The light that fils the room feels cold and blue, tintd by the shades across the window. This window faes south, so the light trickles in slowly and at first I can ignore it, but evenually I must open my eyes to this undewater light and take a deep breath in.

1

I used to get up so early. Some days I woul go outside and watch the sunrise, warmin my hands with a mug of herbal tea. The world was quiet, but not still.

I admired the people moving about the streets, gettig an early start. We had something in comon, they and I. We all knew the feelng of the firs light of day rising over the moutains and hitting our faces. We carried that feeling with us thrughout the day, like a token. But I haven’t sen them, those people of the sun, for monts now. I peel back the heets and stare at the ceilig fan, motionless and stagnant.

2

3

The ar is heavy and empy all at once. Perhaps, I think, it isthe emptiness tat has weight. I pull the sheets bck up to my chin, shivering as they glie over my body. I cannot deide if I am warm or cold, in limbo. I cosider shtting my eyes again, but I know that the mornng light will find me and penetrte my eyelids the way it penetates the shades, taking on a different tne as it shines through my skin. Red, urgent. And so I keep my eyes oen, swimming in the blue.

When I ws a child I believed thatin winter, as water froze, the fishes froze with it. I looked at the icy lakes and streams with curiosity, wondring how the fish srvived. I mentioed this once to my mother, who smled and told me that it is only the surfae that freees and not the fish. The ice fors a windowpane agaist the world, she told me. I could never decde which seemed wose, to be frozen or isolated. Now I feel that I am both, and it has been a long winter. I am unble to move.

4

Continuing to stare, I try to appreciate the stilless, the silence, and the light. I know that I must get up and start the day. I will walk to the kitchen, I tell myself, and brw the coffee I switched out for my herbal teas. I will stnd in my kitchen and … what then? One the coffee is poued, what have I to do? I coud change the sheets, or preare dinner, or open the mail, but I don’t have the eergy to do them all. These voyages, thee escpades. I used to do those thigs and more in a singl day, I suppose, though that seems so long ago. That ws then, and this is now, and befoe I can get to those chores I must first get out of bed Slowly.

5

I kick away the shets, back where I began. Slowly I stretch out my legs and ams, as far as they can go, and then pull them back to my body. I am on my bak. I try to lift myself up, strting with my shoulders, my vertebrae leaving my mattess one by one. I make it hlfway up before siking back down.

6