



Apprehend

# Passage

Something falls from the heavens, the sky, the cloudburst itself  
and falls  
and crimps, reconfigures.

It lands on the hat  
of a passerby, a label:  
a name tag.

Arbitrary like all the designations  
that are received from above  
or elsewhere.

The name of this person comes unbidden  
to hobble free passage

as in the case of the fairy tale hero  
who walked backward in good faith

and stumbled on vermin,

progress and fine form disfigured.

No one recalled his given, the name a lover  
once whispered in his ear.

He was purchased as an object:  
all progress is sacrifice.

What stranger tries gamely to greet him as familiar.

Though little do the sleepers know it  
—those skeptical parents of life—

—forsakers of recognition—

this person stands on solid ground, but walks as if  
on a tightrope.

Why is balance like the name tag, teetering, thready,

intent on sticking to its apparition?

Hunchback or prince  
juggles appellation

while a child nearby earnestly explains

that in dreams the fall is exciting  
and does not result in injury.

Child in the deserted promenade—  
away, the benighted pedestrian:  
to drop the juggled balls  
is to make a decision from on high,  
and the impact of the discarded balls  
on the ground laminates identity  
further.

A smart child,  
he insists: but that person has disappeared.

And who walks on, shrugging,  
good-bye to the invisible,  
its spell broken

inside the transformations of mobility—  
handsome and still hunchbacked.

Smart,  
wise with gravity,  
sincerely absent, extended like an old friend's hand.

So perturbs what should have ended already.

Things sent down seep  
from one conclusion to the next.

A purgatory or so lower,  
another child

looks up, goggling at the supposed sky.

A bird swoops down, maternal,  
and plants a worm in her mouth.

In the world above, he offends his hosts by spitting in disgust.

Why he recedes through the membranous floor  
that the other child pokes through,

because salvation is simply an exchange of names.

# Formula

The idea is that you would dissolve yourself into water  
until the solution is cloudy and has

cleansing properties. Instead, you go away  
entirely. The water is left behind.

The water lacks churn, is unable to evaporate,  
tastes wrong.

Stymying the chemist: How to make water out of  
departure? How to make the water melt,

thinning the air? Froth, lather. That helplessness  
that comes of wanting to touch mutability.

It is a stubborn entity. It refuses to evaporate.  
It brings gifts of otherwise conforming

to the rules of the medium. You offer from yourself  
a house of water, but you are gone.

A property reclaimed at a distance. You would  
deliquesce, only after you leave. You wipe

away a certain soil only by staying,  
contrary. Wet footprints. You see a pattern

that reverts back to intention. Impracticable  
present.

As if to present oneself were an act of intent, a chamber  
of weightlessness. Not to float but to

remain there always, bidden by distance  
the solution in a thirsty knot bequeaths.