## I WRITE A LETTER TO PETE WINSLOW

i heard Pete

that you died

you

who opened my eyes to such things

collections

for the poem.

Pete, briefly, you gave me i am a bird

who moves in lush color thru

a line thru

a jotted thought

given, spontaneous

for the poem.

but

and it is a burning tower to write this it is another urge

the sticking clay

the sinking sulfurous gut the suck of the familial mud

it is what needs of and demands of me

an utterance for

it is ur and you will know it by that sound for it is the charged rock and it is the swallowing earth.

Pete

i am turned

into a part of or from

myself in anticipation of grief

not for you who slipped this bubble long before i knew or learned of you no.

for my brother slipping these past years

before these open eyes

from these hands i tell myself are helpless but how can they be helpless at this desk

a fly they turned just now into a smear

can they not hold

tighter reach one

inch farther with

one squeeze more convey the pain will ease it will that in face of any lack of will there is another's will to buttress you should buttressing you need just say the word an utterance from you

Declan

an utterance

a word

because these words are just lines strung between myself and the absence of an i that would better utter something would better know would better drop this page cup this hand to this ear

drop this scratching pencil cup this hand

to this ear and listen and

make clear that you could—i could—rest

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assured that you would know that i am listening.
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instead, these utterances i speak to a dead tree proof themselves of the lie they tell.

Pete

i am in need O i am wrapped up

Pete

to be a monk

i bathe with cupped hands in the waters of the cool spring

in my bathtub.

i breathe breathe and ebb sweet ablutions run down my neck and pool in my lap.

Pete, i want to be

the bird who moves in lush color

who waits in the air

port eternal scanning the arrivals board

to be sitting in my folding chair on my small patio smelling my stale breath

hung under the death of the sun and fertilized by the occasional breeze.

it would awaken me, say look: a bomb sniffing dog leads two men whispering into radios off down the concourse.

i could move in lush color thru a summer rain, the sun shining my feathers

prismatic. O Pete, i could thank you

who gave me unto these

hallucinations of countries of meaning induced

by the same sun that burns me as i sit

on this patio in this chair

as it thrums in my skin

off and on and

off and on again but i can't parse

the flickerings

too sun-addled to ascend, like you, to the outer edge of the bubble

to alin thru and

to slip thru and merge with the air.

my lone recourse retreat

to the clay where i watch the warts grow on my palms as i sink

as the rock burns in my hands hotter as it rises

screaming!

stone

higher above my head

to be brought down to heal hurt to soothe burns to hearken back to the heat in the dark

to the hot hearth

glowing wet

to right wrongs

in return for a felled bird

felled with a stone.

## OF GRATITUDE, IN JOINING

the scene/ set upon the taut skin/ set upon

the flaxen morning mattress forms and folded eyelids linens/ set upon

air the calm grace of

soft in opening this a first sum

first graze, the length of

dawn in all limens wet in superposition

touch inherent, in one meadow, unfolding all limens

a fountain!

touch, yes, a fountain!

from where springs this sense of o fountain!

flow and ebbs in unfolding summons

meadow, in fountain in fountain, in fountain in fountain, in meadow, in fountain

sound carried in sound on soft breaths in the distance