

The fountain full of coins the smell of pretzels, print, perfume

formaldehyde in fabrics

brass rails down stairwells rebar in the pillars

the underground parking structure — Roman alphabet

Arabic numerals —

red carpet in the cineplex lobby

subterranean systems of concrete cisterns and piping

a drop of water a flake of light: all that remains of home

in the mountain

beneath the mountain

the seas beneath the seas others name

pushed and pulled by the moon its dark tunnel into outer space where

gravity pulls light

around a vanishing point

small as a pin prick and as lost as

a grain of sweat in the lines of a human hand.

Boyfriends girlfriends

gone to the toilets down the corridor

path of the finger trowel through the mortar

between cinder blocks: pecked

gritstone

or stony kernels from the gristmill stone.

Beneath the brick

the beach stretches around bubbles in the sand.

A sand-bug wiggles like a fingerprint.

Pyramid, profile, three-quarter profile — the different shades to

nickels and necks. Sex of a penny-flip:

tailor's dummy seamstress's shape choice of birthday motifs,
centerpiece.

The little prince's balloon wanders with his wrist

the ribbon's knot is small and tight. I say I will call when I'm ready.

At the tea party: polite questions about
new stitches in an old animal.

Through the flatware section, through support pillars plated with mirror
display cases backlit — sweet air:

gardenia peony rose
sandalwood ambergris, civet musk
that contrasting rancid note.

The intercom opens. I eavesdrop.
I gesture “No thank you.”

Little dimples of light distort in the glass:

a vial, a bottle, a message, a wish
a pendant
a little stick fish.

Tennis balls on walker legs — condensation in the skylights

last year’s drop ceiling in the ivy

tufted chintz seats
near three-ways between fitting rooms

rub of cloth against upholstery. Fragrance models

the tall stools at the cosmetics counter

spritzers anticipant
at dueling stations

mons veneris mademoiselle décolletage scent strips

a dab of Chanel or Shalimar —

or the male model's hairless thighs

the poignant angle of his bulge.

The skin on the meat of my thumb ripples under the hand dryer

ripples over the bones on the back of my hand.

(Code Adam over the store speakers.)

Sale at the anchor space

study of retail landscape:

Toys "R" Us off the exit ramp

a family in Sunday dress clothes —

wires and straps

hold the growing saplings straight.

Lilyturf ground cover Spanish moss soil topper

bails of hay stacked in the store window

holograms on hat brims

a garland of starfish oscillating fan

inspection stickers

a foal's wet nose in a handful of oats — bristle of whiskers.

More quarters for the traffic meter, the Tower Optical viewer,
more pellets at the petting zoo

another turn on the carousel.

The tertiary colors
of toy shovels

faded plastic playsets summer after summer

peeling in the backyard like skin from a sunburn —

corona in the sprinkler's spray
a thumb over the garden hose

The home gardener presses
spikes of Miracle-Gro into the mulch bed. Casual Fridays.

It takes many tries to make it through
the same kind of day over and over,
to learn the names of people or Power Rangers. One of the tiny screws
slowly undoes itself from one of the temples on my glasses.

The Elf King's daughter
through the porte-cochère
couches in the garden house

the babysitter's squirrely little shorts
ashiver in the A/C — pet names under threat

through the mist past Victoria's Secret. Bombshell:

floral fruity
notes of purple passion fruit, Shangri-La peony, vanilla, orchid,
and jasmine. Ring marks on the nightstand on the ring finger

lace doily polyester or nylon mesh
nymphet fishnet finishing touch tampon flushed.

(Some say "parking meter." Some say "multiplex" or "Kleenex.")

Foot Locker boys at magnetic checkpoints

party dresses in plastics star-studded jeans
embroidered or stenciled click-click of untied shoelaces

brass separators between terrazzo squares waxed and polished

plant leaves dusted —

how the cloth leaves momentary streaks, how the streaks are

vanishing. Lingerie sales assistant

tailor's tape over her shoulder

bust hips waist arm length chest shoulders inseam

“Are they like apples, oranges,
cantaloupes, or watermelons?”

Binary programs anticipate the changes in temperature:

revolving door ordinance rubber whoosh.

Escalator teeth fit into each other neatly

smell of graphite lubricant.

A cellphone glows in a back pocket —

paisley ties spread in rays on the display island

beach outfits; ultrasound

foamy like peroxide or

the Gulf Stream spinning on the flat-screen. Laugh tracks

nature documentaries meteorologists
making their motions

metamorphosis of water, land, spines, furrows. With or without

leaf over sex topographic map vines in locks of pool-wet hair —

promise ring acne medication satellite footage

plastic bags post-consumer cardboard carryout boxes

tentacles. In the large eyes of the virgins
what they'd call "dewy loins."

Small eyes of the monster the color of steamed vegetables.

There are fossils of ocean life in
the Great Plains. There's

a difference between fishermen and anglers, between

a small town
and a small-town experience.

A cellphone glows in a back pocket in another back pocket

x's and o's flung from the inland orchard
drift back to earth like slug's trails

glisten through rows of strawberry.

Fan fiction — full stop. Born-again in the back seat of the retreat bus:

genitalia twists in their guts like love letters

rent then snatched by the wind-tossed tongue that tickles the dog-
eared corners of the pages

or crumpled like the pile of snow
in the empty parking spaces

around an island near the main exit

light poles sticking up
like masts on a sinking ship —

more snow presses grass flat along the riverbanks.

The water flows backwards with the tide

holds memory still for a moment then shakes the branch to its fork

up through the creek system

to more melting snow gloomy

brilliant over pinched rocks. In the drugstore parking lot

red vending machines for movies

sliding doors superhero noblesse more soft rubber
soft slam of the car door.

Barn swallows roost under the gas station canopy.

Soft earth at the spring's source:

limestone sandstone velvet rope skipping stone

a pebble's plunk

among hearts

heavy as boulders in a stony stream.