

KATIE HARTSOCK

The Grant Me the Stamina to Pray Extended Stay Motel

To quiet the mind into nothingness
is not the task. To keep the mind quiet
on a single thing, or perhaps a string
of single things, to think not of the thought
but just to think, intimate with the unknown—
what maintenance of the heart
that takes, what unaccustomedly narrow
points must stay pinned. As if a meteor sails
through the awful silence of outer space, but then
the daily offering must be drawn from the purse
always, always the elbows or knees
get sore. The eyestrings
must be held taut with that which has no eyes,
which grants the wherewithal to ask
before it tenders any yield.