

Recipe for relaxing with men

A fire, first and foremost
In two sizes, big and bigger
Not for warmth or want
Hell, no
To poke, prod, pile, and piss on
Something to do
Something to watch
The doing and watching
Fueled by flasks of whiskey
And the Sierra-lit summer night sky
Canopy of galaxies over a glacial lake
Slate-smooth and moss-still.

All of this must simmer
In the chicken stock
Of sadness
Thick and sweet
Savored and anonymous
The silent soup within which
All men stir.

Let enough time pass
Soaking slowly
In the quiet of the night
A splendid isolation
Oozing around each man.

Then and only then
Light as a soufflé
Talk rises and floats
And bursts in bubbles and burps
Small talk and stupid and dumb
Lewd and funny
Of coincidence and conquest
Advice adventure
Mistakes self-censure
Autos and animals
Sports spirits
And body parts
An endless spiral
Of randomness and hyperlinks
As forgettable as bad TV
Flavorful and warm,
This talk wraps around
And around and around
The grounded gathering of
Full-bellied, empty-minded men
Relaxing.

(from Kindness Soup, Thankful Tea, Dhotarap Press, 2005)