

that it reminds him of a blank piece of paper
He puts on wingtips with designs so delicate, they're like filigree
The last thing he adjusts are his cufflinks, pale silver with onyx centers, and he holds their coolness
to his temples for a moment. He seats himself at a desk in front of the window to practice. He's practicing being
at work. He's so light, that he feels himself being lifted by the shoulder blades
to be set on a vast celestial meathook
The man's terror is like vapor, like thin poison, but he tells himself it is nothing, so he concentrates
on the clean creases of his trousers, and finds himself settling into his desk like ash
But soon he is looking out of the window again, forgetting to be practicing being at work. He has undone
the hard knot of his tie. He watches the lineman lop the solid limbs off the tree at the end of the drive
Soon he is weeping, sitting at the small desk and weeping, but trying to make himself believe it's more
for the shaggy sycamore, than the job he swore that he'd left for keeps

CONTAINING THE COLOR BLUE

From the fuzzy interior depths of deep cobalt sleep, I wake into a more brilliant Curaçao hangover
I hear the furniture sounds from the neighbors upstairs, and the sharp ping of the crib-side locking
There is the whimpering, 6 in the morning, baby-blue sound that babies make
Sounds so soft, it's like a symphony of *shhh*, so when David's short hair ruffles against the blanket
it is a distinct solo in the silence
I sit up feeling insubstantial, waterless, as if the blue element in my blood had evaporated from me as I slept
But it is not a bad hangover, more the spiritual sort of wandering, a weightlessness

skull cracked open to the sky, eyes narrowed to the light, a noli me tangere sensation in the styrofoam of my bones
So that when I open the dutch front door to look for the paper, I think it is a vision
or maybe a delusion—but it won't go away. In that hazy mist of illumination
the light of Trouble, the light of paper deliveries and adulteries, the kind of light where the blue-gray of cement
is brighter in its intensity than the dove-gray of dawn, *they are there*
so solidly, sharp and surreal as the huge sectioned cut-outs at the meat counter at Kroger's
A trinity of Angus steerlings, blue-black, bossy, broken out of some farmer's idea of a suitable life
and they've chosen this suburban apartment complex to descend, like bovine, cud-chewing angels, to stomp righteous
cloven feet in the direction of us: the commuters, the mothers, the law students, the retirees, the young, black
med-school couple, to show us the error of our tame ways—only the timing is a little off, and I'm the only one
beholding the epiphany. I shake my finger at them; this is the wrong time to reveal their blue-black glossiness
I feel as if I should be running beneath the windows like Paul Revere
waking my neighbors with the news, "The cows are here. The cows are here!" But I am afraid. I have doubts
that by the time I finish my rounds, they will have de-materialized, and I'll be left like Gladys Kravits on "Bewitched"
holding back the celestial blue gauze of the curtain sheers for Abner, after it's already too late
So instead, I sip my coffee and watch. They're in a tight triangular formation, but calm
Their dark, blueberry stained tongues, dart in and out of their nostrils. They're on a small swath of manicured lawn
like a landing pad, next to the parking lot. It's about twenty feet square, with a little curb around it
and the grass is that exact shade of "Bluegreen" that's in the Crayola box—the big one, with the sharpener in back
That one with the color so wonderful, that you could never keep it
in the lines