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Beautiful Lesson of the I

Frances Brent

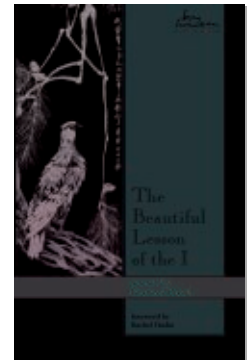
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PLATE AND INSECT

Hunger, a fume in the rice-colored nothingness
surrounds the empty dish
and an insect, the shape of a watermelon seed,
and then evaporates.

My serenity
rests in the invisible scale pan, then moves freely
between the immaculate ringed plate
and back to the small, black smear with flecks
for legs, between an oval
drawn on paper and the dark puddle
of little Buddha in tails,
a cockroach and its porcelain nest,
clump of brush hair
and the imagined heaviness of the Chinaman's
unreal bowl, God's mouth
and potbellied air.

I live between two things,
the stoniness of the open and the other
filled with gold,
fullness
and a pebble.
I disperse into a cloud of raw milk.