

On the radio in January:

-after Robert Hayden and the Grateful Dead, for Aunt Em

I('d) wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking
and the crank radio fizzle out
Why does lemon rain wear away?

Like gray asphalt buried underneath the snow outside
(the cold splintering, breaking) quiet
I('d) wait and hear the birds shake
off the branches, nip
off the seeds, no sound (pips)
but the starved sky
and bone white snow—

I('d) walk and hear the lemons stale
like flies, dry like acid, burn (out)
like the radiator, turn (on)
like radiation fizzles off
It's just a box of rain—I('d) watch
and hear your hair shed
and shear (and disappear)
that one snow-spring evening

I('d) sit in the car in a Stewart's parking lot
upstate (in splintering, breaking
sunlight)
I('d) have a cone of lemon sorbet (wait)
and hear the crank radio fizzle out
It's just a box of rain/
I don't know who put it there.../
(Why does lemon rain wear away?)

such a long long time to be gone.