

This I now remember: lying on a bunk  
and watching your hand fall, lit by streetlight—  
silver rings and lank fingers.  
I almost kissed it.

“The world is blind to your luminosity.”  
So went the first line of a poem I read to you  
beneath the frozen arch.  
When I finished you looked away,  
cracked your chemistry book:  
you knew that I loved you.

But to me it was a secret  
even on the day you crashed  
my sister’s wedding,  
handsome in black, and drunk,  
slung over the piano bar.  
I held you as we descended  
in the glass elevator.

Only recently did I learn  
the silent code  
of your violet mascara,  
your naked back  
and glass-throwing rages.

Only recently did I realize that  
you taught me to love  
if only through a slow burn:  
unwitting desire.