

Notes from the Body—

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Is it over between us, before it's begun?

We talk, several times daily
at great cost.

Something spiralling between
our vision—naked trees,
grey light, flashing storms,
reddest aspens
of the fall

You're afraid of your job.
I'm afraid of the world—

what tree, what sister,
felled again
whispered her last
syllables this night?

And did anyone hear?

My neighbor, pregnant,
with a two-year old child
was murdered.

Someone tried to break in
to my house, twice in one week.
(My children were asleep—with only

one staircase: no escape.)
I could go on.

I try to go on.

Listen: the air is hurting
like a person
who misused the once sacred
tobacco
water is phlegming
like a person
with too many years
of too many medicines.

If I can't say this
to you, whom I know best
of all, how can I speak
of it, of us, at all?

Today, *that* man was lonely,
on my street,
dressed in a heavy overcoat,
hiding something cheap—

and the river, St. Joseph's
only looked clean from the street.

Children are dying
at 74 degrees heat
from hypothermia (starvation)
a whole continent is dying
(global warming) Antarctica

And we've all lost our names.
And the map stays the same:

in every war

someone always rapes a corpse,
 someone pisses in a flagging
 mouth
 someone puts out a cigarette
 in a frozen eye
 someone always cuts out a tongue
 not knowing why

Is it over between us,
 before it's begun?

I never bore your children
 nor danced in the sun-
 light upon the waters
 Austin, Oahu, wherever—

this spiral, this spiro-
 graph, even spies of my own

keep nudging me, saying
separate

and not because I've quit loving you—
 aspen smells
 flannel voice
 leathered whispers
 silk and skin—

but because I'm becoming afraid
 of just how much
 I really am
 learning
 to hate