FULL MEAL

REBECCA FARIVAR
Rebecca Farivar’s *Full Meal* is comprised of a series of perfectly destroyed scenes. Every line contains such perceptual clarity and intense grace. The landscape is so pared down yet the effect is not one of emptiness or erasure but of the complex stratum of each framed moment. Farivar writes: “I cut a hole / in my shirt / to see color, / cut a hole / in the color / to see more / color.” Some time ago, I walked into this book and I have remained there, standing very still, ever since.

– Eric Baus, Author of *The Tranquilized Tongue* (City Lights, 2014)
FULL MEAL
MOTHER

When a human came out
of my body
I’d never felt
more animal.
Then I healed
into a new human form.
NORA

I was in motion before the storm cleared.
Uprooted trees lined the road to you.
When the boat pulls away
stay focused on the water
and remember you’re moving.

Motion favors those who have it.
The trick is to not get angry
or distracted by your legs.

MAINLAND
Sometimes there's fog.
Sometimes there's not.

Yes, those are the only two options. Nothing's been shattered. Most men can't see color or if they can they won't name it. When you first saw the sky did you call it blue or did someone have to tell you? The horizon is notoriously uneven.
CAPTAIN

Give your boy
a boat

and take him
to the bay.

He’ll reach
and leave

the mouth.
There are men

who still live
at sea.
GUT

I cut a hole
in my shirt
to see color,
cut a hole
in the color
to see more

color. It never
occurred to me

that fish
have hearts

until I saw one
free and beating
cupped
in a human hand.
PIER

Again I dreamt of my cousins
the ones I don’t like
for good reason. No one is full
of forgiveness. You have to be
consistent like a liquid.

It’s the closest I get to water.
BROADCAST

First reports say
I don’t love
my grandma.
Not my aunts
or uncles either.
New reports say
there is no epicenter.
It’s a continual
quake, and it’s close.
A tree fell on
my home and
I can’t return.

This is the official
report.
NORA

You came in a storm.

I'm still parsing the meaning

if there is one I hope

only the trees see your wrath.
The meal will taste better if you’re hungry.

The child will be loved if it’s wanted.

I exist because another’s life was ruined, and I was a wanted child.

Not even a stomach can change it.
I didn’t drink
the sour milk
and still I’m sick.
It’s a reflection
of my character.
I understand
why an insect
would eat
its own viscera
why a rodent
would swallow
its young.
SEE

what you look like
saying

your name.
You are less

than a second
a real person

and two
confederates.
FORM

We had to take her
to the hospital

and we will hold
it against her. It's

poor form to panic
and eat all the worms

making your dress.
Be honest. To see

a perfect specimen
look haunted,

strange, off her game,
is awesome.
Before birth and death the body rallies. That’s why women nest and the dying will eat a full meal.
REDUCE

If I stop eating
there will be

less of me
in the world.

Imagine that.
I’m growing

nauseous
with excitement.
Stop eating
in a panic.

No one will take
the food
off your lap.
Don’t worry
about the others
with arms.

They feel armless.
Let’s all go
to an orchard
and touch
a peach.
All of us.

Together.
We’ll feel better.

We’ll say, “This
is the best
of both worlds”
though really
there’s only one
and we know it.
LIGHT

I believe in something bigger
than myself
like a city

or a force
that lifts a girl

on the fingers
of her friends.
ATLAS

My daughter will carry the globe because we all take turns and she is no different.
MOTHER

The only way
my daughter will

love me
when she’s an adult

is if I die
when she’s a child

and even then she’ll have
bouts of anger

mistakenly thinking I
in whom she grew

can control
where death settles.
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BIOGRAPHY

Rebecca Farivar is the author of Correct Animal (Octopus Books, 2011) and chapbooks Am Rhein (Burnside Review, 2013) and American Lit (Dancing Girl Press, 2011). She lives in Oakland, CA.