

The lampposts along this cracked boulevard request
your shadow, as do I. Their cones of light spill open
for you (as do I), small sanctuaries of moth and dust,
as holy as barley, the staple of dreamers, those wise in
matters of longing say, "the grain bends with wind,"
so lovers should not stiffen against the weather of change. This
unremarkable street hums, as would any silver
brook, valley, cavern or coast, any common token called on
to hold you, play understudy for your nearness while
praise is spoken, we can do that, too, here at
Elm and Seventh, elm long felled and paved over
to carry the errands of progress. The woman at the deli
who bags my bread asks if I'm cooking for one, and I say no,
though tonight I am, and yet I know that even alone
I rehearse the feast of your presence, what is love,
at its truest, if not rehearsal for return? When night permits,
when I've tallied all the hours between us like loose change,
I'll defy the ledger and come home, in favor
of all things foolish I've gathered in too much silence
and noise. I will eat the barley with its bend, ignoring the sermons
of sorrow that scold me for hoping, and I will gleam like
copper in your grasp, oh my ordinary, my necessary,
my inevitable, my bread.