

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.

2.

The jetstream careens
As if with a new God at the wheel.

The pines never stop praying.
They pray best in a drizzle.

The pines pray up a drought.
They pray snowdrifts and sheet lightning.

They get everything they pray for.
They get sex with the wind.

3.

Pine pollen yellows the air
Thick as smoke.
Woodgrain flames inside the pines,
Insatiable, flames
Like palms pressed together.

4.

Here in pines under ashen sky
I am. Reason is
To join my prayers
With theirs.