Sunset Over Hand-Made Church · Jane Miller

Like, people get emotionally tied to the first person who fucks them up the ass,

god willing,

we were driving toward Biarritz & stopped to call Alexis, exhilaration in our voices as we described the scenery, an emotion akin to Carlos Williams' man swinging a shirt over his head or Hass' shouting hello

to an empty house,

& as
the one pleasure of the traveler
holding a lemon to his nose on a windless day
is to know he can leave,

the week we saw Arles
we enlarged everything
out of our minds,
Arles exactly as painted by Van Gogh,
the goldenrod, wheat, apple trees,
no one
tending them in all the hours we drove,
for the French, odd,
not a soul,

the difference being
we had each other & were still
believing in a god,
menage a trois, the next day slept between mountains
where the proprietor caught trout
& we ate in the poised and spirited
style of women alone
among men in the immaculate
dining room,

like a picture of a country dining room serving rose pears.

What a night in a featherbed in a room with a high ceiling, life has been good, good, finding our empty purse & providing the wine we drink under a quilt.

I did not want anyone to see that my face was so happy,

because I had slipped into the face of my dead, who know so precisely what to relive with their heads calmed like a unicorn in the lap of a virgin,

& through me drive through France

with you, this gentle self Jane who buys a paper & crosses the square for a beer in Tourrette-sur-Loup, scaling the terraces of the olive trees after lunch

to play the wooden flute.

It's this distance from you, this freedom we have to forgive, that keeps us on a tether

like goats, exactly like

ghosts.