

Humpty

That afternoon he'd been stripped
not so much like a banana or an antique
chair, but

quite like some kind of ice
sculpture, having yet the chain-saw grooves
to prove the artist's process—

fresh from the freezer, unsheeted
for show...

He was now gathering
into a puddle
under his own feet
and the hors d'vours were warming
(infinitesimal buzzing of flies,
cheese dark'ning ever-so-slightly)

Rot's a process like stripping
only rather than disambiguation
rotting *obscures*...
like a peach in the
windowsill, forgotten and now

no longer a peach
but a hard lump of a sow's
severed ear
not hearing, of course,
but also never to be a silk
purse

Whether he was coming clear
or perhaps growing mold
he was not certain,
though he knew he was
in control neither of their eyes
nor curious hands

The innocent are always intrigued
toward tactile amusements,
groping and fondling
the frosty surface, leaving
little fingerprint windows to the
soul

but curiosity, as they say, kills
catastrophically
 beatifically
 in a swirl of red,
and he knew as the world tilted

it was he himself askew
and not the snot-nosed toddler in the smart
blazer, his mum releasing only one
 brief cry before
the shattering moment, the tremble
of cocktail sauce simultaneously flipped
and letting bright droplets...

At their feet,
his integrity scattered into gritty
stones
like safety glass or human teeth
on the floorboard of the fatal
automobile accident beneath
the still-bleeding passenger,

he knew even the *Jaws of Life*
could not speak the pieces back into what
he'd dreamed himself to be.