

Only up was gone. Up was away.
Earth still spun
As it stalled and drifted darkward,
Sublime,

An aspirin in a glass of water.

TWO HORSES AND A DOG

Without external reference,
The world presents itself
In perfect clarity.

Wherewithall, arrested moments,
The throes of demystification,
Morality as nothing more
Than humility and honesty, a salty measure.

Then it was a cold snap,
Weather turned lethal so it was easier
To feel affinity
With lodgepole stands, rifted aspens,
And grim, tenacious sage.

History accelerates till it misses the turns.
Wars are shorter now
Just to fit into it.

One day you know you are no longer young
Because you've stopped loving your own desperation.
You change *life* to *loneliness* in your mind
And, you know, you need to change it back.

Statistics show that
One in every five
Women
Is essential to my survival.

My daughter asks how wide is lightning.
That depends, but I don't know on what.
Probably the dimension of inner hugeness,
As in a speck of dirt.

It was an honor to suffer humiliation and refusal.
Shame was an honor.
It was an honor to freeze your ass on horseback
In the year's first blizzard,
Looking for strays that never materialized.

It was an honor to break apart against this,
An honor to fail at well-being
As the high peaks accepted the first snow—
A sigh of relief.

Time stands still
And we and things go whizzing past it,
Queasy and lonely,
Wearing dogtags with scripture on them.

MORE LIKE IT

1.
It's white ashes
That drift and mizzle,
Muffle and sift like snow.

Feather-ash, not snow.
Sure sign Heaven
Has burned to the ground again.

The pines
(Ah, Unanimous!)
Elect a new God.