

### 3 A.M.: PUT PEDRO TO SLEEP

I know exactly what death looks like

downy hills    pale green  
                    tufts of cottonwood trees  
ribbon of road, ribbon of river.

The needle, long and shiny. . . .

Her breath rises and I feel for it.  
She's small.

                    During the apneas  
                                    the little pauses

she might drift    as on a hang glider

over that    landscape.

I almost pushed him down

                    the cliff

                    on Canyon Road  
                            on his last day    today

I thought about it

Pedro, companion  
                            of my loneliness

                    my solitary glides, at night,  
over those hills.



across the stones  
in rapid water.

Pedro, ball of will  
and bites,  
wagging his white-tipped tail  
when he comes to me.

He'll be put to sleep.

At first, his rest will be very dark;  
then, wisps of dawn  
will fill the house;

he'll scratch to be let out  
his black and brown tank-shaped body  
will trot down the sidewalk  
his toenails will click  
his collar will jingle

an hour later  
he'll return from Smith's  
as he does  
every morning

from scrounging the dumpster

with a whole roast chicken

a dozen spareribs raw or cooked

a freshly baked loaf of bread  
still in its cellophane. . . .