

House of Mirrors

the boy asks why I have never written a poem in which I love him,
and I know he means I should write a poem in which he is not bad.
tell you something like how in the last few months of our marriage
he would blast Elton John's "Your Song" as I walked up to our apartment,
how we'd slow dance with the dog sandwiched between us,
how we'd pirouette right into our next argument, something about dishes
or money or the women he couldn't say no to, but I loved him deeply
regardless. sometimes he'd chase me around the house and if I felt
like it, I thought of it as a game, how badly the boy wanted to be near me.
have I told you yet there is no single door that can stop the boy? he can pick
every lock, can kick down every cheap door, still, I'd wonder what he felt
when he'd have to find a used door that fit our frames so we could pretend
he wasn't always this boy. of course, he wasn't always this boy, sometimes
he was easier to love, sometimes we'd spend hours sanding and painting
the doors he had salvaged, Elton John playing in the background.
so, tell me, what do you call sanding and painting if not forgiveness?
what do you call this willful dismemberment, if not love?