

## ELEVENTH HOUR

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The hound is pawing now as mythic  
heat pours out of the silo slits, wise  
as a harpooned sea's sleek beast

gone cold, concise.

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Dolomite cliffs  
giggle clotted elk's heart.

The ice floes where, kicking  
can, I hack the soft pelt of oblivion.

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When I make my stippled hog  
face, I pen myself in it.

Besodden rack  
of him, carcass  
frothing mirth.

Nightingales, paired off  
& curdling houndstooth

eye slits, raspberry terror  
plumage.

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Little slippers  
pock the page.  
Crosshair me, buck.

Hollower of earthly  
possession, spool me back.

## THROES

Today, you will reheat last leopard stew, key the baroque  
elevator to the roof, lift the wooden hatch of the water

tower slant, blow.

A moment to fold khakis, tongue the turnip cleat of ho-hum coach with the wife & dandelion wine  
still alive in the town you made your name,  
ruby-rubber.

The rust-colored water will inherit the coltish  
dregs of you, gone

obelisk, like all the other homosexual manuscripts.

It'll take just a week till your landladies can tell for sure, lifting highball glasses  
to a scarved lamp some corduroy night.

Little wing, I knew you'd fool me blue.

## CANARY

*Heaven knows what I'll do when the picture is over—& they take him away.* Violet wings bobbing through winter rabbit stew. Let birds be fanatics rustling the syrupy woods, seeking wide-throated carp blurting as far-off papas stumble off the bourbon-lighted porch for the backroom broth of O'Hurley's.

Deepening trouble tinsels the eaves. Late-season carolers taken down by strays, buckshot, blood looping down teal coats. Prose of arched back, spines of the last romantics trembling the iron kettles. *We are blanketing ash now—& everything's gone strange.*

The yodeling hills temper as the last boy on earth, dried lamb greying his shoulders, lobs off the ventriloquist's wooden head to fingerless applause. The arsenic lobsters wizen up to blur his cheek, one by one out of deadstock shallows where I go on knife-like, vinegar-like, like nothing asleep in this world.

*Happiest on the highway, dove-knuckled, my ole Ford moving toward & away from home.*

There's a boiling fog now hunting the town, with a single slit bull in it, nudging skyscrapers, teeming reeks. Infinite chains clinking illegibly, a sonnet looping the undertaker who only weeps mortal coil. *The axe wakes up & paints the room.*

Downstage, prior pour, I tingle needles up with Patsy as she walks on & on through blue lumber. A plane goes off—& she tips down, her wristwatch caught at 6:35. *Let me put on a show for you, tiger.* Dreaming of jarred Rasputin between racks of him, hooking the shanks that never slim. *In the last cicada hour, I gore my castle—straw, mane, aluminum, ruby.*

## MINE LIGHT

*God's dogface lit behind pantybose*

Pelt rosemary water  
Pelt astringent angel with belted neck as horses hatch  
Pelt mushroom heads sloshing the pier's fog recital  
Pelt ruffled milk muscling the axe as it etches licorice bridge  
Pelt unborn dolorous chirping lunchmeat factory chickees  
Pelt riverhunting West Virginia nudging carp  
Pelt heathen chained among my blurtd swan  
Pelt dolling down second sleep trundle beds  
Pelt hog's heart boiling man among cabbages  
Pelt slurping the shepherd's mosses  
Pelt gold-dipped femurs  
Pelt boys ago swinging on darkened stage from a rope of bells

*God's dogface lit behind pantybose*

## MUSIC BOX

Bluest roans feast on god's neck. The hand-me-down hog stutters open the asylum gate.

Wooden teeth cut over tins of campfire beans. The railwaymen bet to pierce  
the runt's nipples, flay the belly out on the orphanage lawn, garland her with condors.

Come morning, children eating small cakes will be sung to her incision, slip inside.  
Merrily, they'll grow furred, carve self-portraits in her hide as cold comes.

The men will board their trains, humming north for the folly hotel unchanged.  
Never again the same, the cruel art is made. Bastard in my arms, fragile visitor.

## SECOND WIND

The ventriloquist's green-striped britches dry on county fair hay.  
Pigs, unpairing their own ribs, hallelujah the Ferris wheel.

Father-son travel, have a sherry, freaked bellbottom, good piers.

The brains blow exquisitely out, blind spray of maroon  
horses loved only by the disturbed.