

SHARD

This is a party
fingers inching down the glass bottle's beaded neck
aluminum cans thrown off the roof's edge
the slip and clamor of foot traffic

Dust catches itself in suspension
like the freeze-frame of an action film

It is an amber light
(light's fiber)
I'm told
that whiskey
with its firm brown grip
is the only honest handshake anymore

There is no path from any angle to the Swan Nebula
from this city roof
only the blank-hour chill
and gravel scuttling under my knuckles

I see the television's convex screen as graph paper
the news reporter's microphone
black ink attacking the page
bullets smaller rubs of graphite
aligned in an arc of parallax

Tonight the pen's ink dries quickly
there is no line of sight
to the Swan Nebula