the absence of heat

i can’t sleep without you.

last night, with the threat of rebellious cells

hanging over our heads

when it was time to sleep

even as the city rioted at your window

i heard your breathing change

and followed you into our private world.

maybe you weren’t truly asleep yet

no matter —

your sound said peace, and i obeyed

i have no idea what i dreamed

it doesn’t matter, i know you were there

tonight, i lie alone and awake

questioning the dark, why must i think at all?

why can i not make friends with the black?

and am answered in the rhythms of night

this is my penance, my punishment

i have left your side, let the city sink claws into you

while i adopt the respite of my well-treed suburb

for this, there is no trial

no pleading my case, no fanciful excuses

the darkness, late my friend, is the jailer of my loins

and my only passion, my love

is the absence of heat