

*Poem For Sam*

a screen door swings open  
reddish night  
onto snow

will be trapped in snow  
melting into  
trapped in water

whitecaps or  
stones

a stray boat

leave the snow piled

layered against windows  
endless

*Indian Summer*

across the third rail  
someone babbles about faggots  
and a last October wasp  
clicks against the subway light

these are the days  
I guess  
    of waiting  
to fix ways I thought  
shouldn't be like this

(I'm leaving more days unfinished)

*I*

you and the sheets  
were made of blood spots

thin Christmas carols mix with radio commercials  
only linoleum gleams

(I left as old people gagged in the dining room)

onion rings and fried chicken  
sweet potato fries  
coleslaw

all wasted in front of hanging head  
and eyes I wouldn't see open again

(I couldn't wash the salt from the back of my throat)

we wait

in a way it's already done  
we all end up with our faces covered

in who knows what

*II*

it wasn't you there  
wearing the clothes we picked out

they got your smile wrong anyway

we rested our arms over our heads like you used to  
in between shaking everyone's hand  
in our new black shoes

(someone said I  
was your raging river)

on the drive home  
fog shrouded the frantic ways  
of getting it all done

the sun the next day  
almost like spring  
the bugle humming taps

I only cried when you were above  
that irrevocable hole in the ground

a great-aunt can make us cheese toast

and we can still laugh in your kitchen  
comparing dresses  
and how we're all drawn to bagpipes

I can carry your coffin  
and eat a roast beef sandwich  
in the same damn day

*On Returning in January II*

to drive home half-blind is  
to have lost a contact on your floor

to later find bruises  
from your dog's nails

to apologize for a mug I didn't break anyway

(a life of misunderstanding  
a symptom)

is a hungry week to disintegrate  
into watching a spy movie while my feet  
fall asleep under me on a hardwood floor

to drive home  
half-blinded is

to have a face cracked with salt and snot  
fog frozen on the inside of my car  
lucid without you