

In An American Country

Cam Scott

i.

Shooting dirty pool, shirt dipped in soup,
The market flounders
Door to motel door, enumerating numbheads
Nodding out for spite. What is a vote?
As sure as birth starts at conception (Melrose),
Same way opposites attract (New Munich).
You're naked, put some graphics on.
Stuck up nob creek without a puddle: two
Nude beaches on ten thousand lakes
Were crowded with the option of escape
Yet no one waded in to help, not one soul,
As we passed the coastline in a cup—
The first sip tasted like a refill.
West is left and North is up.

ii.

He drove, her taurine animus,
His mermaid bride across
The stateline for a prize

The highway gleamed
A gilded taint
Its fur unfurled for miles

The bit rate hobbling poplar
Musty sinusoid interior
He stood and stirred before

Head of a herm, harmed marble
Stooped arranging hair
Into an antique sign—

And we've all seen the signs
"Do Not Touch Works of Art"
To me you are one such

Collapsing form and function
Bench and basket
Rain or shine

How you treat your ovoidal orb
As though light were a paste:
Slather it over yourself

What started as road rash—
Clotted raspberry—
Then spread

iii.

Across America in homes
Of creeping obsolescence gloved
Ushabtis tend to bedsores with
Uncompensated patience

(If you've met someone who keeps reptiles,
Then you know the smell I mean)

Get stuffed

iv.

His accomplice an insect at breakfast,
Pectin spread, ingredients inspected;
A runny salve for scorched bread
Bland and stackable like days—

A fine mess this inseminating glaze.
Light treads across the surface
Which terrain tacks to the touch
And bucks back underfoot. The body

Is such feeble matter, feeling sponge for
Water, porous when you try to purge
What you'd intended to ignore.

To empty you upend the gorge. It's better
To content yourself with form—
(You winged thing, growing as a worm)

v.

A 'whooshing' sound came over him
(And then, and then)
He came to in the middle of the trial
Gripping the compass needle
Stuck stick connoting free will

Do you believe in anything but
Holy Ghost Automatist?
Our subject leaves their post
 To have a piss
 To make a pass
 To take a crack
That said, if all is vanity...
Still let's not posit self-respect
As prophylactic, actor-peasant,
 Masked apprentice, sour gust

vi.

Wind absolves you of hearing
Jet planes score the sky
Which cupola clears the clearing—
Stark trees tantalize the lightning
Our licentiousness creates:

Meanwhile the mainly male gaze gawks
At none of this the least endearing
And the wronged man walks
With able swagger

'WHOOSH'