

They Heard Voices

My head was a gold helmet with bites in it.
Reverberating voices and fighting parents.
My head lay in the moss of marijuana where I prayed
Don't let me murder in my brother's name!
My head had a name on it: Revenge.
Mine said: Patience.
Enemies give each other strength, we whispered, and hated
our pity for each other.
My ancestors carried swords and shields in the Caucasus.
Mine heard their stories and recorded them.
One brother had a wing in place of an arm.
The sisters had stopped sewing way too soon and no one
loved them or knew where they went to school.
The other brother had a helmet all banged up
in place of a skull. People spoke to him from inside it.
Help, help! he called.
You can't imagine the hell of not being heard at such a level

(to be found in the box of Boston One, edited by William Corbett)