

What to Say · *Arthur Vogelsang*

to M.S.

The train's speed, the gray and blurry Atlantic Plateau
A bitter sight, and a few stray gin wings buzzing "left behind"
Most of the time, and in that trip past water,
Past swamps, and over water, I must have rode by some dead women
Submerged and totally rejected as in murder
By fancy, brutal, heavy-drinking beaus.

Nothing's worse. Though there's your loneliness on brilliant days at 2
That even the hardest fucker who loves you truly for months
Can't poke away. Sometimes it's like sinking too fast from floor to floor.

Or that disgust if you can't think of the most important thing
Or say it. When I was in the train the train dominated the landscape
And I thought and thought. I'd be at my desk (this is a story) and

That story, my medium-sized angular cactus sitting in clay,
It and the window at arms length, like
The thunder, and coffee like a musty repellent against a buzzing nothing,
That story of the window in front of me
Has no middle, like a cube of ice only a half hour old,
As if the rain that begins to bang away at the ground
Were the center of what I swore to say.

Then there's a speed worse than sex or elevators,
When each year goes by like Arlington or Perryville,
Actual like houses or the actual words death and loneliness.