



MATTHEW KIRSHMAN

My Mouth, Which Burns

He wakes after the Twin Towers tumble.
Because they're beautiful to each other,
They collapse in a havoc of ashes.
My mouth, which burns from holocaust flashes,
Takes me inside the wet dark thick organs,
Whose oozy sense stems from their being flesh.
Through the pink, boozy paunch around my trunk,
I enter the dense history of signs.
Both "paunch" and "trunk" have their primitive cult.
The king learns to chew gold naturally,
As a reflex, the business of Kingdoms.
Why should I suddenly be in the world?
So this poem becomes my creation,
These creatures submit to constant castration.

Prelude to a Fertility Tale

He creeps, slinks around the castle
On the scent of a man's brain,
Like a fox, scared and cunning both,
In a steady state of nerves.
There was a crime in the cornfield.
An ax was mislaid;
A solo inhabitant reacts to the cry;
Dark tongues orbit the earth.
She whispers into the hole of his brain,
A tale from childhood—Jack & the plant of gold.
Enter the story through the sound,
A nest of bees below ground.
Through the ear, yet another underground.
A sonic figure takes shape,
A story, a fantasy, a murder mystery—
To pass the time.
A giant fell in the cornfield.
She purrs, once upon a time, there was a kingdom
And a king looking down from a cliff
To a village by the sea, a hamlet.
The surf is heard throughout the kingdom.
She prophesies a tale of seven winters.
From the crime comes seven consecutive blights.
A narrative runs and from the words grew spirits.
A king from whose figure a tale of temptation grew.

You were not true to me, the sea said.
A poor man collecting aluminum,
This poor man who lived alone with his daughters,
Alone heard the sea say the king was untrue.
The smallest seed of a crime grew under the skin,
And the thought of doom grew
Into rumor, into tumor,
Into humor, into horror.