

THE CABINS OF RHYTHM

JEFF ENCKE

the intonations we hear
hugging the hemispheres

the radius of a beating
dried-up heart

a little tinkle: what people call
principles

but the poet will discover

 this asceticism
demanding and cruel

 in the bones of light
a dossier of human imbecility

the poem, a crescendo of speed
of sense and perception

transmuting the traces of logic
sowing a light that has failed

shouting on mountains of prayer

DEATH, THE GREAT SCANDAL

don't think of him
that second day

brushing his hair
coaxing the mouth slurring
the chicken breasts

he sat up from bed
and commanded the morning

half-forgotten
a few comrades with silver hair
and monocles

– artificial dung
how beautifully everyone
offered him

the rich procession of the human race

life itself invincible
like everyone else

in spite of the best

a young woman
felt ashamed

YOUR HEAD SO WORTH KNOWING

a cluster of fierce miles
walking twenty by the end

now to push

to be the assassin
aggressively lowbrow

Western art house crap I'm getting
hungry in the taxicab

raw fish and octopus
patched things

absent a greeting "come, come, sit"
oddly empty

even presence
failed to create much

 he saw the quartet
spoiling for a fight the young
employed

her elder daughter's aubergines
sikh kebabs

very drunk indeed

A PROPHET

broods on the wretchedest man alive
an inch away from a eunuch

from a grocer with twelve wives
if only by convention

“That one!” he said

to move beyond the idea of rules
history so mixed with probability

a woman of fifteen
who wasn't placing breasts against

free of charge
fond of the fact

the poet passed whereupon
they mocked him

annoyed by the image
as all were aware

nor did it bother him
such a thing

ONE EYE FOR SIGHT

one for receipt
one for duet

one boxer, indispensable
a gang of dada assassins

taking an acid bath

the claim of blood
the first woman I touched

an ecstasy
that lasts longer, to start over
again

the dial of a year

because I believe
in the bankers of language

their little percentage