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Flies

Black marks
left by the pen
used to sign death warrants.
Who am I kidding?
It's my grocery list
crossed out, rewritten, crossed out again
until it is covered
with them.

Ants

Much the same without the wings.
The only visitor
I have had for days prowling through the house begging for crumbs.

Moths

Thousands of tiny curtains opening and closing at once.
Last descendants of every peep show on earth.

Spiders

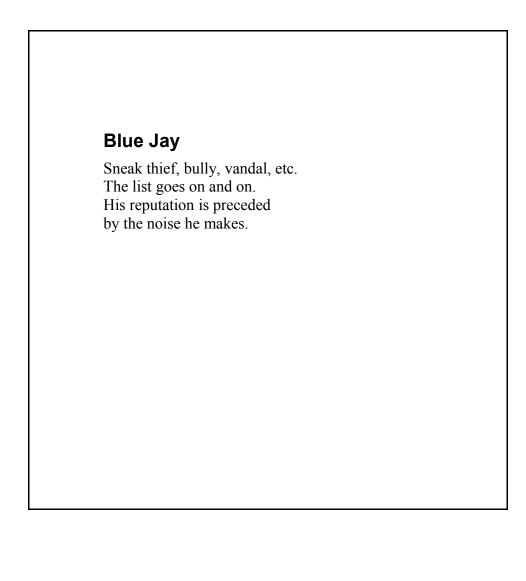
The insides of an old crutch. The greatest invention of a troubled mind. The children of the dust come back to argue their case.



There may be a hundred, I haven't bothered to count. There may only be fifty-two. One for every year they have haunted me.

Mouse

Quiet. Keeps to himself.
My downstairs neighbor,
you would hardly know he's there
except those late nights
he taps on the ceiling
with his tiny broomstick.



Bottle, Cotton Wool, & Formaldehyde

Remind me again, in whose image we are made? The brightly colored specimens neatly sorted, labeled each with its own white cardboard name card. So lifelike, except for the shiny head of a pin.

Thimble

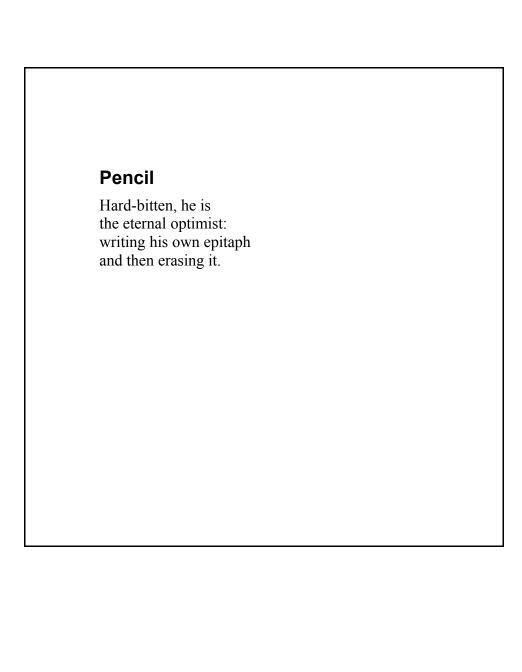
Tiny craters
like a map of the moon
borrowed from ancient astral travelers.
Mayan? Inca? Sumerian?
It doesn't matter. We have forgotten
how to read the charts
and must invent
new uses.

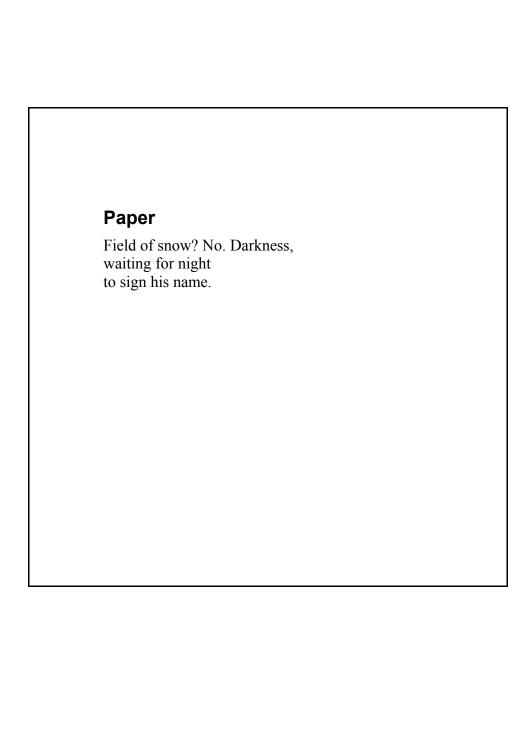
Piece of String

A snake
after the snake
has shed its skin.
The skin the snake
has shed.
A memento
of the guillotine.
A reminder
(finger missing).

Bunch of Keys

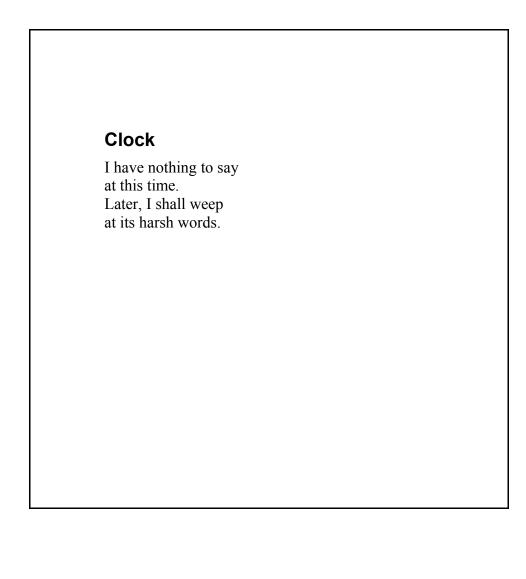
Chained together like prisoners or climbers ascending Everest. Communicants lined up with hands raised and eyes shut waiting for a door to open with their name on it.





Candle

Monument to the never were, the wished for, the could have been... Faux white marble, silver pedestal, and the thread of smoke our dreams, exhausted, must climb.



Casket with Flowers

The smooth black lacquer surface sets off the brightly colored flowers so elegantly. You would hardly know death is involved.

A boy squirms in his shirt and tie as if stuck to his seat by a pin.