

# Vital Signs

**Dan Chiasson**

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The moon in a manuscript,  
A man on a monument,  
A tree on a tapestry:

Everything valuable  
Hidden away;  
Everything visible  
Visibly empty.

I turned the pain up  
In my poetry,  
And now the beat won't stop:

The tic-toc of the lunatic,  
The man in the manslaughter,  
The moose in the museum.

**Dan Chiasson** poet and essayist, is the author of three books of poetry: *The Afterlife of Objects* (University of Chicago, 2002); *Natural History* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2005); and *Where's the Moon, There's the Moon* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2009). He teaches in the Department of English at Wellesley College and writes regularly for *The New Yorker* and *the New York Review of Books*.

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