

**A Mourning Performance; or,
Prepared Remarks**

If I'm guilty
of anything,
It's that I slip easy
into elegy.
The words incurred,
the notes I wrote:
Responses ready
When mourning's heard.

While you devoured
each breath you stole from death,
Checking borrowed time
on a broken watch,

I went along. I hummed
the song, even if I didn't
know the words.

I still don't think there's time to learn.

Vesper

Did you think you'd leave me
Unmarked?

Or don't you remember,
Together, in the dark,
The sigh upon your lips
That I devoured?

How you poured yourself
Into me?
Long past sunset;
The fragrant evening, and
Night's descent

Remember how we spun onyx
Into the hours?

Vigil

Did you miss my light?
I waited up for you, hours past
When I should've slept.
I spent each minute just like the last
Enveloped in the lambent night,
Lamp light, my promise kept,
The quiet house, my easy breath;
I know the roads and know the route
Your loosened tie, the wrinkled suit
But even in the dream you don't return.
Even here a candle can't forever burn.
Silence as the dishwasher's cycle comes to an end.
My ears don't strain. I still pretend.