

## Three Animals, An Asshole, and a UFO at the End of the World

1.

The baby ones pop like popcorn  
when let out of a pen. They promptly jump over each other.

They hop onto haystacks, Toyota Corollas, I swear to God roofs!  
They just fucking want to go up, up, up, up, up!

And I can't stand some of the things that they climb. Oh my God. Places like the Rockies.  
How do they get down? They'll make their way up  
any slick granite face, many meters high, what are they  
thinking? Is climbing thinking? Are wee bay goats  
supernaturally curious, are we even talking spiritual  
refinement, or just brute and stupid  
animal habit?

Some of those enormous, near-vertical walls  
feature only a few modest bumps, teensy outcroppings, barely toeholds.  
So yes they do on occasion drop. I can't watch the film. I can't stand it.  
One by one they fall off.

They are sweet enough to humans, I guess. Or patient. Or they pay no attention  
to people at all except as  
something to climb, humanness, maybe,  
something to climb  
up from.

2.

The Great Blue Whale, meanwhile, the Great Blue Whale  
is ponderously sleek. Heavy and pure and much. And scarred all over  
with barnacles or wounds, I can't say—  
just prominently scratched, kind of prominently written  
on, in the hand of a child, all over.

Or else He himself is a word, a letter, a figure  
of speech—wavery  
in the water you can't tell what  
is touching what.

And He has come up to breathe.

In the You  
Tube video  
on my Face  
Book time  
line

I watch him pause on his side and roll a little way back,  
just enough to see us  
seeing him.

Look: he's really looking at us!

That's what whales and human beings do.  
We look  
at each other.

It's like we're related and we both know it,  
but we don't understand it. We know we'll never understand it.

Which makes us peaceful.

After what is ultimately, maybe necessarily,  
no more than an instant,  
the Great Blue Whale rolls enormously over,  
the ocean closes idly over,  
you go over and over and over  
in your bumbling brain the staggering,  
irreplaceable graces  
really and truly going, soon to go, gone.

3.

The goats are gloriously playing! The whales are gloriously looking!

And the people. The people! Well. The people.

As we all undoubtedly know, the planet's supreme human leader  
this year canceled Science, Art, and Truth—or at least consensual reality.  
But the stupid goon forgot Wonder. Yeah. And Wonder finds a way,  
I think Wonder will always find its giddy, noble way,  
around any fucking wall—or over it  
in however many  
errant hops  
our humanity demands.

4.

Meanwhile, down in the absolute scariest depths  
of the sea, scientists have named all the zones,  
but the last one's so gone it's practically figurative. You start to run out of words  
when you get down as far as nothing  
but ooze  
and micrometeorites from the far distant reaches of space.  
And the creatures down there, in the absolute black,  
under the something-something million metric tons per square inch,  
appear like a shriek  
when the lights we send down in free-falling "elevators"

click on.

Take the Viperfish: crusty, sort of skinless, all bones,  
their mouths stuck permanently open  
and full of very prominent, needle-like teeth.  
Their eyes are weirdly wide, full-on glowing or glowering, but they can't possibly  
see anything whatsoever down in that place, in a place such as that,  
can they?

Or they've seen it all. They go way, way back. They actually witnessed Creation,  
they can't unsee Creation,  
and God are they pissed.

5.

John and I witnessed a UFO the other day.  
I'm not saying it was extraterrestrial. Just object-like and certifiably  
airborne and we didn't know what to call it.

Actually, it basically stayed put, going neither higher nor lower,  
though we did sense it receding  
away from us, almost too slowly to notice.

Through binoculars we spotted  
two vertical beams of light,  
something like two upraised arms,  
a two-tined illuminated fork, damn,  
or a hoof.

A goddamed cloven hoof.

Some totally insane baby goat must have made it that high

and gone sliding back down, the little shit,  
but managed to at least leave one foot  
dangling at unspecified height, maybe anchored  
there to keep hold of a thing, maybe twilight's

last gleaming.