

TO TELL

I would like the stillness to be what it has to be, its steady curtain delaying the start of the game. I would like to have descended through a passage of absence that doesn't allow fear or escape, been there for the embrace, a move toward placing my hands upon the needy abstraction that keeps my breath at bay. I would like to be able to see it, at last, and describe its immense involvement, a fusion of a real thing with what should have stepped before me despite the dimension of questions that got in the way.

I would like to spell the form and the color, involve the hair on the glass and the dust in the eye that blinks toward oblivion without faith, convincing me not to move from this spot because there are preoccupied things coming my way. I would like to name the moments like notebooks stripped of bark and identifiable growth, pages where the story ends before it begins, a passage recalling how I entered the heart and came out somewhere through the brain.

I would like to admire the sentence I erased, how the blur of letters remains on this page, thoughts catching up with what was there before I rearranged the future to pass through unbearable light that grayed my head, hid what I actually meant before it revealed the table where I sat down and ate, fulfilling the world whose madness is measured through the blue cup on the table when I rose and fled, my consequences propelling me to compose a habit whose thousand hours of silence resemble a man sitting down, this time unharmed, wondering what made him so afraid.

THE SHORTEST POEM

The shortest poem is about love
and the blue jay in the backyard,

though the red cardinal wakes us each morning.
The shortest line is about loss and not

about the red wings of memory,
or the hummingbird appearing before

the mud wasp nest on the window sill,
hovering over it for a few seconds,

its quick disappearance unnoticed
by the fist of bristling wasps, even though

the shortest poem is about love
and not about our closed eyes,

uncertain the hummingbird
was ever there.