

Two poems

by Ed Higgins

Communion

I cut myself. Often. The bloodslice like thin lips parted
in prayer. The supplication in the rise of blood. Pink
at first, feeding quickly on oxygen to implausible scarlet.
Beautiful as the dark wine we take for Communion. Holy
as Christ's own blood blessed in the chalice and sipped
for our sins. Forgive/me/Father/forgive/me/for I have sinned.
And my blood soft and warm sealing the wound slowly, slowly.
Some dripping into the porcelain-white sink, later washed to the
sea

forgiving all the earth. But there is never enough forgiveness
in just one cutting, so I will take this tiniest of suffering unto
my own flesh again and again. The madness of the razor
cutting to the altar of my bones, below the softness of my arms
reaching out for God.

You feel terrible sometimes

life's color drained to ashen
as the old world spins, pirouettes
like a circus dog on the back
of a galloping horse. Icarus,
ass-over backwards dripping
hot wax and scattered feathers
through gray piling clouds,
falling into Brueghel's heedless
sea while Auden tells us (un)amazingly
how the white legs disappear into
the green water as indifference
sails calmly on. Your unwanted
as constant as dreams you feel
guilty for. Hoping for the thick

wool of love's unraveled touch.
Losing the drifting fright
of needing, needing, needing.

