

Michael Gregory

The Only Mind They Have

It's said they come from the moon or from
the sun,
it's said they're sent from the mouth of hell
for our sins
or once were men condemned for their own,
who blacken
our skies in biblical numbers for days on end
with wings so multitudinous the earth
shakes until they descend, covering it
like restless, rippling water or crawling skin.

Unlike those granted the wish to sing
their lives away oblivious to hunger
in praise of the one true God which is love,
these—
ravenous for everything still living,
compelled to eat and fuck before they die
again, eating even their own dead,
appetite the only mind they have—
strip the world mineral clean leaving
gaunt, dumb-struck animals to walk
down rows of bare stalks and bare trees,
the bark gnawed away, clothes on the line
shredded,
curtains no longer fit to keep out the sun,
the ground thick with their excrement and
bodies
that fell while they filled their digestive
tracts,
jaws still working, still unsatisfied,
above the buried seeds of the next
generation
beneath the cloud of their own taking flight.

Michael Gregory has published his work in numerous reviews and journals. He lives in Arizona.