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Poem by Margaret Young



Variations on a Line by Bob Hicok

fish can have mad cow disease and I have a problem with that
do they eat infected brains on fish farms or do pathogens
get washed into the sea from cows on land I have a problem
with mad anything except in adverb form like I'm mad happy
about regional speech differences but mad cows mad men
running the henhouse white house chasing whales around in boats
makes good novels but I have a problem with I can't
give blood because I lived some months in England
before 1985 and so I might have mad cow disease
I mean the human version since I ate bits of British cows
my brain might harbor its destruction, turn to sponge someday

so let's go fishing drink a toast eat oil for breakfast
we need fish oil for our brains so we don't go mad

Publishing Information

- The first line of this poem is from Bob Hicok's "Whither Thou Goest" in *Animal Soul: Poems* (Invisible Cities Press, 2001).

Art Information

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Margaret Young's poetry collections are *Willow from the Willow* (Cleveland State University Poetry Center, 2002) and *Almond Town* (Bright Hill Press, 2011), plus a chapbook *Blight Summer* (Finishing Line Press, 2017). She is translating the work of Sergio Inestrosa (Mexico) and Débora Benacot (Argentina). Young is on the faculty of the Global Center for Advanced Studies and at Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts.

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