Summer 1994

Blind Dogs

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Now the fog is clinging to the lake.
It is the eighth day since my accident
in the desert. The fire goes out.
I smear black pitch on my hat
and on an old pair of leather gloves.
It is a lung-healing scent.

I paddle out and driftwood knocks
against the raft. Even the hawks
hump their backs to the spring storms.
I look at all the branches going by
and imagine my enemies moistening
their lips with balm. They send dogs for my body.

The dogs are blind. Their hearing
is poor. Their snouts are flattened.
I spend the rest of my life trying to cure them.
I meditate hours and hours and nothing
at all seems to happen. During the night
they sit on me and blink their eyes.

I hold my left hand under my testicles,
while in my right I hold a cigarette.
I warn the dogs that they sit on green
and tender grass, that the walls and the floor
of the tunnel are damp, that they must leap
several hundred feet into the dark green pool.