

Specimens

He got as close as he could – from a distance – over and over. And then he did it again. Examined his tendency to snow. A book of cold reveries. He was far from apothecaries, fire, warm cups of condolences. He shivered, pulled in his legs up to his chest. Far from bright butterfly waving against glass. At the end of one season he considered how he had chosen incapacity. Not deliberately, but distinctly. He lived with no skin or he seemed not to require any covert actions. He was thinking of wine but also screen porches, creeks, undertones. He was thinking about the relationship between distance and intimacy. He swallowed beds, in his spare time. He excelled. He was now very near to himself, sickly, chronically awake. His symptoms required him to continue collecting specimens and to keep none of them. Intimacy was in not knowing them. He required that beguiling approximation of closeness he could only experience with someone he didn't know. He was addicted. The sky looked faster as they spoke in stops and starts, interrupted by the spectacle of the game. He thought about her while watching a man pushing a young child in a wagon with a delicate red awning in the rain. He thought about constructions. His legs strode, great lengths between each step. He walked the same route repeatedly and passed the same persons, same flowerings, same smattering of pavement and clouds. He wondered how a string of images represented a day. People were not receptacles— people were not 'thank you's.' You did not ever need to go to them directly— anymore. With new inventions you could almost touch and taste from anywhere. Yet where *was* where? Where all ideas were still persons, and where did they go when he had no access? Were they out visiting their own receptivity, their webs? How to follow those delicate lines? Invisible, when not stroked by sunlight.

Peril

They were no worse and mostly better. They were worse as the season turned, worse than their better selves, but better than the obvious noise. *Worse* was a piece about people and their ailments, they said, closing, not naming. They did not specify what would happen if they never spoke about peril. The season was changing that moment. They took off their robes. They shivered in sweaters. Their bodies in that theater often called water. An abundance as in torrential or hurricane. They had been warned. They had meters, culprits and synonyms for precipitation they did not speak. Their lips were sealed when it came to betterment. Mostly they were in love with not worsening, and all of the words for decline. They were in sympathy with their own thievery and competed when it came to discussions of upper respiratory disturbances. They preferred the word 'involvements' to the word 'ailments.' They carried their weight onto carpets, couches, chairs, buses, cars. They did not speak about gravity but they noted the cascade of features in time. They did not believe in retrievals yet they woke and walked. They compared their cold rooms, dipping charts and soiled deliriums. Speech was contagious so they were careful to cover their intonations with constant and effusion garments. Such as: *Come, come. Now, here. Hmmm. Arguably. Join me? Join me!* Peril was also a person. Peril was one of them. But which one? They were mostly worse, and their better parcels were laid aside for sometime, a later which never arrived. Their problem was not in scarcity but in abundance. They rushed about, they rused no worse and mostly better, wondering which selves to wear. *Closer, cloister, coiled. How near?*