

*with which we sleep*

That's how these romances begin  
with their conclusion embedded  
in momentary little stumbles,  
inconsequential blunders,  
union's *drop-stitch* of promise.

Even as we rush to propagate our mantel,  
add frames for the bureau  
such vivid portraits –  
cherished protests to the contrary  
this naiveté of nurturing settles with the heedless dust  
withering before the verdict of the court.

Each night our little cart trundles its oblivious cargo  
to and fro about the ancient tower  
whose indifferent chiaroscuro  
strips bare the awful things  
*with which we sleep* –  
shuttering further these two  
who cling so ardently beneath their gloaming.

The uninvited submission claws the hearts  
Digs with malignant darkening,  
wills both chill-cold.

How curious these moments are,  
which become instantly frozen –  
Freeze-dried tattoos that subjugate the soul-skin,

Branding the way we conceive of love's capacity  
littering up the geography with directives:  
the dos and don'ts  
and never again –  
that define and translate our being smaller...  
less pliable,  
more like wrinkled fables  
stiffening, with the cooling could have been.