

It will soon be midnight and even the devil is disinterested.

I walk away from my cells, from magnification and atomic rhythms
to culture my notebook in starlight.

What do I know of poetry? Yet the sure minute hand
allows for nothing else. My molecules must restructure
to pass through ancient doors. Now is distilled.

Now is vitro-essence of failure,
despite leaving the fugitive fewer places to hide.

And earth will be no better for an 11th. hour poem.

The centrifuge slows. Too bad my other theories were not
as flawless as this forte for human horology. I regret arguing
so much with God—it closed all the cloudy and crazed crystal siphons.
And my tuneless lyric nears the maudlin maundering of senility
but I am not old. My mind persists on something about a valley.

It is all too bad. Unless—

That one! That wire-drawn pupil who speaks other languages,
who one day challenged the god-smith, and turning close by
in the color of discovery, battle-damaged and open for a moment,
gave me a glimpse of the bright burning edge of a demon I know.

To that damned and holy host, that one pupil,

I leave all I have:

The cold shine of my keys,
and my one poem.