

FINAL VIEW

To the kelp

Did you dive or did you fall,
who struck your gas-filled membrane
with the oar as you came up for air,
pushed through the noisome tallow
of the scum and scrape, the scum and squall
of lunar husk undreamed from crepe
of wanton gash and startled river,
the kelp a mat of blood and hair,
the matter of matter that drew you down
feet first, head last, equipped against
the windless cool, the faintly
puled remembrance of that
chance we took to choke upon
the knotted blade, the thalloid glare,
to drag our venous anchors
over chilblain shoals—

Petitio principii

What shall I take
but what does not take me back?
What shall I grieve
but what kills me for the bolus
of my tongue cut out?
What shall I buy
but your silence, your deliverance
to the wine-dark wake—

Breathless

I

Hepatic sump, unsexed of clutch,
colloidal engine of decay,
has stalled upon your vain redux
and though I can't make out the fault
in first or second order cause
I now have reason to believe
that I can neither make it in, if that's
a sufferable phrase, by which
I mean that it provides a clearer
image of your rancor till
there's nothing nearly left to last,
to trace or try, to try or trim
the image of your breathless—

II

Grin-stretched lips caress the cheeks
into a plicate frenzy,
as the sculpting of a sail
drunk with the intermittent breeze
portends to set the wind to contravene
the chaos of its flapping,
though in truth it only animates
the enterprise of cleaving off,
of parsing out, of cutting in,
the rub of slivered surfaces,
once thought a single plane.

O let your molder swallow up
this Wehrmacht of abrasions,
the tongued hull disappears from greasy
board to latticed hinge.
This is a feast absented both
of pabulum and craving,
the armature of ebb forsakes
eviscerated tides—

III

The threshold and the arc
are huddled into rigid poise,
and this defeat, to live again,
you would not render,
not to pin the last of shadows
fettered after gloaming
to the rented shins,
a beggar's hoard unreadied
to receive what you would
pit asunder, deficits
you'd freely sieve
across the perforated borders
of your once secure demesne,
your groping cull,
your tattered scrim—

IV

You seemed to live again,
to play the stasis of repletion
as a child's promise, everything
on offer for a chance
to win a standard, stand
the standing of a witness
to the spoliated barrens
as a winding sheath.

This your stasis, bearing under,
under canopy of thistle
where the hunter's blind once dangled
as an atavistic stain,
was your final image
of the wild, of the bearing under,
image under image
of the plundered blank,
the void at large—

V

Who holds the rifle, sights the stag,
will take the measure of its horns.
Those points, perhaps you realized,
were not sharpened to pierce
your distal regions,
soaked in serous velvet
as the blood seal of a vow.
Who grips the hasp of sweaty shift
and longs to rip the urethane
dissepiments of sterile sheets
from skin sewn, sallow gown.
What cold, what leap across the strand
will hold you from that feigned abyss
and gather from the rimpled pleats
of blistered lips the immanence
of absence, thus
your crowning gasp,
your breathless code—

VI

Athwart this vernal crux, the summer
turns to you and falters
at the choice of such a backwash,
such a visionary molder for
a final view, in stillness driven
savage, rendered casually brutal,
the completion of the trust that stirred
the stew of your relations, saw you
severally redacted
from the season's close.
The white noise has gone plastic
to avenge the potted jungle
you thought such a stalwart vestige
of your posture, of your standing,
as a last repose—

As if another sun

Immanence will not be named.
The stain against our wilderness,
our animal pride,
is named our animality,
from fatted pincers proffering
each blink its creed of hunt and glimpse,
each trill of pillaged dissonance
obtruded into rhyme.
There, as if another sun
will parse our null illumined,
we imagine that our focus
will traduce the bed of nettles
that our further sight has gathered
as the stuff of things.
Immanence has named you,
but you will not attend it
while you still possess a name.
This: the feral gambol of your
hollows into ferment.
You: the torpid spasm
that consolidates the void—

The economy of appearance

Blood spilled into ravaged soil
seems a commonplace device,
but transposition of the trope—
the churn of soil into blood, that is,
deemed ravaged by appearing as
a sponge soaked in the cochineal
dissemblance of that lathered spate—
has saved us any need to strike it
off the list of images
that move us to concision,
or conscript us to repulse.
Silence is most full
in the economy of appearance,
thus the dwindled coast reveals
its inner as inceptive, the jejunum
of our being towards, our spurting
blood to dust—

Phoenix

To cede these flame-tongued plumes
from nest of ash to sintered shroud,
the worm-worn trunk must give its hollows,
leach its suet from the bones.

To sing these braided shadows
as if branching from the bulb,
the sudden flash, the swell of dearth
will draw a line that does not merely

fade in disappearing, but
contracts across the margins
of the nether cracks and forthwith,
without rung or truss, refuses

to disclose—

Deliverance

Everywhere I looked, I looked everywhere.
Master of beacons, beacon of shadows
will fashion the bricks
out of straw—

Evensong

Neither known nor named,
my troth was not to burnish
but to gather up the refuse
of conciliated sinew, limn
the press of sanguine tumuli
unscalable to ground.
That it was coming, that it came
from sockets emptied once but filled
again against the act of rising,
weary of presuming
the inveiglement of seity
a portal through the whelming dross,
retreating from the evensong
as though it were farewell—

Art of hate

The trick is to learn how to properly dissemble,
not to hide, but to revile, as a public tithe.

One wants to be a mirror
to the Medusa's head—

COLOPHON

Another Cull

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