

RICHARD DEMING

## *Speak at This*

In a clear  
chromosomal light of  
sudden sight,

the tongue becomes an unlikely weight.

There are hours when words will not come,  
in grief or joy, or in the startled whirlwind  
when we don't trust any love.

Not nothing now, some silence attests  
what more, what noun  
does not do.

That is to say, syllables coordinate vanishing  
in the ledger of lost chances.

Try this:

If an apple, then exile;  
a pomegranate? Then wintering descent;

a glance backward, and the pupils of the eyes become a banishment.

What Echo said was  
a name not  
worth repeating.

And thus a beautiful daughter  
slides her thumb along her lower lip.

It blooms, it shatters.