

Three Poems

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Ars Poetica w/ Ass Whipping

Q: When did you know poetry would be your form of expression?

A: As bullies in the alley
pummeled my forehead

with death-crunch
after death-crunch,

I babbled Baudelaire
+ bore a river of knuckles,

Ophelia of the extra-
curricular beat-down.

Now, as I bitch about my bill, I spit
couplets at the electric company hit men. Same.

I lack
the voice of Tom Waits, the prose of Teju Cole,

but a bibliophile I be, or at least
a half-assed hobo with a library card.

Visitation

“The mind is its own place and in itself, can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.”

—John Milton

“FUCK John Milton!”

—Satan

Satan appeared to me as a dead man. I checked to see if his shoes fit. They did not. I walked on.

Satan appeared to me as an issue of *Cosmopolitan*. His sex tips were so hot I’ll be telling all my friends about them.

Satan appeared to me as a maggot. I pressed him flat into the earth.

Satan appeared to me as do all vicissitudes.

Satan appeared to me as a hole in the earth. Not as some monstrous maw—Satan was microscopic. A mere fleapit. I folded myself again and again. I tore away my hair, my skin, my innards. I tore away my words. I tore away my breath. Finally, when I damn near tore away the entire cosmos, I collapsed into a thing tiny enough to squeeze into Satan. I now exist inside of Satan, and oh lord, I love the improvisation.

Ain't No Bread in the Breadbox

Today has passed with no gore.
No trauma, no triage. I tried

To juke away my pathos
Via pedals (to dizzying results).

Jerry's here. Wolf bounds
Around the keyboard. Happy

Hunter, uncut chemistry, armed
With chemical balance. Bread's

A memory, but we have enough:
Sickening funk. Dry, sticky floor.

I want to thank you, but I have
Always struggled with manners.

My double-tongue stammers, oral
Janus, praying for a new year.