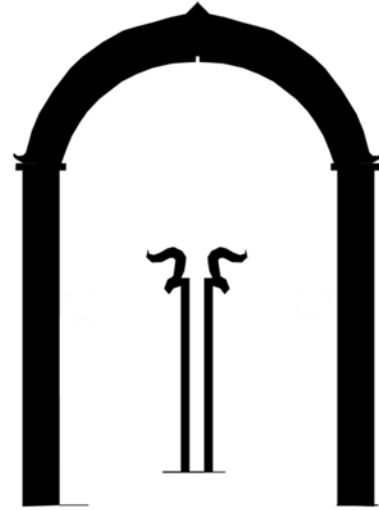


# THAT IRON YOU TASTE

& other poems



## Cameron Mount



### This Poem

This poem is not a poem because it lacks metrical rhythms. This poem is not a poem because there are no rhymes. This poem is not a poem because it does not have a traditional form. This poem is not a poem because it lacks poetic techniques like consonance, alliteration, allusion, assonance, or line breaks. This poem is not a poem because I don't like it. This poem is not a poem because it does not adhere to arbitrary standards of outdated punditry. This poem is not a poem because it is too obvious. This poem is not a poem because it is written like prose. This poem is not a poem because I don't understand it. This poem is not a poem because it is too experimental. This poem is not a poem because it does not match my world view. This poem is not a poem because I said so. This poem is not a poem and the poet is not a poet because the poems he writes are not poems. This poem is not a poem because it is my extended middle finger.

### The Silence Does Not Matter

Behind the sound of rain  
my unanswered questions  
fade to word-slivers.  
The needles of your gentle  
absence are emasculating,  
profane in the diffuse  
streetlight where your car  
is not parked. The shadows  
forget our voices, pretend  
that the silence does not  
matter anymore. I shut  
down the night and taste  
your embraces without you.  
The empty disappointment  
exposes the ordinary  
dissolution denied us.  
I skim the deepening clouds  
and tread back through  
the hole you left behind.

## The Bottom of Tall Glasses

I never glimpse  
the chains she  
shackled me with.

I only see  
into the bottom  
of tall glasses,  
only see  
the dark motion as she  
disappears  
into shadow.

I only recognize  
regret,  
the relentless  
suddenness  
of life  
turning into itself.

## Pandora's Box

When Pandora opened up her box to the world  
it was only because she wanted to be  
fucked, too.

She fell down that rabbit hole no more or less  
than anyone with her on that electric  
highway. Her breasts bouncing in the moon  
must have seemed a pretty sight, and she  
had no daddy to disappoint,  
no mommy to kill and replace.

You might say Pandora's curiosity condemned  
mankind to mortality, but that's got it all  
ass-backwards.

We might have had fire and light in everlasting  
life, but ain't that hell? That funky rhythm  
that bounced Pandora's box, it got us a  
discount on life, because who wants to live  
forever?

And goddamn if Pandora ain't what made life  
worth living.

## That Iron You Taste

Perhaps you should abandon the rules you  
made when you were 22 and hadn't  
yet pulled the trigger  
of a Tomahawk cruise missile  
hadn't yet seen its wake

You agreed to this way of life before you'd  
seen the open-mouthed fear  
of a six-year-old  
who doesn't understand why  
mommy's yelling at you again

Maybe you need to break free of the page  
you signed when you yourself were  
little more than a child

Those constraints have shuffled you until  
jacks are aces and self-abuse  
is more comforting than her arms

Hell, you can't even get it up anymore  
unless you replace her face with that

of the student who offered you BJs for As

That iron you taste is not strength of will  
It is the blood from biting your tongue  
every time she berates you, every time  
she sneers, every time she licks her  
chops just before spitting your name  
like the curse it's become

You could blame your weariness on  
your apnea but even she  
doesn't believe that anymore

You haven't even realized the tree  
you planted together out back  
is only hanging on  
to one last brown leaf  
while the mulch below rots  
with cast-offs of warmer months

Such thoughts you drown  
in the blued lights of backlit screens  
the only lights you pay attention to anymore