Birds in November



By the Same Author

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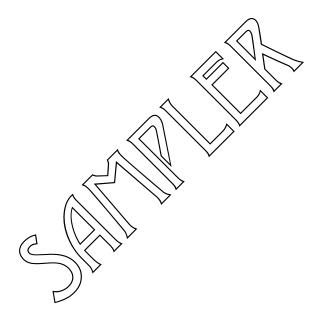
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A sea bird hovers
about two feet above
the last slip of water
that divides the whole length
of the mud-slacked estuary
reading the Morse code
of its eye movements
reflected
in the silent water
as it asks its own ghost
what death is like.

And then
directly in its wake
the water's sarface
is unzipped and abbed
as it lowers its wabbed feet
before the hall of its torso
comes to rest on its dead-self,
enabling its disparate selves
to dispermember which was
life and which was death,
floating in this Purgatory of mud.



Navigatio

Having had impure thoughts, Brendan takes to the seas in search of purity.

His fasting ears still sizzling with the static of the quayside Tannoy speakers, the soaked bunting slapping against the ground where it has fallen, the distant echo of a U-Boat's whale song as it splashes back from the chest of a currach, a tarred claw being passed from wave to wave its occupants churni their long straight ours grasping for leverage all the noise as they to Brendan to come save them.

Having been kept awake all night by the torrential rain on his tarpaulin, Brendan has a vivid memory.

In the rain-light of childhood, memory mottled as a trout, the fishermen of galaxies' spoils have come ashore, their mouths Sheila-na-gigging on the dead sea of the ice.

On the neighbouring stall, a fatty-padded pair of trotters are laid out on the silver platter of the market stall tray, one limply and slightly layered over the other, like the Christ's feet nailed and fastened to the Cross.

Having fallen overboard, Brendan glimpses Paradise.

Edenic, amongst the white underwater bonfires of the ice-floes, a Narwhal carries the frozen frond that flowered and then stalled when it first entered these icy, forgotten waters.

Having spent centuries giving birth to flying horses, it took its secret to the Northern curve of the unknown world to escape the funeral cortege of its species

Having reached the zenith of the unknown world, Brendan has a revelation.

Deemed to have been
Unholy and damned
as the pupil of the Arctic
refused to tilt
to face the sun
in the only account that
he could find of its
purported existence,
Brendan, perched in his
hides of horses,
had come to sing its lament,
but glancing at it all
through a pair of whale-bone
sunglasses, he simply
bowed his head in silence

Having deployed a hydrophone beneath the ice-fields, Brendan waits for its songs.

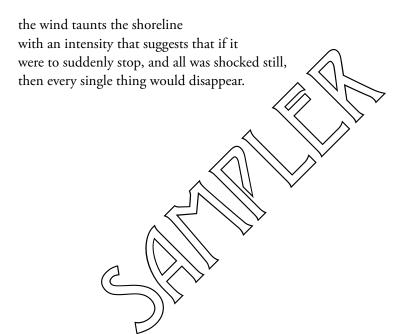
When a chrome hydrophone was left dangling like a fishing lure throughout the day-less nights, the voice of the ice-fields humming their own lament was finally heard, as something seemed to have finally broken deep within.

A Connemara pony, ballasted by the black-marble of its hooves, stood stationary for days and nights on end as it listened to the processional march of its congenveloped by the North winds carrying it south, buoyed by the passing Gulf Stream.

Bourne by beasts of burden, their booves shod with moss, the bell of the moon, no longer strapped silent in its great square oak frame, was carried down the dark trails of the coast, the snow blossoming rink in its wake as Spring moved in the wrong direction, garhering its way south.

Having been all-at-sea, Brendan returns home.

Hunger spored in the damp air leaving behind mushroom gills of village walls, the bell that once called the fish ashore having rotted away along with the thatch,



rising out of the river an exploding hull of two dozen or so seagulls disintegrates into the air

