

ROOK



SHEARWATER



## ON THE DEATH OF THE WATERS

From the wreck of the ark  
to the fading day of our star  
the light races  
the light drags  
the moon rises  
the moon sags  
over the rolling waves  
and your hands on the balcony  
as a spine  
pricks the world  
and the shudder, deep, is unheard,  
but you feel it  
oh my god  
as the spindle  
flies apart  
turn your bow to the biggest wave,  
but your angel's on holiday  
and that wave rises slowly  
and breaks-

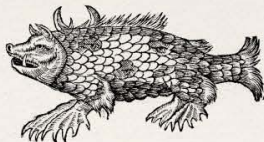


## ROOKS

When the rooks were laid in piles by the sides of the road,  
they were crashing into the aerials, hanging from  
the laundry lines.  
And, gathered in a field, they were burned in a feathering pyre,  
with their cold, black eyes.

When the swallows fell from the eaves, and the gulls  
from the spires,  
the starlings, in millions, would feed on the ground  
where they lie.  
And the ambulance men said "there's nowhere to  
flee for your life,"  
so we stay inside,  
and we'll sleep until the world of man is paralyzed.

Oh, the falconer awakes to the sound of the bells.  
Overhead, and northbound,  
they are leaving his life.  
And each empty cage just rings in his heart  
like a bell,  
underneath these cold stars,  
in their trembling light.  
And he cries, "Amen, let their kingdom come tonight.  
Let this dream be realized."



## LEVIATHAN, BOUND

The hollow light  
is still on the fields  
where the winter has warmed  
and the snows have drained away  
and the hunter's cry  
is still on the air  
as the bullet flies home  
but the heart that's pierced with it  
still is racing  
still is racing, alone

The silver shoals  
of the light in the deep  
brush the glittering skein  
where the great, dark body writhes  
and the trembling jaw  
the unfathoming sounds  
of leviathan, bound  
as his heart, though weakening  
still is racing  
still is racing, alone

You are racing  
you are racing  
alone



## HOME LIFE

When you were a child,  
you were a tomboy  
and your mother laughed at the serious way  
that you looked at her  
and from your window at night  
there were the stars' little fires  
and the armory lights

You were tracing the lines of a globe with your fingers:  
cool rivers, white wastes  
desert shores, and the forests green  
and a limitless life  
in the breath of each tide  
and each bright mountain, rising

But now the boys are away,  
and such kicks they are having;  
slashing away at the forest walls, with their bitter knives.  
Sparks bloom in their eyes,  
and they never look tired.  
Will they never look tired?

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On cliffs that tower from the rising seas  
 their bonfires glow  
 where a tiger lies  
 and, cleaning their weapons, they laugh at his useless  
 claws, and all:  
 it is a beautiful night  
 to be born to this life  
 and grind his every bone to powder!

Do you remember  
 Do you remember

She carried you down to the edge of the dark river  
 and said:

Though the water is wide,  
 you will never grow tired  
 You are bound to your life  
 like a mother and child.  
 You will cling to your life  
 like a suckering vine  
 and like the rest of our kind  
 you will increase  
 and increase  
 past all of our dreaming

Horse without rider  
 lungs without breathing  
 day without light  
 song without singing  
 a song-

## LOST BOYS

My blistered feet  
 turn bloody  
 so I take to the air,  
 and I am everywhere, I am starlight  
 I am moonlight  
 over burning fields and bodies.  
 I stay close to the ground,  
 slipping miles from the arches and arc-lights,  
 into the warm night...

My winged children, all  
 will fly over the mountain wall  
 to the lid of the sky,  
 and slice its belly full wide with their warm knives  
 -not the pin-pricks of starlight-  
 but to bathe in the bright blood  
 of the world above



## CENTURY EYES

You were not the first to arrive,  
 and will not be the last to survive,  
 as the pigs and the oxen we bound to the wheel  
 tear it off, tear it off!

You are not the last of this house,  
 or the first to go over the side.  
 Remember the wrecks of those elegant ships-  
 "Turn it off!  
 Turn it off!"  
 No.

Look with century eyes till they make you go blind.

Galloping into the void,  
 you are rolling your eyes like a horse,  
 all to turn from the beam, from the eye of that screen.  
 "Turn it off! Turn it off!"  
 With our backs to the arch and the wreck of our kind,  
 we will stare straight ahead for the rest of our lives!"



## I WAS A CLOUD

I was a cloud,  
 I was a cloud looking down;  
 Your frantic waving did not provoke feeling.

But this little one-  
 Steady your wings, now, sparrow  
 I remembered him-  
 Steady your course, now, sparrow

And in the dark,  
 from the sea marbled and moon-blue  
 into the burning eye of the sun  
 without feeling

My end was imminent-  
 Steady your course now, sparrow  
 but I remembered him-  
 Fear for your home life, sparrow  
 Fear for your home life

## SOUTH COL

The lunar landscapes of the Hindu Kush,  
as if borrowed from prehistory,  
seem still to wait for the arrival of the animal world,  
or perhaps to announce its end.

- Rene Dollot



## THE SNOW LEOPARD

“The way is to climb  
the way is to lie still  
and let the moon do its work on your body

and then to rise  
through forests and oceans of lives  
and through the way of the black rocks, splitting, wide,  
and flow  
ten thousand miles.”

Well, I've had enough,  
wasting my body, my life  
I'll come away, come away from the shallows

But can this sullen child,  
as bound as the ox that I ride,  
climb to the heart of the white wind, singing, high,  
and blow  
through my frozen eyes?



## THE HUNTER'S STAR

The hunter's star  
burned brighter than all of the suns in the firmament  
as through the sky he raged  
with his hook and blade  
and the world, unmade

As forests bow  
and blacken the air  
as the canopies burn away,  
and the arc-lights fade  
and no gull remains  
to repeat its call-

Only now would you long  
for the ancient boughs,  
the moon, overlapping the long white clouds  
and the home life of a love  
who will never return again

No child at all  
would wake to the light  
of a sun that is reddening  
like a robin's breast,  
and no lioness  
boards a last, great hull  
on the waves  
that close  
on a world  
that will never return again  
and no sound escapes  
from the night to come



- BONUS TRACK -

## NORTH COL

Each stray reminder of your home life  
is hung on the wind that pulls away from you  
as the walls of the mountains in the cold light  
glow red, in an echo of the flares on high  
in the vault of the night

In the frost on the branches and the clotheslines  
a fierce little wren was singing loud, and high  
while his eyes, insisting on their own life,  
gave legs to the lie  
that there was world, and time  
to grow old in its light

In the last of the embers of the twilight,  
the gunmetal air has come alive with birds.  
They burst from the clouds above the snow line  
and bloom in the ashes of the old, black sky,  
and go back to the night

