

# At Melville's Grave

CHRISTOPHER OHGE

Too stony-faced to understand the meaning  
of the embassy bequeathed by those bones below,  
he opened the ancient trade paperback,  
gazing at leaflets dangling by poisonous glue.

Woe seeps from these dusty pages in hand,  
hazy parchment compared to a grave blanked,  
where no livid hieroglyph sits, no chapter appears—  
purely the all-color atheism of a marble scroll.

Out of this verdure, as no sound registers,  
animals and cars collide in a distant wreck  
already told, already written, in grand volumes—  
while silent answers creep on Woodlawn hill.

Here lies, still, the mad mystic and here stand  
one and the many, all sad seekers before this,  
taking modest time to see through the whitewash:  
clenching Schopenhauer, he starts beneath the wave.