

RICHARD ROBBINS

I

You arrive at a place where
I doesn't matter. You're tired
of hearing yourself talk, star
in the celebrated farce

billed as drama, titled *Me*.
The sea, the mountains come in
and out of your life, children
grow beyond you—still, the one

voice hardest to leave, the first
person, holds to you from his
central cave position, armed
with the old clips and soundtracks

projected against concave,
distorting walls. He needs to
be told the war's over. He
needs to leave the stronghold, to

come out with his hands up, high
as surrender requires. You
may pull the brittle palm fronds
from the rusty helmet, douse

the uniform and burn it.
Be gentle pulling leeches
from his back. In the drama
of his life, they open leaks

into your life, into you,
where he will, naked, finally
arrive, smug to have cast off
most things personal—*I*,

now *you*, on his way to *he*.
Be gentle passengers toward
the new place, your memories each
dislodged, at large on the train,

observing your fine progress.
If you're asked, don't be alarmed
to give up more: fingerprints,
your tongue, that seat you'd dare to claim.