

Bones & Skillets pt. 1

(James Autio & Susan Koefod)

This slender edge of
winter shimmers on the
lake in bare willows and
the slightest layer of ice.

*Mist eases from the cold face. Cattail stems
cling to balsam beetle parsley cup
phosphorous nuggets lining the pond, cold,
thick quick as a roux. Iridescent brush erasures
kernal nub of silken tuft.*

The past season's warm breath
steams a gap for the flock
to tip and gobble through;
one long last kiss of summer's cooling lip.

*Leaves fog upon the glass, the cold
outdoor gaping gravitas in frozen soil.
I'd plough myself into you, ghost to another,
close enough to feel the heat
of your lips and blush.*

Fierce and fevered, so many days
lost in the burning and now they lie
forgotten in dense thickets
of downed rushes.

*Bulrush and creambush, woven
to form a float with pillow of cattail fluff.
Lay you and kiss your down, follow
your trail to dense upon the thicket.*

The blind seek a familiar fold, each
hand a nomad hunting for its lost
partner, every touch haunting the nameless
landmarks, every voice whispering incoherent
promises in the strange new place.

*French the sun, clam and cedar bough.
Float like a ghost, creak and fold
over the lower forty. Twirl twine,
a braided jute, hoof and heel boot
to the fine titter of the plucked lute.*

Now the world is down to its bones,
rattle and chilled through to the marrow,
god breathes blueprints of frost
and it's you, yet not you, silhouetted
or laced against the evening sky.

*Simmered game, meat pulled from the bone,
chilled prosecco in a fluted crystal. God
spider crawls out through the plaster crack,
turns a lurid eye on young men, shipwrecks
and helicopters.*

Lips to the window, cold shapes its
absence on the pane; a rigid yet transparent
wall that even sand and salt can't change;
bereft forms envelop Orion's sky.

*Wind
blitz between meaty thighs, twisting tights
and rising the denim cleft. You and me
and ennui. We're now numb to stalk sound.*

The silence drifts, it slings fists that undo
every memory of you, makes cold and dumb
my tongue and the whole old song of you
skips wrong on my player, and so out of tune.

*Draft ditch dodge and cute youth époque
made balsam to man in gabardine. Spoons
red velvet thickens the silken tuft,
the kernel hub at the farthest edge.*

A half-hearted wind passes by these dry bones,
the mourners are weeping elsewhere.

*Brittle mantle, the harness clock. Put
the complex skillet.*