The Gospel of Jack Kerouac
Andy Goertz

The howling hounds of death are barely a breath upon my back.
Lead these feet over rain-slick streets and uproot each fresh step before stillness becomes me.

These un-trenched soles, wholly unwary, carry me through these bastions and gunnels and barroom jungles that are sticky with topcoats of sweat and spilled drinks drying slowly beneath the soles of my boots.

Lead me through to the prophets of pride and their unmarried brides: the motherless mystics with wild, dizzy eyes.
Let our ears ride conversations like radio dials on seas of white noise, heaving endlessly as, restless, we pray these intrepid feet stray from the patchwork of blackened gum and half-lit cinder sticks still smoldering in the oxygen.

Lead these gravel-callused feet beyond the comfort of known streets, beyond the graves marking the birthplace of each person bold or boring enough to believe that the three most powerful words are: “I am staying.”

Tonight I am Jack Kerouac. Moaning for man, bones groaning as unknown roads unroll before me like canvassed spider-web spools of teletype paper. It’s safer to stay in place than try and trace the cut-and-paste cadence of those deacons of doom, those Beatniks of the Boom, too soon.

Lead us to angel-headed hipsters with tar-stained lips, junkies strung out on culture and pubic beards with measured grins, and as the lowest of our limbs begin to sink into these streets, let our bodies be uprooted. Let our shadows be relieved, lead our hungry eyes to find their feast—let our beatnik hearts stay restless, and let the faintest scent of sweat be the only clue that death is left with.