

## **Basement Uncooked Polenta**

How i ended up with a bag of  
Bob's Red Mill Polenta  
is no longer a matter of  
record. The important thing  
is the basement, a place where  
a person of a certain height  
needed to sit down to put on  
a shirt. With every extant Star  
Trek episode (excepting the  
original series, even i could  
not), part one of a Teddy  
Roosevelt biography, a two  
burner hot plate next to the  
laundry sink on the unfinished  
side of the so-called abode, i  
was lowest case, under the clouds,  
feasting on gray lint across the forest  
green futon, where i dozed at all  
hours and poked away at mindless  
internet games. The bottom of the  
barrel: i scraped up handfuls of  
uncooked yellow dust particles and  
masticated, a grim face in  
the mirror I won't forget,  
a will to survive in the  
eyes and jaw, to live to  
follow instructions on a package  
so I might taste my food again.

## Locked Out

The bureau you are trying to reach  
is not accessible to your hands.  
You've waved and clamored for  
legibility one too many times.

Home was on credit from  
your family and you didn't earn it.

Your verbs don't connect  
to any noun we see in your  
account: debts must be  
paid by your loneliness  
and won't be discharged  
in bankruptcy or in death,  
according to the agreement.

You could have gone up  
to a salty title, your first  
business name: enterprising young  
articulate, subtitled wealth futures.

You can't come back to the place  
where your identification number  
was printed, that passkey no longer scans.

Search in earnest for the agency you  
were promised, it's all we let you keep.

## **World Weary**

Questions pile up.  
Papers file grief.  
Information's knowing  
Fall from cliffs to belief.

And we then walk  
Onto the dreamy air.  
Candidates for procedures  
Moving on and down.  
Able and skill-bereft  
Scorning, conning, conned.

The trees were a comfort  
A metaphor to bear;  
Claws and their rejoinder  
Leaving, falling, scared.

Did you break up road?  
Pile up concrete?  
Ask a query load?  
All these listless feats.

A minute cauldron's moan  
Satisfies no thirst  
Braying against the bore  
Scalding, sleeping, cursed.

Who's tired, me or the whole thing?  
If both, what next?

## **Strange Downtowns**

Is quiet eerie?

Only when there was noise;  
the echoes were erased  
by ire and escape.

Fading brick tells two tales  
wrecking history  
and losing time  
graying to newer music.

Attempts to rehabilitate the dead  
are two parts magic  
and one sadness.

## **Time Loss as it's Happening**

Once again I've become a character without memory,  
a video camera powered on without a red dot,  
the overused metaphor. Lonely, false eyes  
see my self from twenty years back and ten ahead.

Who will grade this work: one or many?  
Some argue the question is the problem  
but all I see are inquirers.

It's reversed: I love curiosity  
and am terrified of purposeful attention.

What's it got to do with time?  
It's the synchronization tech;  
meaningless for the one  
everything for the two  
and weather to everyone's together.

Concurrence loss is failure's clip;  
simultaneity theory and practice  
synonymous or not  
is life.

Death ends the coetaneous.  
A clock's antonym is a notional grave,  
the ultimate preposition.

Between records and the sixth foot down,  
the parallel is my dance  
with happenstance.  
As second hands go out of step  
memory loses rhyme.