

a standstill. it is a peacefulness
easily placed in the category
of blessings. i don't want to see
the green yet. the seasons
of insects and animals and more
people cannot hold a candle
to winter when it comes to sheer quiet.
none of the neighbors are here
during the winter months.
the house floats alone in dunes
of snow. other houses
in the distance are not visible
at night because they are dark.
usually the glass
on the kitchen counter
has vodka in it.
vodka from poland,
made from potatoes.
quiet potatoes.

SHE LOVED MOZART

a sadness to it, sure, this pulling
further and further away from the world.
i remember when i was living at the
motel, there was this woman who
used to come and go, sometimes staying
up to months at a time. every so
often i'd go over to her room and
sit around and talk with her.
the room would smell from clove cigarettes
and dirty wash. and over the
lampshades clothes were placed to
bring the light down to a remarkable
dimness, which never failed to
charm me and attract me, as
a moth, any moth you like,
is drawn to a bright light.
but, i suppose moths are drawn to
dim light also. anyway, i
find myself becoming more and more
like this woman, and it's scary.
except for the dirty wash part.
if anything, i'm fanatical about wash.
dishes too. the car i let
go to hell. i never weed.
and like this woman i'm letting the
place slowly go dark.
she died while she was at
the motel, from cancer.
some nights i'd find her
crossing the parking lot

with meager flesh left on her
bones, wanting me to put my
mozart on the stereo.
she loved mozart.
in her youth she had been a
very promising violist,
but injury and shock
from a fire made her
a ghost of her old talent.
her old self, for that matter.
i used to feed her too
at times, the miniscule
amount that she
could eat. she loved
sharing a cold sandwich
as much as she loved
mozart. i told her
it took a lot of solitude
to write a poem
she told me it took
a lot of solitude
to die.

THE PEAR AND THE EARTH

a terrible grayness today, such a
grayness that i can hardly bring myself
to mention it. and it's as though
it was coming through the walls, seeping
through them, and filling the house like
at night the sounds of insects do.
what can i do but stand at the window
facing the back field, and stare out
while eating a bright green pear.
and certainly i enjoy the pear,
but i almost hate to see it disappear:
it was my only truly effective relief
against the otherwise overwhelming
grayness. and if i'm not mistaken,
i think i remember being told, when i
was a kid in school, that the earth
was not actually shaped like a ball,
but rather like a pear. now that
i think of this i am sorry that i
don't have the whole pear before me,
not only to benefit from the bright
green of it, but also that
i might contemplate the shape
of the earth. and no, i do not
have any other pears; that was
the last one standing between me
and this grayness that is as