

Eating the Leftovers

For Dr. Inge Kemp Genefke

Never candy coated, more nettles
or tumbleweed spokes gnawed center first,
then off to the fringes. Hard to swallow?
Dream of fruit, apple blossoms, branches
fanned by the mind's windmill. Here, here
they are, images drifting between cloud
clusters as though glimpsed from a plane.

Distance is required, the mists of sedation
for, without, memory's too persistent, the pain,
too much. How scientific torture haunts the inflicted:
to have witnessed soldiers molest relatives or, to your
crotch, a lobster's pinchers. The choice is yours'.
Which will you...

No. No. They're only joking. It's just hallucinogens,
Deprivation's D.T.s: a trough of water brought every
other day, excrement-smear. How...after that...

can dashed faith, belief blocked, relearn trust like a guitar
player who's had his knuckles taped for so long they can't

feel a thing?

Chords well up, rain water vibrations, waves, grueling, the
waves...and, on each, a face paddling to split with the ripples
as though timed...What?...timed by the roll of bells...

Pavlov's paradox, a counterpart to conditioning survivors must digest daily,
all *Nobodys*, simply citizens forced into heroism by withstanding
what no soul ever should. How they'd rather have been left

as peasants or office workers, mere cogs content with gruel, why not?
Yet cruelty too is generous stew. These are its leftovers:

a crust of bread savored in a dream of normalcy, sunlight, wings
of flight for the woman suddenly herself again after years of being free

of the giant's gold harp.