

Pastaerie Mystic

Life was brought to you fresh,
warm, and glazed:
a deep-fried fritter,
a doughnut for dunking.
You should have kissed it then,
while it was still soft, powdered
by sweet perfection.

But in celebration of all complete circles,
desire took a mouthful, and the gaps between
your teeth have made the mark
of a beginning and an end.
Since that crispy bite through crust,
pure sweetness has sifted away with the past.
Now only a dust of lesser joy remains,
clinging in far corners,
teasing your tongue to seek
that first sublime taste.

Well now you know: only a number of nibbles
and this short snack is done.
And like any mystery, truth lies
near the center:
a doughnut cannot be whole
without its hole.

Swallow it down like empty air,
or fill it up, like the jelly in your soul.

—*Michael Gaio*
1991