

Elizabeth Campbell

HIEROGLYPH

I have been given the gift
of a mummified cat.
Tight-swaddled bulb, I
will be pared back
to my sockets and
gums, to lie with it,
this cat-headed bullet, bone
on bone.
I will unsheath
paper-hilted claws,
unwrap linen, feel
where skin has tautened
into lantern-crepe and a
purr rattles
like a cricket in a dry jar.
I am something found and
ancient, hollow and unwritten;
attendant on cats.
We will hook out our brains
through our faces, snap
our tails up, bind
our shattered limbs to our
delicately incised chests,
innards mummied by calico.
In round, chalky places,
where dead scrolls
chill
by teeming seas,
we will pile; imminently feline,
sand-rolled pellets, we will sit out
the fading of the ciphers;
we will wait.

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