

**LAUREN CAMP**

**I Pull Into the Walgreens Parking Lot**

To elapse this story means to knifework & life-ease  
the unbearable. So when he calls, instead of driving, I sit hushed  
in this repeated city beside the embarrassed crisp trees, too much

concrete pigment. My father outlines his now-failure  
& death & discontinue. Again, again, whatever won't quit  
his mind: the bike the bag the way the seat

made people disappear. All the while, the body  
of with & against buds without nouns, but I know  
his crammed overgrown frets that hasten

to anger. The dashboard clock goes on, the same numbers  
re-ordered. He tells me how he fingerknicks his scalp  
of its allegiant spots & I love that head

that's sun indulgent, that orphans its smallest terrors. I watch  
people walk along the nearby folds of road. A whole hour  
through his joists of memory. My fingers fish my purse

for random dirty sweets. I'm seeing through glass  
how we were five & sweaters & faith  
wide enough to sing God's names & later down

to one, one, one, one. I have to figure  
he is an old man hammering dozens of times  
on the story & its contamination. The whole city can see me

sitting here as his words curve to my throat. I take them,  
take them; you can't want a man to be quiet without  
stuttering with death. The words back-to-back flint

every next thought. You might think I wait for every clump  
of foul from his pockets. I can't stop the time  
to headlong my silence. There are days breaking this blood. Days after

to slip under its flank. That's why I'm in a parking lot  
holding my hand in my tired hand & saying  
*love*, the word stuck to my palm. This teaches me

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not to hurry & this is not enough. *Love, love*  
& again the traffic light burns up with red. The sky falls  
toward night. Saying it in every available absence.