

GIVING IT AWAY

I never told you this before
but those sanctimonious lectures
about holding onto your integrity
and refusing to sell out—
all bullshit!

Here's the truth:
I tried to sell my soul
repeatedly
but times are tough and the devil
can afford to be choosy

It was carefully packaged
formatted according to guidelines and sent
first-class to all the top agents—
those fastidious middlemen
in sharkskin suits cruising in BMWs
cellphones growing out of their ears
plucking blackberries in a jam—
but in the hands of those more intimate
with the devil, who knew his needs
what he was looking for
how much he was paying
my soul only suffered

And it always came back
sometimes with coffee stains
rumpled and torn
as if it had been slept with
even worse—sometimes unopened

Nothing kills the soul like leaving it
lay around, expecting to be supported,
watching daytime t.v.
hoarding its secrets
peeking from behind curtained windows

Used to be a well-used soul
retained some value like a fine leather sofa
the more cracked and worn
the better the fit

Used to be old souls fetched a cool million
You could bid up a less-than-pure soul
with paid-for testimonials, strike a bargain
make those mortal moments of fame
last a lifetime, livin' it up
drinking imported beer
fucking like a rockstar

When goatboy came to collect
he found you so obese from debauchery and excess
you could feed the fires for eternity
without spending all your fuel

So what if I limited myself
to the living room of my mind
without exploring attic or basement?
Sacrificed pleasures of the flesh
for the straight and narrow
only to end up in hell anyway?

Better to live my way down
than ascend with eyes closed
When I die, don't close my eyes
I want to see where I'm going
and if my soul's of so little value
that I'm going to have to give it away
it might as well be in poems