LENAT MOSES-SCHMITT

The Doorway

1

My table, yellow in the hands of morning light, is not a table

but, as I unsee it, a square
of margarine on the black & white tiled plate
of my kitchen floor.

I want to practice seeing
what sight steals—
to trick myself into believing
I am living

in two worlds at once.

I know at least that there is this world
& the one in which you are dying—

& I’d like to let myself come & go
as I please.

2

When I let my eyes close into the gesture
they’ll someday take forever,
I see nothing.

Well, that’s not true. I see my body’s door.
Is heaven an extension

of this darkness? Or a stepping into sight?
And which view is more true—the dark
or the world constructed by our vision?
On my run through the night
   I passed a man
   who wore on his forehead a headlamp
   bright enough to erase

   his face, tossed in shadow

   as a rag into a sink fogged with soap—
   a momentary disappearance

   leaving me
   waiting for the shape of it to return

   clean, made new & heavy
   to the surface.

Two pigeons chase around my yard
   landing & lifting.

   If I unfocus them
   the birds fly into syllables,

   my pulse: this world
       reduced to rhythm & then,
   sitting with it longer,
   strengthened into abstraction,
       which is to say escape.
LENA MOSES-SCHMITT

5

I stepped from my dark house
  into a day
  so bright I could barely see
  the pigeons startling up—

is this what it’s like

and are you me
walking into a light which overwhelms

  or are you the birds

stunned by the door’s collapse
  against the wall
  its intrusion

summoning you
into the branches?

I am waiting for you
  to break

back through the surface of this green world

  alive,
  I am waiting for you—

  Please,
  fly down