



Detail from *Circe's Cabaret* by John Elkerr
24" x 18.75"
Colored ink and graphite lighter burns on paper

FIRST RAIN

armed with bolts of nitrogen and fire, zeppelin clouds descend upon the ice shingles of Fleming Creek, east of Dixboro. two redwing scouts fly wide criss-crossing orders: *Glaze sumac, throttle south through scarecrow armatures, then west over Witches' Butter* and thirty thousand redwings spring into defenses along the streambed: red-streaked fermatas in whipsailing sumac, shivery tempers, mordants, trills as I run naked through the black-tailed drops of spring's first rain.

Text by Stephen Eric Berry