

Disease

From the street, a light, left rattling epoxy, sticky breath
staining my kiss goodnight. You rise, stirring 1 bed 1 bath,
dinner burning on coals of carpet, where the creeping begins.
Beyond the doorframe, sense esophageal uneasiness bringing
forth the morning when sallow rings salient, rendered fuzzy
with a 5 o'clock shadow, at all hours. No off days for the
assailant bending buzz into drunk dumbness, dimmer
already where dawn should have broken, shoulder
blades sharpened with the upset of hangover,
you buckle, subject to upchuck where mouth
meets porcelain, cheek beseeching linoleum
for a slice of cold between lurches. In
peacetime, you retreat to your quarters,
those covers muffling out the spaces
where your daughter must have been,
seeping through the carpet, another
casualty drenched in dystrophy,
casual as the disease,
shallow as a spilled drink.

In Transit

When the sun would let off a bit and hang
just hovering above the cacti, restitue and
shallow, we would get up and go and entreat
our bodies beyond the atrium gates and the
styrofoam roots keeping the cul-de-sac buoyant,
seeking the rubble and refuse of the dusk.

With me, my grandmother, before the knee
surgeries, a force of freckles and enamel
always accelerating before the gum bubble,
a Barbizon body, dripping in contrapposto,
most vital on our afternoon jaunts. She paved
her way with her sway, leaving bits of her DNA
footprint on asphalt, proof of protein content,
metabolism in motion. Sporting a pink halter
and shape-ups, you might catch a strand of
platinum hair caught in the blue, little envoys
somersaulting their nike swoop serenade into
white space. She would speak to the little
gatherings of half-hillsides, conjure their
cocktails of species while her Walkman
dribbled besides the bend in her knees,
spilling chlorine salutations on the
sidewalk to cool off a bit,
Norma Jeane in transit.