

1976

Knife

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horse bites and kicks at mangy clouds a hot visor descends deeper and deeper over eyes our fingers on the helve harden and the axe's bliss becomes so palpable that it fills us like darkness a grotto infests our whole being changes into an iron echo drumming inside heads juggled by a storm

o sweetest of heroisms but for you the hand would decay and the horse plunge into its own hooves

o most blessed of blows but for you neither our skulls nor those of others would have purpose or meaning

we swing the axe into the white stem of day forcing itself through us and putting forth its first quasi-leaves the stem is too delicate to bleed but we will wait for a hundred fierce nights its blood since it is quite possible that we have been hoodwinked here

The Rifle

I speak directly
from the heart
to the brain

if I jam I smash
teeth by order

I've got a head
for knowing the hand

my sight is to the rear
yet I can see ahead

Knife

precise sovereign beauty of the knife's back edge
cool skeleton upon which magnetic flowers climb

backbone of bloody encounters dinner's back peelings'
tendon of blueness mechanical zone of mundane tasks
of the possibility of piercing the weightless cataract
which grows between our kitchens and latin america
constellations of rams of beefsteaks clusters of beautiful souls
disguised in the forms of tomatoes
rigorous image of hunger congealed rivulet of tears
eye spitlike stretching to a slice of bread
tongue of one word only babeldom of steel
promise of a dead avalanche ripping the earth's breast

let us stubbornly smile to it for if it left us
in our halved kitchens we should drift away
beyond the flashing stillness of the cutting edge
in a yellow field under a yellow sun
robbed of our polarity which lies in the basket among the potatoes
we should run from blade to blade of grass from god to god
forgetting what to remind ourselves of and what meaningful questions to ask

Translated by Jan Darowski

SHIRAIISHI KAZUKO / JAPAN

Phallus

for Sumiko's birthday

God exists, though he doesn't exist
And, humorous as he is,
He resembles a certain kind of man.

This time,
Bringing a gigantic phallus,
He joined the picnic
Above the horizon of my dream.
By the way
I regret