

Queen of the Hop

I have lived in the mad minds of cannibals.  
My modern masters, these are men of the forests,  
cockstrong, devoted to Plato and More,  
Abstract Expressionists of form and heavy strokes.  
Suddenly: a young girl on the beach,  
swept-away mascara, no assembly required.  
We couldn't let her drown, but so much to do:  
there were the silvery invitations,  
four bucks a pop, the removal of dogs,  
and, of course, thr gathering of spices.

Our love used to be the opera, Italian,  
19th Century, but nō self-respecting  
troupe would near our shantytown.  
We tried twice-a-week bingo, then  
block parties with deceiving brochures,  
a la Club Med. As a last resort  
we hired Bob Hope as permanent MC.  
He split, we sank, our sadsack army wept.  
We were hungry for diversion and purpose.

Our hard-to-read guest rarely stirred.  
Men's appetites soared to emperor's heights,  
to a new-found glory, as we clanged

(Cont.)

(" Queen," cont., no break)

pots and spoons, whistled Walt Disney,  
and starved wives at bedtime. Wait:  
the girl's elbowpoints began to swell  
with split mist as she leaned  
into the ocean, covered with condoms  
and dead mackerals, waiting,  
waiting for the feast  
when chefs' slitbone ovens  
would dry the dawn and clouds would shift  
and dissolve, allowing her to pray  
under the moon's hollow rings  
for the pain that still comes?