

DEPOSITION

Let the graves make their confession
—Herbert

After all the centuries' time stamps
are rendered tiny tin soldiers, foreshadowed
dung on the balustrade, none
of its fashion adding up to anything
more than some faceless dawn, or limp
lungs hung over a half-folded fence,
we might've looked back to now
as some kind of rejoinder—the perfect
pitch ringing in our ears, the twin
galaxies that dart across our field of vision
without ever arriving at its vertex—
sight's engirdled suffrage.

Somewhere in a country
no longer empty, castrated stillness overtakes
all opacity as absence renders
presence's dominion and all movement
grows namelessly brutal without brutality,
without a jury's bona fide *snap* or
wrinkle. Sure that our sadness is debuting,
we cry unlike all the other times
we've cried just like this. Somewhere it's
midnight and somewhere it's tomorrow's
today, and we've no way of fiddling
with it, of backtracking to another ingrown
hour that didn't so much pass us by
as die another minor *snap*—
just a fly we killed out of boredom and
nothing more.

Maybe our jaw
has locked up again, or again we've fallen
into another basement that has risen
to the surface—dawn: another

pharmaceutical we found on the bank
of an empty river—or it's the wish
to flay one's own flesh for food.
Unlike the road we decided not to take,
or unlike the clarity with which we know our
history's bemused injuries as scars
kept not on flesh or on the land but
in some dried-up ocean, we're
still breathing between breaths, tracing
driveways up our arms, around our
necks until the muffled impulse to speak
cries out and we, again, sleep.