

REGAN GOOD

ENO'S ROOKS AT BEANLEY HALL, NORTHUMBERLAND, ENGLAND

Sticky hash on a pin's tip, under a smoky glass:
I drank it down and dreamt of the polishing stone
with Roman pleats, a stone kilt on an earthfast rock.
Rock folded like the convolutions of the human brain.
The rock bore shallow cupules to catch rain, or milk,
where a cat might drink, or a lamb, or a King.
After a dark morning in the morning room,
I cried in the lane, angry tears of human hate,
over cruelty and bourgeois hierarchies.
The kettle's on, currants on the bush. Plums
grow in the Marie Antoinette-like potting shed.
I fled that horrid house and cried inside the lane.
(Her flower pots are all Roman baby sarcophagi.
But these sheep are not of her; they are of *me*—)
Now a horseman manifests, then a greyhound.
In Northumberland, the dog is King. Horse, Queen.
Bronze-Age funerary bowls buried under trees.
Only the Lord knows what is under each canopy.
Bone chips and human ash, a piece of quartz.
A bird wing, two fetal lamb skeletons, a pin.
Brian Eno's rooks live here—or their offspring do.
They fly above the walled garden, by the heated house.
Glass hot house for Birds of Paradise and quince.
This is not my house.
Below the window: a flock of stinking sheep.
These are our host's brother's sheep, the eldest son.
He lives at Hedgeley House, the Greater Hall.
His snits are blue-red jellyfish and his wool is burnt.
Through the woolworks, our first morning, we walked
south, but never reached the stream we heard.
We lost the dog, then found him back at Beanley.

Globular-eyed dog with a pig's tail, living a man's life.
Sheep die in droves here leaving fields of ghosts.
Ewes turn to mutton. The dumb ones look at me
as if they have never seen a human. In the lane,
a black-faced flock followed me, belled, followed
without thought. If I turned, they stopped.
If I walked forward, they followed fast, alarmed.
We did this for an hour. Up the lane, then down.
They are dumb like me and cannot understand.
I climbed the hillock of shelving rocks without them,
then slipped and fell ten feet down. I bit my tongue.
I lay there on my back wondering if I'd died.
I fell near a dead sheep, that animal fallen days
or weeks before. The mass foamed more than rotted,
it generated fur on its way to becoming something else,
a woolen bag with its sheep guts lifted up and out.