

## Clarinda Harriss

### Soup

Soup's a bruised & shoeless brew  
(notwithstanding the cheap imitation MD  
crab soup of which it can be said  
a crab was marched through on a leash  
wearing galoshes): all soup's at best  
disheveled, at worst a broth of near rot,  
however tarted up with creams and names  
(notwithstanding how one sprig of sorrel  
entitles soup to 'la sorrelle' and damn  
if it doesn't taste better). Some have  
died from wanting it: not as in *v., desire*  
but *v., lack*. I myself did a friend in  
with one pot too late and I knew a man  
who let a pot on the back of his drunk  
midnight stove cook him to death.  
Once my mother told me my soup  
had killed her, mistaking brown  
mushrooms and a thyme twig for  
poison and voodoo. She was clearly  
mistaken. Now when I bring her soup  
she laps it up like a cat. Or turns up  
her nose. Like a cat. There's a history.  
When John the Scribbler begat that  
strumpet Fanny Hill, soup was the  
'life giving fluid' his dirty blue money  
bought him. We live how we can.  
Whatever kills us, we die of starvation.



*Photo: Joe Paczuski*