

CAITLIN DWYER
Chamber Music

what is the impulse
 tell me something
lies, more often than not
I started out wanting truth, got
caught up in bedsheets, tangles of
fireworks are exploding
they sound like bombs
 make a shelter
out of words (that is not the impulse)
or maybe it is to construct
a thing more protective
than beautiful they are crackling
across the sidewalk, popping
their small red bodies against the concrete
 at first, I thought North Korea
I started out attacking
a problem of intent, but got back
somehow to form, structure
being a choice I wanted to nail down
a man who used the word *casual*
as definition, though it meant
he was tearing out the heads
with the back of a hammer
I wanted to wrench up any loose verbs
 just wanted to talk
it was true, back then, or it seemed true
but listen: firecrackers pattering
in the distance we are being
orchestrated first violin in a symphony
of self-pity wires strung across the sky
at appropriate tautness, plucked, sing
little telephone songs, digital signals
he pulled out all the connections
this is not a violin
 it is explosions
little red papers, charred at the edges
noise for a new beginning
 (I don't want to be *casual*)
noise for a blueprint
pour it into small containers, let it harden
I am harder when I do not allow

→

for beauty she is such a casual bitch
she tears up hammers with her teeth
spits them out, desiccated red nails
they clatter against the sidewalk
in the distance hands are exploding
uncertain applause