

Scott Sweeney

This Storm is a State (its Beauty, Eternal)

-- *after Sands*

Ferns in the gutter were just beginning to brown—a Death befriended,

as round bodies bloated and gathered for easy rolling to a greater unsafety.

The rain swoons itself down as a blushing, never-was virgin.

Oh, come, minty-fresh, cherished destruction and spin us toward the tornadic darkscape of your mangled appropriations.

Say *put it in*.
Say *do it inside me*.

The Dinge

Every crevice of my dry hands
is black with the meat of chlorine-disintegrated gaskets
from inside our toilet tank—
disassembled, upended—
the greened screw bolts removed,
exposing more stains
like tree rings—a history written in iron deposits
and arsenic at less than five parts per billion—
like me at eleven, crashing my X-wing fighter
into a different toilet with my mother screaming
for me not to do that *again*—
perhaps a Dagobah where I'd gone
to face my fears
in a swamp-borne alcove of perpetually wet trees—
some distant cousins of the majestic cypress.

 This is the test, my path to the Dark Side.
I'm James Earl Jones with a vocoder,
my black hands extended toward your throat.
You rebellious porcelain, I will gut you
and fill you with water and force and purpose.

We Touch like Cripples

With arms still working, moving freely, we
crawl to the corner of the room to eat
on a table with legs as useless as ours.

The food is good, so we smash it
into our faces and regret
not having savored it longer. More

cranberry sauce, marmite, and rice I offer, but
you say, "The dark is melting," push away the plate
and clasp your hands together as if in prayer. I would

ask you what this means, but
"cold indigo and black-gap maggots"
are the best that I could

get from you, staring
into the table.
"Who has dismembered us?"

you say.