

The Right Hand Man in Madagascar

I sucked on her pansied marriage
like a necrophiliac, applying salt
to sustain prior fields of flesh
and other sugary signs of life.

The pre-season hope never materialized:

I broke, then entered, another's ~~life~~--

I had to cast my warlocky ways away,

I practiced Pig Latin for the kids'

benefit and each time I carved JEWEL

into her thigh a new pair of headlights

became a search party for survivors.

Fuck it. Really: I was her trump card
to get to Paris, a sloppy, minor threat.

Once thrown out, I carefully removed
fingerprints, flecks of dried blood,
and riverine traces of hickeys,

and back at The New Funeral Theatre

I still swept floors, waited tables,

played Horatio, Ophelia, anything,

anyone with better lines than mine.

While inside, I corralled her routines,
hi-jacked, in alphabetical order,
her previous joys: abattoirs, Buddha,

("The Right Hand," cont., no break)

college pastels with her husband.
Pluto, Nebraska, became my soil,
my home and my guilt
over being single, for my body
never quite learned how to behave:
throaty kisses and secret messages
turned me into a menschy spy,
codename of Monsieur ^QPirre,
who gave weekend bridge lessons--
she began to make no sense to me,
a novice kayaker, seeking origins,
drifting eastward counter currents,
alone, back to the African shore,
half-awake to childless silence,
a near-empty bottle of cognac
ablaze in the charred moon's static.