

to love

she lays her head down at my feet and i consider  
whether it's a sign of servitude or what  
she needs  
does it say more of my conservatorship or her comfort  
i feel the warmth spreading from her face  
radiating my toes  
with the perfume of her puppy-ness  
piercing my hands as i pet her  
the center of my heart protector  
and i think  
whatever the motivation, the tenderness is real  
maybe more for me than for her  
hers might be more or a convenience  
so i'll soak up her sweetness  
her service  
her sacrifice of body and perception  
as if the ancients would write it like the women with the jars  
letting their hair down to tend to the one who they tended  
to follow  
lowering their faces, the meaning of which we will never earthly know  
radiating both pedestrian and divine devotion  
receiving the protection of their hearts  
i thank them all for showing me how