

*David Ruekberg
3558 O-at-ka Creek Rd.
LeRoy, NY 14482
585-538-6463*

Prisoner

I dream that I am in a vineyard, and that I am treading grapes.
The grapes slide underfoot like wrongs I have committed.

The grapes are perhaps women I have violated, neighbors
I have stolen from, children I may have beaten.

They might be my children. I do not hear them wailing
in my dream, I only feel the coolness around my calves

where they are not. Skins and seeds clot
between my toes instead of the perfect juice of grapes,

and the edge of the barrel bristles with splinters
so I rarely grasp it. It might be that someday

I will slip under and the world will darken and purple.
Then I will breathe in the thick liquid,

then I will at least drown in the juice I have trodden so long.
How I would rather be the man who dreams of walking

down a shaded road, balancing a loaf of bread
on his head, wrens diving in and out of it, feeding!