

their clothes to a skin that is better than clothes.
they take little address books out.
and the mouse cars
 drive out on the floor
on their little soft wheels, with hardly a toot
to take them home.

Outlaws in North America

Only God knows how long they have been riding
calling for little girls through forests that have
 the icy light of a sunset;
bursting out like uncurling smoke, like a
 fist and an arm, where the peasants
least expect it, preceded by a
 giant angel in flour sacks
 who turning the wafer pages
 sings aloud in a nasal voice.

each carries a little of the blood of my grandmother
 crossing the sea,
 wailing
so there can be no excuse;
and fresh eggs up front
 in the velvet case attached
 to the dashboards of their jeeps.
horizons revolve and revolve through their heads,
 always grey-blue.
 their arms are bicycles
 that chew up paper.

and by 3 o'clock they are all
 drunk
 from their breakfasts,
 swinging from girders
 peering through binoculars.

I know. you want me to say
you can't tell them by their conical
white hats, their smiles and guns. their skeletons
are suits floating to the surface. and brute hands
that offer you cigars that are bombs
and on their tooled boots
roses for spurs.

-- Peter Wild

Tucson, AZ