

He pulled the tip from his thumb  
with the grace of a man at ease with social gesture  
and flung it at her.

She threw herself flat and rolled,  
jackknifing up as the molecule whipped past,  
steel claws snapping in to the light.

Nick walks in, nods to all three of us, looks around the room.

He too takes his place behind me  
He's so close that the tip of his boot is touching my foot...  
two shapes of leather. I feel my shoe soften,  
blood flows, grows warm, becomes skin...

I noticed how much we danced,  
and how much of this was a battle of feet placed on toes in red pumps  
that got grimed with sticky black from wet floor.  
I then noticed just how quiet they had become.

She was asked to grind  
by the man with hair mushrooming from his shirt at the collar.  
He was there, at the edge of the light,  
taking in the Killing Floor with a tourist's calm.  
And as our eyes met for the first time with mutual recognition,  
a memory clicked in to place.

I looked for Molly Millions but she was gone.  
To the swamp institution - through reeds with roots contorted  
defiled by reptiles swimming silently, controlled, poised.  
Keep above the water.  
From the swamp she will return.

They parted to let him up on to the bench.  
He bowed, smiling,  
and stepped smoothly out of his sandals,  
leaving them side-by-side, perfectly aligned,  
and then he stepped down on to the Killing Floor.

Molly hit the Floor, moving.  
The robust players were dripping in sweat at the foot of the stage.  
Clammy hands  
spent too much time in back pockets  
stuffing paper money away after each drink.  
The notes fell to the floor,  
expelled by buttocks too tight for the jeans they filled.  
In one fell movement, back to original position.  
I glided in the slime and stretched to the ground  
sweeping forty pounds in tens and fives in my hand;

You go to space in your sleep and experience.  
We go inwards.  
You come to the bowels of fractal disorder with me now,  
eventually there is more room, but if you fall, you fall upwards.

A drumbeat began,  
electronic,  
like an amplified heart, steady as a metronome.  
At the best of times we follow the same rhythm, but we see different routes. During  
better times, our routes will disband but our rhythm will move on. Meanwhile, you  
set the tone I do not understand.  
Something I can move to at least. In your hand.

Her T-shirt was sleeveless – faint circuitry traced along thin arms.  
Her leather jeans gleamed. She began to dance.  
Become a part of our technology,  
buy in to the dream,  
uphold steel finishing,  
get citizenship.  
Become a part of mythology,  
buy in to the millennium,  
uphold escalated display,  
get your ticket.

She flexed her knees, white feet tensed on a flattened gas tank,  
and the Killing Floor began to heave in response.  
The sound it made was like the world ending,  
like the wires that hold heaven snapping and coiling across the sky.  
The drum pulse quickened, and she bounced with it,  
her dark hair wild, her mouth thin, lips taut with concentration.

The Killing Floor  
boomed and roared...  
Lily of the Valley  
I feel my shoe soften

I would like to steal something from this room.  
These things we give one another  
only serve as comparison to what comes next,  
a gift to you.  
I no longer give I just give gifts.  
I would like to take some small thing,  
the ashtray, the pillbox...  
It would make me feel that I have power.

My hands stay where they are, folded in my lap.  
Thighs together, heels tucked under me.  
Head lowered.  
In my mouth there's the taste of toothpaste.  
Fake mint and plaster motifs – a distraction from what really happens.  
A movement, an understanding, correct or not.