

DAN BEACHY-QUICK

Chimera in Virga and Voice

mercury will merge this startle
 ravening in clouds a
 poem not Nature cannot be
half-murmuring the elements I think
the mountains for love sleep and hover
 above the lawns in havoc
those poppies you small doors you roses
 unlocked by wind if worthy—
 if worthy, let me in—
blossoms unpetaled but thunder blooms
 my child awake she's thirsty always
 she is not for crying she asks How
I am not, not born, not yet, and why
 her empty bed my eye
become the cloud in darkening volumes
 a promise above the blank
parch of prairie where no peace
 save rainburst sings
lullaby unstable in deep layers
storm swallowing itself as no drop
 falls the whole symphony
narrowing deluge into one cello
note less heat than melody not heard
in dust my ear the half deaf earth

the dutch town half dead spoke
major in his ear, my grandfather,
the sabbath candles in the chimneys
rose holy the longhaired beauty
in cloud he could not see
sky through strands nor see
in shapeless cloud a face in stratus
form comfort from months in storm
such ash rains dark on streets
we plod on braids of whom we love
loved might have loved loved wind
when wind thins cloud that light-limned
crease is his daughter's eye so soon
to wake such years
in war the sea whispers "major,
a parcel from your wife, a record"—
phonograph—"yes, major"—and leave
out the needle her voice his
child he does not know speaking—
mother showed me your photo
your face its cloudy here you should
come home in the air I'm practicing
memory he mouths bright words she
sings her hebrew night in prayer