

Combing The Map Flat

It's crooked roads branching  
from serene grids.

It's water  
towers proclaiming what GPS claims  
before GPS can.

It's dirt roads leading  
somewhere unmapped.

The gods have decreed  
north is a pole striped  
like a barber's welcome.

It's two ferries slicing so close  
the lake is afraid.

Captains brandishing fists, hollering.

It's enlarging Greenland while shrinking  
Africa.

It's Donald Trump's mouth opening  
and micro-Trumps filing out.

The wall is long and high and separates many people.

It doesn't need to say anything in Spanish or English.

It's canvas painted so realistic that patrons walk  
into the brick wall.

The light of ten giant diamonds on a wrist.

The wrist a swarm of tunnels for gerbils.

They run, smiling, content to end up in the same place,  
but having seen the underside of the wrist, felt a vein  
pulse.

It's the dinosaur egg in Hitler's undiscovered underground.

Hitler's past mustaches pinned behind glass like butterflies.

Tiny, tiny butterflies of the upper lip.

Their migration patterns astutely captured  
during propaganda films.

It's the hills pushing back against your palms  
as you sharpen the creases.

Your fingertips glistening the Pacific.  
Knocking a speedboat into a wake.

It's all the books on maps stacked on this map  
overnight.

Inter-world travel commences when an old map  
sheds a spruce onto the supine map.

An ant walks into the present depiction.

It doesn't appear as anything we've ever seen.

The government spends exorbitant sums to bomb the ant.

The ant, after surrendering, claims a second ant was in the tree.

He trades time stuck like a butterfly behind glass  
to lead government mercenaries to the second ant.

Riding in a mercenary's hands, the ant burrows under the skin  
to find the gerbils walking. He kills a gerbil and doffs its carcass.

The furious mercenary is shorn of his arm.

It's a discussion about how to figure out if a gerbil is a gerbil.

A diagram of a gerbil is procured from the library where the maps  
snicker in their stacks. Rivers coughing up sediment at the sight  
of mercenary fingers on mice with balls in their abdomens.

It's that mercenaries lack leadership or that leaders lack

selecting mercenaries or that gerbils are slippery,  
but there aren't any gerbils in the wrist tunnels of the limb  
next to the tree in the northern quadrant of the map.

The mercenaries get out a map to strategically map  
combing adjacent areas to the tree.

It's how to suss out a gerbil that only knows the same  
tunnels that are drying up in the leafy overgrowth of the forest  
in the northern quadrant of the map.

It's remembering that the gerbil is really an ant inside, it thinks  
like an ant, and wouldn't the ant tunnel?

The mercenaries shovel up the area around the tree and find beaucoup ants.

It's the government warnings and the slaughter of ants and protection and television  
ads and pundits and talk shows and blood.

It's a mustache of ants that looks like a mustache.

It's an ant that grows a mustache and calls it a map.