

From the Window: Carpenters

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Carpenters are working beneath my windows. I like carpentry, it's pleasant work; often, when I am writing, I wish I were a carpenter. I was just chewing on my pen, because it seemed no ideas wanted to come to me no matter how hard I tried, and my eyes wandered down to the courtyard, where an apprentice was sawing a nice-looking board, and he scrubbed away at it until the sawdust showered and the saw thrust through the wood like a knife through fresh bread. "Time to quit," cried an admonishing voice from the worksheet; Franta was so startled that he didn't even finish, but laboriously extricated the saw from the half-cut board instead. Then I realized that "time to quit" is a higher, indeed a metaphysical command, and that something terrible would have happened if Franta had finished sawing the board; and that even in these unglued times there are laws which have an absolute, sacred, binding authority. I could not do otherwise, I bowed before the impressive supremacy of the phrase "time to quit" and put aside my half-chewed pen - and my half-chewed thoughts, as well.