

Dishwasher

All the hot froth gone into tepid,
the lukewarm associations, nothing
of cohesion, nothing which sticks....
Just substancelessness less than scum.
Just depthlessness, less than air even

When it's passion I want, either the coldest
of gusts or most fiery. Either the guts
or the spirit real & raw as 2 fingers

right on the vein
as a wilderness found teeming in a city
gym, in the starkness of a desert,
in the ocean bloom of azaleas &
the Chinese pattern of their pot.

Tempest within. Tempest.
Don't tell me to file edges.
Don't tell me to whitewash.

Put your hand in this tub
& pull out a rabbit breathing
& pull out a babe who knows of napalm,
& pull out a prophet still believing fiercely...

Soap streaks the arm, water glistening slick
'til even the beads are jewels of heat
for a crown where one lives
in the baptismal of war paint,
in the redeeming meat of experience.