

The Anorectic's Plea

The food you set in front of me
tempts me but I cannot touch it now.
I know for you it is delicious,
it is sustenance, a way of life.
It has no taste for me.

Let me crawl into a cave, and ache
alone, where your compassion
cannot reach me, where I will not hear
your warnings. Flesh rubbed raw
and lighted into flames;
nerves like thin steel wires stretched and wound
around each bone, waiting
for the snap.

You say to me
I do not know what I am doing, but
I know so well, so well, and here's the joke:
I cannot stop it now because
my mind, my mind, my mind
will not stop thinking

won't stop caressing
the slender woman
who slips between the molecules of air
almost disappearing, delicate,
veined, bony like a leaf
and empty,
impossible to touch
without breaking,
unnoticed when she touches;
but Christ, how frightening her concave face
and skin stretched over bones.

All I want to do is never eat,
to run on darkened streets until I lose myself, am lost,
to shrink away each day
until my flesh is gone
and precious bones lie crumbling into powder.

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