

The One I Wrote When I Was Perfectly Content so I Imagined Things as Worse to Feel Something

he said black

that's how he likes his coffee

of course

but he knows it

makes me happy to prepare

so cream and sugar are fine

even that whipped cream, the
nutmeg dusted on top

for you, not for me, he insists
of course

and there are other lies

we tell secrets we keep

for each other, for happiness

other lies

perhaps like forever

always

even tomorrow but that's okay
of course

It'll keep

he says

calms down the
motion sickness
presses his pointer finger and
thumb on my wrist

“breathe

in your nose and
out your mouth
again”

hey says

when i'm worried
moved away
left that version of
us behind
wonder if i ruined it
left it to rot?

he says and i imagine
a jar of pickles

no i imagine
olives

no i remember
our first date

tipsy feeding ducks
leftover sour dough
our first kiss

nose meets nose
no one knows who initiated it

our last summer
kissing on a tuesday on the
river, in the sun
buying summer wine from
the farmer's market

no i remember
honey not vinegar

no i remember

he says

“did you know you can preserve
strawberries from june in

honey and it'll keep

be even sweeter next november?”

I spent a decade writing about endings because I knew them the best, but this doesn't seem to be ending anytime soon so let me talk about the middle part

we don't fuck

the same, that is to say

we don't fuck

fast and breathy,

showing our bodies brazenly to another

stranger

drunk

scared

unsure

nothing to lose

nothing to keep

we don't fight

the same, either

that is to say

we don't fight

ready to end it all, match

in hand

poised to

strike

we don't leave

smoke where a bridge used to be

maybe that's the part that's different

this time

from the other times

we don't leave

we don't leave.