

The Underworld of Lesser Degrees

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Hypostasis

for Raymond Hammond

Faith is anemic, propane
blue—sulphur-pox:
kelvin or rankine, scaled to a thermodynamics
of absolute zero and zero
is the adiabat $S = 0$: the lapse rate
of cold transferring rapture to hoarfrost
and ring-billed gulls.

It depurifies as clot-hours circle
in arcs of new sparks, hacked
to pieces in shifts of frenzied stupor.
Signs of send rescind and cloy
and warp—scatter, splinter, bless.
Its dead were dead before undead in edits:
hack marks of corpses alive by *sous*
rature. Mentors are the gravitons
of a *petite mort*—release oxytocin
to swap spleen for on your knees.

Pray to appease Asmodai,
zombied with fog horns in the dark, hollow
hole of salted *ousia*. Antic disposition
or ontic dispossession? Never feigned.
Always canonic. To be the tilted palm,
packing in the prick-light of prayer,
Asmodai is Iago bloated as faith's
negation. Tongues are unsigned.
The haloed flecks of posthumanity
still like shards in stasis for you,
among the elect, cleaving
to a dead man's clysmic
tip of pass.

2. Drunk by 176

One of these electrolytes—lytes, the molten lytes:
furthermore is there polymer in this drink—barkeep,
one more drink for my friend $\text{NaCl}(s) \rightarrow \text{Na}^+ + \text{Cl}^-$

solvation—I know how to pronounce it— the solute
of dipoles—who’s talking wrong for a drink, late, we
swam this pig prairie—we were arrested by the natal,

no chaser, mixing up us aren’t they—you know who
we are, National Agency for the Betterment, bet it all,
bitterment, goddamn bitter, no leaves in my lungs,

and my friend the ivil ervent, vivil mervent—barkeep,
of Written Words—there’s ammonia in his ale—Ethel,
hey Ethel, changed her name from Leah, too ethnic to,

to, two here in mid-tundra, have a light—wait I mean
ethanol, two more we ald alde hyde deis in this smoky
rat-hole, my head is a rock on the floor—sawdust, spit.

Blue Splice

for Walter Ruhlmann

Icy blue cyanosis—in my zone, a rare blue dahlia in a saucepan of herring with blue-back and the discoloration of a bruise, at loggerheads. At once, blue pills, blue pencils, *Blue Danube*

and lilac, or blue veins, blue moods, the rarefied blue disk longhorn beetle, pale compared to blue-mold in the blue light of a freezer icing a copy of *The Blue Octavo Notebooks*, a postcard of Picasso's

Les Noces de Pierrette with a list of *Der Blaue Reiter* on the back, Turkish tiles, several plastic blue jays and lapis lazuli costume jewelry. Alone, there's the blue skin of cold built as psychosis of spent

haunts, left to sequence, slated to be strung together like blue pearls: beryl, cobalt, damson, cadet and periwinkle, tinting the bluish shades of verdigris toward the final bleached blue of me.