

Gone too high too often. A pile  
 of singed feathers dripping wax on the downers, always  
 patching to fly one more set too close to the sun.  
 Trumpet man. Slow-moving target  
 for shooting galleries, fifty-two small pasteboards,  
 and heavy bookies, mean as a bull when you got between.

Was there a man at all?  
 Or just a flared gold phallus that seduced you  
 and crammed you into the gears of a music box on wheels,  
 hurled you across the bad weather map, into the broken-john hotels  
 with faded lint bedspreads, and the watered-gin back-corners  
 of never-quite-level-halls full of lurching bodies and bad acoustics?  
 Trumpet man. Inseparable composite  
 of flesh and that wind-thing you both die in different ways  
 without— cold spite for your touching,  
 hot pipe to all we know of paradise for his.

Tears emptied for the last set, he mounts  
 the god syndrome like mercury,  
 transcends music and sound, an entity  
 not protoplasm and metal but some new alchemy,  
 entering entrails and hair shafts  
 to that last submerged panging tunnel you had sealed and secured.  
 Deep, forcing down your fiercest barriers,  
 playing what no mortal ever played, filling  
 you, driving deeper yet overhead, levitating. Slamming  
 in the afterburner, rocketing upward, peeling  
 off new notes like bright blisters, Inhaling, exorcising