The Dalliance of the Flies at a Waffle House in Virginia
(after a theme by Whitman, in the style of Ginsberg)

Above the honeycombed batter, the flies
in end of July heat—
between sips of water and coffee, I am humbled in Virginia
by old glory of amative burst tumble, the bliss that distracts
also from side order hash brown patty.

Two black stars in coital galaxy, thermal pressure before
ebullient swell of collapsing mass. The flies in rapt ignorance
of gravity plunge toward another earth below.

Where I sit, diner booth shade forgiving the unsanitary spectacle,
union of germs, unshaven limbs.

Do the waitresses ever pause to witness the luscious iridescence
comingling, the stellar birth that brings the pangs
of failed equilibrium, of stellar death . . .?

As I dwell and wait for the check, one lover drifts from the other
lands orgy warm upon the cracked tabletop, rubbing forelegs
back to ugly—

Still life waffle house with dalliance of flies.

I gather my laptop bag and sunglasses, head to the airport,
abandoning the Seven Cities.
Patrons behind me unaware that from their forks they chew
the unknowable sex splash of each other,

the white noise of nearly silent wings
that carry from zenith to zenith

our microcosmic dust.

Song of a third eye that witnesses the beautiful and final

She was otherwise beautiful, a demigoddess, the pierce-
faced college girl, with labret smile and studded septum.
In the dim light of bar, I saw her hand wrap
around a pint glass—there
lone abscess on her knuckle,
a displaced *tilaka* like an atrophied eye.

A requiem hole, injected with Siva, sanguine-
crust of smattered poppy;
the hypodermic loop that bore small-
town crater into her, over
and
over,
made the clitoris and *annuit coeptis* useless;
the ellipsis of darkly sore
staring pustule—
rudely I fixed
on this black dilation.

On the ride home, I thought long on this girl's addiction
and wondered when the veins of time might also collapse
on other beautiful here in Indiana.
And the moon, like a third eye, at once settled its enormous
vermillion gaze on me.
The end will be like this, I thought,
when everyone forfeits, shuffles in wan assemblage:
eyes closed against
the one, lidless in terrible blossom,
what rushes sudden
from a bloody circle of light.

MANDATORY ENDORSEMENT
[OF A] NUCLEAR CLAUSE

The Highly Enriched Iteration
of a 1958 Mortgager's Policy Rider

The word "fire" [. . .] attached hereto [. . .]
does not embrace nuclear reaction
or nuclear radiation or radioactive
contamination, [. . .] controlled—uncontrolled;

and loss by nuclear reaction
or nuclear radiation or radioactive
contamination is not [. . .] insured against;

[. . .] whether such loss be direct—indirect,
proximate or remote, [. . .]
aggravated by any other peril.

Direct loss [. . .] from nuclear reaction
or nuclear radiation or radioactive
contamination is, [. . .] however,
subject to the foregoing.

Do not ask why we are hated

At the end of Ramadan, the North Shore of Boston,
at the intersection behind a Ford-F150, the rear plate
advertises 617-666-…. I hear the word *Dabbah*.

The irony of it—Washington Street, Pandemonium
and the great beast of hubris idling in a phone number.
On the passenger side, a gas station, here more

Washington by the gallon, rubble pulled from our wallets
to buy paper cups of coffee. Just the other morning
a sinner scratched off one thousand Washingtons here,

performed his Pledge of Allegiance in front of the attendant.
He waved the perforated stub like an amputated limb,
a minuteman, the whites of his eyes, muzzle flashes of sclera

there was his roadside bomb of Hallelujah. Christ, how he
could utter he would rather have claimed 500 dollars
to forego the ride to the lottery office.

If only someone were to wrap him in stars and stripes
and pour unleaded Washington—87, 89, 93—brand the word
SUPER all over his body, give him 666 reasons to cry.

Over coffee, Revelation

While I scry the cup of black water,
old prophet calls forth an ocean of torsos,
the Pacific theater he conjures, familiar
heaving with the liquid of men, eidolons
and red brine wrung from his uniform.

This afternoon unforeseen, he
and I so different in Danbury now
that we would slay one another
war-mouthed at the kitchen table,
saliva running down his chin.

And my Grandfather's eyes
like Mount Suribachi at midnight.

Before me a container of sugar, holy
temple that keeps earthfallen stars,
from where God will spoon deathshake
grinding sweetness out of human dreams
this white sand locked behind glass veil.

Over coffee, the down-pour predicted
beyond September seven years ago
what will be a more terrible bellowing,
of seven trumpets, seven bowls,
tomorrow, the seven cities.

Alas, the deafening silence before silence
when all is sackcloth smoldering all
the coffee like wormwood.