



appear out of nowhere  
alabaster, two fingers shy of trampy  
to conspire with the wiles  
of a bit-coin shaman who flirts  
with chastity until he realizes  
its verbal paradox. The Silk Road  
genius is going to jail. Now  
who will defraud us with  
a patois thicker than almond paste?

Moral bankruptcy is more corrupt  
than an actual  
Chapter Nine direct result  
of the housing collapse.

Desiderata flit around me with giant wings  
like a circus troupe of super heroines  
moths that ate their way through the pocket

of a suit coat where I kept my integrity  
in case I ran out of coins to throw  
at the meter maid that dupe of democracy  
who was "just following orders."

Someone gamed  
the global banking system  
to cleanse the landscape  
of overvalued real estate worse  
than if Florida had actually sunk  
into the Atlantic as so many predicted.

Panther, stork and manatee  
stalk the marsh, waiting on foreclosure  
to do what ecologists couldn't.

Surgically enhanced harpies  
in a collective taxi straight from South Beach  
incarnate the double entendre  
of the word *bust*, and set up an antistrophic

wail, an unwitting paean to catastrophe  
because the nervous staccato clicks  
of their high heels happen to sound  
like a syncopated flamenco gay  
as the city council of Fort Lauderdale.

O electronic blips  
sparks without a star spray without  
an ocean, whistle without steam  
please light up the sky  
dispersed thunderheads from Jupiter  
to Cuba.

Like a bereft octopus  
at a pool party with a naked chick  
on each arm pretending to be  
love children of Paul Volcker  
and Donna Shalala  
this downturn casting off  
its stale metaphor  
can go all directions at once  
without a séance without regret.



then I read to her from Keats's *Endymion*  
of a beauty under-lit with whispers of demons  
an endless fountain of immortal drink  
pouring unto us from heaven's brink

and we ate Doritos straight from the bag  
and our minds turned to blank verse  
and she said darling what's with that one teddy  
I have lots of sexy undergarments just ask

then I awoke from the fever dream and lay shivering  
while God snuffed comets between finger and thumb  
yet I was grateful for celestial points of reference  
and the song of the lark as it heralded morn

love is some wicked shit      just ask Darwin  
    rhymes with darlin'  
        about those finches  
    with insensibly graduated beaks

    we become what we must  
    moving to San Francisco      to follow  
the waitress we banged      thinking  
    it was gonna be a one-off

next you know    you chuck that law degree  
    and you're a courier  
taking orders from the man      grinding a bike  
    up a hill    suffering aortic strain  
    literally she's breaking your heart  
    what's left of it

but then there are those happy-hour chalupas  
    and watching the tallow re-harden  
        on the Chianti bottle

such sweet death within the breath of life  
    du dieu aveuglé as they say in French 301

as each cliché breaks apart  
like a coconut smashed  
by a standard size hammer  
it reveals the tender meat  
and fresh clear milk  
beneath the rough surface  
the gift of irony  
cloaked in sincerity  
or vice versa

oh flatfooted lyric  
with fallen arches  
thou hast trod  
the earth in steps  
measured and  
unerring yet  
remember  
to stand on tiptoe  
once in a while

I got sunshine on a cloudy day  
when it's cold outside I got the month of May

alternatively

oh oh here she comes  
watch out boy she'll chew you up  
she's a man-eater

then again

she took me to her elfin grot  
and there she wept and sigh'd full sore  
and there I shut her wild wild eyes  
with kisses four

whatever the case I'm fucked

those wild eyes  
should have been the tip-off

on a trestle  
in the thistles  
I lay me down  
in earshot  
of the train's whistle  
like Tristan  
when he drank the potion  
that started all  
that huggin' and kissin'  
then the poison  
'cause in the great love stories  
it always ends with poison

let me smell      the resin of my Isolde  
                         no matter how many times  
                         she's been bought      or sold

her perfume hints at primordial ooze  
                         and a shot of Jameson's  
                         her favorite booze

let the cold stars wheel  
                         like a centrifuge  
                         flinging off liquid  
                         in a great deluge

let the harps play sharp  
                         and the trumpets hit b flat  
                         while I handle her sap  
   like a sap  
                         in a trap