

JUDITH ROITMAN

## **Tongue**

Beloved! says to him  
from that house shouting.

Thrown with the bat oyster:  
qualitative thing.

Money unable to operate.  
Lampost and tongue binding.

Glued to birds:  
don't do it.

## **Fish**

Porcupine feet  
shaped by Clorox.

Mountain distressed.  
Shoulder blade damaged.

Mortification strikes easily.  
Also stomach.

At the duration, his container.  
And his fish. Not talking.

Eidos = formal content of culture.  
Dressed like glue.

Like sequins, slips so easily  
as lizards wait.

## **Hand**

This takes & that.  
Rice in its pole.

Edges crammed.  
A guarantee forgotten.

Pluribus! Calligraphy  
& spirit on the page!

All spilled, can't maintain it.  
We are snakes no longer.

Which motor quest? Which fan?  
Which undulation? Coverlets?

Attempt to contain,  
to import, to interrupt.

Hand various.  
Scratch & exit.

## **Worm**

He was the earthworm!  
He arrived with me!

40 forgotten years  
and for this: my eye.

Who dives into pond,  
knows absence of bottom.

The poor person  
lacks basis.

The other person moves into a house,  
groundless.

The non-route  
shares its non-capacity.

Perhaps continuous, or simply  
to follow.

## **Crumb**

Each crumb brings an ant,  
strengthening the water skin.

Where do clothes come from,  
the sad transfer, like debt?

I tried to cover him  
but his glasses fell over.

No heart, not two.  
That's how it happens.

Within one mind, another.  
Mirrors can't compete with this.

One card gives you jousting,  
another, the fool in water.

Precipitous moon. Sheer door.  
Planets without their sockets.

Skin is toxic.  
You can't see behind his eyes.

## Hall

All things in the hall we walk in.  
Waking in a strange room, beside ourselves.

In the great hall of silence:  
demons, faced with their teeth.

Ambrosial beads on the premises.  
Smell of coconut, emollient, her pins.

Hats evolve to small appliances.  
The progress of winter, inaccessible.

The way he leans backward  
while she tends his motor stage.

Whose eyes see him dancing,  
the password: mandolin?

**Judith Roitman** lives in Lawrence, Kansas where she teaches (not English) at the University of Kansas. Her poetry has appeared in several chapbooks and a number of journals, including *First Intensity*, *Eleven Eleven*, *Bird Dog*, *Black Spring*, *Locus Point* and *Otoliths*. Her book *No Face: Selected and New* appeared in 2008 (First Intensity Press), her most recent chapbook *Slackline* appeared in 2012 (Hank's Loose Gravel Press), and *Ku: A Thumb Book* is forthcoming from Airfoil Press.