

Mark Irwin

Three Panels

The Light

starts, then the greening, and we
stamen, anther, and fully flower in it. We sweep,
bend, and blow, finding the air. To be
is to fully have the moments, but then they
are gone, the dissolving story we cling to, looking
through its curtains, shaking the dreamy sleepers
who vanish in their rooms. The clouds all gold
in a gone light, such that we say, memory
is some light that was. The giving and finding
of light. Bodies over the years moving between
the film of lakes. How beautiful this forever
stalling. Faces glimpsed through clouds on water,
this closeness in distance, and already a remembrance of light
is touching the trees, windows, and houses of an unpeopled world.

A Gift

He walked up to the winter and then into it
with eyes open. He wanted to show how the writing
of snow within snow, of nothing slipping through everything,
shines. He moved among drifts, a pillowed world
where the turns of desire were less dangerous
though no less beautiful in that futureless, indistinct
while. He moved through the individual rooms of snow
as though they were parts of a house where others,
gone, now waited, and he spoke to them through a kind
of steeped sunlight, as the wind blew, and the quick
was tall as it was long, and as he was laying the unsayable
at your feet, you were shy about it at first, then wanted
to polish it and leave, leave nothing, everything, and be gone.

Gone

We would like to speak, but only
wind comes from our mouths. Some gaze
at the sky. Others pick up rocks, looking for words,
while others, and I say this with great sorrow, others
stand in the shadows around objects
they wish to unname. How long it takes
to forget that a bee is a bee, not to notice the gold
hum shivering, pendulous, on a flower. "Close
your eyes now," they say to a child, "and peel the name
off the love-wounded-object like a scab. Now
listen to what's gone and remember the petals'
dizzying vanilla scent all the pushing way up
and how you would call and call and call."