable day is calling early—
the roof of heaven illuminated by a burning hand
chasing hurried drops of vapor from a clouded lens
outside, but far below

a pillar of white sand
whirls through the fiercer air
covers the sedge

say
It was our homeland,
far below, in the west
where the sedge-gold dawn follows the breaking day

breaking
then falling away

Robert Huddleston grew up in the Washington, DC area and in West Africa. He has worked as an editor, teacher, translator, and book critic. In 2006 he earned a Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Chicago. His work has appeared recently in Chicago Review.