

JESUS CRAWLED

After the accident, our parish halls grew swollen. I weaned
lambs from the pale soap that cascaded down
their mothers' swollen udders. My
fingers parted their begging mouths. I shook confetti
from their hooves in the webbed mesh
of night. My mother held the bulbs of
her crimson amaryllis and summoned
the lunar new year from its green
nirvana. That night I spoke to tulips. That
night I smoked and smoked; tobacco leaves
grew fur and I shined a light in their yawning
mouths. Jesus wore a halo. It had never rained
so gently. Jesus crawled below the surface
of a claw-foot tub, among imagined gardens
of aloe and jade. Children inundated the
square and their faces ticked with the pleading
rhythm of a cat's tongue. I drank tears from soup. I drank
and drank as the last drop sunk inside itself.

THE SOUL'S MANSION

Leo Tolstoy appeared in the pixie ring, sucking both thumbs and fingering through the wispy, derelict hairs of his beard. His raven kept its eye on me. He spoke in the northern dialect and the valley flooded with flowers as delicate as the tips of succulent chives. One appeared in his mouth. A bullion cube of froth breasted the mountain range and bore down on us. At dusk the shrouded world was reformed.

Bricks became the ochre legs of mushrooms. His Russian hands converted to water and sizzled. They were shards of ice on the rococo magma of a soul's mansion. His eyeteeth became knives in the hands of an ancient juggler. His tongue was a sword in the mouth of a dying rat. The blade of sound separated from shrouded turquoise crystals in the hollow of his chest.

He stands alone on the world's thatching, gracing us with scars and his tablecloth spreads over the softening Milky Way.