

what for me
could be five years or twenty, but for her is
distilled in future tense—why she
wears sunglasses on such dull days, not for the weather.

an afterlife ill fits the novelist
whose life cannot end.
with a name on some lists, doors open, and
fellow beds become bedfellows, and
you'll hate these cages.

WHAT IT IS TO BE A GOD

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh
The pale yellow of a flowers life
A like with its death.

How brief
And how inadequate
The fluttered body
Come unto and out of itself
Its interim being
The merest of winds
That possess a sail.

How cruel that a body
Decomposes faster
Than memories of it
Unlike songs or great works—
We're laden with our contraries.

Those that know this
Are gods, sage purveyors
Of seconds.

A fellow I know
Did so, befriended
His seconds.
We could imagine his aisling
A night across a ceiling,
Wonder at what a week might mean
Without the means of dying,

He tells me how he'd do it
With a relish unbecoming
Back off a short pier—
Gives me a look
And I don't know if he means
He wants me to do it.

For Prometheus I wonder
If it was not the falcon that did him in
But the time that it took to come.
For Tantalus,
His starving was a postcard
Of a larger lie—that here was time.
He'd be satisfied to die.

For my friend, the God,
We may look and wonder
What it is to be disabled, or to be shod
Of life, but we must ask on—
What it is to be a god.