

The Holiness of Saying No

Three years since the marriage
and still muddy lawns cry
for sunlight: I didn't belong
to this dark club of moons
and martinis, elegant cities
that betray, like college girls,
like hoops without any real brothers.

Three years since that sister's kiss
of promise, since I displaced
one emptiness for another,
one ship's hull for one lost glove,
thinking now more of dance music,
debt and death, herpes nearing my lips,
fast cars gliding over potholes.

Three years since stances of love
became inverted iambs, kicked-in walls,
bus tickets to the middle of Kansas.
Surrender Dorothy: in the limousine
of clichés and mascara I talked
of Love vs. Magic, saying fall,
take cover, protect your religion,
your thin waist. Alone at the movies
I snap my fingers like Sinatra and coo
thank yous to perfect strangers.