

A CONFSSIONAL POEM

The story—someday he would have to confess the story—would not resolve itself for the telling. It remained clouded like amber, and, like amber, not clouded exactly, but dense with its own color and hardness, a surface and depth that mimic each other: the light enters it and takes a long time exiting, caught up in the sepia, the golds, the pale yellow of the river willow's leaves, the fog having lifted, but still remnant, a rust stain of iron oxide, the odor that rises from the book as you open it, the dead language of fossils in a jag of limestone, the honey on the blade as it's scraped from the combs. The story, if he tried to tell it now, would move like this *away* from the causal, like all matter, dark and light, from the trauma of creation.

COMES A TIME

There comes a time when you can no longer believe in the night and its one alibi, believe the snow-light in the orchard, believe the ice at the heart of the onion, believe the fever kindled by hummingbirds, and the wind bruised by an angel's fall. There comes a time when the name you have called yourself in hope and in lamentation—*I*—that charred wick, that ruined column that once held up a world—*I*—that incision that never quite healed seems a brittle and makeshift marker for this body that sustained you. Did you believe the struck match purged the air you breathed? Did you believe you were ever poor, hungry for something more than the little that filled you, day to day? '*I*'—you start to answer—'*I . . .*', knowing there comes a time.