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This isn't what we thought it would be, this edge-of-the-wild civil platform, these conquering-of-our-fears mistakes, this hand-holding of common sense in a neighborhood of instinctive oblivion. This isn't what I thought it would be, this putting of objects into slots, this rational mode of life-making mimicry, all for a glistening slice of empirical pie. Culture kills us with affection. Nature lures us toward privacy. I go to the sea where I'm allowed to stare at the horizon and where I'm master of shore moods and future worth. That imaginary house isn't settled, is settling still, a dream-old structure making the occasional sounds of a body restless to belong. The house is a mansion of the dreamt, and once I (waiting for the very someone to come downstairs) sat in the parlor—not the bright many-windowed parlor, but the deep-dark woodsy violet-furnished parlor, or study, though no one has ever studied there enough. Waiting—of the full-fledged fantast sort—waiting for the one, the future one, to descend from private heaven, chambers beyond thought, or a compatriot of keen wit, a sharper intellect in need of herding—takes its toll. To wait, as I once waited, the dominion settling, there is winter light, there are summer regrets from lifetimes ago, the lamps are weighted toward the planet's core. Everything is possibility, I once thought, everything is yet to happen, or not everything, of course, but everything else. Everything else! The room breathed its own dim light. Death, from difficult and decisive wars, still lurked in its corners—great suffering in the breasts of those who wait. All of everything, from the worn rugs—shy of threadbare—to the bodies of intelligent youth, not too young and not yet cynical. The masculine failure to be clear. The feminine failure to project fatalism. Or the brutality of singularity. The mansion is illuminated elsewhere. The sea is illuminated elsewhere. Next to that house was another house, and next to that another and yet another, flanked our world round, settling and peering into potential night and prospective day. I once sat in a chair too deep for me. I once waited in a house too tall for me, my hands too pale for my lap. And once I walked a waking shore (waiting for a very someone to appear out of the waves) without my bluest zeal. Long arrived is my need to accept some community place, to move remembrance inland, to feel fondness for blocks of ordinary living under roofs of typical angle (my bluest angle, their typical zeal). This won't be what you might wish it to be, Mr. Sea at the edge of time, the seams of men in suburban fury, the mean click of fate. This is the gravity of a mind in flight. A pelican above the surf. Wisdom sinking to the bottom feeders. This is dust collecting throughout the library of privilege. Language brought round as apéritif. The study waiting for a worthy studier. To wait, as we all must do, is more natural law than virtue, there are bloodstreams, there are time scales and probabilities, the heart is lifted toward validation. Nothing is as impossible as nothing, I once heard, that abhorred emptiness, emptier than empty, emptiest even, as if in my youth I could comprehend superlatives. Even mosquitoes cast shadows. Even individual insects have lifeforce. The house is a nothing-special ranch-style monstrosity without host. Too much carpet. Flimsy doors. Diamondless glass. The kitchen has never been heartened. I won't live up to my potential, as if I were perpetual day. I'll compromise my time, but not my love, not my effort. If I seem to be unseen, even unseeable, it isn't because I won't come to the clearing, it won't be because I wouldn't acquiesce to the localized light of smart company, or of imaginative respect. It can't ever be what we want it to be—it will always be what we think it is, not what we thought it was, and I'll be what I try to see, what I try to mean, what I couldn't say when I wouldn't speak.

Modularity teaches patience, the knowledge that the whole can't be witnessed, that it must be courted with inference or divined through intuition, some arrangement of sense, standard or strange. I'm not the kid in the yard or the bones in the field and I'm not the ashes in the carriage or the child in the urn and I'm not the man unalone in bed or the spirit flown and I'm not the cock in the box or the lily in the skull. Nobody can hear the sea from this neighborhood. Afternoon treesway invokes the scary possibility of the very someone. The ball gets away from the children at play and bounds down the hill toward the busy boulevard. While waiting—waiting must end—one may as well pay attention, do something, gather time within time. The canicular sky whitens with my longing. I would polyglot myself into the royal chambers and sensitize the reckless fox. I would dimple myself into the holy mall and strategize the restless hounds. Friends invite me to testify to my outer days (not my internal nights) and still they slip away to friendlier climes. My odes to joy are bruised with severent thoughts. Pleasure often comes from lust-slant. The hose to water the lawn too easily crimps—the windows go burgundy before blackening into reflective punishment. Lamplight kills differently than starlight. Block after block of intellectual avoidance, these dwellings, the weariness and fears of challenge, our betrayal of imagination. I'm portioned across patios of indifference. I portion myself as varicolored gelatin cubes in plastic goblets. I position myself in the sunlight of lattice shade. These placements, in memory or projection, satisfy my sense of community and my individuality, though they fail to provide happiness. Happiness is an oblique flash, gratitude blent with melancholy, what is experientially present and what is spiritually absent. A sprinkler on a windy day won't flood to know me. Don't think I thirst for spray—a droplet or a torrent is my asking. Contradiction stretches my spectrum. Meet me at the angle of subtle and sincere, the romance of the obtuse. While waiting for the kettle to boil—just before the boiling—the ornamental water of my inaccurate steep—I'll imagine the very someone crossing the very yard, this kitchen window of inarticulate magic. If I were in obedience to my surroundings, I might not mind long harmony. A sleep-defying affair to the horizon, the one choice, the daily one chosen daily for the whole trek, the whole repast, the whole dream. Nobody can see the sea from this neighborhood, not even from their roofs, not even from the bluffs flanking the town. Waves come in waves to those who wait. Watch me dive into the neighbor's pool as if I doubted the coming apocalypse. The children won't scatter till subsequent chunks of brimstone scutter across the asphalt—I'll sacrifice your comfort for my quality—hummingbirds never look at ease when out of motion. I'm not the man undone in bed. I'm not the paintings on cave walls unseen for twenty millennia. I'm not the evening wind up your sleeves. To come apart at the seams is our chemical fate, our molecular breakdown into all things, the shamelessness of mutability. What looks like temporary is but once upon timeless. What we think of as affinity is sometimes ricochet. If I weren't so skeptical toward quantification, toward categorization, toward lionization, I might seek the banquet and not the picnic (the feast's regalia and not the ploughman's sack), I might expect a chair at the mahogany table and not a patch of grass on the unmown span that slopes down to the edges of the wilderness. I may settle down upon the earth—not to settle for simpler fare or gentler company, not from natural or unnatural selection, not for vistas of uncertainty over glimpses of intelligence—the ground could be cool or warm, damp or dry, and I might fail again and then again to understand my place of privilege upon its surface.

Relativity preaches variance, a variance that might as well be similarity, if not quite sameness, a sermon without pulpit and a message without flanks—an opponent without supply chain. I won't be the sun shining at the moment of my death, or the rain falling, if rain be falling, or rain fallen, if rain were just fallen, or the darkness outside, if I'm to die at night, or the bedside lamplight or the shattered glass from the windshield or the clouds drifting heedlessly by. Gazes gazed at me—even by the very someone—won't verify a lifetime. The averted gaze—even some direct stare—that resists becoming a look. Reciprocity: rare. One who witnesses a silent accident yet never tells another. The imagination—any imagination—is kept awake by primordial memory. The mansion of the mind complements the roiling of the sea, chimneys to waves, surf to corridors, clock-ticks to water-gleams. My conical aspirings are a ream of blank bodies, curved together in erotic order, leaves against leaves in summery greening. By the shore, the flooding of a desert, the cosmopolitan strip mall, the metropolitan malt with a cherry of feminine wish, market tides and bohemian bluster, by the shares of our tinny sins. I've investments in the oddest times of day—track-home houses of festive indifference, of earnest disregard—my friend of memory, that poppy gardener, doing nothing as hard as possible, the fetishizing of obsolescence in the stun of immediate beauty. I'm partial to depths-of-field and half-mistakes, the many framings through a screen and the not-quite-seen-right, the mini-nighted drifts of thought around some wellsprung dream. I'll partition myself—I'll be partitioned—as if from asymptotic falling, our infinite togetherness unassailably separate, our ideas curved to belong. These partitionings, in space or as desire, won't eclipse, won't align. Windchimes on a still night won't self-motivate to serenade me. Don't think I long for melody—patterns or memes are my susceptibility. Iteration fletches my fields. Wheat my heart with waving grain, the romance of provision. Gazing at the gazer, not the gazed—just before the gaze is withdrawn—the angle not of my strategy—I'll imagine the very someone focused out of motion. If I were compliant to position, I might defy the horizon by spatial wakefulness, choosing the very someone across every palpability, every fantasy, every demise. I'll die without being my death. Distance becomes duration to those who gaze. Watch me watch the neighbor's pool as though I believed in options. The drunken children totter toward the edges and there are those among us who don't care—I won't superrealism it for your equilibrium—dreams can't be serialized into the fabulous convenience of continuity. I'm not the man for the job. I'm the wrong word in the otherwise revelatory maxim. I'm a raveled thread in the vee of your pajamas. Loosening the tongue of every foul-mouthed savant isn't freedom at its noblest, our insistence upon commode baptism and kitchen-sink inclusion, our everything-goes transfiguration, the shameful disregard of logical surprise. What looks like permanence is but twiced infinity. What we think of as timing is often the only possible carom. If I weren't so reticent toward self-assertion, toward self-promotion, toward self-valorization, I might seek solace in the award and not the bafflement, the recoil of the disoriented elite, the availed acceptance of the brick-crowd. I may stack my ambitions to reach the empty belfry—not to hear the common moans of pleasure-ghosts, not from sympathy for the never-heard, not to cry the town awake or to fling my secret into the river, not for vistas of progress over the retroactive gaze—the tolling could be bygone or prophetic, urgent or sunday-sure, the canned artifice of ropeless and clapperless song, and I'll wait atop my swaying tower till it topples or is toppled, till it fables an ending good for salvage, suitable for ribbon and bow.

See to the reconstruction of the protective wall, there to serve fragility and the beautiful spray, surge against resistance, the implacable versus the dynamic. Set it against our gravitational attraction and observe our dismay and sorrow. We're swept out to sea by our love for the sea. Thus I edge toward death. The mystery of suburbia rests in its lack of mystery, what is overly known, though the color of the neighbor's pool rivals the color of the sky. Now my dreamlove loves my lovedream, or so I dream it, the dreaming of a dream as if wakefulness weren't an absolute, the absolute dream of the solvent love, and the solution to love is to love. Sent: one twilight missive—without escort—a fortunate mistake. The wanderer wanders into the witchless brambling. If there is to be a fatal breakdown, let it be in broad daylight, that I might disappear in front of the sun, that the shadow might still be cast after the breathing stops, that my conflicts might sparkle before my underknown world goes dark. I always wanted my life to be the memory of the transition between a fading shiver-down and a furnace-day. My desert daybreak won't tolerate superfluous talk. I'd hoped to be more than spurts and spasms at the end of my manhood, building upon my boyhood-conjured promontory stare. The softer bearded goat across the chasm. A cairn of select scree hauled up the escarpment, a body of conquering work stacked as guidance. As a youth, I lie on the cement with one leg in the chlorinated water and a wet towel flung across my loins. A plane drones toward the crowded coast. Someone's upstairs showering. What a good day of life-share. We are the wilderness. Don't let me settle for nice-guy or kind-soul or generous-spirit status and I won't let you settle for shrouded eccentric—I'll be with you every white night, every sprung night, every sweltering night, every fallen night. The children are stoning the librarian on the village green (as we speak) and we think that's swell. The sheets are clean and cool and the breeze is out of the dominant west. All of the light from all of the stars in our heavens isn't enough to read by, a universe of insufficiency—only the sun's light refracting off the whole of the moon can do the trick—our terrestrial fires and globules of light are dismissable as tacky. History's on the horizon. History's on the rise. My linguistic choices (what I say) are swannish on a placid surface, a feathery coda to a fabricated avian calling. I ought to relish the friendly words of a comfortable acquaintance. I ought to admit your superiority. I ought to mourn our slain philosophy. Red lips aren't truer than the pale or parched or swollen—only the mind feels like a last harbor. The body isn't a lifeboat. Metaphor isn't a sacred strait. While waiting—my death song will last for forty measures—one could imagine shivering like living scripture while walking the streets of grace, one could envision burning one's heap of residue without the sanctioning of a follower, one could project beyond one's tentative trust in tomorrow. Life's disappointments are a victory over complacency. The inner space is the largest space, and the study in my mind is too often dusted, too seldom candlelit. I've sat longer in this chair than anyone should, this deepening chair in this deepening night, my waiting more self-violence than obsession, more anger than opportunism, wanting what the imagination invented in its cradle, the very other of recognition and reception, the very one on the very day of least likeliness, the unsurprise of oval timing, our overreach and undergrasp, that gift of availability when lightning strikes, the origins of our electrical charge not found in sky-hope or a storm's affection or cloudy love, our modulated energy renewable in every old and stale story, every nagging favorite melody, every reconfigured formula of obvious limitation—this isn't my town.

Earn the protection of the structured veil, there to starve ability into flight, verging upon insistence, with no opening for the mouth. Put it on and swallow any need for approval. We all bleed when we chew on our tongues, though the silence won't kill me. These rooflines are too familiar, as if I'd been forced to render them again and again (at a school without vistas) to prove my instructional worth. Now my real love loves my loving reality, or so I perceive, the reality in the perception, as if what's witnessed can be trusted more than what's imagined, the imagining is the real, and the real won't be unimagined, not by you or me. Rare: one divided by one making two or none—a double miscalculation. The rambler swerves amid the boulevard traffic. If there is to be a fateful breakthrough, let it be a shock-memory, that I might reappear in spotlight awareness, that the loss might be recovered in the wings, that my omissions might haunt me after my overwrought frame goes dark. I never wanted my life to be a projection of the future between purpling mind and a diamond hearth-mirror. My burnished sleep won't imitate friction-sheen. I've dreamt more spurts and spasms than daily manhood condones or allows, shoring up boyhood-inspired fidelity-care. The ram won't ram the rock or the hard place. A monument to the monumental, the building blocks of a self-pyramid not far from one's gaze-polished sphinx. As a dream-man, I swam the fortune-lake to the granite outcropping with godly form and prowess-strength. A swan kept her distance and watched. The very someone knew to rendezvous. Death is worth the dream. We are our crowd. Don't let me settle into petulance or sour-grapes ingratitude and I won't let you settle into pinched abandonment—your bruises aren't my bruises, your fetishes aren't my fetishes, your neuroses aren't my neuroses. Our heroes might recognize us only as striving children in an age of precocious toddlers and infantile bullies. The streets are prosaic and stained and the heatwave is out of our midwestern cauldron. None of the light from your eyes or any eyes reaches my farthest text—codex shadows—only my mind's lantern has penetrated that violet space—my coy corner of wish, my angling toward the most solemn of chasms. Mystery's not my seduction. Mystery's not my rise. Those love-story choices (fashioned for targets) are harvested from slumber-fields, stalks into quills of make-believe ascension. I ought to cherish kind words from awkward friendships. I ought to submit to the hard authority of reality. I ought to merge my disparate dreams. Perfect teeth aren't as interesting as textured thought—the lustful body needn't twist its own arm. The spirit isn't arrowed to any mark. Sensuality isn't bound by time. While waiting—my life won't last as long as yours—one could imagine quivering like a dying god while soiling the slates of heaven, one could envision torching the town of one's mediocrity without punishment, one could reflect upon one's formative spiralings into clingquant solitude. Life's entanglements act as an antidote for arrogance. The inner voice must outlast the outer voices, but that massive beach house and its confidence lies at the bottom of the sea. I've lain longer by this pool than anyone should, this clarifying pool on this clarifying day, my lingering more self-reticence than savor, more hunger than eroticism, craving what the imagination engenders, the very opposite with kindred goals, the very one without a solitary expectant night, the finest sex in the syntax, tensed and stretched and scintillated to belief, that gift of acceptability when hummingbirds scatter, our derivative inability to share the same nectar-fount, our relative clumsiness around the same-old same-old, the garden forms of neighborhood adjustment, every suburban plot and starched bed and sprayed bouquet, every arrangement that isn't my fate.

Aim the memory—adjusting for wind-correction—at the backlit bull, there to stand for obedience, merging instinct and will, his natural trust. Shoot it as a theological construct. We need to witness dignity in the brute beast before we'll accept it in ourselves. Staring at it on the nightstand, framed, corralled—I shouldn't have hunted that image. Now my creamlove loves my love cream, or so I wake in a sweat, feeling the silliness of stock prompts, squeamish that I wasn't awakened by a burst of laughter, that my conscious rejection of standard delivery doesn't always reach my subconscious, that a trope-infested heart can menace a mindful love. Click: one light press of my finger—transportation to a wolfish breast. Some clever children thrive along the information highway. If there is to be a frightful dissolution, let it be distributed globally in equal measure to everyone I love, that I might peer into darkness, that I might be nostalgic for radiance, that my emissions might prove phosphorescent across someone else's night. I don't long for time-reversals to change my life-discernment—all of my wishes are future-cast. At the edge of the sea I seek confirmation. I'd wanted to make marathons, not sprints, galaxies, not molecules, expanding upon my boyhood-wired far-abstractions. The sparest heights accomplished with a willing companion. A private flag planted at the peak beside another private flag, flapping together in a rarified breeze. As a faux-mountaineer, I tread the ocean's calmer surf waiting for a tsunami. Pelicans glide by in search of meals. A kid and its source build a castle with a moat and a seawall of sand. They could salvage me. We could triangulate. Don't let me driftwood to someone else's moonlit shore (where I'll never belong), and I won't let you settle against the common reef as some romantic shipwreck—we portaged to the freshest river with a tried-and-true current and it'll deliver us where it must. Our child sings to the hills and the forces of lift. The best sweets in life are concentrated in domestic overlappings. Some light comes from every cardinal or ordinal or feral point—even if isolated beyond testimony—only shadows on ruins speak of organic endurance—our elegant deflections, our embraceable sins, our emotional archives. Philosophy's been executed. Philosophy's risen to its methodic father. Our cultural choices (what we advocate) gather in a widening gyre on our revelational ocean, a patch to manage our cravings. I ought to admonish the not-knowing in my antagonistic self. I ought to commit to a more feminine strategy. I ought to lobby for scientific joy. Eloquent tongues are as skin-savvy as they are phrase-fluent—let's talk sun-fever around earth-curve. Words aren't anchors or buoys or lodestones. Language isn't a spooned lover. While waiting—I'll try to last as long as it takes—one could imagine trembling while embracing the treats of another, one could envision scalding one's modern hands in some contemporary crucible, one could never protect one's shy from today's cloy and snark and smarm. Life's abjurations still coin our contrivances. The inner choice becomes the outer choice, and the very someone descends the velvet stairway in search of a body-intellect. I've floated longer in this water than anyone should, this brooding sea in these surface times, my tarrying more self-indulgence than weather, more linger than eclecticism, desiring the ingenious hook, the very burr of elegant carry, the very one across a seeding field, hood and bead and flange and sack, dunes to copse or barrier to estuary, our verse-to-chorus vortex-swirl, that gift of accessibility when kismet calls, our interstitial bursts of briny guilt and the potion bought to cure wrong salt, our purifying streams of cogent-seen and evening flaunts of pulsing soons, toward every middle-of-the-night assurance, every rekindled day-skill, away from all statistical worries not yet mine.

Express yourself—in song or industry, in craft or children’s laughter or cyber-fill, in chiseled prayer or engraved comedy. You’re worth every flinch, every swallow, as is everyone either of us knows, everyone who is a resplendent mansion, every winsome bungalow, everyone who has termites in their frameworks. Tell me something to reinvigorate my nightmares, to make me wobble from the sudden comprehension of comprehensive loss. Take me for something better than I’ll ever be. Convince me of evil if you can’t convince me of good. Wash my body in the headwaters of your sacred gush. You’re worth every straight-and-narrow, every till-death-do-us-part, every tucked-away consignment. Everyone is worthwhile. I don’t want to be everyone’s worthwhile—I need to be your worthwhile, more worth than while, if one must be subordinate to the other, if time can give way to love but love needn’t give way to time. Bathe me in the flow of your secret gash. Suppress your mirror-echo. The pretty voice of the distant fire abides in its smoke, what reaches us and haunts us in our unsheeted sleep. Impress me with original sense. I’ll follow you down twisty steps to paper lands burning in your stead, subterranean thoughts of quality unknowns, whispered lusts of rejuvenation, curled listings of unbalanced rationales—our fathers become quick flames in our hands. The resultant gloom won’t stay our underground marriage of shoulder-to-shoulder invention. We’ve made it up as we’ve gone along—your energy toward illusion, our energy away from prescription, my energy at the horizon. Culture saves us through inflection. Nature spurs us into lower lands, timberline to wash, mountaintop to delta. Oppress me not with derivative oversense. Spare me those chunks of gray prose shimmer with spiritual waver, those brown blocks of body unfurled of their intentions. Down the corridor came the foxing—then the hounding—then the treeing of wild’s night—then we hung the stars from our ceilinged fear (my crowing in the square, your blooming to the grave). Our houses settle into their spans of reliability as we settle into our steaming clawfoot tubs as we settle into our patterns of perception as we settle into the death gait. Expression escapes from chimneys into our townish sky and we’d rather be penniless than thoughtless. Love goes stepping out and coughs in the ashen air. In the end, it won’t be the future, but the past, that marvels us. Cinnamon skies. Tawny seas. The most neutral options. Nostalgia seeps into you. Lie down with me in the mumblety-peg place. There rises a host of sepia souls. The horns could be heard from the drawn room. Your freckles moved and I closed the drapes. There, still, when I look down, is the impression of your hand. Up from the furnace chugs a handsome warmth. You’re worth every round-the-bend, every sickness-under-the-sun and the lunar health, every surrender-flag flown. Anyone can kneel when burdened, when contrite, when anguished or spent—when knighted, when proposing, when subjugated, when crowned—but rare are those who kneel when the fairest winds blow. I’ll follow you up rickety stairs to wordy days in an attic bed, elevated acts of quantities known, shouted bursts of substantiation, unfurled promises of sober abandon—our mothers become swift flavors in our mouths. The resultant fidgets won’t stray our undereaved rigor of eye-to-eye seclusion. Nurture slurs us into track-home claustrophobia—no cellars, no garrets, no wrong or delicious angles. Out the chimney into the air and along the street into the flow and with the traffic over the bridge and beyond the hills into the land and through the door into the study where the veryest someone in the deeper chair sits amid language dark and language bright and waits for the making and the unmade to mingle and codify and mystify and stop.

Numinous as are our reliquaries and roses, our anthems and our grapevine grand illusions, our most resilient love, remarkable today as it was yesterday, passion and laughter and talk, the good talk of compatriots in a bed just off the floor—the frontier nevertheless calls (with authority). Not the copses or thickets of experience, not immense space (outer or inner), but the wilderness of difference, horizons of the impossible. The land is enchanted because it isn't everything. The sky, as though it were a celestial you, reacts to the arid land, the craggy land, the wooded land, and I feel expansive under your gaze. You, a night of moreness, a body-smattering of stars, settle upon me, a common day. This is the way I once said goodbye, in a vision, some last made memory before I revolved toward disappearance, you twinkling as I went dark. Speak to me—of sleigh bells from the old winter, the unfinished winter, and of the summer snowfall we imagined onto the hillside strawberries, the orchard cherries, the neighbor's smoky plum. I flung on my coat and strode home through my untrustworthy white. You gave your heart to a serialist. So many ways we men cast our presents (our futures) to our impulses. You've stood my ivory carvings, my crude marrings. My mind—dodgy, constrained—intrigues me more than their universal natures, their methods of advance, their breaking of horses. Our universe is too vast for our collective span. I swore: never again. Never again. Once since, by accident. This heart won't swim in shallow love. The lake's depths make me. That's my body of water to be blood within (when I'm with my love). When alone, I walk a path of long disuse to the hill-brow. There, at any time of fabricant day, I peer into untitled scope. Our air loosens. Our individual climes unforlorn us. The scape slopes down to sorrow gone, and honey forms in the mind only after much meadowing. Luminous as are our sequence and flow, our young stags and your misconcepted green, my vigorous daily affection for you and yours and my phantom alignment toward you and yours, one close to perfection and one a flicker of candleflame—some promethean gifts still coax (without warmth). My isolation atop that brow feels absolute. The purity of that feeling constitutes my loneliness. Loneliness is more illusory than love, tantamount to an emotional lie, and tacit truths are my favorite truths. I followed you round the gorse of my inadequate intellect, down to the seclusion of your hollow's dapplings and our swimming hole of comparative vulnerability. The afternoon was warm and we kept our wills averted. Shoulders glistened. Smalls of backs. Clouds off. A stare penetrated. Hands proximal. Cognitive ubiquity. Hazards of attention. The ever erotic sky. What I wanted to say wasn't worth bothering the silence between us, and what I tried to think went unthought as the day tired and became more and more certain. Dry to wet and wet to dry and apart to unapart and unapart to together and together apart or unapart. The mind vantages the body. Bodies diverge and hearts cleave. Then comes the clench and the spirit-shift. Clement me in the near night—attend to my astral touch—and I'll wish you purpose in your self-leniency—disastrous swill in my brain pan. Gracing leaves silvered above us (your glen's forgiveness, my vista's harm), and I tried to wash my stones of their dust without a river to polish them, words flecked with pyritic constancy, ornaments in your moonlit essay, our great try. Brace for the marginal over, the venn loss, our leaving trees uprooted early—not early enough—blocks of space put between them in the barked landscaping of suburban order. To go now would necessitate tossing aside love splended from day-to-day care, love for bodies bent around mutual twists and gnarls and knots, love for the mind's wildings flung across our sky's spread.

Mezcal isn't the color of your eyes, not at summer's advent, not by winter's hearth, not in the light of any season's moods (not when ambered in memory, not when poured as empathy, not when mirrored through apology)—our emotions rise as roiling plumes above our structured thoughts (goddamnit). Emotions vandalize blueprints. Even my emotions, even my unrolled smoothed-out strategies. You, as exploded pleiades, mote my night, and I'm concordant with your light. One could say these things to someone (say more and say them better), should life grant one the chance, should life bring one a someone, should life allow one to take it seriously without it seriously taking one or one's very someone too soon or too severely or too lightly, should one not lose one's hope too early or find one's tongue too late. I think the body reeks of brain, not mind. I think the mind is zeroed out by the body's time. I think I'll stay in my chair long after everyone has left—the flickerings on the wall are my projections and mine alone—images unencumbered—your image without barriers as the wall and the mansion eventually disappear, my theater acquiring depth-of-field primacy. Spin my confidence, form of forms, round my urge. Axis love doubly true. We might yet learn to access the tree-hinge into the elegance of arrival. The coming is endearing (especially when difficult). The going—whether short or long, whether to the leaving or the left—is a banal and savage withdrawal. I pull from you my unanswerable question. Extravagance isn't my default. The world south of me has always been the harder world for me to explore, heart and nether, the nefarious gut and the morning saguaro and my articulated knees—siesta the boss. Take all suspicious thoughts for a one-way stroll to the toolshed. Dispense pedagogical fury. Not cinnamon eyes with tawny fears. Nor autumn heather of a former north. Tequila, neither. The forgiveness won't be forgiven. Your body's time is spun, spring wound down to done. I'll project it onto my evening's tree. Or, in the calming dark, I'll remake the mansion into ruins of predestiny. The velvetine staircase strains toward your liberty-catch. We violate ourselves—we don't need anyone else to do it for us. Humidity turns my head to mush and I'm vulnerable to adult sentiment and would that I could resist confessional bravura. Hung on the laundry line is the fraying coat you stained with tenderless regard, some narcissism of need. You've held me in my sleep as though I harbor worth, and I hold myself accountable for my empty seas even as I cherish my lighthouse. You, as concentrated source, pulsar my way, and I'm steadfast in your sight. One could say these things to someone (say them better and keep saying them), were one to know one's unknowing and never consider one's merit while awake, were one to release one's nervous ambitions and untethered visions into one's far periphery or one's fleeting wake. I don't want to hurt anyone by failing to understand our mutual limitations. Humility turns my head toward vigor and I'm prone to childhood sediment and would that I could adopt professional bravado. Given enough span, any wire walker will fall. My climate would disassemble me long before it could be tamed. Clothespinned next to my coat are overalls sexier than the whitest of gowns. The amethyst fog rolls into the attic forest. Outside the bungalow the she-wolf suckles her moon. The mansion crumbles into a declarative heap. Birds aren't bees. Insects kill people. Don't eat the worm—an imperative mosaic. I won't contradict you, though I contradict myself. See what can't be seen. A pillow isn't enough to soften a friendly blow to the jaw of a dreamer. My trauma doesn't travel along the surface of libido. Geometry is plain. Fight me mind for mind across lifetimes of shifting slates—blank, scratched, broken, invisible.

Tomorrow will be the day of days when I make a difference: tomorrow will be the grandest of days when I'm validated: solum silance: and tomorrow will be the day I justify myself: make the world happier: finer: stronger: make my impermanence sweeter: I'll move a small mountain or feed a big waif: future forests: shinier seas: I'll do the thing that needs doing at the exact moment it needs to be done: tomorrow will bring acquittal and humility: challenge and repose: cold-shower quadrants: blonde: brunette: ginger: brownsome: tomorrow will dawn difficult and dusk transformed: big fool and small discard: I'll brighten the void or darken it into visibility: I'll mend the endless fence: I'll counsel the inconsolable: small fall and foolish discord: fire-incense: quake-order: I'll speed up tomorrow's petty pace: I'll be who I was born to be: and tomorrow will be the day I verify myself: make the world happier: safer: wiser: make my fatalism moot: come watch me animate the stone and deaden the chaos: olden the fashion: form the blood: come watch me inflame the satisfied: shock the graphic: enliven the tarry: they'll saint me in the streets and street me in some holy subdivision: tomorrow I'll do better than good: my cleverness will repurpose to unwill my ego: I'll exhibit my restraint: I'll spell my accident: I could cordon off indignation: condone grief: composite the ideal: there are those who will die the day before the aliens land or the meteor hits: there are those who will want to kiss the cuffs of my slacks: tomorrow will be my homecoming: the day I come into my own as servant: steward: secular savior: the day I spin the wheel of fortune for everyone: the day I show my constitution rare: lucid tarn: abstract continents: there are those who think clarity doesn't always look real: there are those who will thank me for not waiting one pulse longer: tomorrow I might surprise my friends by astonishing the masses: tomorrow I might win hearts and fortify spines: I'll be the undaunted one: the good-timing one: the chosen one: I'll wake a common man and retire a common god: these are the moments that calibrate our quintessence: that sculpt our fates: bathed conscience: unscrubbed love: rendered fame: tomorrow will be the day of days when I change the world: change it from what it is to what it should be: wide-water solace: candlelit company: trembled air: I'll do my best and my best will be more than sufficient: curb conflict: spread concord: signal static: and tomorrow will be the day I codify myself: make my world happier: leaner: saner: make of my certainty a razor: make of my uncertainty a balm: I'll redeem my tangle of ancestors beyond the roots on back to the seed: I'll galvanize my descendents as though I were a global bolt from a local storm: tomorrow I'll be the man of the hour all day long: tomorrow I'll heal my congenital mediocrity: tomorrow I'll fascinate both the morning and the evening with a single star: tomorrow I'll laurel more than my shadow as proof of my secondary self-esteem gone primary: tomorrow: at last: once and for all: in one fell swoop: with one sweep of my hand: in one stunning flash of inspired action: I'll make you proud: I'll fruition your trust in me: tomorrow will be the day I become the silent avenger without ever resorting to violence: tomorrow will be the day I make the mansion into a pantopia of perpetual revisionism: a homecoming good for everyone: without exception: at any time and for all of time: no matter what is said or done or felt or thought: steaming nostalgia: smoldering reveries: tomorrow will be the day of days when I will the status quo into some imperfect dynamic of crepuscular hope: some perfect blend of every unlikelyhood: some self-sustaining kaleidoscope of difference and repetition: I'll make it so that every you and not you and every you of yours rejoice in the days you were born.

Today was the day I was going to surprise myself and do something that mattered: something truly marvelous: something solid and incontrovertible: something almost magical but altogether real: today was to have been a day of supreme consequence with superior effects from humble causes: I was to have rediscovered myself as the well-intentioned man behind some lucky gesture: fresh seas: salt mountains: instead: moss-rust: lark-loss: instead: screw-sweat: hark-stew: instead: heat-skew: glass-dust: today wasn't the day to end all days unless I don't survive midnight: today won't have been my day of reckoning unless I must now in these moments reckon with banality or failure or delusion with everything at stake: the world is more than half mad and my nation is more than half stupefied and the neighborhood is more than half strangers and I'm more than half incompetent when it comes to understanding the property lines of my mind and its structural history: today is close to done and gone and it more or less resembled yesterday: tomorrow doesn't know my name or my face or my fingerprints or my genetic code or the probability of my fact: and someday: a day that won't actually be a day: there will be no: solar system: context: but today obviously wasn't that day: today wasn't my day to nova and beam into every dark corner: tomorrow won't be that day either: that day might never: won't ever: come: for me and you: and I must reconcile myself to special commonality: to the power of everyday norms: my prow: your ambace tide: our ebb anew: sparkle flee and spiral torn: any day is just a day away from pixilated memory or dangled hope or bloodless disappointment or never happening at all: today was my day to almost suffocate from the weight of my limits: tomorrow I'll rebound and think good thoughts about the day after: but today stung: today burst my bubble and smallened me and exposed my self-inflation: I was to be the trumpet fanfare: not the accordion wheeze: now until sleep I'll flounder in my shortcomings and shortfalls: my cascading rivulets: that won't salve me: that won't rectify me: instead: I'll reflect upon dead days and unborn days: days not worth remembering and worthy days fully forgotten: stick-figure days and days of spectral sorrow: brick days and somnambulant days and a dozen days of sporadic perfection: days of maddening logistics and days of obsolete clothespins in dwindled light: overwrought days and underwhelming days and days of presumptuous dissatisfaction: stratagem days: diadem days: biled requisite days of blackened moods: phlegmatic wall-to-wall carpet days of shagging nonsense: hill-roaming wind-rising mind-afire days of autonomous ramble: imaginary days of unreal suspension: harp days: hayfield days: carnival nights: quilted nights: dawns of nausea and twilights of ordinary stun: hearth evenings of inexpressible comfort: playground days of small-pond agility: tower days of expressed disdain: lone surf days of off-season gleam: those dog days of summer and all the best days of our lives and our wine-to-water days of purifying simplicity: what may be impossible days and what could be ordained days begging courage and what should have been days upon days of unfiltered gratitude: instead: I'll reflect upon the improvised refractions of my imagist loves: that won't solve me: that won't ramify my blurred projections: maple-voice: jaw-crest: nape-fall: brow-might: today was to have been a banner day: today was to have been a zenith day: today turned out to be a day like any other day like most all days bending toward their tomorrows: I bend toward tomorrow and tomorrow bends toward its disappearance and tomorrow bends toward the darkness and the light beyond itself and I bend toward my sure departure as I bend toward just another night's sleep.

Idle are the gods in these days between days. Weak is their hold upon us when we quantify their output. Their days are primitive elegance amid our days of sophisticated mayhem. We hang our ragged cotton-show out to dry in their early sunlight and the gods look down upon us with envy. Clothed or naked we are vulnerable. Clean or soiled we aren't knowable. By nightfall we'll be haunting waterlands and woodlands and windswept ridges. Our fierce. Our playful. Our tameless. The gods journey to our locations and we out-wild them. May they long sing our praises after we're gone. May our settlements crawl under the bedcovers of the heavy land and may our reveries evolve into new species of flowering thistles. Blameless. Awful. Piercing. The day may come when our mother will shake us off into the stratosphere, and a cosmic wind will come along and blow us into the dark stream of might-as-well-not-have-beens. I've felt your hand slip from mine while we've engaged in life's fascinations. I've sensed my mind sliding off into the silent noise of wakeless sleep. Summa tabula. Some purist's pain. The violin scales the summit behind the child's wail. Some curved rooster's plan. The witch, as busy body, stirs the pot of apples that don't talk back, and the interstitial hours flow through her plots. Out of tune like birds at night in a basement tight with strangers, we watch the banshee's boathouse burn from our skiffs out in the harbor. The gods will inhabit our dreams as loved ones not quite behaving themselves. Lamed in steeple-pink. I've heard the organ's insistence under our stress. I've smelt the animal-anger under your breath. The gods will inherit our schemes and ploy them through some chronicler. Bathed in stable-ink. I'll force the hand of the maker-mind to calm the rioting change, and what one needs for ideal witness are one prime love and a sturdy friend and an unknown kindred kind. The day may come when our father will sweep our fallen feathers into a pile to light them with his gaze, and the smoke will rise to his memory sweet and make him faint away. My grayer. Your gray. The crayoned sun must be yellow. Accountability mounting. Kids alough in summer rain. A dozen eggs come crashing down upon our checkered floor, and out the door in our brown yard the plastic rainbow whirls. I've seen the spectrum spin to white. I've tasted many flavors of your sentence. Rasa magnificat. Some prurient error. The child climbs the tree behind the violent wall. Some bent beast's fervor. Now, as frantic mind—days dwindling, blue-swallow kindling—I try to warm my thoughts beside flames I'd live within if allowed. My arced. Your winged. Our charged. The gods scour the grounds for mines—for bombshells and dynamite charisma. I'm overlooked as wooden and you're bypassed as burlap. Together we're shelter from stargazing. We ignite our flesh strata, our blood dynamic. The packed dirt always gets scorched. May we revel in our spare hyperbole. May the gods pay heed to our yearn. May the urns be sparse before our singular ash-times. The chalked moon must be paler than my image. Accessibility wounding. I've wasted many favors on the undelivered sentence. By daybreak we'll again be flaunting our sustained ignorance. The safe, the tried, and the very true. Kids askance at summer's end. The day may come when we won't relate to our misbehaving gods. The day may yet come when we won't relish our darker aspects or our lighter facets, when we'll value homogeneity as a birthright, when we'll celebrate the standard over the rare. The days of days will come when our grain and our lift—your wave and my rise, my weave and your shine—will plain and silo and horizon and provide, will fail and slacken and flourish and fade, will fall and wither and linger and forget, will do what all days do and have done to come and go and stay these days.

Twilight comes: promise of melancholy: nebulous air and drift of reign: switch rule from heart to head to voice to heart: I'm too done to propagate the realm: too normal to command the pace by dying: too pale and penile to buzz the core: cult off-corner: refined beyond secretive stones toward secretion hint: clitter and clang: I can't speed the pendulum to fairness: I can't swing my noon to your midnight: I can't shift toward darkness without marooning your grace: days pivot among themselves as jacob's ladders of time: dusk-dawn hinges of hope and hope: cascading out of context: your grain: my grayest: frill: pleat: rain on my sunny recent: vibrants: frails: snow on my pended past: woodenheaded: sex the old soul into submission: red the river to vision the hood: I won't truncate the grid to infer the center and I won't sacrifice the pebble to appease the pole and I won't want you to forget my easement across your climes: smatter and slick: drown me madly: or: posit me out of the depths: shore my pointed pose: I'll watch the rocks stay where they are and I'll waver the moon from off the waters: night might join our outer darks and I might dodge the morning light and you might crown the finer zoom and we might find the purpling quaint: finderhearted: flex the mind into remission: bleed the will to soak the mood: I might seed the sequence square and you might sad the stoic eyes and we might shun those options fond and night might fault the rivers twained: trees these days timber from the slightest gust: roofs lift off like birds of burden: lidless stare: humble-couch: my conscience is more insect than flower: our sun disappears and we frolic in our starlit box: stinger-petals: subtle gales: clutter and clang: I peer far into the dim of you: the gloam of you: seeking radiance: language cut into refractive planes or substitution flamed to shine at day's end: estuary from waterhouse: briar patch from clough: I make no unimaginative ingress: everything comes from mental reach and nothing comes but mind upon mind: my thoughts collapse upon yours at the riverbank: your thoughts sit upon mine on the millfloor: all our thoughts end up in the sea: in the sun: in the farthest place from some other place: which is any place: which is this place: and upon this dying day I profess my love for day: for light and shadows and warmth: and as this day dies I feel my affection for night progress: for lights and shadow and mystery: your thoughts with mine will mingle good: our thoughts will breed kid-thoughts into our impossible pasts: dusk is always our time of reckoning: when dawn or midnight or noon aren't our times of reckoning: we transition from moment to moment by staying between them: our privileged place is bewilderment among certainty-mongers: enigma of solution: evanescent surety: evening as creator: trill: peats: leaves on your shady lane: clant: brails: stars in your stung throat: torso embers: finger-shocks: if you could tuck me under your blankets tonight: if you could dive into my sunken mansion wearing your indifference: if you could ride the rails toward my monument to finitude: if you could rise with me into unsung storms of replenishment: if we could fall into cavern-gleam: sparkly lives: fortune laureled to strivers: hurt minds wading into rushed waters: glitter and pang: I'll tangle your pose or I'll uncross your cross: I'll bond your flesh to comet myths: you'll brand my flash to mitigate risk: we'll blend our trust to commit our bliss: foundation me: ground my current without threatening my beam: twilight comes to usher lights indoors and some into congregations and some roaded into streams and some upon wicks and some upon towers by the sea and some in our black above and some in our nethers below: and I witness you eyes to eyes: and I testify to our flow of unchartability: from sleeping to waking to sleeping to: day after day in these days of our twinings.

Tonight is the night that won't end without the destruction of my ego: my ego that fought so hard to survive the day: that stood up to the banalities and beauties and terrors of these days: these days of poses and whine: of reverse snobbery and severe snark: of desk-drudgery and national catastrophe and neighborhood hugs: these days of driftlight on dear bare shoulders: these days of martyrs dying on village lawns for the idea of everlasting texts: tonight is my night to succumb to the world's first and unoriginal spin: I doubt not my weak grasp: my rule of instance and slippery thought: I'd be flung from the merry-go-round of any club: I have no hold on obligatory association and I can't grip fabricated loyalty: I stand alone beside you and you stand alone beside me and we don't matter unless you matter to me and I matter to you and this mattering must be choiceful and must be sustained moment to moment: day after night: night after day: I'm not enough without you to want to be without you: in these days of social loneliness: these days of rampant joinage and masque autonomy: if we need to lean our parallels inward and touch to stand: let's lean with dual vulnerability: our strength in equal risk: unmasked anatomy: unmarked territory: tonight my ego will fall under the blades of strategy and expectation: the cutting wheels of the lucky few: circular arguments of sanction: these days of forgotten futures in beloved eyes: these days of unblushed children dodging traffic: ordinary calamities of a predictable populace: tonight my mind grapples with middle-of-the-road oblivion and middle-of-the-pack obscurity: no-man's-land fever and everyman's claustrophobia: when I sit I sit in a chair that could swallow me: if I were to consider waiting a prudent act: if I were to expect the stairway to eventually convey: if the immense book on the pedestal were of intrigue to me and I could hold it in my lap: old lamplight won't forgive my vascillation: tonight I'll wander the neighborhood pounding my thigh with my fist: feeling finished while possibly still too young to die: I won't hear the sea: it won't rain and trees won't swirl against streetlights: I won't be surprised by some very peer vanishing to my side: then: sudden gridlock in my dreamish metropolis: dreamt spell-down to pavement and lawns of curve and sculpt: clean welcome mats and cleaner chimneys: I walk through a cardboard diorama as a plastic figurine: mounded bark: iceplant: squat palms: lit patios of unintense abandonment: cars agleam on a starless eve: blue tv flicker in slits of stolid drapes: doorbell buttons aglow without purpose: I'm bruised within my molded stroll and you'll appear days and mazes away from me and I envision meltdown but might have to settle for quietus out of these nightmare sermons of central air: tonight is the night I come to child-terms with matching bath-towels and hallway nite-lites and formica trauma of standard consequence: one can't flee suburbia for bohemia and expect a smooth ride to aesthetic clarity: to oddity of form: there's charity in bungalow linoleum and farmhouse porcelain and urban wainscotting: there's kindness in irregularity: tonight I'll climb fire escapes to roofs to praise geometric quirks of invented angles as angels of shape: tonight I'll navigate subterranean networks under my mode in my personality skiff that rusts: I'll wait for you in our bed of a lifetime: I'll recline in the easy-pose of this world and I'll stare through the ceiling into our attic of wintry embers: houses burn: those that aren't underwater: those that aren't wrapped in stone or memory: curl of paper and smoke in the crucible of the eye: my ego goes the way of wood and leaf and breath and wish: I stand in this yard: waiting for that house to go up in flames: waiting for my many mansions to be swept out to sea: thinking on the living and dying still to be done in this neighborhood: in every neighborhood.

Champagne isn't the color of your eyes, not at twilight, not at daybreak, not amid the imaginings of a super-average neutral boy (not when I'm drunk on supposition, not in my subjunctive glaze, not as optional swatch)—our variants converge as rolling whiteouts across our stormless planes (godsaveus). I've never been sounded. The margins bruised. My actual bleed. What comes from unacceptable influence is what comes from living. You wish you could live the loving. You wish you could dye the whites of their eyes. That idea would mess our slates. Wipe your death from your lips, but don't let me throw my way upon your way and call it trump—don't let me stack my air upon your air and call it firm. Seam the gap. Change the trace. I saw light come from beyond the cemetery and play in the water I held cupped in my palms. I also felt the reverberation of rams slamming heads in my meadows. I thought I heard my breathing in a leaf-wealthy courtyard. Those things I've somehow said in the tense of remembrance—confidently—as if my recollection were sovereign. Stream the joy. Amp the will. The projections of my improbable futures on the study's wall flicker with no accompanying sounds but the pounding of my heart and the rush of my blood. If I were to prick myself I'd flood the mansion red. The cork is popped and the walls fall down and the roof evaporates as the graying images from my futurescope mingle in the trees. Across the span of lives lived and lost, of lives never found, begun in an instant and done in an instant, I'm still in love with what has happened and what won't happen. I've been in the world, undeniably. Fortune bestowed, and I've dreamt things. I won't ride my sleigh through a kingdom of snowy nights. I won't stay young in body as I mature in mind. I won't converse the gods awake with folk availed beside the kitchen's blazing hearth. I won't flourish—not in this life, not with doubts for hands, not while I value quality over luxury and whim over comedy. Forbid me not to tell you I'm keen on the world and your existence in it even after I'm gone. Show me I'm not happy beyond thrill we met and sad into thrall we're not one. I won't swim your darker lakes, not at midday and not on the verge of storms you don't command. I won't sleep alone in mysterious enough beds to wake into the boldest realms of solitude. I won't dream the big dream on the night the big dream must be dreamt. You'll watch the waves from too far away to see them break. We'll stare the goblet empty when we should have shattered it with song. I won't spare my inner child by spoiling my outer rod. I won't walk into any room as lunatic or lord. I won't stain the outcropping with my impermanence. I won't shilly-shally through their cafeterias of more—not in this life, not with my candlelit conscience, not while I hold yearn above satisfaction and sensation above souvenir. I won't travel to exotic locales of evolutionary theory with my steamer trunks and twill elegance. I won't hew an ebony city out of an alabaster mountain. I won't have been with you at the bonfire on the hill before the apocalypse steals upon us some weekday morning when all we're trying to do is get through yet another milquetoast or charlatan or avenger or grinder day of unnecessary pastries and weary exchanges, of duty and blur, of language congealed into bloating shame. Don't try to convince me of the conviviality of the club or the integrity of the game or the worth of the spoils trucked endlessly to the victors. Don't prod my once manageable fear of failure with the gloss and coax of infinite success. Don't mar the margins with confessional smear. I'm still in love with peripheral gleams and shadows crossing obsolete walls. I'm still in love with snot-nosed refusals to obey prevailing logic and half-wrong tries at afternoon naps and the clear-eyed arrogance of old ascents toward the almost impure. We're never fully in this world.

Liken unto me what your latitude bequests. Care me not with coordinates I can't tend. We'll come together at the delta mouth. Traveling—of the imaginative sort—aligns the disparate with the desperate, the chronic with the coy. I go wherever I allow myself. I'm here, at this time, with you, in this confluence. We share the stairway landing without immediate thoughts of descent or ascent or staying. Somewhere the waves curl into luminescence and the horizon flashes green. There are places in our hearted lands where it never snows and places where the snow never melts. I can't fall asleep with my head in your lap. The chandelier shows our options. Anything but tumbleweeds in my swimming pool or flames in your library or atomic diamonds in our eyes. We could fashion technology that anticipates our whims. We could eat eel hearts slathered in butter made from the spurts of bulls. We could (we could!) evolve into creatures of thought able to distance without motion. We'll light matter ourselves as dark reversals and speed into out. We could (we could!) evolve into creatures of thought able to durate without area. We could drink owl blood droppered into our whiskey. We could coincide our creative failures with an economic bleak streak. Anything but suburban stasis or shelves bereft or scientific entrepreneurial theist entitlement. The embers in the study's hearth flare from a chimney downdraft. You can't fall asleep when the weather threatens. Out in our interstitial waste squats the wreck of a tireless jalopy with slatted floorboards and with oval windows in its delivery doors. Somewhere in our vibrant futures our lives will thrive within its modest shelter. This landing is a miracle of split focus and we exist halfway between equilibrium and sleep. Here with me, in this moment, you breathe, even if I don't. I went where I was sent. Traveling—of the spiritual sort (if there exist spirits to travel)—separates the air from the offal, the awful from the rare. We'll always say our goodbyes at the perpetual center. If I were a surveyor, I'd cap your linger. If I were tack, I'd harness your gait. Bide me to flux. Bind me to forever. I'm altering energy. I'm scratching pupil glass. Ethics aren't tripe, and our desires aren't entrained to ideas. Heads will bang against banisters and portrait-eyes will weep. Come walk with the likes of me through attic forests and you'll never again know culmination. I'd sooner absolve myself of lack of charisma than of cloudlessness, of mystery than of melancholy, of tone-deafness than of chagrin. Absolution can't come as a surprise when it must be willingly accepted to be effective. The storm and stress of acceptance isn't worth the becalming contrast. We have no choice but to acquiesce to natural placement. I didn't know what clothes to wear when it was time to leave the planet. I didn't know what layers to shed when it was time to fall into bed. I didn't know what station was mine when it was time to sit and listen. The wall candelabras come into flame by themselves as our temperaments darken, and the corridors keep lengthening to confirm our isolation. Where you are is where I'll incline, but I can't adhere indefinitely to this loose inscrutable plane. Grant me something different than artistic entitlement, something other than the sanctimony of corrupt devotion. Principles aren't trite and my aspirations are too enthralled with purity and where is my cake or why aren't I satiated and where is the shepherd or why must we flock and what matter the wolves when death holds our stock and till the sun turns blue I'll hum hymns to church-dust. Dust rises into my eyes and clouds form in my vision and you blur into grace and I water from the friction of myself as impediment and myself as particle of changeable position and myself as waves of doubt from idealistic me to stalwart me to tarnished me across the breadth of this quotidian neighborhood in these days of extraordinary loss.

Idyll square leaves in these days of dissipation, my satchel outdoor-bulged and indoor-locked, my output mulched. My days are dry mouth among your days of dry dock. We display our most unfortunate lies out on the wires of our global narcissism, our exhibitionist gushes of confessional freedom. Blogged or poemed we're self-punishing. Compressed or dispersed we aren't seen. By daybreak we'll be flaunting our libidinous fun and empowerment exploits. Our shameless. Our joyful. Our forced. The neighbors pry into our drawers and we out-mild them. May they forget us midway through their second drinks. May our settling for comfort not condemn us to the fantasy of thinking individual will can alleviate collective misery. Coerced. Woeful. Frameless. The night may come when lightning strikes itself and slivers shock into our unlikely eyes, but we'll know better than to wring our minds over what-might-have-beens. You'll put your hand in mine please as we all stumble through life's disappointments. You'll feel my thoughts of approaching tornadoes tingle in your palm. Sums of curves. The tablet's chains. Violets grew upon my vintage hilltop before the winds wailed. Triggers uncocked. The storm, as depression, rearranges the pleasures of childhood into utility, our damage control untimed. Out of fashion like toddlers at night in a ballroom packed with debutantes, we watch the twister steal the roofs from every building in town. The neighbors won't invite our elaborate dreams into their sky-exposed behaviors rote. Kided in clearing-bleak. I've felt the thermal pressures under our sod. I've smeared the sacrificial steam across your cheeks. The neighbors won't excite our musings into storied reductions. Washed in cheering-bleat. I'll forge my mind with making-hands to balm the choired-range, and what one needs for idol cleansing are one cardinal goal and sturdy wrists and a well-known solvent strong. The night may come when thunder will roll across our frail neighborhood to shake our chimneys down, and the smoke will shift into our sight and make us see our heritage. My prey. Your prayer. The worshipped moon must be red. Eventuality discounted. Sheep adrift in hallowed fields. A dozen obvious mount-delivered commandments couldn't yang my yin, and the two new ones wouldn't black and white my gray. I've seen the contrast curl into pose. I've smelt the aromas of your disappearing. Round-edged absence. The templates change. Wild breezes fail to vantage floral dew. The lineage-rose's favors. Now, as limbic want—nights blooming, dark-testament looming—I try to chill my heart beside flames I couldn't live within if condemned. Your sentenced. My cloused. Our worded. The neighbors sour the air with plans—with investments of topical industry. You're underwhelmed as golden and I'm overhyped as unironed. Together we're smelter for brimstone. We concentrate our ors, our conjunctive choice. The hard earth yields glitter. May we reveal all of our extra excess. May the neighbors magma from their core. May the ash deepen across our earned duplicity. The blood-moon ruddies my refracted gaze. Actuality mounted. I've spent my very finest savorings on your requited apprehension. By nightfall we'll ignore our most daunting knowledge. The rare, the stable, and the molten. You aslant on the granite slab. The night may come when we won't relate to our exhibited neighbors. The night may yet come when we won't cherish our lighter fare or our weightier dose, when we'll select the congenital as fairest, when we'll champion the real over the proper. The nights of nights will come when our train in our rift—my patch off your rip, your coupler round my spool—will take way and parallel and recede and point, will shunt and tighten and vibrate and snap, will coil and snag and whistle and fray, will do what all nights do and have done to arrive and vanish and stay these nights.

Kill the time that stalks your heart: again by thoughts: and by surface of substance: the trill and chunk of sound: shock waves, motion, verticals of hope, opposals and cleavings of mass as must be wrought, and the substance of surface: your frontal aggression toward the delicate bias and fluences of my ivory trust: in the musculatures and knots of stripped memory: your pleated fates: your molasses sorrying: your songs of wee woe have all been sung and stored on lacquered shelves: I'll take your safe aesthetics and toss them to the ruby scavengers out on the unrepeatable slate: in the shadows of our savage breathings we'll mock every homage to transverse quality, and we'll let love traverse our knobs: our notions, our horizontals of change: appraisals and sleeveings with moss upon our wrongs: again by sensations: and here come ways to die: every way to die: but only one will penetrate the oval boundary of my release: if I could choose my way to go I'd choose every way to go, an impossible choice made by my wishing to venture beyond linear limitation, beyond the tracings any story-spine permits, beyond the meanness of melodic memes, and by every way I mean every fatal way that ever was or will be, heroic or ridiculous, tragically stupid or tenderly comic, resulting from betrayal or sacrifice, self-inflicted or circumstantially anonymous, those brutal or banal or cancerous norms, those eccentric rarities, those statistical clumpings, all of them, every one, beyond category into utter specificity, the altogether particular and ordinary ways we die, and the choice would be a failed one from the obvious centric wisdom of our mortal collective, since by experiencing every option I'd actually experience none, not fully, not in its isolated individuality as the one chosen just for me, its sure resemblance to those of others but all mine nonetheless, the very one of billions, and the choice would be a failure—as unallowable—and so I'll choose whatever cup of poison is handed me, I choose it now in this fading daylight before the night plays with my fancies and fabrications, before the darkness fiddles with my acquiescence and makes me shake with resentment, my refusal to dance a single step in their dance not commensurate with not dancing at all, and I'll jig and jolly with my love and our loving in the most ferocious rapture of abandonment, our amazing grace in our own founding of the quietest success, a success so silent only the flames and the soil that will receive us can now hear it, a success so resounding it creates its own space where space won't otherwise exist, air in the mind of a creation older and oldest still, my ebullience not diminishable to delusion or hyperbole or denial, death as amplification of witness, the vital capping to seal the deal, fleeting sunlight passing over monuments even as our sun outlasts our monoliths of enterprise and servility, the fervor of the gods and their champions and their followers: broken columns of hubris: enough you say: enough saying of what's been said: said by me and said by my dead heroes and said by my living betters: said in cigar bars and library dusk and shoreline opulence: said across spans of surge and fall and intricate cognition evolving from mistakes: spin my head with the oxygen of language derived from wind and water: that chemical indifference toward harsh generosity: asymmetrical innocence as dazzling gift: smothered aspect of bone and the original colors of peasant madness behind relic glow: unpolish my veneer if you dare: roughen my palms with your violent calculations: cut your face on my words: bleed on my accusations and I'll hollow out your trees of blame: I can't care for your faded tropes or your steamy tropics or your topical flair: I won't pay your grinder to get some monkey off my back: don't save me that seat on the stage: spirit me through your wet alleys: keep my mind spry enough to hurt.

Empathy doesn't suit me, sadly, and the planet spins on unwitnessed. My ordinal won't cardinal and my moon isn't red. But I fever—and in fevering I cover ground I've already covered and I cover it with the residue of nervous unknowing. I fever in the broad sunlight of a desert life accompanied by good will and intelligence and volition and shade. My mental heat melts sand into glass and through that glass I peer into the resplendent chambers of tempered shapes and temporal forms—of impossible zero, of planetary insignificance. I burn into the fullness of expanded energy in a universe not yet gone cold. My small life of little thoughts. My big moments of tiny shifts and massive adjustments. I think into darkless rooms of light-stunned shadow. People work hard and struggle to make sense of toil and failure and love and die and disappear back into dreams. We fever through dreams and faint toward computational restitution. People suffer leisure and struggle to make sense of wealth and disease and hope and die and disappear back into dreams. Fever arises out of illness and my illness arose from my imagination as clean steam from fresh snow on a stove brow in contemplation of what stays unheard, fragments remembered in isolation, a shower taken alone or a shower not taken alone, gorgeous day or inclement night, strapping lad or man weary to distraction, the eternal feminine or a figment of a burnt mind, reverting to life's earliness, those initial gauzy impressions of what won't be mastered, kindness and inclusion and nightly abandonment, enforced aloneness and smothering attention, love and autonomy, cradle to crib to carriage to bunkbed to own bed to shared beds to hospital bed to coffin, this traditional trajectory of probability but not promise, with calm stretches between fevers, or chills in the damp shroud, the fevers of creation and the chills of recoil, shiver and flail, scatter and fixate and curl to sleep, some afternoon blusters enough to carry leaves from tree to tree, to blow them into your clammy dreams, to blow them out to fields untended, dry and wet and dry and wet, this natural flux of ground and skin, seepage and sweat, and I hear the orchestras from the old fens playing for the crags and dells, strings swept down to kettle thrum, winds brought round to polish bones, woven hair to horn the knobs, sticks of brass to curb the wood, noise in my static that moistens my lungs and throb in my gut that signals my coda, sickness short of perish, church erect to time, rivulet of tributary to amplify the serge, thrash the covers to the floor and air the pillow warmth, the tightness of our weaves and the thread counts of our thoughts—the day is gray and will stay that way, and I'll surge along with my local sinfonia to the very cliffs of you. I fever—and in fevering I crucible my isolation into a corrupt godliness of containment. I fever in the gloom of elaborate inadequacy, in a world that can't save itself from its impending doom, impending as in eventual, even if it's yet young, even if its ambitions still have wheels, even if it has the advantages of location and access, the statures of devotion and dignity, one hand near the lamp switch and one hand full of endings, eyes on a former distance, this fevering for insight to pattern knowledge, for intuition to juice the mansion into a lasting celebration of fragility, a snapping of delicate filaments, a flickering of the only candle, a flutter of the heart and a rasp in the lungs, the sounds of someone breathing alone in a velvety room in a velvety chair too massive to give comfort, the sea tugging at the land, the land squirming under starshine from forces too far away to cause concern or bring concern or be concerned with the rise and fall of the temperature of my body, this composite body I'm thought to inhabit, thought by me from within its frame and thought by me from outside its failure.

Mule me to your waters swift and let me cross through fears and dry me in the working sun to come upon the stables dark and time will burn them flat and we might feel the hasps of harm and I might wicked the illusion cross and you could scrape the pit for flakes of shine and we'll still work for stallion speed and down the grass on beauty ridge and swallow hard the sad afflict and pattern out the rough accost and damage comes to those who wait and those who won't and script my post in dark veneer and still my ride to amble's ease and taunt my flames to hilly gold and black the valleys wide and I won't fell the tawny curve and you won't tell the totem's pulse and we'll propel the ground to sister's seven and they'll impel the shone to mother's scar and I was told to wait for worthier crowns amid the grope and stare and they were wrong as wrong could be under winter's wayward star and I'll soon wander stupor's slope to see the coming slide into the ocean's marbled maw away from paisley air and swirl my blame round lillies cold and block the passes tight and I won't bell the true dawn's bend and you won't kneel to grasp and war and they were wrong as wrong could be under summer's purposed glare and we'll fathom sea swell into next door tubs and I was shown my father's wake upon the lake of fire and you have mused in sparrow fields of cardigan and prowl and she was pure as pure could be that daughter never born and you might keel my paper skiff and I might steal your hammer wool and we might congregate in the grave as splendor ripples to its banks and starlings rise and murmurate above our poor excuse and hallelujahs to the brink and potter's stew poured down the sink and our gurgling of the strangled will and their wringing of the mangled won't and round the rack comes glare of hope and by the white we hoist our rope and up your bomb we shove our doubts and out the gate we gallop force and with the gore we advocate the acid of the bottom rage and slake the pauper with the booze and blink against the borrowed stink and correlate the language skew to propagate the patterns rued that avid us to gentler fade within the pale of slighter bold and I won't scowl the awesome pitch that reels us to the slicken rail and when the stiff awakens fresh we'll celebrate the broken rest and quantify the brawny straight and qualify the power's ruse and propulsion found in brother's wheels will launch us into gutter flip and I was shy to gaze at lofted goals amid the scope and spar and they were right as right could be under autumn's sorrow care and soon I'll carry causal weight toward slanted shelves of meek and I won't bow to rasp or mar and you won't ribbon twilight's stall and we can't farm the local park and every lack that sparks revolt will spawn a pool of going back and they were wrong as wrong could be along spring's muddy spur and we'll carom newsy spells in central air in middle rooms of lamps sketched dim or shallow yards of rub and rusted coils of sprung regard in beds of daily merge and in our days of feign and ruse before our nights of risk we bracket cheer with sober charts of calculated grail and we have sung in parrot cages near polyester scrawl in vestibules of recent make from ancient sermons stole and I'll mark your while if you'll mink my grist and every perk that calms the mob will pawn a rule of doing fair and a rotter's soup of situate won't calcify my pride and drip after drip of cavern salt won't falsify my claim that love is worth the broader stroke as well as focus fine and I will jolt your margined life if you will steward mine into a field of depth and mien with attitude to rend true from real and strange from caught and we might feel the clasp of charm in handsome shake of charisma's bolt even as we sunset fact beyond horizon's fate and saunter toward our fantastic gift of oblivion absolute.

Set the sun into your mouth as if your good were you. Till what you are is meant for yours. From what you say an angle joins less dark. Try to warmth the look. Or encircle yourself and do perfect the interior panorama of the encircling ring. Validation apt. Aesthetic chance. Flaws as necessary on the perfection span. Swallow light. Children out the eyes of hysteria. The taste of fire. From what you say an angel comes in sudden flame. We unsmoked the deviled apology. The fox can sure do what the sure lion can't. Try to disappearance the pride. Or incriminate yourself and due process the inferior cinema of the suffocating box. Application rapt. Patriotic glance. I'll go. But I won't cheer. I'll die. But I won't fight. Flow as necessary above the inflection scan. Shallow flight. Children in the guise of asphyxia. Odors from the pyre. We unmasked the gaudy anthology. Then I saw you through the gaps in the fence as you walked its perimeter and I thought I was watching you watch me but you were watching me watch you and I'm often the gaze but seldom the gazed. Try to cornerstone the kit. Or envision yourself and redo the ulterior agenda of the entangling square. Rest and flew—attrition dance. Now I know you as the sound of surf and midday planes and a eucalyptus breeze. That was the shallow plight of a rendition nap. There is in all of this day a spot of darkness just for me. We futured creative. Our history attends. Pig-tailed girls in sunday clothes on pogo-sticks in front of suburban homes. When a boy I jumped over a culvert and while in the air I saw the coiled rattlesnake that didn't strike, as my lightning wouldn't strike, hasn't struck. You unleashed the bawdy ontology. Upon my nature was inflicted being and upon my being all of nature is pertinent. We feature incentives. Our mystery appended. Pony-tailed girls in saturday clothes with pom-poms in front of subaltern clans. When a youth I fell asleep at the wheel and while the car skittered from the saving embankment I felt the absence that would wait, that waits still, that won't wait forever. As a child avoiding church I hid amid the wisteria vines—my floral images of arrogance and melancholy twining. As a man avoiding death I hide among wistful thoughts—my choral collages of innocence and anger blent. I wish I could survive on tap water and sunlight. I wish we could understand absence from positions of presence. I wish I could inject my cottage-knowledge, my accumulated silt, my self of selves into a compelling narrative of global resonance. Now I know you as skeleton candy and middrift hollows and a frozen eucharist. The gaps are always way too long between my auditions and subsequent for-one-night-only showtimes. Behest and rehearsal—condition stance. There isn't in all of my private night a legitimate complaint to be made to the burning stars. If new words were to roll around in my mouth like a honeymoon couple, I'd spit them out. If new thoughts were to come to me in my sleep, I'd wake comatose. If new times were to flood my memory-fields—swollen tributaries into some river of identity, some watery you up to my eaves, some lone notion clinging to a chimney-top, brought to me out of multiversal chaos or universal order, long spells in the honey of lunar generosity, tide upon tide in the nevergone, energy become space and space experienced into energy, choice compounded with reflection and the smell of the very one's skin, light upon throat and eyes upon bloom, a mathematical constant or a morning's oddity, your gait and my stride, your gate and my pulse—I'd sluice and duct and bail and divert, I'd punt goodness to delta escape, I'd sun as roof till your nights set us loose to drift along shores to lands of stranger meaning in a circle of angles, valence songs to the impossible whole, the joyous ring of finite voices in crazed love with their stationless points and their moving horizons.

Enmity doesn't suit you, thankfully, and heaven warm-shoulders your twirl. It'll set you down safe in your equal blood. But you sever—and in severing you'll hover above my sound as if my sounds were anything but those of an animal succumbing to its fate. You sever my narrow strait with an intrusion of good will and intelligence and cove-coalition and matter. With my way to the open sea blocked, I navigate and adore the lake, exploring its finite shapes and its fine features—of fathomable intricacy, of explanatory significance. I ripple toward the earthen boundaries of a corporeal form not yet transformed. My pond life of ocean thoughts. My moss moments of local adventure and loyal play. I sink into unlit depths of time-shunned uncertainty. We shirk work and desire reconciliation with our past nature as living animal and our present assurance as social organism and our future potential as improvable mind. People sever themselves from the mystical mess. We endure entertainment and desire intimacy with the cosmos. Severance originates in connectivity, and our tether together is ridge-to-ridge imagination, as wires in the sun from pole to pole across secluded vales, telegraphing what stays unheard, figments recollected in company, an estuary swum or reeds beloved, banisters garlanded or lamps sparking, willowy lass or women of the world across our neon nights, the mean testosterone or travels in constants, subverting life's timeline, that artificial stretch of what can't be plotted, existence and incident and daily calibrations, what ought to be the individual and what must be the collective, auto-erotic merge, alpha to omega to zero to infinity to one to forty to never to always to conception to decomposition, this causal continuum of expectation and progression without breaks in the stream, without folds in the flow, the severe creation of galvanizing simultaneity and unsameness, increment and identity, patter and pixilate and bend to new, some morning bright enough to convey speed, to blast it into our uninterrupted, to shock us out of our box-sit, positive and negative and negative and positive, this conditional toggle of force, mammoth and weak, and I feel the blows of that ancient forge upon my chest and brow, fake iron in my spine, cobalt and sulphur in my spleen, my fingers sparked to sear my ribs, my cells agleam as short-lived amulets, there will be no more sages, and some percentage of our monsters will disappear, specks of light unmoving, stillness shy of absent, monoliths of mind, our weld of artifice and seduction, our sleep in attic-must among the obsolescent and the quaint, our bed of laughter and projections and bygone motes of lonesome—the night is white with lessons of snow, and you'll sleigh behind your horses to the very ridge of me. You sever—and in severing you sensible my affection into a native cleanliness of sustainment. You sever gloam from dawn and noon from nightmare, in a psyche that can't save itself from analysis, their intense probe, youth as foundation and maturity as battlefields, ridgetop vantage and supply trains orderly and magnificent, the impressive discipline of sound positioning, one hand on the blade at the jugular and one on the pedestal book before the swift cut, this severing of image from story, of sensibility from sensation, the metaphor hideout and the narrative ambush, our liberty to ride the range alone with death as our only destination, far from fields of harvest, far from bodies strained behind spring plows, far from my own worn summery self slung into a porch hammock on a day I suspect was imagined all along, the sky begging forgiveness of the land and the land turning its privacy away from the sea, my mental vulnerability of no matter to them, of no consequence to the future them or you or anyone, this mind you inhabit, brought to me by the purposes of chance without any ingredients of rapture.

Temporality never slew the loves of ages, not at the stroke of midnight nor at highest noon, all hands to heaven, a dozen whistle blasts at the depot with destinations urged, the necessary parting that nature enforces, trains not off to everywhere, just lots of somewheres (not quite anywheres and certainly not nowheres), the perpendicular sun or the bewitching hour, showdown or pumpkin or unspeakable horrors, oppositional entropy and conditional nightmare, and so I went walking at the height of day, as if across a homogenized cosmos, my heat death, with love enduring, as love must, and you approached my mind with some counterfeit ticket of access, thinking you could enter the kingdom in that intellectual outfit, in that fancified get-up of containment and memorization, in those shoes you parade only with reserve because the soles might suffer and grow so worn you'd have to conjure a cobbler or purchase another pair (as though that style would still be available, *as though*), your lack of confidence as palpable as your astonishing potential, your pecky attitude insufficient to carry the day or eliminate the seed, a victim of the fashionistas, neither transgressive nor underground, a tradition to be undermined but not ignored, and I forgot to bring a hat and my brain baked, that figurative nonsense, the engines pulling the freight, the tracks gleaming to their vanishing points, your poetic wardrobe as tacky as it is sophisticated, mishmashed and impure and availed and dynamic, too old-fashioned and too topical, our prose as prone to sunstroke as to lockjaw or molder or dysentery, gerunds askew or absent or oppressive, telling to be tolled, superstitions around the analog clock and its artificial representations, and all of my walks lead to a promontory, and I stand there, with or without you, with or without any of you, and peering into the distance I think I see a past and a future come together for me as a tableau, and not just any past or any future, but our pasts and our futures, whoever we are together, even if you aren't with me or weren't ever with me or won't ever be with me, a timeline delivered as a plane and reduced to a point, shiny and dimensionless, an impossible thing to be convinced of, and as I stare at the point of light that also is a point of darkness I apprehend all of a sudden that it isn't our futures and pasts imploded into a singularity, that it isn't time at all, neither as pulsar nor as paradox, neither recognizable as time nor hidden as timelessness, but just an imagined particularity from an imagined point of vantage, just a conceptual marvel, something we can embrace as ours, as ours and ours alone, our unique single-stitch seam, our peculiarity, and all of my walks must lead back from the promontory, back to my station as lover and father and clerk, as brother and uncle and son, as southpaw and caucasian and pawn, back to these days of privilege and grind, of litany and cuss, these days and these nights that form our lives, tracked or haphazard, derailed or balletic, these days in which I weave and wobble, hesitant at the crossroads and dizzy at the precipice, these days of second children and angry birds, what has been said a million times and what can't be said at all, with time to conceive but without time to kill, with time for a story or two but without time for the spiral to close, with time in your watershed or time in your flesh (with time in your confidence or time in your pole, with time in your hyphenation or time in your wound), one remembering one's northern time, working the words to catch the moth, nothing attracted in the end, nothing chewed here and nothing flamed there, the roof-blanch under the sky-whirl, my shoddy withdrawal, your active rasp, the hard-trip and the rift-map, our air filled with disapproval, our sweat pooled into eventuality, the coming of more life and more death and more heart-flash and mind-settle across days upon days.

Tempt me into passion for ideas of paramount simplicity, some mid-morning or early bedtime, our cat lives in our avoidance of messier affairs, peak purity in clockwise resilience, whatever within us is resistant to party-lure or sleep-it-off consequence, the ennead that is our circles of concern, our hours of effort and regret and excuses around lucky survival and whatever mistakes we are allotted, what we get away with until there is no getting away (with anything), and so I went walking within the leisure of morning, as if I had all the time in the world—although the world itself is also doomed (as just another mortal entity)—and I thought of you wandering about in your quirky outlook, looking for vindication or trusty mentorship, your place on the proscenium contingent upon a ubiquitous stage, life as theater with a solitary entrance and a solitary exit, meridian to meridian, that old saw, my fondness for your possum ambition, your intricate language insufficiently compressed, my snow from an earlier reverie, and while I sat with you in a chateau of fabricant memory I passed a deserted playground of rusted metal and missing swings, one chain hanging without purpose, sand gone to weeds, and I felt no sadness, only a sense of time passing, time doing what time does, in false alpine seclusion and in harsh urban decay, our prevarications elaborate around this truth, time never settling, spaces never fully mapped, the old academy dressed to the nines and the new academy dressed to kill, and you praise your constructed clarity over my organic opaqueness and swear you respect me nevertheless, pointing to the arrangement of the planets or a model of a molecule or a sculpted female nude, and all of my walks lead me to a lake and a swim and an outcropping, and I lie there, with or without you, with or without any of you, and staring into the sky—into the gray or white or black or blue, the occasional proverbial bird (by day) or shooting star (by night) crossing our bell jar’s interior, my snowglobe of projection—I feel the hour seducing me into relaxation, into an ease of situational stasis, so I tensed myself into the past and swam after your illusion, but I was the weaker swimmer, the weaker spirit, and I couldn’t imagine myself overtaking you, not without you imagining yourself being overtaken (by me), or you imagining the outcropping as a place of rendezvous (with me), or you fabricating a storm-possibility that could chase us indoors, that could take us to a shareable room for a shareable night, or a long sequence of nights, or many nights as one simultaneous nightness folded into itself as dark warmth, our recollection of a collaborative imagining, and all of my walks must deliver me back from the post-swim lake, back to raw almonds and apple slices, to sacred chorales and shredded noise, to reading what’s already been read, back to these days of gratifying attempt, of principle and lamentation, these days and these nights that shape our lives, lured or seized, discarded or cradled, these days in which I flail and flounder, mocked by the rocks or drowned in your wake, these days of data and malnutrition, what language has the nerve to approach and what language can’t touch, with time to shed pretense but without time to shed time, with time for make-believe but without time for vision, with time in your yonder or time in your nerve (with time in your sequence or time in your crown, with time in your guesswork or time in your guise), one remembering one’s western time, shagging around the edges of our shared bed, other to selves and self to others, and I’ll make my particular universal and my ordinary strange, and I’ll take my punishment outdoors in the open, well aware that patterns collude and green losses haunt, that thunder shakes and tidepools lure, the leavings of change and trace and more bodies than minds embroiled in our spectral nights.

Laden me with what your longitude bequeaths. Dare me not with substance of position. Don't let it go to your head. Unraveling—of the psychological sort—assigns separation to the mental threads, the critical from the sacreth toy. I stay where I'm most needed, even here, even now, alone in my tatters. I won't share this old ragged quilt with just any wandering stranger, with just any self. Somewhere snow falls upon the wicked and the good and the poppies. There are spots in my fraying mind where things never edge clean or wide enough to patch. I can't put my head to sleep without harming my hands. Chroniclers can't hide hiddenness. Anything but these fond hands, weak and strong, or the vivacious colors in the gutters of your library of secretions. We can't hook sense to grammar as trim. We can't sweeten art smothered in ironies made by the sport of boys. We can't (we can't!) resolve creative differences with the stuff of magic potions. We'll fight better fights in the streets as rehearsals for godhood. We can't (we can't!) revolve around our own proxy-created personalized spaces of time. We can't easily unpoison our neighborhood well. We can't sync our living voices to the flurries and torrents of this world. Nothing will keep us from our individual appointments with independent exit consultant strategists. The cinders in my mind's grate fade to cool to gray to white. You won't fall for my threats to quit this space. Paradise comes to me in the margins only if I hover in the center of my cell. Patterns must be set and patterns must be broken and patterns must elude. I hauled my sacks of nonsense to the bunker of your winter reaches. Those cream hills. That black valley. The pitch of proof. You're no burden, here with me, in this moment, breath and breath, till we don't. My spent, your tantamount. Unraveling—of the identity kind (the fraying self)—separates the I from the all, the thread from the eye. An old friend is beaten to death by strangers and it has nothing to do with me. If I were a pardoner, I'd tap your spine. If I were a jack, I'd let you shadow me. Mine my tux. Hind my crown. I'm faltering, wearier. I'm matching lux to mass. Mathematics ripen, but our oddest equations aren't harvested. Tails will shorten to make the simplest plottings look steep. Come stride with the likes of me across static forms and you'll wish for impossible motion. We'd sooner solve the empirical obvious than the abstract apparent, the problems with the real knowns than the pale melancholies of mystery. Evening solutions are never as surprising as we in the morning light might wish them. The storm and stress of contrast isn't worth the upset of acceptance. We have no choice but to willfully change our minds. I didn't know what thoughts to share when it was time to speak my peace. I didn't know what prayers to bleed when it was time to wash my wounds. I didn't know what rations were mine when it was time to shush and survive. The mall merry-go-round burst into flames and ashed the children quick, and the storefronts kept advertising to verify our loss. Where you are is where I'll incline, but I won't adhere indefinitely to this loose inscrutable plane. Allow me something similar to spiritual faith, something close to the decency of neighborhood trust. Standards rot if not consumed and my ethics are too stalled by situation and there are my gold stars but why aren't I placated and where is the very one very awake or why must I sleep and what matter the sun if souls are for keeps and till the sky turns green I'll twist wishes into my clones. Dust swirls through my chest and movement worms into my heart and you rush toward me as emotional clarity twirled into flesh and I fiction my reaction by ranges of response as the imposter sweep of vanish disrupts me and disperses me and disappears me across the spanse of this slate in these days we take for granted at exceptional cost.

Elude me, yesterday's prayers, those of unnecessary completion, my alphabet construct, mortar in the cracks, prayers yearned into yesterday's mists, prayers brought to me by tortoise patience and dwindled options, the donor prayer, to die before my body is broken down and useless to anyone else, before it is closer to soil than sinew, this body that deserved better than this mind, any body that won't ever be paraded feeling lucky in its skin, and the juror prayer, selected just this once to be attentive and impartial, to concentrate on the facts and nothing but the facts, to serve justice in the land of the caught or the free, and the lunar prayer, to live one night at highest tide with lycanthropic disclosure, the dark land giving way to the darker sea, dispensing honesty without pose or bravery, and the nadir prayer, to be shown my lowest point without ornamental judgment, the frozen valley of strong hands and hearth-homes, and the organ prayer, to be a grand instrument of rolling and thundering sounds heard by the angels in their leisure and by the church janitor shoveling coal into the furnace in the basement, pedals pressed and pipes flushed of their mortal dust, and the razor prayer, the sharpest-edged humility of the hairless or the dismissal of the willfully hirsute, the cutting of the conduit from heart to mouth, and the xerox prayer, to mimic acts of goodness that don't come naturally, that have never come naturally to me, repeatable kindnesses without smudge or delay, and the zebra prayer, the grayless patterns to pique the instincts of hungry hyenas, the contrast I adore unless paired with the color of straw, my pale gray and paler yellow fantast, stray dear prayers elude me, yesterday through every tomorrow, my wishes gasped to the beleaguered gods, my pleas for compact resolution, the donor prayer, that volunteer inclination in private, my philanthropic death, my sundry objects of metal and wood redistributed to the junk heaps of my old neighborhoods, and the juror prayer for collaborative truth, for insight into the fairness of ethical force, apostolic majority or unanimous joy, and the lunar prayer, those brackish complications of mental entanglements, moon violence done upon proverbial boy and prolific girl, a forgotten intensity of waterless craters, and the nadir prayer, in zenith partnership, I've had my ferris wheel moments when I couldn't get off, and the organ prayer, cockle fugues to warm the wings, every carnival and every soul, the undead dream, and the razor prayer, strop and slice, the whitest road gone red, nicks too late and the unsaved day, and the xerox prayer, enhancing flaws through repetition, the same and not the same to keep the generosity genuine, the one flirts with the all while the all struts as the one, and the zebra prayer, thumbprint individuality, our patterns of uniqueness within recognizable frames, my place in the herd where the teeth come sharp, these ultra prayers without you, without surfaces to land upon, elusive as unspoken flakes of melting want, so that when I said the last prayer you taught me it burned my tongue, so that when my inevitable silence turns permanent without turning gold I won't be around to shoulder the blame, so that when we drop to our knees at the unapocalyptic altar on the unapologetic anvil of our implacable and uninvited night we shouldn't try to conquer the divide by harrowing bracken with sympathy blades or claim space with black and white markers of boundary slide or haunt the upper hallways with gifts of dominant choice or clone our complex gestures with any green flash and blur or chord the twisted stairwells with stocking coal or verify the crime with intuitive fluster or wolf the throat with crescent phase or lower the lowering with some shared shame from our unprayerful pack and bury the remains of the day in a vital experience we're all bound to forget.

Methodology, to work the knees, lubricant of the penitent, forgive. Storm-care, the stacking of logs, solitude for the kingdom, woolen. Implicate, health to the near horizon, rat-a-tat, simplicity. You gave me the bulk of your life and it has proven itself a most remarkable and spectacular gift. House plush. Chime-children. If these trees could talk. I went barefoot down to the fountain to see the water shine with duty. Darkness glitters, wrest. We're going where we're going. A gaffe of the meteorological elite. Tin cans and twine, some future of sorrow, aversion risk and amethyst. Corona's sun. I won't levitate. Your skin is the only skin. Thorough is the stun and adamant the stare. We can't avoid the mess, our comet succumbing to intensity, lonely ice unable to steer clear of star-heat. I couldn't shun the light that filled the space. The flower flamed. The milk spilled. The water shone with duty. As I turned toward the window, my elbow knocked over the glass. What an awful chance we took with happiness at stake. All of the extension cords in this world couldn't reach that outlet. We exhaust our battery with distance. You save what I underthrow and grasp what I overcurve. The heavenly life sleeps in the room beneath the stairs. Wood dusk, velveteen. Word musk, sensitive. Every rustle of every leaf (any rustle of any leaf)—air vitality, causal existence—your breath on my ambition. Stress-core, pack dogs, mass graves for the starved, stollen. We should stand candled at noon and just melt into history. Here we shake a cone toward hurt by horses. This old fellow. Took our poison. Leave our bodies as they are ruined. Holidays blurred. Cheer-road. Lored the difficult gear. Architecture (entombed). Lives in brushed honey. Retribution light. You came penniless up to the fountain to wish for right surprise. In our lunar angle, combings. Yard desolate. Free to pure the gaze. We swung and courted and housed the vows. Then, stag and fawn and intricate doe. Then, deepest green shelter in imagined wallpaper, corridor wilderness, lazaral youth. The plaid of bedrooms heavy with harp. Static-cure, a shack of cogs, wintry in the highest, molt. We are wonder in the thick of night. Stellar's rays. You don't hesitate. My spin is the only spin. Though we hang and advent the dared. Happy bluebird up the chimney. Stars twinkle above our gallows. Cinders for kids. Soured water, breast. Temple sharp. Some clear day will defang our fads of taboo. We impress our sluttery with filth. You gave me overtow and underdo. The emperor speeds to the gods and the people feast. I wish I could articulate treebark. Cats meow. You fast. My tick-tock. There are beasts walking among us and that won't ever change. Could-lust. Would-dust. Attractive, wolverine. Snarl my traffic to the falls. Restitution sight. Purr-fear. Everything is all right when contentment is at hand. Tough to unmonk and convent the dread. There exist many unpublished preludes to the deaths of friends. Vapor eyes. I've spent the night holding your ghost. Crain stall. We can't reach the stars above our dreams. As I turned toward the bridge, I felt my knees buckle. What a frightful fall we took with knowledge at stake. Wicked revision. Antennas to life-rafts of prayers. Into us must groan our way home. Still fun. Coast to rivulet. Look upon what is left. I'm not expecting you to tell me what to do—to novate me—but I wouldn't mind an open door to spare my knuckles. Avatize self. We're blood-blame. We're cream-filled. The holy water is made holy by its hydrogen and oxygen, its parts outlasting its whole. You know things I'll never know and I know things you'll never know and if knowledge depends upon memory and memory is tethered to the brain and the brain to the body and our species is finite—we aren't souls unless souls pass through—our souls are mute travelers—we must account for origins and destinations we intuit don't exist—we're innocent.

Ease on down the road to where the thistles veer the crowds. There'll be a place for you in the big outdoors. There was a place for us in the woolly thickets. There's a blue flame where my heart should be. You took some clay into your fist and threw it to the ground—I felt your loneliness and took pity on you and shifted from where I was to where you are to where I am to be with you. From the mire I rose to meet your need—you bore me more children that we could feed. You put your hand on my wisdom and if you'll wait for me I'll come with you. We are all one another's endless distance. In the waning days of this culture, as it struggles for breath, your conventions become the conditions of our plight, the constrictions on creative escape, the bonds of excessive freedom, the confusion of any frantic crossroads or the sterility of any overfarmed field. Follow a path or get lost in the brambling. Our event horizons can't be avoided. There'll be a place for us in heaven's suburbs. There was a place for me in your neighborly hedge. There's a form where your formlessness should be. You shook some tinsel from my tree and made it live with love—you felt for my solitude and populated the mansion with everything more than one could want. We are all implicated in collapsing space. Out of milieu comes zeitgeist and in one's verier time one must falter, the falling short of crucial ideals, the unsurpassable critical mass of the world as it is. Erase the future and whistle to steer the herd. There'll be a place for me on the mercurial heath. There was a place for you in my bruised study. There's earth-noise where our air-silence should be. I'll sun the sound and brighten the sleep and dial the dreams to our spectrum-sharp account of the new beyond—we thought you were sensational—and somewhere there's an infinity girl with petals pressed between forgotten leaves and notions risen to a southerning star and somewhere there's a friend with equal passion for idea and actuality who isn't too oblique to my coordinates and somewhere my hands move with precision and intuitive confidence over changeable stone. Larklift. Water-vanquished luxury. Cornet's skitter. We are all the swirl that drags us under. I'll beg the sound to tighten the sleep and style my dreams into color-harps of angelic chill—we knew you wouldn't compromise—and somewhere there's a re-occurring scheme of life-spin meant to disorient the earnest and curious and diligent and somewhere there's an alchemy of sparks and refusals and entanglements that mark the flesh as sunset-brand and somewhere my words burn into wood as lust and the wood petrifies into rock and the rock is as burnished steel within a monument to self-control. Horntwitch. Light-languished royalty. Bass bent wounds. Now I lie me into deep and stay aboard my soul's sunk keep and should my sea flow past my wake it won't pretend my thirst to slake. And I'm full-aware it isn't my time to pinnacle and it isn't your time to fathom—those times won't unfold within memory—not mortal memories broken down into discernible components with surface areas of concrete certitude—and I'm dull-oblivious to tomorrow's glow and all potential redemption—not salvage of the economical or ecological sort but reversals of abstract fortune. Harmcove. Sound-anguished loyalty. Organ shake. Then the pinking of the sky and the sun tries to rise but fails: and we'll redistribute our poverty and reattribute our causes: and thorns rip our tidings toward a red sorrow we can't dissuade: and while we tarry in our eternal dawn or coral-dark this side of day truth takes a wild vacation and honesty calls out drunk from the crimson shore: and every lesson earned in theory is lost in practice when we confront our five-leaf clover guilt: plum-stain: two-fold promise in the bed of beds: and there is the window and there are the imagined moving rays of light and here is where I'll stake my claim.

Nettles aren't found in our wishes, not those we haven't made, not those still-scoped to unsting. We bow low to the unknown from our great floor of ignorant freedom. The old tears are our favorites and they once flowed to the strangest sea. A helpless child won't raze cathedrals, but muddy waters will ruin our mausoleums of nostalgia. A hapless man won't feel happiness as he crawls past the altar seeking blood for his hands. It doesn't matter that we've abandoned and been abandoned. It doesn't matter that the time slipping away from us is a constant. I do so wish you happiness and I wish you happiness always and again. But the neighborhood won't stay stationary and the sea roils and roils and the mansion creaks and settles. Settle, structure, settle. Come down the stairs into the study, my love, and flow through the biggest book. Move, motion, toward your place within the sun's sun. It doesn't matter that relativism is the silent assassin. It doesn't matter that we can't establish our worth. I do too so want the perfect cocktail of contentment and adventure and surprise for you. But the pool is drained and the view is broken and the waiting awaits more waiting. Restless waters beyond sight, restless lives beyond belief. Make the night air shine in summer showers, drop by drop, slowing time to observation, following attraction. Geometric accuracy over numerical poignancy. We sure cause ourselves—our waters roil—kettles on open flames. I'll walk the new way with you down the mountain toward some iconic joy of arrival. A doorbell ringing in the middle of the night can't be good and simple. My body will wash ashore and dissipate somewhere along the great banks. Your mind will float through the orange groves away from that suffocating bungalow. Our spirits will someday escape these subject-verb-object straightjackets but it won't be this day. What society built up—we'll watch the spaces between words tear down. Imagine an unsolvable problem and jot it on the board. It doesn't matter that situations won't align with our aspirations. It doesn't matter whether or not the destinations of our stories match their origins. Petals strewn on a corpse. From what I know of the world, it appears we've been dealt the cards to risk the worst and capmangoe. Here comes everything our way—the sun and the blue moon and the black swear—our palms plentiful with an array of love. Burrs in our socks show our fondness for wayfaring—not the aggression of bushwhacking or the flaunty dodge of a roaming trainwreck, but the control of a goat and a ram on a windswept ridge above the fray. We kowtow to the unknowable from our earned vistas of tethered comfort. Ancient fears keep us content to be grounded in a cheerful room with a changing view. The royal trowel—too smart not to be an old maid. The royal pain—won't jig a solitary step. It doesn't matter that the girl died too young in her family's car accident. It doesn't matter that they're not responsive to the subterranean whirr. Boil, dreams, boil. Watch the crumbling building open itself to your charms, my lucky stars. Stay, heart, in your place of cool willingness. This arbor at the edge of Eden. This planet on its dizzying axis and rounding track. All of matter on the move toward dark renewal. All of anti-matter asquat, comfy and cozy, while spinning yarns around campfires. All of the math girls writing their proofs in menstrual blood. My hand shakes trying to wind the clock unchimed. The end of our sun will soon provide bright moments of silent wonder to all of those just galaxies away. Take my hand and we'll cross the noisy boulevard toward park accrual. It doesn't matter that we've been given what everyone isn't given. It doesn't matter that our design is a free design of remarkable chance. We'll be illuminated by flashes of wild and bewildering ideas on a dead-slant morning at a vast window in a place we've never been.

Tempestuousness never brokered my annoyance, not at deepest night or dead of afternoon, our triangulated security, our insistence upon action around the oblivious and the indolent, triad abandon and triple-wrong effort, the laziest and the most dangerous hours, daydreams of escape and night terrors alone with the clingy bedcovers, sweat and dispersal, optical fact conversations gone way too long or a hammock bereft of another contemplative or co-dozer, and so I went walking in the torpor of an inconsequential day, as if by strolling or striding I could counter the malaise with agitation, with feverish aplomb, going where I wasn't allowed or where I was unwanted, as trespasser or interloper or nuisance, convinced, temporarily, that it was time, now or never, to assert myself, to be an aggressive force of incontrovertible charisma and not merely a nebulous eccentric, also wishing I were at some celebration in the wee hours of the mansion, with champagne (just enough) and roofless swirl, talking about the darkest place, or the darker place in lighter times, and as I sauntered in the afternoon's embrace, wanting to act out while also wishing to be coddled, I came upon a tragedy in the making (not a life-or-death situation, just the loss of integrity, the permanent tarnishing of a soul), but I slid on past, too sensitive for that encounter, never enough provocation for involvement, angling toward the bright while clinging to the shade, or aiming for the pitch dark while adoring the streetlamps, my hopes that I'll stumble across you or your path out in the gorse or the heather, those imagined moors out on the outskirts of my consciousness, windblown and colorless and essentially unpeopled, and all of my walks lead to the sea and an abandoned pier, and I stand there, with or without you, with or without any of you, and leaning against the rail I feel the waves sway the wooden structure I'm counting on to hold me, dead trees carefully fastened together that will someday soon be driftwood, my molecular structure impermanent, my mental solvency impermanent, my present tided away swiftly toward what wasn't tangible in the past, or what was far too tangible in the past, and while the pier rises and falls and shudders and creaks with the surf I can imagine imagining but I can't imagine unimagining, not as a conscious act, and if we are fantasists, ill-equipped for life, it isn't surprising that we find ourselves where we are, or where we aren't, you with me at ebb-tide, moonful and honest, on scaffolding above the sea or at water's edge, the restlessness pervasive and insoluble, the night not yielding again to day or anything but more night, and all of my walks must lead back from the edge of the jetty and the mortal sea, back to long stretches of afternoon and my middle-of-the-night frettings, to languor and insomnia, back to these days of reckless pamper, of rough disease, these days and these nights that govern our lives, conspired or devoted, engendered or borne, these days in which I fumble and fail, aimless in the cubicles and ponderous on the pier, these days of impetuous disclosure, what language is pimped to perform and what language shouldn't fake, with time to exhibit but without time to engage, with time for some hairshirting but without time for any admittance, with time in your innovation or time in your pale (with time in your travesty or time in your might, with time in your irresistible or time in your sauce), one remembering one's eastern time, when it didn't matter to me whether weather is geometric or ancestral, the weather within bound for silence or song or other weatherings, elsewhere-dark, matter unmaterring, my patience done, if not my spirit shown, that irreducibility of having been, as one of many and as the only one, other as one-loved, one as the sole oneness among multitudes, all to resonance, all adventure bound.

Temperate is the cause and fairer the favor that couches us to the tranquil porch, at dawn or at dusk around our equinoxes, half of the apostles gone fishing for actual fish long after the established depth of our gravitas, our humors too heavy for bed but acceptable for that old sofa or the wide rough planks of collaborative reflection, the birth or the dying of parsimony or melancholy, of our movable stars and the flushed pinking above of our altered states of restlessness, and so I went walking in the first light (or last light), as if either the new day or the new night could hold surprises of practical instruction, as if I could be taught the contentments of transition through immersion, that unavoidable participation in what is at hand, what is simply more the case than anything else that could be proffered as the case, that could be put before the judges of science and philosophy as a viable alternative to the phenomenological or empirical absolute, and possibly you went walking with me, shoulder to shoulder or hand in hand, into sunrise or into sunset, our eyes on a transportive horizon, our heartening steps out of emotional marasmus toward gradual exposure to surfeit, the natural excesses given typically to romantic fools, the even-keeled wanting to list offshore like a wink, or a thought with a belly full of treasure, our comedies ever in the making, the vasculations across a lifetime, murderer as moderate, entrepreneur as pirate, and we walked and we swam and we never flew, not in the literal sense, and I was raised without winter's silence or summer's intensity, with only perpetual spring and without its bookending contrasts, without fall's complementary introspection, under too benign solstices, and all of my walks lead to a watery hollow, and I sit there on a fallen log, with or without you, with or without any of you, and gazing into the murk I think I witness all of human history unfold before me as a farce, or a parody of a bacterial sentence moving at a syllabic pace, steady and programmed, portioned and decreed, hilarious to some and offensive to others, obvious to me as a poor substitute for subtlety and mystery and the evanescent will, those things soaped out of my childhood, or from my imagined childhood, or from a concoction of imagination and memory, one informing (upon) the other, so that the will must be scrubbed iron and the imagination a tamed beast, domesticated and fully house-trained, so that we can sit on our porch (or a fallen log or a boulder or a stump) or a stool at a lacquered counter in a sparkling and stifling suburban kitchen and breathe in the what is, whatever it is, inhale it as a comedy, earthly and common, and all of my walks must lead back from any eternally dreamt watering hole, back to six-of-one-half-dozen-of-the-other, to my twilight and not my morning, purple after yellow, back to these days of methodical risk, of joke dissemination, these days and these nights that control our lives, blossomed or wilted, grounded or kited, these days in which I mamby and pamby, appeased in the gloaming and bemused upon waking, these days of ceding and theft, what gets spoken of as entitlement and what gets circumvented as duty, with time to yield but without time to stop, with time for some irreverence but without time for any revolutions, with time in your substance or time in your juice (with time in your illumination or time in your justice, with time in your radiance or time in your rain-for-days, one remembering one's southern time, hellish choirs of cherubs singing of reasons and suppose while the bloated demons shell falsehoods and the transparent ones renounce the unfathomable, my strong hand on my throat and my weak hand on my brow, any whiff of delusion sovereign, any slip of cleverness permanent, my dreams rough and unbidden, betrayed to betrayal, becoming after coming every sheltered night.

Idol not those copper days of connection, not in these days of air-match. We pearl what settles in our palms. So I'll opal the debt of sin. Out of the round we extravagant the curve, in hopes that we may curl to point, in hopes that we might homeward bind. I celebrated the circle as if perfection could be traced—circumference before flesh—but what you prove is radical configuration, a gestured body of earnest bend, the posed liquid held in place by a skin jar. Our ferocious. Our lawful. Our aimless. The fractures in our individualities weren't put there with beauty in mind, didn't arrive from strategy or carelessness. We can't irrigate this difficult plain without dimensional blood. May our harvests come with shared fears of unbalanced abundance. Claimless. Awestruck. Voracious. All of our paths were easier than we wished. A woman pours her famous empathy into the world when she should be forging symphonies or fording slipstreams. She'll oval the rainbow into the whitest of whites and then she'll kaleidoscope us back to the primal spectrum. You went swimming in the lake before I was awake, before I imagined myself with you, before I remembered to forget the outcropping. We drowned into relief. There are ways to engage the crowd without scuffing one's shoes. You'll oral that pedagogy with appropriated ease. The story sneaks into your house and pales your life while you sleep. Rude, this global pest. Here comes the raw dew. Conjure the tears. My stubble won't get in the way of intimacy, not where the greens of our summer are concerned, the conjunction of leaf and leave, our naming of permanence, go present the past. Torch what remains. The subject is dismayed. You're ill with desire for the childing, now that geometry is gone and the center is conferred, now that I'm the router of what I deem radiant, all that shines into and out from my life, that happy vectoring, and I'll vanquish my disappointments with aspirant finds, timescales of snails and glaciers, amoebas and thieves, conscious of my shortcomings when the melody goes sour, your need for the funnier sounds and not the serious strains, the encapsulating quandary of inclination, what quickens the heart and astounds the mind, what lifts the spirit and torques and rallies and breaks the body: water on skin and sun on hair (wet hair and lit skin): water against rock and skin against granite and stones in the bottom of a glass of water: a worry pearl in the hand of a doll abandoned by the quarry's shack: the spiral nightmare on a dock by day and the recollection of opalescent sadness in father's eyes: asymmetry in the shower and your nape not mine and my mouth not yours: a praying mantis on the screen near the yellow cap of accountability: shores too far for weakening lungs: fecal odors on the kitchen windowsill, paintsmell on my sweatshirt, faint stains on your flannel: metallic tastes in floral salads: voices on the rise: da pacem nomine: I'll unbutton your health when you zip my lips and the day tires into concert, minus the pilgrimmed stance, plus the protestant steam, minus the puritan bother: socks striped te deum: whitecaps in the evening and the jetty sways and sometime again the maple stump will accept snow against its bark as winter balms devout: you'll shawl and I'll vest and our world will draw us close: out the bedroom window planets stalk the moon: hair grays and hands spot and thoughts drift to efforts at praise and the trenchwork isn't altar-proofed while the throat blues and the eyes gleam with our standard mortal swoon: this is our togetherness, incomparable, flawed, the stubbornness of pair, sounded to the bottom of the lake and scattered through the trees, the double dutch of swing and hop as if they're jumps of faith, your smile of know and my flout of wonder as we children ourselves in the fading light to soften the going with a smatter of will and nonsense to accompany our ideals.

Mole me into your scarpment steep and let me hide my tears from souls and sky and atlas my stark to symmetry and prime that turn from hex to home as we might wasp and vex alone and I might wick elusive wax and you could scape the strait with brakes of cane upon our earth of scree and shame and dull the brass of duty's badge and pillow soft the stud effect and battery spark the smoothest ghost and rampage those who hesitate and those who won't encrypt my past with lark and veer and thrill my stride from ramble's tease and flaunt my name with thorns controlled and stack the galleys tall and I won't shrill the bawdy nerve and you won't kill the moment roused and we'll caress the sediment till it blends the stones and bones to clay and we were told to wait for sturdier climbs amid the scurry and sloth and we're as strong as strong can be under heaven's omnipresent disappointment and I'll now squander homage and mimicry for the strained sounds of something fresh far from feinted stairs but I will fall as fall can be the season stripped of blame and I will land as land can be the substance there to feel and the matter there to move and the placement there to love and I will die as death is mine to have across a gulf too wide to span in a time too short to spend with words too same to share and here comes the day with the sun in my eyes but without tomorrow's tears or here comes the snow without a white forsake but with the principle silence of trivium solace and when you put your palm to my chest on a cold night of lion's stars I'll feel the warmth of nervous lones from a body of vibrant hinge and I'll feel some stretch of endless doubts with a mind of fatuated thanks from what is missed when what is missing gleams supreme in a dear distance too distant to imagine and when my horizon meets your horizon there will be bloodshift and saltspent as colors unmingle and rush to pure to spare us language loss or language gain amid the straight of send at odds with winnebago come and gone even though the trees have our hearts to lift and wheels lower our birds to sleep and I've had enough of your shy nonsense and you've had enough of my honor try in these days of again and yet again or these nights of again and please again and we're as brave as brave can be to trust in tomorrow's memory and lonesome can't be cured of superior space in inferior rooms of shadows shrunk as light climbs noon to bulb too clean for the good of all in a box of one while symbols match to partner next as triads twiced to couple curves and we're as pale as pale can be in fear of mediocrity and dread that this old water hymn will trickle dry before we delta reach and on the cross he cast a hum at every broken song about life's side of bright that looks to hold perspective's smile and often switches irony to comedy as funny swells to glee that may distill to bliss but though we're through and ashed to rest we'll offer bone for flesh to tilted intervals of soon and your mood skin is my mood skin of dreamt and dreaming still and your voice will voice the gracious seen of gutter cheer across this worn out land and we'll belt bluesy spells in stagnant air in bottom rooms too damp and wretched dim with hollow shards of skeletons and rusted coils of camp and slung across our shoulders stooped are sacks of maily waste and throughout our ways of spate and curse before our mights of wish we racket rage with drunken parts of rote and slur and mock and we have sung in karat gold near caret lack in naves of ancient fill from tidy stories told and I will clerk your justify if you will leeward mine where sorties dropped their tiny bombs into our pots of stew and when the poison blew our states we cried to fated chance that when we're as dead as dead can be they'll sharpen glass for their fashion hunts beyond those rows of statues with their ever-patient peering eyes made from obsidian obsolete.

Responsible sidles up to famous without a cough, saying here I am, this common soul, make fun of me and my ilk if you must, but my pragmatism makes you possible, our offset fates and the demarcations of choice, my long contentment to your swift pleasure, and the celebrity suffers not more than a curious pang for not more than an awkward moment and timing struts round the room and is untouchable and gorgeous. Gaze around the gaze into the hidden gaze. The golden questions of the very corridor. My inner interrogative as outer flame. I say here I am, this ordinary man, not of a kind and ignore me if you wish, my sleighs in the snow-shock forest, our perpendicular ways and your embarking voice, winter now with weighted heart and frozen prayer. Detours are what make language the most wonderful land to live in since silence. Seasons have made my momentum reasonable, my restless mind providing tidal notions for me to pick up and study and drop along my shore, illumined by day by hydrogen into helium and by night by a stone reflector or the deaths of millions of microorganisms at times of as and be and is and am, your orbit around my calm. The tang around the root. The quarry under the summit. You'll always paraphrase my reveries and kinema my attic blank. We'll say here we are, this wrapt pair, watching the images flicker and indicate and stun, a wavelength of potential memory, crossing the space between us and the window onto our phantom sea. I'll depend on you to source my code as intuitive call, to spread my patterns on the coroner's slab, to middlenight my fondest patience. Wander over this way. Point to the interesting development. The elemental shift. The component excite. That magnetic stress in all of those corners. You said here I am and the snowglobe shook—the astonishment surge, the quintessence ease. Flat lay the water till we craved immersion. You've never troubled my frets with positioning. You've never sandwiched me between stale egos. Tranquility might be reached in a long enough freefall. I settled into the declarative to preserve what integrity I could. If we could remember what we know, we could fill in the missing data and make the air thorough. You quit too early on my quarry—my blocks of delineation—my vertical chance after foundational rigor. Beauty is at its best in its last days of fading. I'll modulate when I'm dead. We're modulated—it must be so—by duration. Alteration inherent. Cycles develop the woman beyond the man. Heat comes from change. Rivers bend neither against nor with their wills. The situation is clearly one of out-of-place. The location is one of another time. The duration is never one of endlessness and is seldom measurable as itself. When I don't sleep I don't dream. When I can't dream I won't live. I overpraise my deprecations and disvalue my esteem in these days that resemble one golden gaze. If I were to disapprove of my disapproval, it wouldn't ripen what I grasp. If you were to tabulate my shortfalls with the burden of a judge, I could snatch your bruised offering from some reach of isolation. Hollow is the claim that prettifies the harm. Frontier the thought, not the urge, and I'll valentine the corner light, wanting the whole angle, assumed by its core limitations. Something is happening in this room with sunlight pouring in, with light flooding the observation that is making objects more familiar and less comprehensible with every passing moment of every unsolved atom, or any unsolved spaces between atoms, or all unsolved space between spaces. You're what makes coming home coming home. You're the reason I agreed to be delivered into this realm as prisoner. You're why I know so much less than most and yet so much more than all but that fortunate subset of those who love and are also loved by those they love. Everyone needs the what and reason and why of that empirical yes.

Amicable as an animated fawn undramatized upon my childhood pillow, you and your spunk make the day approachable and survivable and retro-infinite. You and your glow, the expectant vibrancy of consummated abstraction, knotty-pine roommates on a starlight ride. The cord runs from the bucket in the well to the clapper in the belfry. I bury my tired mind between your shoulderblades. As a way of calculating risk, we could count photons under the covers, or mansions in the tide, the grand total approaching zero. We could extricate dignity from persuasion. We stand to benefit from staying in the wings with our little flames of industry, our fabric processes, our orderly expenditures of stitch in this performance of skin. The argument is that—like children—we communicate before we can be understood. Click: one light press of my finger—transformation beyond the secret gems in woodlots. Some leveraged adults survive off of the information highway. If there is to be a validating instant, let it come while I sleep—deep sleep or that deepest sleep—as a gifting gesture of fondness toward my vulnerability. Stork the desire in a calmer cove on a pale day after a blustery night. To live by the ocean—that old girl—might bring solace to the end. There you are—up to your ankles in sand, or with your whole body into rowing the sound, or in your nightdrift on the saggy couch of the screened-in porch—the adventure companion, the very sterling one. Birds on the low island that want to be painted into the creation of the world. Lap goes water against the jetty. Cirrus above the tree moss. Ways to live in peripheral splendor. Don't let me angle for head-of-the-line (where I'll never belong), and I won't let you languish in the swampy known. We could populate reverence with elation. We won't be washed in the blood but time will scrape us clean. My weaknesses show in the steady try and my strengths hide in the refracted burn. When the white death sweeps down upon us from our folly it won't be any bother because we've had our days in the sun, we've efforted our small boat from home to elsewhere and to home and to home and our structures collapse and our havens implode and our hearts disperse and our lives existed and we served senselessness with grateful fury and we sought sense outside of rushy flight. Questions descend the stairs into the study and the books quell their fearfulness. The bassoons go lower to mood the rooms with romantic inquiry. You've always been walking through my potential, stocking-footed, striped and filthy, you to boy, the imprinted neighborly nearness of the tangible feminine. Dreamily. The thread runs from your fluff to my debris, from my consternation to your crimp. You cup your active hands over my ears and tell me exactly. As a way of imagining trysts, we could strew aquarium gravel across our slicks, or try novel finesse with navel placement, the coming heroes, fleshworld and futureworld. We could implicate fidelity as devotion. Along the banks of almost always is nearly enough. Life's procurements still pawn our allowances. The outer press becomes the inner flinch, and the very someone ascends the daunting hill in search of thought-elegance. I've lingered longer in this cloud than anyone should, this brooding front in these sulky times, my loiter more self-indigence than caution, more comfort than eccentricity, desiring the genuine look, the very lure of diligent parry, the very one across a steeding fold, soil and sod and hay in stacks, runes to lapse or carrier to heart, our curse-to-porous cortex-twirl, that shift of impressibility when our comet stalls, our interspatial gusts of shiny guilt and the motion brought to ensure strong fault, our codifying seams of pageant-keen and nightlong jaunts of rushing nevers, toward every noon-spate reassurance, every spindled kite-chill, away from all curricular glories not yet mine.

Mescaline or methamphetamine or muscularity—none of these will release the night into history or push-wish the lullaby through dawn = What I think of buildings lit in ways that make me want to enter them though I know I seldom should or because I know I never will = Tomorrow's risks have already passed us by = In a position to accept consolation prize as nod of approval, as uncompromised stamp, that apex of liberty = What I know to be true eludes me as if it isn't true, as if what I thought was knowledge is something closer to opinion, and what I thought was informed perspective might be closer to delusion—so that I can't distinguish what I once wanted from what I now want, as if what I now want is predicated on what I once wanted (and got and forgot, or want no more, or still want and want in acknowledged desperation) = Contend, if you must; you're alone in a closed system open to everyone = Raise my eyes toward a minor sky = The sun can't be stared down, not in this lifetime, not by a dreamer from the suburbs, not as a substitute for relinquishment = Sometimes I think there's nothing sexier than speculative thought = What if we were allies in the oldest sense and in this whole mess together (we're all in all of this together, sisterhood and brotherhood), and what if we pushed off from shore and the shore disappeared and there were to be no more shore forever (there will be no more shore forever—the positive negative of the negative positive) = What if we were to shelve contentment in favor of happiness, our form over their content, our going to sleep where the books can fall on us = What if you waited for me not far from where I waited for you and the religious folk wandered in and out of the dappling and the fashionable folk wandered in and out of the choring and the lost folk hung out in arboring song = The real middle way is only discernible if the edges are known and we must admit the edges aren't known ≠ The margins aren't my focus any more than the gutter is my self-valorization = I've waited and I'll wait on and on, the waiting as genuine as the end of the wait (long or short), just as living to be living only has to be what those that are living are all now doing—assuming we know what constitutes living = Your joy around the massive musty tome and the scrolls and slender books and pamphlets and shreds of thought in the study are the dreams that stuff is made of = We'll substance the air between us since we won't close that distance (some distances can't be closed, won't be closed by motion or thoughts of miraculous accident) = The subjunctive havens the heart, not the body, and the mind will stardrift whether the clouds portend or not, whether our pretenses confound or mollify, whether we situate ourselves within the good or the indifferent, the mellifluous or the stark = You know me through my debris and my thought patterns—accurate or scattered, opaque or fishbowed—or you *could* know me if you would risk that knowledge, to take upon yourself this mansion and its vine-ridden neighborhoods, the bungalow and its groves, these boxes and their environs, these tract structures too far inland to believe in the sea, these places where I live or have lived, you could know me more than most are knowable and my soul could mist your room = My opinion of you depends upon your quest, or if not your quixotic aptitude, your compassion, the ways you inhabit the other, me as other and as minor world, as explorable as a copse in the wilderness or as static in the noise = Not in any position to insist upon the laurel treatment of proper framework, the fair shake or some lucky break = Our mutual ghosting amid contemporary ruins, the dreams bought or borrowed or bound to disbelief, the truth in the illusions we gather as twilight reveries = I'll accept whatever is acceptable, which turns out to be everything, absolutely everything.

Ideal are my projections into this day of endings, now and next to now. We peril what stays outside our vale. So I'll cradle the threat within. Into the sound we capitulate the nerve, in hopes that we may lull the saint, in hopes that we might heavenward mind. You elevated my halo as if redemption floats the heart—remembrance before loss—but what I crave is friendly recognition, a familiar nod toward sincere effort, the close comradery of the creative war. Our nameless. Our maudlin. Our focused. The fissures in our offensive didn't result from negligence, weren't put there for purposes of sabotage or diversion. We can't defeat this night without sudden light through our mistakes. May our mornings come with shared tears of staunch persistence. Locus. Cautioned. Sameless. All of the cloth is softer than we thought. A man goes about his banal business of survival when he should be tearing down steeples or crafting starships. He'll organize his many mysteries into a briefcase of greed and then he'll plummet with it from a skyscraper of grief. I went swimming in the lake before you were awake, before the skies threatened, before you joined me in this confusion of imagination. We drowned into release. There are ways to enrage the mob without shocking their old folk. You'll shelter that fabrication with lyric tease. The narrativity sits on the mantle and the sheep eat the swaddling's straw. Crude, this modal flesh. Here comes the new law. Conquer the fears. Your stubble won't get in the way of intimacy, not where the keen of our simmer is concerned, the juncture of heat and the heated, our taming of immanence, come verdant the spill. Match the stain. The object is dismayed. I'm sick with memories of the wilding, now that positions are won and the perimeter is secured, now that you're the scout of every known gradient, plateaux or escarpment, edifice or fields, the sacrificial norm, my tones and your hues, solus from fame, freefall from vista, alive in the nostalgic vibration, I crossed the too-open space with my bayonet affixed, throat dry, heart expansive, and I made it to the bloody wall with internal damage only, the higher ground gained, and you will die and I will die in quiet or in fray, hands held or sorrow-blown, land empty or lampglow or violent stun, amid some glass-shatter or bedlace, sheeted nakedness or shrouded hero, ignored in dirty blanket-wrap from shadow alley chill or adored in hospice kind, the unknown day of night and the promised halt, fresh ground and soil cooled, washed and laid in gravity or flamed to shelf, wool upon the cheek, we took the hill for vaunted scope and swept the floors for their small soles and tucked them into corner warmth to evidence the care, sinews strong and minds too young to comprehend the grace that fell from skies too ripe with change—and dark upon the slope the shapes will daunt the love and sparks upon the page will haunt the federal halls and we could live to sex and wheedle and we could scorn our source and we could cloud the air with flaunt and we could mind the sheep and we could tend the coals without discouraging the word and we could mine our sleep for flecks from lesser days or we could slaughter the grammar (why not sure) of every child spared across a nation underfed with myth and overfed with lore and we could spin the shiny web to attract a truer moth and I'll spread your legs for cannon shot that sprung from powder kegs to honor space that begs for time to consecrate its point and now that you can pounce on chance and advocate my junk that clutters up the salvage lot next to cathedral heights we should maybe think of moving out at first peach of morning light toward sanctuaries sermon-juiced to preach for roofless awe and ways to milk the swell of victory over intolerance and might (with reverence and doubt) as orchard laughter shows us days to gather away from idols.

Champion the virtual into the unreal when you hear windchimes from the patio of a childhood home long leveled. Burn out the bad minds. The ego of exclusion. Here comes the foul-mouthed poet with her medusa hair. The background singers are rank with worship. There's beauty in the gaps. There's the belle in the universe's garden. Big moves like a garbage scow or small moves like a honeybee. Or bigger moves like galaxies and smaller moves like prokaryotes. I'm sick (to wild distraction) of my elegant aesthetics, my impeccable taste, my canonical breadth. You left my nucleus in your wadded napkin. The stag failed to jump the barbed-wire fence that the doe had cleared easily. Listen to me when I tell my speedy parables as anecdotes. Easily. When I die—tomorrow or the next day—I want to die nearer to the river than the highway. That sweatshirt—hanging on the line, clean and true and floppy—probably shouldn't be worn again. The place doesn't remember its occupants. I don't have the time or open space to tell you everything I won't do. Early in the morning of the last day—crumpled sheets and kitchen smells—the turn isn't turning, not in the way one might be expected to suppose, not the cinematic turn or the fascination turn or the wheelhouse turn. Be more proud of the thief who stopped thieving than the god who never stole. When the winds and the waters and the quakings challenge our vertical urge, let's not try to adore the rubble. Contradiction only looks like itself in broad daylight. We'll speak of ment and grath and relm, the groundrest—and I'll insect the sex and elephant the theory—while your warmth comes from energy expense, from care for outcome. Life forms from lifelessness, though this makes no sense, not as a construct of cause-and-effect thought, not as poesy becomes scientia. The apple-half tables awareness. On a rainy afternoon—a rarity in my neighborhood—I sat in the study with my correspondence and my speculations, my associative nexts, and as the eaves wept and the hearth crackled and shone, I sought solace beyond the burgundy and density, beyond my insular scrawl, something more than insight and less than epiphany, still glad to exist in transit between departure and arrival but desiring interim shift, and the walls transitioned to glass-transparent before disappearing altogether, the rain staying conceptual around a chandelier of suspended stars, my inclination leaning less toward just-give-us-time than more-than-meets-the-eye, less toward here's-the-key than let's-wait-and-see, life as intentionally unsolvable over life as accidentally mysterious, and I felt my vision and my subordinate senses melt away under my imagination. What I apprehended won't translate (that authentic excuse of convenience), and I'm honor-bound to speak of you, you and you and you, the requisite you and the daily you and the noctilucous you, that wealth of yous that offsets the gravitational me, those yous I value beyond knowledge, all of the youness that constitutes the not-I, the you of yous and the you unknown and the you that is this language I hold dear as flawed—if I were to live a million years (I won't live a hundred) I wouldn't put my questions to rest, not all of them, and not all of yours either, the inquiry endemic to this organism, a by-product of breathing, of ambulation and cell-replacement and thought. The cadillac of winter drives my feelings home. Undo. The sun rises into my eyes and the sun sets into my eyes and the bonechill is the need. Hymns scratch. Spun maple. The radiant swath of dawn and dusk across the neighbor's nearest wall. I'm still in love with ethereal dreams and the shadows within your absolute faiths. I'm still in love with what doesn't work and what never had much of a chance to work, or not any chance at all, not from the day it was conceived to the day it collapsed. We've always been very squint-wary of this world.

Keep your heart dry enough to burn: again by feelings: and by subconscious winds: the howl and thin of blown: siroccos, scrub, horizontals of scope, apostates and evings of loss as must be sought, and the winding mind: your ambush assault upon the tender leanings and junctions of my romantic bluster: in the armatures and clots of gripped memory: your meted feats: your syrupy overpraise: your wringings of can't go have been wrung and tempered into gnarled hands: I'll rake your leaves into tidy piles of summertime out on the unremarkable sward: in the freezing of our reciprocated breaths we'll take stock of winter adversity, and we'll set love as advertisement upon our mounts: our motions, our elevations of range: ascents and conquerings with flags to mark our rights: again by inclinations: and here come ways to live: every way to live: but only one will perpetuate the peak joy of my arrival: if I could choose a single way to be I'd choose this way to be, the tautological choice made by my willingness to censure any wayward imitation, any erasure of early contentment found, any acceptance of the status mean, and by this way I meant to say the actual way that ever could or should be, chosen and centrifugal, radically joined and gently alone, resulting in the portrayal of paradise, self-conscripted or personality fit, those futile or runnel or answer-us storms, those concentric parities, those clerical lumpings, all of them, every one, beyond strategy into tended reciprocity, the altogether singular and extraordinary ways we live, and the choice would seem a foiled one from the perspective of the immortal call, since by experiencing any option I'd experience just one, though fully, in its isolated individuality as the one selected by me, its rare resemblance to those of some but all mine nonetheless, the very one of billions, yet the choice would be a marvel—and allowable—and so I've chosen the cup of nectar handed to me, I choose it now in this guiding flame before the darkness toys with my fantasies and ambition, before the slights riddle my rigor away and make me quake with presentiment, my awareness that chance can't keep giving me everything, that that would deprive it of its definition, and I'll fog and golly with my love and our behavior in the most precocious capture of engagement, our astonishing trace of original founding from the purest source, a source so old only its destination can bear its oldness, a source so resonant it vibrates in its own absence where absence wouldn't otherwise exist, fluid objectivity in the mind of a creation going cold and coldest still, my subjectivity not dismissible to collusion or antipathy or reluctance, life as personification of wellness, the viral sapping to stain its margins, draining the resources even as our sun outlasts our enterprises and atoms survive our ideas, the perjuring of the gods before their accusers and their executioners: the hushing of the foundry: enough you say: enough saying of what's been said: said by me and said by my living heroes and said by my dead betters: said in leather chairs and bolero crescendoes and heartland poverty: said across dismays of rise and follow and narrowing erudition revolved around awe: wake my heart with the pound of language borrowed from factory and sea: that murky difference steaming from parched machinery: symmetrical overconfidences as sizzling rifts: othered specters of tone and the stolen sounds of royal sanity above pelvic stow: scratch my façade as you come: toughen your psalms with my violet permutations: rut your spaces with my prow: furrow your aspirations and I'll disavow our leaves of shame: I don't care for your jaded slopes or your seamy products or your twittering flock: I won't pay your kid for the hopscotch blueprint: don't deny me the shade under that tree: spirit me through your dry valleys: share the time that chalks your mind.

That wasn't what we thought it would be, that smack-in-the-hold conflagration, those succumbing-to-love triumphs, that letting go of common sense in our volatile waters of restrictive risk. That wasn't what I thought it would be, that spacing of subjects into spots, that irrational mode of death-making originality, all for a potent spice from the abstract kitchen. Nature thrills us with effect. Culture blurs primacy. I went to the desert where I was allowed to cease thinking and where I became a servant to my lack of expansiveness. My imposed structures settled upon my frames, fresh-dreamt containers seeking the constituency found in stray thoughts of home. That space was an arid palace of emotion, and once I'd (waiting to ascend to the very someone) slept in the badlands—not the fabled haunted godless badlands, but the sun-scoured color-emptied badlands, or death's wash, I felt clean, though death would not wash me there. Waiting—of the dull-edged limbo sort—waiting away from the one, the once and present self wandered under thought, companionless and numbed of wit, a solitary mind in need of counterpoint—life's lilting knells. To wait, as I once waited, my green opinions settling, there were fall shadows, there was spring egress round the heart, and our lamb was waiting in our confluence. Nothing is impossible, some are told, nothing hasn't happened, or not yet, not while we know next to nothing. Reach out your hands to nothing! The mesa spoke of what was missing. Absence, from loves gone awry, occupies space in the mind—grand agony for those who are destined to wait. All or nothing, from frayed feelings—romantic and shy—toward the bodies of celestial intelligence, neither accessible nor illusive. The feminine facility with association. The masculine ability to delineate. Or the sensuality of duality. Empty wastes are emptied elsewhere. The sea empties into my elsewhere. Next to any desert is non-desert, and deserts are scattered across this globe as spaces for availed spirits to wander by sunless day and moonful night. I once traipsed a desert too confined for me. I once waited by a boulder that wouldn't become water, my lips too moist to compel. And once I strode a valley desolate (waiting for the very someone to reel me back to city ferment) without my blackest veil. Long gone by was my violation of solitude, my memory of a childhood in a beachy paradise, a hobby of fondness for blocks of safe living in orderly boxes (my black box, your verdant vale). That wasn't what you might have wished it to be, Mr. Sea at the crux of time, the milk of women in coastal genius, the coral kiln of mind. That was the levity of a heart in tow. A marlin lost to leisure. Iridescent blue fading to sportsman gray. Those were trees petrifying in the wastelands of patience. Language gone hard as bookend souvenirs. The reaper waiting for a worthier harvest. To wait, as we will wait, is more fear than judgment, there are helixes, there is dark matter and countable infinities, the mind slips homeward to confusion. Nothing is as embraceable as everything, I was told, that cherished materialism, objects as mattering, bountiful even, as if as a child I understood scope. Even molecules go wandering. Even individual atoms know raw distance. The desert was an any-old-empty space of dirt and rocks without host. Not much cactus. Dun scrub. Stratified time-streams. My firmament has never been harsher. I haven't lived up to my moments, as if I were perpetually away. I'll proxy my actions, but not my ideas, not my imagination. If I seem abstract, even unknowable, it isn't because I won't nod to candor, it won't be because I wouldn't attend to the enlightened towers of intelligence, or of scientific rigor. It won't ever be what we dream it to be—it will always be what we suspect it is, not what we conjure, just what we figure, and so I'll dream my dreams without contemporary threat of their coming true.