

Mnemonic

The trees bend in a common trance and Canada geese
return in files. Northern spring is summer
in the afternoon, and winter at night, joined by a thin hinge

of rain. An old friend in Tucson calls to say he's had a dream of me.
I've never been to Arizona, but now that this much of me has,
I remember it: southwestern spring, the surprising green, and the sun's

acetylene breath. Invented memory is as uninhabitable as real memory.
We hover there, but can't put feet down. In mention and dreaming,
we conjure each other; like seasons, we are obliged to appear.

I Come Home

To find an exercise bicycle parked
at the edge of the driveway. It almost
made it out, before remembering
its wheels don't touch the ground.
I try to lift it,

and the resulting crash is the sound
of the truck hitting the truck behind me
on Chestnut Street – not what I thought
it would sound like. The wedding
that took place here was not what I thought

it would be either, marionettes dragged
over white tarpaulin. On my way out again,
I carry my mother's coat through the train
station, an oatmeal ghost on a hanger. I bring
it to stand on the platform

in front of the disappeared Asian girl's
poster, and find the poster itself
disappeared. Passengers give me
their seats, as if my mother
were actually with me,

but it's a miscalculation: the mother
in this coat would be twenty-five,
and it would be 1966, Manhattan,
under the clock at Grand Central Station
with its brief-sparkling constellations

forever reversed. We are always
misjudging something: the time,
lovers' signals, what the dying
really want. The already dead
are clearer: grapefruit juice,

a magazine, and fish and chips
one last time. Dogs are easier
still, want you to hold their faces
and look, finally, into their eyes;
want to pet your trembling neck.

Solfeggio

You steer our evening canoe through mercury
and sing bars of Cohen's *Hallelujah*

while I try for harmony, *so* and *si*,
sol and *sidera*. The *la*, *via lactea*,

remains between, understood,
or above in profusion. *The minor fall*

and the major lift. What new music comes
will suit me as you can't; knowing you

becomes sight-reading, just short
of improvisation. Cutout in blue dark,

you mind rhythm, but are mindless of cargo,
rowing precisely for precision's sake.