

*After the Broken Shoulder,*

I thought of the force in the fish. I did  
my exercises, I extended my ailing arm along the table  
into the lipped, resistant cincture of the rosebud  
of my pain, until it widened, until  
I made it a sleeve of small glass stabs  
I entered, up to the wrist, then higher,  
moving into the pain, and thereby changing the pain,  
as somewhere else the vapor altered itself  
through multiplying itself and so returned  
to earth as rain, the poet of rhyme and rule  
lay down beside the poet of crazy slam  
and there was to-fro sexual spelunk  
and neither one would write the same again, the force  
was an immanence steeping  
into a deeper-dyed idea of itself inside the fish,  
was like the dream of the hand of a puppeteer  
in a live and literal fish, I pushed  
one quarter-inch of veldt and grassy plain and asphalt alleyway  
at a time across the top of that impossible table, now  
the fins were nearing a pebbled shelf, as somewhere else  
the sugar inside of the twig was nearing green,  
and the writhe in the web was a sugar closer to wings,  
and the atoms of hand in the atoms of fin  
were alchemizing, up to my elbow, higher,  
wearing the pain, reducing the pain in wearing the pain  
from here to its horizon line, my twenty reps, the grains of sand,  
the first step and the first breath,  
and I clambered out onto the land.