

Bruce Bond

One

Today the heavy snow makes difficult
the roads, and I touch the glass to test
the cold, to teach myself how to face it.

You loved that, how clarity relieves
the burden of the clear. One day you woke
to the thought your life was not your life

alone. But whose. The tap of the distant
faucet was never more insistent, the way
it gave a name to the quiet around it.

When they found your body, it sizzled with flies.
Dead letters in your mailbox, the body's
little debts whose total was enormous.

When I pass the dumpsters on Frye Street,
I smell the last good cigarette snuffed
in wine. Not you. But a sacrament of you

a shadow lost to a confluence of shadows.
Language has no body, and so you loved
to liken it to one. As if talk were enough

and bodies born of it. That's one way
to mend the rift between us and a world



that was fine before we came, and so continues.

It lightens things, true, the thought we lose
our singularity just looking around,
every window a page the snow revises.

You said to me, you know a language is
dead when it will not tolerate mistakes.
White travels into white. The mail arrives.

I type some letters in the field without
knowing, step by step, and when I turn back,

I vanish, buried in the snow's reply.

