“Aubade for Sesame Street at 3:27 a.m. Ending with a Line from Snyder”

Synchronized, the Muppet ones
sway peppermint canes
with fishing line visible
below their cardboard stage.
An off-key Frank Oz warbles
how glorious it is to be
a stroke, a streak, a floating
bone, simply perpendicular
to the earth and counted
first, the carnelian match-head
of infinity yet yourself
divided by yourself is still
yourself. The putrescence
of formula puke wafts
from two ruined towels
heaped and sopping in the tub.
There is no other life.
“Cento from the Church of the Nazarene’s Advent Marquee “

Our God of limitless supply 
behold the star everlasting 
who wails in a manger 
all the ribbon in the world 
no X can replace Him 
join our fast honoring 
four trucks with Fraser Firs 
at the kingdom’s gates 
during our pancake social 
the charity pageant raises 
our annex roof’s repairs 
where Your dove descends 
with no limit on poinsettias or 
the midnight service wreath 
if you can brave the ice
Steam escaping from a chipped tureen
of broccoli cheddar soup is the last thing
I remember. My math teacher date
had just wrinkled her nose at the awful
nearness of a baby grand tinkling
in the vestibule. It was a bad table.
I wish I could say the gray expanse
of cloud that cleared revealed
a saucer moon, that I felt my fur
prickle through my pores and howling
I threw my head back cinematically
as the change came on. But it was steam,
then waking naked in scrubby boxwood
behind marina benches. Some eternity
I spent plucking shards from my palms.
My date's ochre skirt was a kite streamer.
With her bones I made a tidy mound
before shivering like an arctic diver
through traffic. This all flashes back
like glistening hoods of yellow cabs
in rain. Five times I've been shot
by your department—each round
puckers an oozy mouth that closes
without speaking. You're the third
detective who's smoked and smirked
while taping my confession. By dawn
these cuffs will be pink nebulae
around my wrists. By noon
I'll purple my fingertips flossing
marrow from my teeth with your hair.
But in that holy brief amnesia, those seconds
when breezes lick my claws receding,
I'll trace the heart-carved teens' initials
on the chests of dockside oaks where
each name the tide kicks back is wrong.

“Into The Primitive”

A subterranean blue pulses under our feet as the escalator coasts us closer to Cretaceous fog and a railing concertinaed in plastic vines where a plaid girl leans jabbing PLAY on an installation that floods the mezzanine with a pterodactyl’s kamikaze caw. It makes me paw for father’s thumb as our group glides into the primitive, a rumpled envelope of permissions in his Carhartt pocket. Holy shit he says and I say it too, gawking at a triceratops frozen in a histrionic snarl that says I’ll gore the shit from your very guts. It’s the coolest thing I’ve ever seen—

two horns reared at styrofoam asteroids strung in the purple nothing, ready to pummel walnut brains to smithereens. My own walnut brain knows the velvet rope around these husky flanks means mucky hands should grub some other wonder, like the night

I squeezed basement screams that rode each furnace blast of dragon breath through the register. I lay on my glowing Land Before Time sheets until I stripped to underoos and felt steel slats scald the bare boy skin of my back, as if a burn could make their screaming stop the way summer rain pelts a house into dreaming morning won’t have the mulberry of a bruise. Beyond is heaven, the Hall of Extinction where fingers stained
with sidewalk pretzel mustard are free
to smear cases of mammoth tusks,
a plastic quagga with her foal and the last
known living *canis lupus rufus*, stuffed
“since 1930 beside a first edition *Call of the Wild*, splayed at page 13: no
warning, only a leap, a flash, the metallic
clip of teeth. When the last patron
is a cane’s echo fading, our tribe
bellows for the rest of Sister Blaise’s
class beneath the beast, flicking
a Nicene Creed paper football

through finger goalposts. Here
I learn four boys gasping
sounds the same as my mother’s shudder
when dad swoops me by my belt loops
so I can stroke the stitch
pinning back a saurian’s sneer
in the gunmetal leather of its cheek.