

Buckdance

Like cutting teeth antlers push the brain.
Swollen flesh throbs each weather change,
rings every sound. Flies sting the velvet,
lay eggs blood-deep under it. Once the herd
breaks up, the worms hatch out, blood turns
into bone, the engine is complete.
They breathe wings. Heat and gristle tempt
them into the shade. The air is on fire.
All night they thump and rattle bone to bone
hoping to shake loose the blood eating inside.
At last one wins. One lies ruined, red leaves
clotting his lungs; one stands ruined living.
Swarms of blue dance in the immediate sun.