

The Word

Remember the hours before
R— leaves the country, in which we witness a man covered
all over in the word, repeated: METALLICA and R— turns to me:
what do you love that much?
I can think of
Nothing.

As one by one or all at once the trembling lines
of the universe go up. The stems of the alstroemeria, of the rose, of the
wisteria twisted to the funereal wreath. The water under-
neath. As one winds the way
of the grieved, as one lives the life of
the grievable. As we are each. As one wonders how many years will pass
before the air will get clear, the grass will
grow. Blue, bluer, still blue. Has it been two years? Is
every edge still defined
not by air, but by fire? Expect another
year
in the bloomery. Admire others'
words. Survive
yourself.

Nothing is like nothing else. In emptiness
I am allowed
to learn this. I am allowed to wait. I am allowed to know
a flood is a flood. When a wall surrounds a river, when a river
surrounds a road, a flood is a flood. Nothing
came and I thought
nothing
wrote poems for me. I thought
nothing braided my hair and chopped my basil
and wrote thick
oil-painted poems

for me and in a few months if I wasn't here because I was *still there if*,
I was still, if
anyone
took a photo of me
and the photo
was static off a set,
I thought this is how nothing looks.
But nothing looks like nothing. If
I was allowed to learn,
I was allowed to learn
there are not ghosts, only hauntings. Grey, greyer, gone. If
still at the end of the line, if:
I expected you dead to me, if
I spit on life. An apology can sound like nothing, an apology written writes like:
I expectorated the séance only
because in the still center
of grief, love.