

Art History: Jurisdiction of Noise in a Landscape

In the distance between what is and what could be,
there is no second look at spring, though the sun

may come suddenly, a moment that solves
everything—the woodpecker's task, the lonely vigil.

Knee deep in the long decline of street, in pencil shavings,
swollen moons of porch lights hover over brave domains

of cubic gravies, voices starched in congealed
breezes hang on street corners where no one is

listening. A woman bowed in the laundromat fingers
her final quarters, rosary beads in a fluorescent

confessional. Street lights pollinate the black sky on curbs
tattooed with ice cream wrappers and unsalted sweat. This

is the rinse of someone's certain dream: all the shoppers
and surveyors wade on thick ankles.

The train's crossbars floss identical commuters,
orange barricades prevent nothing—the fouled

air follows us daily and fresh cement,
not hardened yet, although there is concrete everywhere

like paper we've written secret recipes on. The sky
as backdrop, touring an old myth, does not explain its colors.

The more we see what we are looking at the more
we avoid all glass: on the pavement we walk past

the one bird that flew for the window.