

AND STILL IT COMES

like a downhill brakes-burned freight train
full of pig iron ingots, full of lead
life-sized statues of Richard Nixon,
like an avalanche of smoke and black fog
full of bent pins, the broken off tips
of switch-blade knives, the dust of dried offal,
remorseless, it comes, faster when you turn your back,
faster when you turn to face it,
like a fine rain, then colder showers,
then downpour to razor sleet, then egg-sized hail,
fist-sized, then jagged
laser, shrapnel hail
thudding and tearing like footsteps
of drunk gods or fathers; it comes
polite, loutish, assured, suave,
breathing through its mouth
(which is a hole eaten by a cave),
it comes like an elephant annoyed,
like a black mamba terrified, it slides
down the valley, grease on grease,
like fire eating birds' nests,
like fire melting the fuzz
off a baby's skull, still it comes: mute
and gorging, never
to cease, insatiable, gorging
and mute.