

THE WEDDING

1.

With a hammer & iron bar
break your front teeth

it is easy to do:
rock each tooth with your tongue

spit long strings of blood
into sand &

bravely breast the pain: now
it is your bride, touch

her in all her secret places
wear her smell on your middle finger

as a ring, then
whittle the palate of a wolf
into a wedge

& lift your upper lip
& push it in the aching gap

between the canines
(you are almost complete) Drag
the wolf's raw scalp

over your forehead
your eyes behind his eyes

crouch down & see
the wide fields fall away

to nothing—each crow a flutter
in a grave,
each gelded beast a darkness—

then draw that vacuum
in your lungs & wait

for the sun to dry
the leather shirt

stitched across your shoulders,
crushing all that is human

from you
in a howl.

2.

A hornet trapped inside
a bowl
is a compass, man
a microcosm:

Follow it through THE GREAT AMERICAN desert:

There in the shade
of a cactus find
the pain doll
with lodestone hands,
tektite tresses,
womb ablaze
with inexplicable lights.

Together
sell one blood bead
in the marketplace
of a sleepy little emptiness.

Share your smell,
your endoplasmic kick. Lick
the fake patina of age
from her 4 A.M. luster. Sew
a mouse skin around her gut
so she gives birth to ghost puppies.

It is that limping-leg moment
you have always been looking for
when the bullet
sparks among the lifeless spaces
making the walls echo, the dirt dance.

Texas Rangers
yank the greasy
steel from her hands,

stack it around them
with the concentration
of logicians
building a syllogism
for a hornet to hide in.

It is then the real wedding starts:

you prop yourself upright
on two stilettos

your skin leaps upward
like a bombed horizon

muscles loosen
—polymers from bones—
& drip stalactites
in the desert air

jaws
drop in something
less than astonishment

as all things advance towards you
on empty feet

(drizzle of sand
from the brainbox)

a natural progression
on toenails lacquered black

NOTE: The breaking of the front teeth and the insertion of a wolf's palate for Shamanic purposes is suggested by artifacts found in Wright and Ayers Mounds in Kentucky. At one site, the skeleton was encased in the remains of a leather shirt indicating that the subject met his end by a kind of ritual sacrifice that involved the stitching of a wet leather garment upon his body. When the garment dried in the sun, it shrank to smother the wearer. Whether these "wolf-men" were widely found in Adena societies is not known.