

and all the empty space in between, still ringing

in vain, an effort—:

collapse your wrist so the vein folds like a garden hose. press the new corner to your ear as if to block out the noise of war. some people might tell you, doing this, you'll hear the ocean.

you won't.

it's no miracle to feel the effort of your meaty heart forcing that thick-blooming plasma into your limbs, pressing out against your aching flesh.

that's still your body. still your blood. that's the sound of your body desperate to survive. to keep your fingers from growing stiff. and breaking off. that's not god.

or, that's all it is.

it's certainly not the garden hose. your body is no lawn, no flower bed, or sapling. no great oak will burgeon from where you stand.

your body is only a body. the hose is only a hose. the ocean can only be itself.

there is no magic here.

after many years, a revision—:

god and magic might be the same thing: lose one and you lose the other. if you can hear the ocean in anything that is not the ocean, some miracle has certainly occurred.

what i meant to say was: i had a doubt and i lost my god; or, my god gave me a sickness. i do not remember which hole was made first.

i meant to say: i do not pray now—did not then—but, every morning, the sun bleeds orange, burns gold into the glaucous sky; the forest spews its lurid ochre cloud in seasonal routine; the moon still presses its silver cautery into a burgundy wound.

i meant to say: i hear the ocean in the wind in the trees, and, under the wind-water, i hear your voice, and my body folds, a garden hose.

i meant to say: i had a doubt like a gusty hole in my throat, and your voice kept blowing through it.