

# FAVORITE POEMS TAMUK

## PURE

RANDALL MANN, 1972-

*This poem makes it seem like it is going to be very pure and angelic, but it is the total opposite of that. I love that it gives a two-faced feel. The words say one thing but the whole message is another. In my life, this is significant for me because sometimes life can feel full of brightness like a diamond but when you get close it is sharp and rugged.*

Brelynn, Flores  
Student, Age 20

Purgatory must be like this,  
myopic, wet, all noise white,  
the ocean inexhaustible.

The old woman to our right  
could have been a saint, clothed  
in layers and layers of white.

And the terns, they strutted  
then scattered when a sopping dog  
ran in, then out, of the thick fog.

I was grateful you had pulled  
me away from my dull schedule  
for that walk, though I,

selfish to the end,  
could not bring myself to say so.  
I'll say it now, too late:

purgatory will be like this:  
the nothingness behind us,  
the nothingness ahead;

you and I, arm in arm—  
two men holding each other.

*from Brock, Geoffrey and Lucas, Dave, eds. Poetry. Poetry Foundation, 2004. 285.*  
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?contentId=42234>