

frozen hands

for Felicity Plunkett

frozen hands shatter before they touch

words pulled at either end (end)

become black lines bundled

in a square inch of skin

surveyed and cut from the fore

head

when they attach leeches

to your memory you know

the predicted digestion

via common sense

is not far

away

you also know you

must consume the liver

in your conscience as

nourishment to maintain

the unlikely necessity

of yourself as a personal

god

now satiated

and drowsy

you see
black mermaids
face down
in water

withawishboneshape
deucalyptyoutweeze
rthemontoyourton
guetoreincarnatet
heirtailsincisedto
newlipstonewmo
uthsadozenfolda
syourheadinflate
sadozenfoldinsid
eitsnewlanguagea
sdeadasitbeganou
tsidebutnotexclus
ivetothelastwillan
dscanttestamento
fporcelainhopesun
glazedandbreakingi
ntounlistenedvowels

now we are
not the same
as we are
now

a naked inevitable
totally at odds

completely the same
as a well-dressed fate

because is adept
at shaving the head
that is always absent
because it is always looking
for (where) it buried
its bone

(1 a 1). your ears were passed in at auction

(2 b 2). your heart heritage listed as a trinket

(3 c 3). your fingernails thankfully replaced by mirrors

clouds weigh the truth
before we see it
rain in our skulls

the thread you cannot see
in this page is blue (where)
most would say 'like a vein'
but that's such an obvious
correlation and (this) requires
more imagination than (that)
but i guess we won't know
until we cut it will we (will we)

one umbilical breath
satisfies the twin impulse

of separate lungs in different bodies

moments after death

the chiropractor and calligrapher

shake hands before ripping out our spines

elegantly ply both into an ampersand

convert it to a neon sign

installed in the front window

of our family home to be

switched off on the day we were

born to be switched on off its own

back which had our backs

on the same day we will die

the liquid we drink from the hair

line fracture in our comma

keeps us alive

so leave the best percentage

of your body inverted in the ground

exposing your crepe myrtle calves

polished to bark-hard knots

with missing toes pruned each year

as a standing invitation to spring

are we now

not the same

as we are

now

two diamonds
wholly unlaced
with their own light

as compressed beings
we sleepwalk the memory
in this land until it opens
its jaws

your orb-empty hand
pushed through the (i&f) rigours
of engineering hallucination
is shown to possess enough strength
to grasp a shrunken moon

without doubt
thinking would be
unable to water its
excuses

there is no point visiting
yourself in prison when
you're already there

but you're glad you do

don't tell it on the mountain

(12 proverbs forgotten)

forgive what you can't see to see what you can't forgive.

6

lips will carry boulders when gripped by the sun.

5

a rabbit can't be expected to count its feathers.

4

the stars in your head always the farthest stars.

3

the moon and a mother's face will fit in any pocket.

2

pick the fruit in your memory that you would leave for others.

1

(↔)

the ocean never tires of drinking those who would walk on her.

1

when dead we finally get to speak to ourselves without interruption.

2

brush the teeth of a tiger with your softest mirror.

3

weigh the same heart every day with different hands.

4

only the best archer can restring her bow with a snake.

5

the clock sleeps with a stone in its mouth.

6

don't tell it on the mountain was written for Kahl Monticone 14-15 May 2016

3 small engines
for Maria Zajkowski

3 ← our deaths
are not reported
to ourselves

2 ← we report
our deaths
to each other

1 → no report
is ever worth
its reading