Before It’s Forgotten
Nadia Kirmani
Class of 2019
Poetry
From *The Forms of Love*

Beginning to wonder
Whether it could be lake
Or fog
We saw, our heads
Ringing under the stars we walked
To where it would have wet our feet
Had it been water

-George Oppen
Before it’s forgotten

“Until we forget,” we would say. Sharp edges form image
inhabited in different bodies,
we give into the frame...

Pressure led back,
slapped into a haze that
never quite recedes, muscle
turns to glue. A lonely fix to fragment lead,
palms resting down.

Left chasing phosphorescence
on late afternoons,
until the day after the day
can be...I am listening
for the bass of an indie-turned-pop song.
Blue vocalise shade

Soft red headlight glow, arrested
euphoria.
Let me leave...trees heave sighs
bark impressed by curious fingers,
cracked from compromise. Fluctuate breath
as a blundering tradeoff,
waiting
for the sun to reach our side, if ever -
we stand in blue vocalise
shade,
wringing anguish, fist on throat
strapped in trance by strings,
making
soundless music. That naked
wet grass wafts under our noses,
playing trampled rhythm, by feet that crave
earth,
the last reminder of summer
hanging around our necks...
until this wouldn’t be the first.
We fear, the birds swallow their song.

Glacier

revolutions take flight, where
words are only words on
photographic pockets of time,
trellis-work of neuronal strength
makes mottled memory develop in gray,
numbing synapse, lingers
disappointed,
amniotic desire brings cords into motion...
we pull apart, you first -
feign acceptance,
letting go.
Nightbundled

Night is our safety
A promise like a shy smile, blooming dark,
    intentions are actions
our bonsai world keeps space
clutching chrysanthemums you and me

Moonful of hope
bathed trite and true
condense (without collapsing)
adjusted on the tree to branch stem root

Inside means forgetting, a temporary fix (as if
it were that simple) for you and me
to redesign genesis
Declared

Sunstrings pull,
cymbal-kissed
confessional
echoes into
singularity
Homage to summer

part i.

Shade touches the outer banks, cooled
to lackadaisical anticipation,
you drift to music...

I fell into it, picked up the beat and
forever ago was
wading through reeds
tepid water coalesced
   into beads that freckle bare skin

...that we wanted to stand
in the intersection of myth and reality,
   copper-colored roses in your palm.
Homage to summer

part ii.

Fledglings take ascent

baptized in glass-water, cautious movement fully formed

breeding love from anisotropy,

the art of saying what needs to be said, reigning unfocused light into fixation -

    gaping
crushed grass under our bodies

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Music labors potential reality, feeding time on a slow beat

We internalize decision in agreement light rests on your eyelashes briefly
Homage to summer

part iii.

Postured in the slant of light
stretched tendons under skin gather,
loop into reassuring strokes
as I weep on the last night,
uncynical and unashamed

The day you go
    I am left with
the first mouthful of fruit

buzzed and buzzing.
Maybe if you had your way it would be different

I shouldn’t have left
    meaning the car should stay
where her grandparents could never find it, and
I could say
what it was I was trying not to say...

My words are not prophecies
from sun-soaked pharoahs to famine bearers

I am a spectator to your vortex
    of contaminated blood
    cigarette smoke and self-loathing
migrating to the center of red eyes
Atonement

It comes before you realize
the unreal is habit

when artificiality courses through
your lymphatic system,
becomes reassuring

outside threatens light
    scatters off the glacial surface
each particle of water gaining autonomy

insects take refuge
on your body
    the wind surges
shaking blades of grass,
disintegrating dandelions

the warmth feels familiar you
let it graze your skin
    even though it won’t last
you welcome it
Midflight

Out there
wind turns stone,
the feeling of song
massaged in your skull

relief radiates
wrapped in dark

we scoop out sky for
more dream