

Last Meals

At the end a man eats for others,
a woman for herself.
The man orders what he knows, sincere
as T-bones, confirming his innocence.
These many years he has been fed
and now he wants to please the chefs.
The woman orders what she has never had;
she remembers an impossible pastry,
a Sengalese tidbit, the lungs of the llama,
all those recipes locked away like pearls
in the kitchen strongbox, untried, untrue.
The man wants a foursquare meal,
constancy and good chops.
The woman wants a last romance,
exotic essences; she has exhausted
the basics, the balanced, the breadstuffs.
The man prides himself on his appetite,
eats with a religious gusto,
believing in the eternal gullet.
The woman lingers over her meal,
relieved of the need to diet,
so no longer famished.
No one can know what she sees
between the silver bars of her fork.
The man belches. The woman sighs.
The world is full.
Ah yes, the world is full.

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