

STAYING

This is a never before time and place,
yet old. A crumbling under a dark weight
reeking of permanence. Not somewhere
I could live, nor you. Especially you.
The houses look stricken, sidewalks abscessed,
roads humpbacked. No recurring nightmare
ever taught me this dirt smell rising
from crevices alien as my own voice
cleaving the night with your name.

How long has it been? Away from the fir-lined
hills and music, fine wine and tulips
on our table. I remember being expelled
from a silver express train, booted off
as if we didn't have the fare or some VIPs
claimed our compartment. For a few moments
we recall watching out our window the white-tail deer
in velvet as they browsed the moonlight.
A fawn and doe raced us beside the rails,
albino as stars, fleeting as good dreams.

I've heard about this place
in rattling prologues to winter.
Or from spider tracks behind the furnace.
These alleys are ruckled with flickering eyes,
fever warps these rooftops. The walls tremble
as something passes heavily.

And yet you stay, not knowing when or if
my pale feet can return to the station.
Knowing only
that no one else knows about the deer.