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All Sorts, Amtrak Dawn: Seattle to Vancouver, BC

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Joseph Hutchison

Mortality

Hard to imagine yourself
in the ground . . . a shabby mess
of broken spindles, the loom
that cranked out the cloth of you
smashed, scattered – and somewhere
the ego sputtering its rage.
You can hear it now – railing
like a mill-town dowager
piqued, let's say, by the country's
fraying moral fiber. Her spotted fist
gavels the tea table . . . making
the bone teacups clatter.
"Oh! The very idea!"

Carol Willette Bachofner

All Sorts

In the up find branches of birds
above them fields of rain
and far far over all that
a marbled headstone of planets

Under the middle is down
fur fantasies and buzzing
and all sorts of blowing stalks
dizzy intercourse of bumble bees

Past the under see cracks
 in the cracks used lightning
 melted down hailstones and bones
 beneath, beneath our roots

Now flip the universe, the jar,
 and watch the bones and bees
 clatter down the tulip stems
 mixing like lumpy batter with stars

Amtrak Dawn: Seattle to Vancouver, BC

We skirmish the surface of the Puget Sound
 held close on the right by a nubbled edge
 of landscape, pressing in to water's lip.
 Liquid sky, cloudy bay consent to meet.
 Splendid grey gulls hurdle the mass of spruce,
 the island shoulders. Osprey stoop to fish
 the breakfast soup, dip in to hook sockeye,
 compete for their morning meal with a pod
 of Orcas hunting there in mottled pairs.
 Behind my swift clacking window, hungry
 enough for some delicate taste, with no
 hook or beak to get my breakfast, no fire,
 rack or spit for cooking, I sit off shore
 with dull, cold sausage sandwiches to eat
 and train tea for the drinking as we pass
 the fishing ground beneath a strait of stars.