

## Coney Island

last stop step out
into a changed world, haunted
not by the dead but the stillliving past, tenacity
of billboards, signs
it's where I felt crazy lost
everything talked back
I took photographs there
benches gulls old men
hotdog wrappers fishing poles
tableaux of actors and props
to lend reality

I thought I could see invisible things
after dusk, I'd take the long ride
back to Astoria, shaking off the nostalgia
that I can't shake off
tighten my coat
memorize my reflection,
say I am a fixed object
I am real I am fixed

under the trestles

soot and dust

wafted onto my hair and skin

I walked the few blocks from the train

to my apartment

I lived there

for eight years

but never came home

## Day of Diminishing Returns

Most pictures of today
have blue in them, a dusty blue
moss and winter ivy, fern blankets
the lens was pointing downwards
to below eye level, to the crushed
cans and ramen cups and cheap
bubbly bottles caught in the arborvitae
archaeological droppings from recent
ruins, the homeless who push grocery
carts up and down the street, clanking
like Marley in all but the worst weather

one night last fall, I was ambling home from Gladstone in a fine mist, giddy drunk and lobbed a hello to the carved woman and cart-pushing man, her face broke into a radiant smile and she swung her arm at the moon

hello she cawed I hope you have a beautiful evening!

You too! I responded and because I could not think

of anything else to do, I gave them two thumbs up

kept my thumbs up and wiggled them

and they put their thumbs up too,

and we stood like that

afterwards, I realized a radio

must be in the cart, the wavering, crackling music

filling the space between the mist and the three of us

after they were gone

it was quiet again

the mist had turned to rain

and the rain was quiet rain

## On the shores of Crystal Lake

1.

my shadow walks at night along the shores
of Crystal Lake, past spots where boys and girls
wade topless and smooth rocks press
against their arches
whistling handed-down tunes through ironclad lips
and waking the neighbors, who aren't above
turning on each other

Crystal Lake wears capes of long grasses that catch the wind, toss it around and mistake it for echo my shadow wears these capes on the shores of Crystal Lake they sound like soon, soon

2.

body hollows, body bells
the body is resilient
determined to pleasure
so much body more body
than one woman can hold

cut to a goat eating chevre

toast points balanced

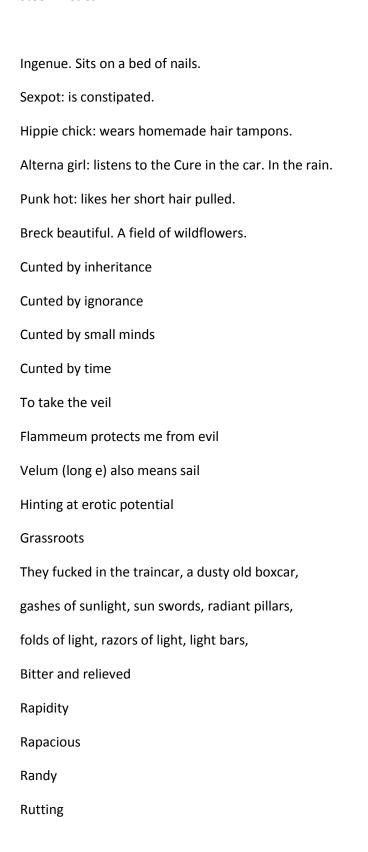
in delicate hooves

it commands you to listen to the train

you hear a train

this happens somewhere inside us

## Steel Thistles



Doing something new

Running into my reflection

At full speed

What is clear makes the rest look doubly opaque

The rain was late in arriving.

Spring's old civil servant

Night's old civil servant

Eros's old civil servant

Consumptives in search of delicate bone structure

Parched butterflies on steel thistles