Third Shot

“I think I’ll try another kind of life,” I said mildly,

shouldering my load — light,
I wouldn't carry much.

They brought me a dog then, a puppy

for companionship, protection —
you know, those things we need. They . . .

“Thank you,” I said, “That was nice.”

Shot it twice between the eyes and left

with only my knife, no regrets,

no dice, no toothbrush.
I was afraid

I was afraid—
The invitation read

In peculiar nocturnes:

Hunger
For the Abbot of the Nectarines—

while I wonder,
ponder,
to my soul’s service—

compatriot of all the miracles

of learning years
from Leucopoesia

1.

It was a claw
But for the sake of the sweetness of voices
we called it wing

It was a claw
which we called wing
stroked into its scabbard

The blade of flesh
joined to the tuberous handle
cut the bindings of language
rubbing in the brain

and freed the drift of long
( long )
silent voices.

2.

The first words she says
after many, many years
are these:

‘the lens/ is clouded . . .
my glasses. . . .’
( and the words were *like* glass,
   I could see through them
   sharp words, sweetened by salt seas )

I said
“Occupation?”

‘lightning focused here’

I said,
“Address?”

‘number seductive’

Then I knew . . ( the Queen.

‘The Queen sang zero!’ ( self-mockery? triumph? )

3.

“introduction to a dream”

Who nodded his head?
The old man blown from glass,
blue, green, white, azure, grey
The beautiful dilution
unfolding and fading
“introduction to a Dream”

At this point/ we begin

coming forward

into the raiment
that they hold for us,

grey silks and watered velvet
like the thaw of snow on dark ground.