

ODE TO MY WALKMAN

Thoughts get real flung out on the edges of the city. There are no true edges, the desert intrudes. Things begin to dissolve. Pain looks difficult. I don't have another answer; sometimes I can't even turn my head to look at you, sometimes all I can think is, what happens to the empty battery package when I throw it away? We have to eat, I know. Tell me what it means to you, where you think I come from. You're probably wrong. I'm well-disguised on the surface, but underneath always are signs of construction. Life is not an anthology. Someday I will get used to never getting used to it. Music in my ears stretches across, solid, realer, more beautiful than merely beautiful, the singer's voice fills space, soft yet tensile stuff. She's freshly unpainted every morning, I scab and bruise and cry over the smallest things, repeated lines of melody: nobody's asking me, nobody's asking me; I'm calling, I'm calling. The creek of a door opening onto an darkened and empty house. The drink of cold water I don't realize I need until I find myself gasping, I've been drinking so hard I forgot to breathe. When I walk on the sidewalk with my head down a branch crosses my path and catches my foot like death. Oh girl, cut if you have to, but sideways, don't give up yet. Colors will spill from your fingertips, you'll be too busy then to celebrate. Dance now, let time twist this way, it's forgiven and even encouraged, it's the only way it works. Get ready to go soon. Stay up all night and pack. Don't forget to buy new batteries.