

# Dead Men Walking

By William Logan

What did they desire, the dead who had returned?  
The sons who had inherited their estates  
pretended not to know them. The iron gates  
were welded shut, but soon the dead had learned

to hire lawyers practiced in the laws  
that bound the afterlife to lesser gods.  
The angels thundered on like piston rods,  
denying their gold wings to either cause.

The city streetlamps flared like learned ghosts.  
The moon turned red. Beneath a scrim of clouds,  
Spanish moss draped the myrtle trees like shrouds—  
in politics the guests became the hosts.

Those days made angels of the better sort.  
The cases languished in a lower court.

Source: *Poetry* (March 2019)