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Falstaff Sifting Fish Trash

Brandon Krieg

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Look at these herringbone men dangling long ropes
down from the pier, each a dull child
waiting for his unspooled yo-yo to return,
each dreaming his sunken pot will come up
hissing with dungeness—

Bait-brains! I piss on your pots’ polite chicken livers!
Oh, you sunned a squeak of reek from them—
two days on the fence post?
Crabs scramble to matter more noxious:
these gutted albacore at the trash bin’s bottom
with eyes like smashed watch-faces, smelling thunderous.

Herringbones likes a dry scentless picked-clean
neatness, and has a wife
with antiseptic smile who forms a smart display cake
of his sweet white claw meat. After dinner he feels most man
being chewed up and spit out where she is toothless.
It’s otherwise with me.
I was born with these blunt hard teeth to crack the very clamps
that pick at me in dreams. My agile tongue can feather
life out of the cracks. Who will say I’m not a lover?

Look at this gashed ling cod
making the face we are all about to make.
Crabs will place the bone crown on him and send him
turning deeper than moonlight reaches.

Herringbones cannot fathom the spectacular waltzes
I dream, across death’s wide drowned deck.
I have been promoted to Vice-Admiral,
and crabs cling to my massive flesh like medals.