

Waiting for a Partial Lobectomy

Cinching up his supple suit of skin,
adhesive patch pulling on threadbare bones,
sanguinity escapes him; so wanting and wary,
callous to caretakers. “Incorrect attitude,
improper to the place.” Almost languishing,
the sufferer seizes upon unwanted attention.
Arched a little, allocating breaths, distressed
(as anyone ought to notice now).
Slowly, yes; and yet, soon, his hateful half-smirk
erodes. Erudite lips no longer tilt.
“Should have stopped smoking, but knew no better.”

A Grand Iota

There. And, in an instant, it is air.

Your frosted breath crafts
a diminished portrait
of the sender.

The hilltop is spare,
spotted with spruce presenting
in their frozen branches
the festooning icicles
like reverent Kufic script
in a caliph's time-thinned book.

Snow compresses beneath
badly beaten soles
and conceals for now
the deep claret blush
of leather-like leaves.

Even we are being buried:
from a grey expanse
the south Michigan soil
collects a surrogate of sunshine
and dulls the senses with stillness.

This crowning lookout
just recalls the opacity
of every surrounding;
but, in an instant,
there float fading breaths
which frame you with
a spirited significance.