

King of the Hill

When I was a boy, we played a game called “King of the Hill.” Standing on any small rise, one boy declared himself “King,” and the rest of us fought to push him off until another boy became the “King of the Hill.”

Older than god, the King of the Hill
makes the rich richer, and the poor poorer.
He turns a deaf ear when you cry out
in emergency rooms, corporate boardrooms,
at the water cooler, and the ballot box,
in police stations, courtrooms, and rescue missions.

To the King, you are expendable.
You are nine ciphers: 000-00-0000,
a timecard, a necessary liability,
a demographic, a statistic.

He says, “Someone’s got to pick the grapes.”
“Nobody said life was fair.”
“Everybody does it.”
“At least take a shower and shave.”

Once in his ravenous jaws,
you’ll not escape his inward-turned shark’s teeth.
He will drag you down
and pull you under till, at last, you die.

The King has four laws:
The first law: Survive.
The second law: Survive and Pro\$per.
The third law: Pro\$per some more.
The fourth law: Never share your Hill.

His name is POWER.