

/ Rae Armantrout

## Portion

Having eaten  
what remains of space,

black holes  
will eat each other  
some say.

Time will last  
until just one remains,

gasping  
for more

when there is no more.

\*

That is none of your business.  
To start is everything.

You start over  
and push upwards,

open  
eyes like glacial lakes--

black pinholes in the center.

You're passionate  
about proportion.

/ Rae Armantrout

## To My Knowledge

The gut shudders.

It is the organ  
of renunciation

as the liver  
is the home  
of qualms.

When they claim  
elites are cannibals  
they aren't exactly wrong.

No one has ever thought  
that thought arises  
in the feet or hands.

It's overseen  
by the eye,

that organ of exaction.

The heart is the organ  
of self-harm.

It beats itself  
against cage bars

from a natural love  
of syncopation.

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## Tap

Small children love  
the barely human--

the enthusiasm  
of a talking snow-ball

melting in the sun.

\*

In dreams, people  
are accessories

after the facts  
of mood and tone.

\*

“Writing’s just tap-dancing,”  
I write

in my father’s voice,

digits pumping  
up and down.

a

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## Safe Room

“You are not your thoughts,” they say  
or don’t have to.

You squat in terror  
as your thoughts roar and echo  
around you—originating  
god knows where.

You try to plug your ears  
but you are an ear  
that can’t stop listening.

This is just a thought-experiment,  
I say—grandiose  
as if I rode the tiger.

/ Rae Armantrout

## Deep Six

1

First I was young  
when youth

and defiant self-love  
was an act

that stunned England  
and took America by storm.

I keep putting the band  
back together

in my sleep.

2

They seem so certain--

Venus-fly traps snapping shut  
on fallen stones,

lakes swallowing sedans  
full of screaming passengers,

wounds closing  
(X marks the spot).

And me trying to remember  
what I was about  
to say

