

## HC SVNT DRACONES

I've eaten whole bridges before; chewed them  
slowly to splinters that caught between my teeth,  
molars grinding dry, mechanical  
and mindless of sparks.

To what end? I cross them off the map  
in pencil: Here Were Bridges, and Here Will  
Bridges Be Again, grown cheerfully back  
come spring's first rain,

intractable toadstools, weeds of damned connection,  
traversal's promise reborn—and me stuffed to  
gullet with matchwood futility, its weight  
pinning me still.

Tonight I drowned inertia in shots of pitch  
that burned going down, stress-ate sulfur  
in hollow frustration despite this permanent  
loss of appetite,

and felt them both touch to tinder past. I  
set out for the last bridge southward, stomach  
bursting with the keen flammability  
of dire intent,

and crossed while spitting up lit matches,  
hungry only for embers and salted earth;  
crossed again while sweating rivers of naphtha,  
stomping madly

in salamander boots with heels of flint,  
aiming for nail-heads, in desperate search  
of permanence—but found only wood  
too wet to catch.

Denied the salvation of severance, I burned  
the map, a final surrender to heartburn and blisters.  
I haunt this bridge now, lost and oddly uncertain  
of which side you live on.