

## Bill Matthews

1.

Entering  
Giotto's fresco, he  
presents his gift to Mary.  
The father doesn't  
follow.

*Follow  
you to Florence?* he  
replied to his Catholic wife.  
*Remember, Bill, our  
bargain.*

Bargain-  
ing that no one watched,  
he tried to escape—*Chapel's  
that way, sir*—then turned,  
guilty.



*Guilt is  
in the rage of kings,  
went the homily. But can  
guilt gild the souls of  
rich men?*

*Follow  
me to Florence?* my  
master asked, spying my sheep.  
Sheepish, I said, yes,  
*I will.*

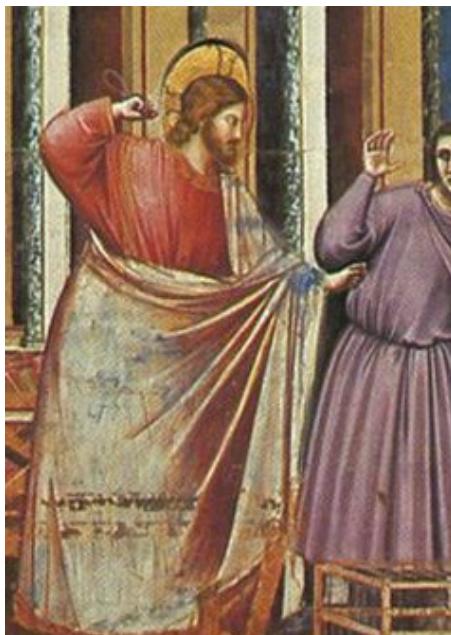
I will  
*not* enjoy this. he  
announced with finality,  
refusing the sighs,  
the guilt.

2.

*Guilt is  
in the rage of kings,  
went the homily. But can  
guilt gild the souls of  
rich men?*

*The Rich  
Man's Guide to Europe.  
But my extravagance is  
not so shocking. Small  
comfort.*

Comfort-  
less, sleepless, he'd tossed  
for months; the pills didn't help.  
He worked more. His wife  
just laughed.



Rich men  
and poor alike sighed  
at Scrovegni's excess, but  
he raised his eyes for  
comfort.

*Comfort  
is true charity,  
said the pastor. Mother of  
charity, he breathed,  
and laughed.*

*and laugh  
if you choose, said the  
guide. You may feel anything.  
Ha—just another  
purchase—*

3.

*and laugh*

*if you choose, said the  
guide. You may feel anything.*

Ha—just another  
purchase—

Purchase—  
the chapel blue breaks  
his thought. Enrico turns to  
him: *the purchase of  
your soul.*

Your sole  
protector is not,  
nor never will be, you. Find  
rest in grace of His  
lending.



Lending,  
earning interest. How  
could I have lost that bargain?  
You bargained on  
your laugh.

Purchas-  
ing his father's soul,  
Enrico kneels to Mary,  
hands her the chapel,  
palms out.

Palms out  
to count the time spent:  
four giornate on that face  
credit against his  
lending.

4.

Lending,  
earning interest. How  
could I have lost that bargain?  
You bargained on  
yourself.

*You're self-absorbed, Bill*, his wife had said. *If you can't believe, at least leave your own head.*

The head aches get worse on her vacation. He's tired of these attempts to buy his release.



*Leasing's not his way*, explains Enrico. *When you leave, choose. You can't keep borrowing to lend.*

Your self-inflicted curse wears you, weight you chose to shoulder. Drop your burden and follow.

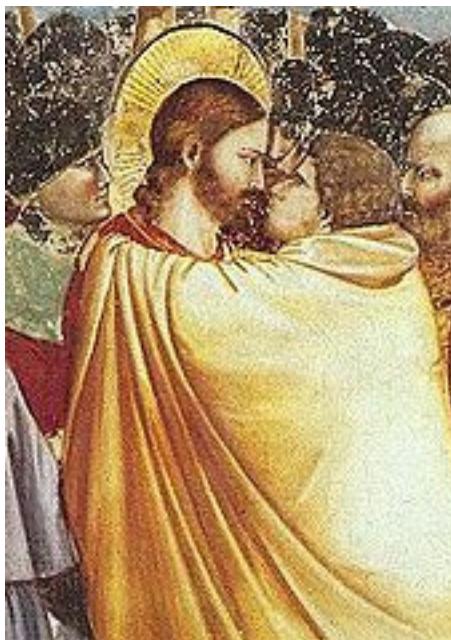
Follow the lines of gold on blue—they'll become your riches, your way out, and your release.

5.

*Leasing's  
not his way, explains  
Enrico. When you leave, choose.  
You can't keep borrowing  
to lend.*

Lending  
was odious to  
him, insisted Bill Matthews,  
CEO, the great  
liar.

*Liar.*  
He could have sworn the  
painting spoke. Scrovegni? No—  
Enrico? Nothing  
follows.



Follow  
those words? How foolish!  
But the blue death on Judas'  
face, die cast? I'll try,  
at least.

Lending  
each other a hand  
into heaven, the two men  
determine terms for  
leasing.

Release.  
Reward for forcing  
God's hand. Repayment, Judas  
wrongly judges, will  
follow.

6.

*Follow.*

Those words—how foolish!  
But the blue death on Judas'  
face, pale cast...perhaps  
I will.

I will  
always remember  
how that blue light percolates  
down through the minutes—  
time stops.

Time stopped  
at the door. But the  
watching guard extends his hand,  
*Sir, time's up,* then sees  
his tears.



*I will  
not forget. You will,  
old Scrovegni scoffs, then turns  
away. Please. Restore  
my name.*

*My name  
is in your hands, he  
exchanged with the gold. Giotto  
smocked the son's orders  
and tears.*

Enter-  
ing the fresco, he  
presents his gift to Mary.  
The father doesn't  
follow.