

Xenomancy
Shannon Hozinec

Come, spit a mouthful of ink onto the ground
and I will pretend to read your future. All yolks
within us rise as we skirt the edge of the glen,
hidden and hardened by the sun's cowardly heat.

Post-coital, all we are is a symmetry of spines.

By the light of wane and creeping dusk, we wander,
howling as we invent new methods of divination
using the dried and used-up parts
of our bodies that still cling to us.

Without those, we are lost:
our voices rend, rend, rend—
imperfect oscillations,

and our prey, gunned and gutted—the hemmingbrawn descends—
we ready our arrows and take aim—

the light makes the men among us teethe bellicoso
gnash and fit, fish and firearm alike.

We move beyond undue speaking,
tracing our roots to the head of the snake:

our hissing rattles the loose bark;
we slough and become what we have discarded—

—foul, pull, and release.

In death, all we are is a symmetry of spines.
Parallel and unyielding, we rise.