

Lobster Boy

i.

To understand his body
look no further than the Lobster, often
named American; a benthic
sea-bug; a garbage animal without vocal
chords, endorphin receptors

therefore alien; without higher brain
function and, thankfully,
a screamless kill; without preferences or
capacity to suffer given
absence of spine; spineless; A blue-

blood ritual,
in the same breath an aesthetic
nightmare made eco-
nomic necessity; a slow death; he is
refuses to die.

ii.

better speak your mind
or go home
you redbone
redzoned
you red, red ocean vial
vile spider
speak you caribbean?
no speak? why so
recoil, trap dealer?
scrap faith healer
oh token oh shielded
and battlefielded broken canvas
broken bloody
ruddy carcass
you gunmetal cancer
answer me this
bullet bug—
ugly, why you
so ugly, little thief ? little knife-
handed dragon
yo ragdoll
no quiero
bellycrawlers here
no soggy saucer
zombies
lo poison, scorpion swollen
stolen thing
you salt sting
you machine dream
mechanical, maniacal mind
better be
you speak like
your own kind

iii.

imagine.
barely born,
when sky rose up
to bury a boy

in the sea.
gives him to heavy,
bottomless
dark

his heart
a skinless thing
it marries the ocean
to his bones

born bubbling, his heart
appeal to life
to living
grown a fighter

his heart glorious
and strong
so rebelliously
alive, alive and

unafraid
yes, he unafraid now
to bury himself
in the sky

Elegy (from a Sidewalk In Cambridge)

A sidewalk is a haunted thing.

To be a Ouija board ghosted with gone bodies,
a broken glass tapestry of vacant lots, lost parts,
past tense, tinsel silver, a river of stolen
chance and traffic fantastic. Witness

the snow, as it devours, whole, a man, while
he lay under trunk of car as dust came whistling
down—whispered his name into deathnote
diary pages. What I'm saying is I am

the villain in this story—I might as well
have been the snow—the way it swooped in,
soft as a palimpsest. An angel of forgetting,
which is another way to say Death. Witness

the young woman asking of a world
which took everything from her, If I were
an angel, and this were a test, how would
you do? What I'm saying is if she

is an angel, then who took her body? Her body,
sketched into my bones, in cigarette scribble
smoke. In hoofbeat ellipses. How long does she
have to wait until she gets to howl vengeance?

What I'm saying is ghosts are just angels
inside of old bloody houses.

Tristina for Winter

give thanks for snow—how it feather's window,
offering, after long and winding climb down
from calamity, to make glass

animals of mud—and then glass
for gathering gold, before dark'ning window,
Sun, exhales from sky—music, spilling down

over counter, for carrying these down
hours as glass
does scotch—then watch,
 she slides in through window—

like window, downed, with wings like black glass.