

Jaime Kensel

Red Under Gold

after *The Large Man*, by Sara Cole

Episteme to an epistle man
is life, platonic,
to another--sanctity.
Karl, of the latter type, sits--bent knees,
bed ridden in his ember days
volumes now robing his legs,
like stole over shoulders.

He apprehends the closest book
not looking up to see how
the sage drapes stopped glowing, backlit.
Holding his blade firmly, cleaving the pages
pressing down, cracking the binding,
he parts the incarnate white in
gem tones and gilded type.
Then lays the reading, opened
and pages down
on the spreads, atop piles of the same--
a spined landscape of
bound cloth and straddling leaves.
He is resembling the works, prima facie, well-read.

He turns to the desk,
retrieving the last, cloaked in buckram
machine cut and crisp--
ex-libris, already dispensed.
But to finish the process with mere placement,
with the rest, won't justify its presence--
or the ease of facade.
Better to acknowledge something,
than nothing at all.
Of cosmos and sight, he'll read,
between thoughts,
until daylight.