

Two Poems · *Matthew Lippman*

CHILDREN'S BOOK

When I speak with you the windows don't move.
They are filled with grey.
The man playing piano across the way coughs into his lover's hair,
turns over a rose.

When I miss you it was not long ago.
It was when something was defined.
It was yesterday, at the museum, when I saw the marble sculptures
of Love and Eros and thought rain was falling from the
ceiling.

When I speak with you I remember driving across the bridge with a
torch in my mouth.
When I speak with you the river explodes with fish and large
elephants who blow pink feathers from their trunks.
I hear warm steel spill across factory floors.

And all the while, a woman lays her head across a body of water.
It is not you.
She whispers: lapis.
Because she knows everything to be that warm.
Like when the sun is green and the bees come back to her with
stories the tulips have told about making colors.