

THE SUNSET FLESH OF SIMPLE LAMENT

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A gun to lean an elbow on.
A bayonet to pick a lock.
Were we not chained to Amiens
we'd track a purple wilderness
as rhododendron root of little
interest to birds of pray.
In surrounding the sun,
the stripping of blossoms has begun.
The blossom is aware of its own death,
observed only by oriental
warriors falling from its life.
The sunset flesh of simple lament.
Margins run heavy with water.
The rivers they make of roads
we tramp in picaresque dissolution,
of saxifrage that pinkens winter
and withers leaves the size of elephant
ears. The aviary constituents are nosing
dirt for convicts that could
wear a link to iron. Their kingdom
for some soap. But no, the leg iron
bleeds a little convict and Indian
soapberries survive the winter.
Soap is their last defence against
birds that will enter winter having
only to walk among the whitened globes.
But only when starving and feathers
are rotten cloth will they eat what tastes
so clean it is droppings from heaven.