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| Butchered, salted, barreled,they, too, went south on boats.Praise the common acreagethat held the beasts of men—four thousand and more acresat St. Louis, all sweet grassand salt springs, trees for pigs,and room for horses to run.Praise the enclosures wherethe Kaskaskia met the Mississippi,where men made breeding pasturesfor horse, cattle, sheep and pigs.Praise for the brands and cropped earsthat men used to claim the animalsand keep them straight in the herds.Praise the fire, iron, and knifethat let men own their beasts.Men were the givers and takers of beasts' lives, letting beastslive their short while before slaughter.Praise for man's dominion.Praise for his way of suckingout the marrow of the land,its juices, roasting its flesh.Praise also the first ones here,for the natives who helped establish the *cmokmanuk*,and then pushing back against them,stealing, shooting the Anglo beastsso well, that the *cmokmanuk* gave uptheir common forage fields, bringingthe iron hoops, the calls of love.”The rumbling trucks, carrying mail, pipe fittings, frozen food, books,kitchen faucets, vitamins, all a city needs.Unicorn spires point upwardto *Heofon*, paradise divine,the cozy home of God, heaven.The word once meant protected, to the Anglos’ ancient ancestors, and watched like shepherd dogsthe flocks of apartment blocks,gathered around like ruminants.Everything here is numbered now,as if we live to keep track of things.Every door, every vehicle, numbered--every building is addressed.The streets, though named,are numbered in grids alongthe points of the compass.Apartment blocks stackedone atop another are numberedwithin and without for easy access.All the dry cleaners, the courthouse,the groceries, the offices of lawyers,real estate agents, tattoo parlors,psychic readers, nail salons,the music store and the storefor ideas, the dress shops,the pawn shops, and shops | their animals together on stock farms,closely held, so closely they beganto die more quickly of diseases.Praise to the natives for resistance,for their last desperate blows.Praise for the energy of the land,praise for the space of the land.IV. *Cityscape /* *Heofon*Winter dies in the arms of spring,and the city's veins and sinews throbwith the movement of city lives. The trinity of commerce, state, and churchsits like hens above the traffic tracing its way through neighborhoods.No ancient buildings here,nor monoliths raised, exceptan occasional flag flying overthe nesting hens that look downupon us like scurrying chicks.We nest among cornfields, tucked away amid towers, rising uplike sphinxes or unicorns askingall who pass, "Where are youbound, traveler? Stay a little here.Listen to our syncopated music:The children playing in the parks.The laughter in the streets around with new methods came to measure and divide the landinto townships, plats, acreage.The People helped at first,but were soon made to leave, so the Anglos could acquire an acre of land for the price of $2,or half the cost of a sheep.III. *Praise for the Room*Give praise that there was room enough for the beasts to run and forage. Praise for the horsetail grass, thickin the wetlands, in the shady woods,and for the acorns that fed the pigs,making them tasty to the French.Praise the fat hams,the salt pork and porkbellies that flowed southdown the Great Muddy,to feed New Orleans.Praise for the cattle drivefrom Kaskaskia north to feedthe settlement of Detroit.Praise for the salt pans boilingto preserve food and health.Praise for harvested fieldsand the cattle let looseto feed on snowy stubble. |