ACTS 9:16

My father was struck by lighting
and it became a dream.

There was some confusion in the church
between the one who

had done the wrong and
who deserved it.

Accordingly,
his name was Paul.

It must have been my mother then
who was some kind of animal.

And so half-animal—
my brother, sister, me.

FEVER DREAM: SOUTH COUNTY HOSPITAL

I am swimming in the river. It is gasoline. It eats away at my skin until I am soft, gleaming. There is no bearing here. No rules, not even our own. GOD is a heavy necklace, dripping. The end of GOD skims across the water, glittering as only oil glitters. There was a woman once. Who fed me. Who decorated me with cloth and dirt. I sucked from her neck like a thousand flies, I was—a swarm. She called me Princess. She showed me inside. There was a job to do. An impossible job. Inside—water to the neck and my father sloshing on the floor. Princess watches over the vegetable-head. The flies are feeding. Eating the belly out, leaving the tongue and eyes. The wound is leaking again so Princess collects it in her plastic basin. Anoints herself, each nipple wet with oil. I breathe through my mouth— I touch his arm.