

wheat

wheatgrass &

wheatberries

km rowe





don't tell me from what wheat i
am, and i will go against the grain
and if i had known better i would
have grown antlers

i know what home is
so don't tell me i don't
you said i had wings
but everywhere here is trotting

distance, if you've the time.

don't wheat for me
i'll be home in the morning
before the pink frost, before
you melt in the chinook winds

hay bale, hay bale, make me a man
and if you can't, i'll move to the
tar sands ... mama found black

footprints in the kitchen again.

mama said don't drink too much
but i loves to crush me
some pilsners down by the bow
tying flies and fishing for trout

a stranger once told me my nose
makes me look ethnic, now i wear
tortoiseshell glasses and drink
beer from a glass, i even say things

with grammar like it mattered.

canadian wheat or waterboard me
just a place that i was born
where you could drink water
straight from the tap

had a liver then, fancy pair a shoes
had a job and a bank account
and almost paid taxes, but where
the bow meets the elbow i heard a

a voice, it said to go west.

grain trains and shirt stains
met her at the old raley elevator
red paint chipped boards and an
onomatopoeia making the sound

of the wind, whatever sound that
is? she brought a cheese sandwich
and wild rose tea in an old white
thermos, the colour of bad teeth

we kissed and became the night.

left in the morning i was left and
leaving and she was a ghost
wrapped in white sheets, well i
better go west i said, so west i

did go, somewhere over the
rockies, where wheatgrass and
wheatberry is for skinny white
folk who don't look you

in your beautiful brown eyes.

wheat
wheatgrass and
wheatberries and i can't even
lie to ya, if cold rain or snow i say

neither, and no i am not
impressed by your glassed-in
condo and i don't care how
much you know about coffee

out west always thinking east.

don't grieve for me when you
are gluten free, and pay twelve
dollars for three tacos, i am a
loaf of bread or at least a slice

and it has been a slice, or
make it true of wheat and you
a grain a kernel a captain, turn me
about and without a doubt

i'll be the thing your trapped in.

a short short history
of the prairies and me
and the scars that mark my body
born on the fifth of november

a little spark and ember
brown hair brown eyes
little hands and feet, big nose
big lips human body made of meat

just a baby, a child, a thing, a me.

if i am, i am wheat
so don't patronize me
with biology and science
i fell upon hard times, but they

were made of my own
too much drink and too much
everything, to mistake catharsis
for breathing, you are bound to

choke at some point, no?

little prairie boy, knee-high
to a grasshopper, they say,
boy becomes man with the
passing of time, but i am

the spirit of the buffalo so
bathe me or drown me in the old
man river and dry me like
pemmican, i am stubborn it is

true, but still i persist to love you.

i said i know where home is,
whether wheat or be it corn
directions are meaningless
to those who've never moved

i am wheat

i am corn

i am north and south

i am golden field or i am milpa

i am not so native grasses.

we don't pray here
we sing and we dance
our feet on the four corners of the
world, we pretend we are birds

and birds of a feather always flock
together, we commune with the
sky so that we may find the taste
freedom, and so we feast on flesh

of earth, corn, beans, or wheat.

where walking is flying is
meditation and memory, we
share the same legs and we can
call them wings, but these things

move differently, i've got but two
sticks on the ground tracing
circles, if there is a logic to flight
we'd rather be walking where we

creatures are wayfaring strangers.

cream of wheat in the morning
and who said the prairies are
bland? but the same is the same
wherever it is religion goes

so set the fields on fire
burn every last grain and if it is
raining fish here, don't
forget the nets and buckets and

don't forget that hailstone beer.

spose he was a cowboy
and he never washed his hands
drove a weldering truck drunk
once, right into our minivan

men and bulls and
men and all their bullshit, but
i fell in love with a barrel racer
once, we barely got going before

she blacked my eye and left.

i ain't no cowboy and
i've barely ridden a horse, but
of wheat, wheatgrass, and
wheatberries i prefer mine

ground-up course, hit em up
cowpoke brand me brand new
and i was drunk as a skunk in the
hollar tree, the day i fell for you

i knew it was, too good to be true.

prove me palomino
and groom me like a horse
when we are free we are free
we are wild and free

free as wide as the prairie can be
but for some reason, we just graze
lazy the same pastures, and i ain't
for pasteurized milk or beer, but

because capitalism we live in fear.

best bend one in the bush
a day, two, maybe three, and
there is a thing about getting
bushed in the bush, but we have

no time to burn bibles so throw
that there baby out with the
bathtub water, and pickle me a
saint a saint a saint a saint and call

me wheat gum or simply refuse.

probably like prairie pollen i've
travelled far away and i simply
can't come back, so let me put
this into words and sounds we can

all understand, that you can take
the boi out of the prairie but you
can't take the prairie out of the
boi, so don't wheat for me alberta,

be patient prairie and don't pry.





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