## Jonah in the Belly

## Lon Young

So this is how you'll preserve me, Lord? in a slosh of brine?
Go ahead, though I've borne no fruit, torn loose from my roots and gone my own way. I should be plunging through the vast black deep like a spoiled melon dropped overboard. But your bowels were moved; You rinsed and wombed me.

How long till I sour in this reeling vat of guts? My cries rendered blubber-deaf against the rushing of great waters. A pulse in my brain, a breach of trust. Once I grasped the tongue of your thunder. This is no cellar, but the belly of hell.

## What have I fled?

Take me back. I taste it now; I taste the salt even of Ninevah and her people, and tears for them in gales, in flood. It is enough that you regard them.

Save me, Lord.

I've swallowed my pride and softened the bones of my skull until it's as supple as a gourd sprung new in the night.