

# Lobsters and philosophers

They feel changes in water chemistry  
with their attuned antennae and body hairs  
these gangsters from the deep—  
tough guys who take nothing on their carapace,  
deep thought thugs  
who mow down sea urchins, red rock crabs,  
mussels herring, and sea cucumbers.  
These garrulous creatures  
will not hesitate to cannibalize.  
This society lives in shadowy worlds,  
uses gangland-style execution:  
pulverizing shells and grinding fish bones  
with big-toothed crusher claws,  
atomizing weaker thoughts  
ersatz systems, and ill-formed concepts  
sticking it to ya like a steak knife  
with their finer-edged ripper-pincher claw,  
tearing soft flesh like good hit men  
tearing soft schools like good think men  
wearing their skeleton on the outside.  
Then there's the fateful "claw lock."  
Through Nietzschean will power  
they are able to release a claw right out of its socket,  
leaving behind a miniscule pink bud.  
Their discarded body part drops with a thud like a meat offering.  
The opponent, not even feigning remorse  
over a one-clawed colleague,  
simply eats his opponent's arm,  
becoming boss of the think-tank.  
They are cold-blooded, territorial, aggressive, irascible.  
They molt, shed, and eat their own old shells,  
making themselves ever tougher and more callused.  
In their lifetime, most lobsters don't move far  
from where they were spawned.  
Most philosophers don't either.

Their black-dot eyes are propped on movable stalks—  
eyes with 10,000 facets.  
All those tiny eyes within eyes  
detect motion in dim light,  
perceiving philosophical nuances,

reading the text behind the text inside the ocean floor.

Their whole body becomes a sense organ  
detecting with its chemo-receptors  
the moods of the waters, the Zeitgeist,  
Weltanschauung, Weltschmerz.

They burrow by day  
prowl by night  
head out head first,  
and live alone, except to mate.  
and except to fight.

Ah but the fate of a lobster is to be boiled  
just like Nietzsche was fated  
to have a mother and sister  
who boiled him in derision  
and charged admission tickets  
to ridiculing audiences who watched Frederick  
claw and spar in his syphilitic madness.

An original thought like a live red lobster  
occurs only once in every 10 million.  
The rest are ensconced  
in darkened crenellated calcified shells  
of speckled black and green,  
tossed without hesitation  
into the common pot.

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