THE CRUCIFIXION

*The blast blasted blubber beyond all believable bounds.*

~Paul Linnman of KATU-TV

What now? In a forty-five-foot, eight-ton mound, the dead sperm whale
washed a question ashore: *once given, how do you go about giving god back?*

So isn’t it shameful that we, still unknowing, will answer with dynamite?
Monkish distraction: this quick digging the pits beneath the enormous
bearded flank, handkerchiefs guarding our faces from the real work at hand,
which is looking—isn’t it?—a difficult looking at slipping away, an end
larger than ours, decay. That’s the task we all return to, however briefly,
when the easier business of shovels is done. Backs on dunes, sandwiches
on our sandy laps, we try to watch the blubbered hall go on not moving.
There’s not much to see. Early clouds the size of countries ride over us
and slip off unrememberable. New questions flock. Spirals of terns and gulls
collapse from the sky to pick at the carcass staunch as a church. A god
has come. What will make it matter? Fire, nails, camera, action. As if
we make the unimaginable more: we plant the charge, we run the cables.