

ANGUS A. BENNETT

Muted with a Line from Someone Else's Memory

And the wind chords work through loose-roofed yard sheds—

Charles Wright

I.

it is reliquary, this weather, five days old
as it turns itself from new rain to ossuary-rain

the smell gulf of mexico mixing
with iron and ordure and bonemeal

transforms the middle west into opera
conditions us into decline and fall, into simple spaces.

applause, the hundred-handed slap,
courts even the most egregious love

I struggle to hear past it into silence,
into the grainy texture of street as seen through rain

this waxy quiet light a film, a film toils on
and on, on its way to a reasonable conclusion:

we are daguerreotype, we are war.

II.

thud-heavy rain content in its rage and dance,
damp hollow and the slow and the greening

washing weary grease from cold fingers, trees,
until they raw and snap or don't and bloom—

sullen spring as it curls and uncurling goes limp
your side—still blurred, still-life with black bra under white

a running torso and a fanwheel of off-kilter motion
a lead-lined heart leaps back to front, it's you it's you

you came

III.

georgia's number on an index card, tucked
snug between two poems to remind me
of a train to lugano, the sleeping train from rome

and the joy of a midnight as meaningless things
as we do meaningless things—a placemaker for desire,

pages as a coordinate system in cream and stone, heavy as
bernini's too-late apology, an impresario pleasure.

the wind bunches water into squares, fields, occupations
the screen rattles in the wind and reorders

the patchwork into a grayscale landscape
I squint, imagining the world stops in a grid
an inch beyond my nose, my nose pink and round.

pressed further, I do the mental calculations
square by square the area of your back, your thigh

inner and outer, the volume of your lips, the one eye
I trust, the other that roams like a stingray, that stings

End of excerpt. For the full
poem, please see our print
issue.