

Toby Martinez de las Rivas
Penitential Psalm

Tenderly

Out of the shallows, horizonless, unbroken, the impenitent, vertical body
tenders its asperities

to blinding waters.

None to anoint it, looking out towards Huish and the dismal stratocumuli.

O, hark at! The helicopterish *whap* | *whap* of goose wings.

Shall I thrust

my own head under, inhale the shattered meniscus,

*ghost-cases of larvae fixed to stems
in the vacancy of self-possession*

the third clause held indefinitely to spite your transformational grammar?

Fierce joy that is like retching, undo me. As a dead polity,

brick by brick, stitch by stitch, the squat, feudal tower at Langport,
or the drowned mole in this baptismal water, claws subtly demonstrative

of admonishment, supplication, *woefully arrayed*.

My tender heartroot for thee brake:

My tender heartroot for you in the brake of thorns,
and the desperate purchase of this falling metre, Laura.