

ARDA COLLINS

162

1

The lakes
are behind
the salt shadows
a frozen sea
deer, midnight.

69

2

Brittle there is electricity
in the snow. It would break the sun
at 1. In an hour
astral afternoon rises before dark
over the road and rocks.

3

It's dark

and so hard to find it

any other way.

Not on Earth.

In another part of the solar system there's a blue sky;

wheat or snow

blown down on one side.

70

Lake as dark

as a mirror

in the dark. An unmoving tide

lies still in far order.

The unlit origin

glided out.

4

The arc across
a glass building to a white
civic courtyard, mild soot,
and brick partitions at twilight.

The afternoon is distilled to heights
the next day
on the golf course
through the television.

71

Are you startled? Saturn,
or it was something
besides, what had been
crossed or vivid
to get through the sedge and verdure, virid and diamond.
Madness
blows through its eye,

Saturn's rings, a king comes slovenly down a hill
to a flowering meadow
that towers over disappearance
cast into vertices, and voids.

5

Who doesn't sing from this lake?
the song that plays
under this galaxy of lakes
races a thrush
through the grass in the stars
across space
clutch through to their forms
and break stones and flesh
desiccated in the peel
torn into red light around a storm;

star comes through the pond
gleams in the black shallow water
a mirror bounding in eternity,
though there isn't eternity
outside the cave face that sees it.

6

death star comes to a pond
night in a circle
back over the hill
where the moonlight is shining;
drowning under it
wouldn't be.

I come up somewhere else
with my heart and lungs
silvered
giant skate,

73

seaweed valves,
in black wings
flies through
up to the light
shredded animal cells
fail the wide
cadence
repository.

Plant water
algae clean the dark for new
cold water stars;
dying
I'm not sure what it's for:
where would it be?

Gleaming and slavering on
teeth and moonlight tear apart
vast, flat,
elevation.

Reaching into kelp under the black waves,
only the sun bright brown and blue returns to it in the morning,
hazel thistle makes the ocean return to the day.

75

It's the time of day
the light changes over. The waters
at the bottom of the slopes
ringing and burning empty
turn a hand over a carpet to make it darker
in places down to the inlet.

Clear unrest

sunset blazing and watching
a beach movie blazes the eye
only.

7

Cilia light your arm.
Your sleep passes me
when you wake. At 6
forces wait
in the circular drive.

8

Afternoon has a white shadow
downstairs. The forest across the road
envisages the gray pond
by the highway. Lakes,
it's true that something something.

9

It's 6:22.

The dim

closes in the lamplight, across

the dark hall, that

—eons come in close

in one note

they're still, they're here; they move

it's us.

77

10

They bent down

the two hounds

they made they became.

On your knees

in the branches and lake

snow on the road that bends that would end.

11

Awash in the afterlife of swans,

walking up the road

it's boring

but I'm still afraid.

It's freezing out,

I feel like I'm walking above the road

suspended because my breath is cold.

When I get back

it's perfected.

12

Reach across

arc of day

on this chest that belts the hours of these depths
the creeks and shallows wake
in pails and lets
the rip that makes
the fabric of eyes
a terror of space.

79

By the ocean, soft, wooden
decomposition
in breaths
near apprehension

I could
this way
blackened forest
ash only.

13

It's impossible to say
why I recognize
something about why it's black.

It's lost.

The sun is out and winds up a dirt trail in the grass that gets
narrow and goes higher

80 up from life.

14

The fence in the grass buckles
under rain in advance
of fields' shallows.