

Here & Gone

sky of stillborn shark

Washed-up on the beach,
your underbelly skin

with umbilical still
attached, ripped from some

selachian cosmos, dark as night
& obviously stillborn

is baby-white. Morning swirls
of windswept sand

dance in the sunlight.
Microscopic mica sparkles

around your carcass,
glinting like star-clusters

in a sea of sky-high space;
like the firmament & yearning

intertwined. Your silhouette
haunts me, dwarfing

comprehension. Its imprint
spins on the arch of my mind,

past your torn, pharmacopeial
fin (still erect, yet bending

heavily in my direction)
its apex nudging true perception.

It's the cutting edge of a
boomerang nebula – discomfiting;

a blip of consciousness
that eludes & enfolds;

the sly smirk of a tragi-cosmic

sin. How precious time

(and any glimpse of a mutual future)
is abandoned on this golden sand—

irrelevant to Man—nipped,
before it could begin.

Living With Goats

I will deny thee nothing:/ Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,/ To leave but a little to myself. From *Othello*, by William Shakespeare.

Chew this over. Contrary
to common lore, hungry goats

aren't strictly polyphagous.
They only graze on stuff they *adore* –

and they are, as lovers go, horribly
greedy. Red-eyed goats

can't identify from echoes of self-
mockery what they may not ingest;

nor define separations of love.
I'd suggest this may explain

the “me” you see; the rancid bits left
after I have denied you nothing,

left not *for* me, but *of* me. To wit:
the hard-thumbed washing-up

glove; crumbs of stale salt-'n-vinegar
crisps; a worn-thin engagement ring;

six silver hairs in the shower & some
in the stained basin; bracelets & old chains

draped over the bedstead; a faded
wedding snap; a flat-bristled toothbrush's

minty-stale kiss; flakes of dead sun
on summer's favorite top; an hourglass

of poems in masticated mags
of highbrow-lit (which no one we know

ever reads) and on our moldy rolling-pin,
little clots of gluten-free flour.

I've truly been blessed
by goat-like affection –

there's really nothing left of me
to devour.

Lazarus, Rising

A rat scrabbles at the floor of his mouth--
rank disintegrating foulness of fur
hopelessly gnawing its
 own dung...

Roaches scurry frantically through his lungs—
their legs thrash with demonic blur
in desperation
 to devour...

Blowflies flurry from every rancid orifice—
spawn of mutated curs, its
black-winged demons
 maniacally feasting.

As his crackling lip-scabs part,
the noble air glides in, glowing; golden
between tonsil & gullet,
 arresting.

The rodent drools, shrinking from
the sunlit cusp that expands—
but can't escape...
 It thickens, becoming tongue.

The roaches hiss, lunging into
blackening recesses to escape the glare...
their myriad legs quicken
 into bronchial tracts.

The maggots shriek. Stiffening in
this miasma of contamination,
they harden into teeth.
 Putrefaction's halted.

The spew of corruption—the rot,
bile & funk—all are thwarted
by the jewels of renewal
 that were a widow's tears.

It's miraculous, yes—we get that—
except, I fear, for one
miscalculated biblical fact.

Who asked *him*

poor bastard? Who thought
to ascertain if he even *wanted*
to be brought back—since he'll only
have to die again?

sixty minutes & gone

Black sister Sleep carried me
upon her twisted back

for weeks, in deathly stillness.
It was like obsession; like the two hags
would never release me—

her & her white sister Valium—
from their intimate grip. I found
no peace. The trip

was rutted & slimy and its undulation
sickened the sun.

Brother Night moved in, shoveling ice
around my heart until he was certain
my muscles numbed.

But I must have insulted Sleep,
because the bitch has abandoned me.
I hurtle, wide awake,

through this life's random schisms,
through dissonance & misery

like a missile, with no fixed destination.
Here, daylight's dragons are still defiant
and conspiring in fire;

and you, my prince, who came from my dreams
for what seems like only the briefest hour,
are still slain.

Pyres of paradox devour me,
consuming my oxygen —

I can't harmonize their flying sparks
with the brazen sharps & flats
of dragon-song.

Mistress Sleep's visits have become erratic
and rare. I ache for her – but she rips into me
like a drowning cat

for a bare, nightmarish sixty minutes—
and she's gone.