

Soon · *Jim Simmerman*

I will take an orange and move  
into the closet. I will deposit  
a small jar of water outside  
the door. I will stroll the floor

of my closet like a sundial  
on a cloudy day. And I will say  
to myself, "Poor Mutton, now you  
not hurt no one no more; poor

wind whipping through the hair  
of a corpse." As if remorse  
were a fop in a  
restoration play. I

could live inside a closet if  
I wanted to; even one haunted  
by the remnants of no person  
I had been. I could scream

like the darkness on both sides  
of my skin; I could grin  
like water, and no one would  
check the door. I could store

a year's worth of sleep among  
the teeth of a comb, or hone  
it to a fine point of abstraction  
and stab myself awake. Take,

for example, the water in the  
jar, how it drinks itself more  
out of habit than thirst. Take  
the one thing a man has done

alone his entire life and  
shake it like a rug; shake it  
until the air begins to clot  
with dust, until it becomes just

one more reverie in form, a  
closet full of soot, a lull  
in the lull of waiting. I will  
peel my orange as the door hinge

locks with rust. I will hold my  
head and sing myself a lullaby. I  
will think of heaven as an empty  
shelf. I will forgive myself.