

Karl Plank

DECALOGUE: RULES FOR GUESTS ON EARTH AND BELOW

know what matters
and when
and then this

soothe cells with cinnamon and sea salt
in the alchemy of the mouth saliva
soft syllables afference

find branches that appear as tear-drops
a noose a ring to grasp in mid-air
they are the same

intinct daily bread in the warm liquid
of steeping sage cornflower
and heartsease

somewhere waits a field of filaments
its threads your cocoon
lie down there

wash in the eddy hiding in deep woods
where flycatchers chirr or sing
weet weet weet will

but listen to these three
when you go under the ground
firedamp foulbag outbye

befriend the Stygian darkness
of the pit-eye which is night
which is waiting

hold the hand of the mangled ungloved
do not let go
until light finds the crevice

the shaft the haulageway
if you must take your last breath
together fingertips yet touching