

from *Quarantyne*

Now, then, the gutted  
plantation houses, howl-jawed  
on vine-coiled femurs.

Now, then, netherscape  
of bush-scaled rust, Firestone  
reefs over-rotting.

How that empire  
slaved below façades of ruin  
like it was nothing—

how I took my seat  
inside a grief, was housed in it,  
grew accustomed to

my broke frontispiece  
rigged to suggest all items  
behind it were smashed

after some bygone  
century of smooth decadence  
so romanticized

I must be a mood  
between a once and future  
kingdom. I forgive

the South the Lazarine  
legend in its chest. I too  
prayed for a rapture.

Our phallic brutalities.  
Our beat breast. Fatigue of each  
hour more phobic. More fees.

Our mores. Our monitored lives.  
O, wherefore art we fable.  
Are we feeling like ourselves.

Our salves. Our fundamental  
awe, or a poplar in gales.  
Our grimace a winsome wall.

Our grins over white stone walls.  
O'er ores we buzzed in circles.  
Ah, were we continual

♦ ♦ ♦

and, while what we had  
to live for lessened,  
still we had the will

to mill around and  
make what gratified  
us to term "our world"

plum impossible  
and mowed like yellowed  
hellbreeze across it

by the ten millions  
milking our bodies,  
sifting for children.

And then there were none  
of us who could remember  
how to hold a gun,

as though it were not  
the last thing we'd warm with our  
very wanting hands.

When a man came to  
love me I saw him simply  
as a detainee

and then less simply  
came the visions of small rooms  
where I kill myself

with missing him: yes,  
these were both premonitions  
and blood memories.

When there was no man  
to love me or learn me his gun  
the prisons ran

right into the schools  
as they had the factories  
and what were still called

homes, which by then were  
anywhere the lonesome longed  
for stronger doses.