

Eating the Whale

MITCH LESCARBEAU

He brings the sizzling strip
on a bone china plate.

Outside it's Iceland, winter
solstice. For a few hours the sun's
been slanting like a swollen eye
above the orange mountain range.

And then twenty hours of darkness.

Outside the whales turn flukes
in the frigid black sea.

Inside, the restaurant is a refuge
of old lanterns on polished tables.

The waiter told us the whale
tastes like the best steak
you've never eaten, tastes. . . *ahh*,
he kisses his fingers.

Time-jagged and sleepless in Reykjavik
we contemplate our appetizer

just a taste, he'd pleaded. *No*,
not endangered. *Minke*.

We lift the first morsel to our lips
and a world we thought we knew
has slipped away.