# Busted Piano Man (for Ross)

His teeth clipped, craggy pegs of wood, dried bones

the keys have shed their ivory skins

peeled like dried gum leaves amongst which they lay curled

strings, sinew-rusty, over-reached

from under felt fedora his breath hard on the boards

his beloved machines all around Plaaang, plunk, tink, taaang

zeroing in on the dying moment as they exhale their last

this is their bright shining dark twanged, plinked

into the unknowing cloud like a monk he squats over them

extracts, extrudes, extrapolates Exhausted at 3 a.m. he turns off

the lights, dreams before he sleeps in his head unrecovered racket

resonant sounds sonorous, sibilant silent

busted pianos work overtime deep into the dawn

they have wandered from room to room

he treads the Mobius like a fine-tuned invisible rat

eyes finally glaze as the night claims them Piano-man

he, they, one and his seat that squeaks its bit and bees

spiders, mice, ants chirp, chew, crawl, scree, slink, sluice

honey comb his wiry tendons play it *sostenuto*

Tomorrow he will become pliant-fingers, ears, cheeks-on-lids

feet-feeling O the sigh of it man-piano

see it breathe, this busted thing hear it groan in the giving of everything

Tomorrow I will receive the CD-gift, run home and play it and play it

missing sounds will invade my eager-child-mind

weeks thereafter made up of three days each instead of seven

the sky mercury water ground a swell of felt hammers and I

a boy in an empty schoolyard