

That last year in Pittsburgh

Loved the bottom of a ship the way summer came on
that last year in Pittsburgh, rot deepened by its own
sweet. Everything was burgundy: plaster corner
into which I practiced my name, bottle of yellowtail and double
bass pumped. Even haircuts shed boozy brown
nests. You could booth it till you dropped
into a licking, could impress the wood with wet
breath, impossible to pull the roughing in.
On my birthday or the country's, I got dressed
as a gun, bright lily bruised by nothing
but its own death. When I picture the hill I just picture that Levis poem
that ends with a piano. One night out my window
a car burned like the movies and the men
came to work their work, red lights my camera loved

Braid

I think I was wearing a tight dress
in the dream and on foot through a nighttime
city. I think I was visible, corroding the dire
hour in sweat. I think the thread ended
in a bug. I think at my sharpest I was a butter
knife at best. I think lobate and jumpy,
think stuck by my own nettling
dance. What I thought was friendship
was perhaps power hedging its bets
against softness, a stance. Status
was not what I thought. I think I was most
myself squat above the grate in smoke
and trance. I was wearing the dream, a tight
tress.