Borgo Of The Holy Ghost

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THE BROKEN GULL

First, disregard the shattered plume, the edge
Of fence unwinding where the carcass lies,
The feathers darkly plastered, stiff, at odd,
Unpleasant angles splaying from the bones.
Ignore all but the pearly eye transfixed
In blank perception of the unfurled flame.

It is as if some other world, aflare
With useless muscle touches us, edge on edge,
And, purple-gray, its signature has fixed
Itself upon this beach where we wanted to lie
And feel the sunlight loosening our bones
Into the texture of sand. It seems odd,

We never plan to be undone by odds
So entirely weighed against us, as if flame
Could not burn, and marrow in the bones
Not gradually thin till, standing on an edge,
Hollow and squinting, we see the cards that lie
Face up, and realize the game was fixed.

Or when a landscape seems fixed
So that the intrusion of some odd
Detail washing ashore to lie
In front of us is like a house in flames
On an otherwise peaceful block, we age
A little in the heart and in the bones.

And what seemed, once, more than clattering bones,
A sense of ourselves in which the soul was fixed,
Fades visibly with some offhand remark, the edge
Of which can cut us to the core at odd,
Unpleasant angles; whatever tiny, tended flame
Aroused us to this beach has flickered; we lie
Somewhat further apart than how we’d lie
As children with children’s springing bones,
Our minds unfluttered like a holy flame
On which we’d dote with wonder, fearless, transfixed,
Never completely perceiving our odd
And precarious perch: toes just over the edge.

Now, consider your own bones eaten by time’s flame.
Think of them as odd the way they lie
At the edge of your life: not quite broken, not fixed.