

POLLUTION

The earth is so white under this tree
You'd think a divine leprosy
Had set in. But it's nothing mysterious at all.
Generations of crows have let their droppings fall
Here. If you look up you can see
The crossed twigs of the rookery.
But down here is the thing men and crows have in common.
What we know of men is their garbage dumps,
A few fallen columns, perhaps, but mostly the mounds
Of broken pots, orts, the throwaways of life.

What would you expect? Life itself arose as the wife
Of pollution. Stars broke, unclean magmas poured
From fissures, foul methane and ammonia bleared
The sacred emptiness. Nor can life at all
Abide that purity in which the spectral particles
Of matter coast. In space our blood would boil
Away in a pink vapor trail
Fading in colorless cold. Vacuum would suck
Eyes from sockets and reset the atoms by blind luck.

Well, man, keep your house clean—if you can. But
Remember the god you must worship is the crow's God.