

Rewinding an Overdose on a Projector

Blacker. Black. The foam drools back
up his chin, over his lips and behind his teeth.
The boy on the floor floats onto the bed.
Gravity returns. His hands twitch.
The heart wakes like a handcar pumping faster and faster
on its greased tracks. Eyes flick open.
Blood threads through a needle, draws into a tube.
The syringe handle lifts his thumb.
The hole in his vein where he left us seals.
The boy injects a liquid into the cotton
that drowns inside a spoon. He unties the leather belt
around his arm, pushes the sleeve to his wrist.
The wet cotton lifts, fluffs into a dry white ball.
The flame beneath the spoon shrinks to a spark,
is sucked inside the chamber where it grows cold,
then colder. The heroin bubbles to powder.
The water pours into a plastic bottle. The powder rains
into a vial where it sleeps like an only child.
All the contents on the bed spill into a bag.
The boy stands, feeds his belt through the loops.
This is where I snip the film and burn it.
What remains are the few hundred frames
reeling: the boy unlocking a bedroom door,
a black jacket rising from the floor, each sleeve
taking an arm like a mother and father.