

late august seminar in andrews hall

the fields
along I-80 are dark as
three years back when
you moved behind
every stalk
in the side-spill
of my headlights--

silent trips
only three weeks
four weeks
five
after your death marked for me
a new accounting of days

three years and I am here
and something like your arm
has wrapped itself around me
your hands
steer me through campus the
way you slid your bike
in and out of traffic
wind in your long hair
force of all that was behind you
guiding, pushing

counting keeps me
looking back
you, there behind me
not changing--
shrinking with distance
the spot on that narrow road
where I listened for you
in the grass
the gravel of that shoulder
the crescent of black rubber
mapping your short encounter
with something too heavy to resist

you're coming up again
from behind me
the windows are black
late summer is rolling over
into night
the pavement cooling outside

the fever rippling
toward the sky

the dashboard lights
are pale green and orange

how fast I'm not going
how little time has elapsed
how far I haven't been
my headlights hardly touch
the edge of night as I
tug each marker up
from murky water
counting off the next mile
this side of you