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# Births of Images and Deaths

Tom Raworth

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BIRTHS OF IMAGES AND DEATHS

*for Stan and Jane Brakhage*

he turns  
it is the leather skullcap  
on his head

i am lost  
they turn through all connections  
of light

in rhythm  
now they walk behind the smoke  
and turn

they are acting  
it appears  
the pit depends on her hair's weight

gold into feathers  
the smoke is them  
the eyes of doors open

it is clay  
the city on a table  
the smoke thinks

now she is perfectly lit  
stone is a hummingbird  
poised feeding at the image

and there is more  
always on the way  
a simple change like hair's death

lips under a nose  
under eyes teeth  
behind lips and all in the spectrum of grey

where is the lost color?  
wandering in the machine  
strange boils, scurvy, on the machines

but chosen  
the last chord  
you must leave now

*Tom Raworth*

ONCE OR TWICE

No country would have me

Where I was born slips my mind  
Uncontrollably

Once or twice  
Climbing unfamiliar steps  
I've discovered a lost bend or sock

The host's wife wears  
A heavenly smile  
In an embroidered frock

So like a good child  
I confess my perplexities

Of the two standing at the window  
One speaks of his regular habits  
In a remote world

Soon he'll hurry  
Like a ghost at daybreak  
To his rented room

For the first time  
You notice me