

## Rembrandt—Self Portrait

I take a moment to realize:  
It's your hair spilling  
from under the beret,  
flowing across your brow then  
down the back of a neck  
that recalls other images, stolen  
from us: Che Guevara,  
Bob Marley,  
John Lennon,

each so common now  
on t-shirts and hats  
worn by those who  
too-often have no clue.

So many ways to rob us  
of our art and soul.

But here's a clue we might  
ponder as we wonder which thief  
carried your self-portrait  
into the darkness: A true artist,  
like the revolutionary,  
is guided by deep feelings of love.  
What else could have moved you  
to take such care with every line  
and shadow etched  
onto that tiniest of metal plates?

So many ways to rob us  
of our love.

Because some people would gladly  
stop the earth from turning  
if, first, they figured out how  
to make a buck that way. And yet  
our world continues to turn, day by day,  
etched with all these lines and shadows  
sketched over the years  
by poets,  
by painters,  
by singers and lovers,  
with such care—while each  
new generation of artists and revolutionaries  
(perhaps this is a redundancy?) finds its own solution  
whenever someone becomes cold enough

to rob us of our love,  
our art,  
our soul.

I would like to print your stolen image  
on a few million t-shirts, or hats,  
give them away for free just to see  
how many would take the time  
to discover whose hair it is spilling  
from under that beret,  
flowing across your brow, then  
down the backs of our necks.