

One for you

A thought this morning
out walking -
I thought
I ought
to love my body
as it was moving -
to allow and enjoy
the infinite intelligence
of this living system
and its movement.
And in that moment
I said to myself
that I loved my body -
and then laughed
at the physical recognition
that the 'I' that I clung to dearly
was clearly
illusory.
My feet are here,
my hands are here
but 'I' am nowhere to be found.
'I' love my body -
such misplaced pomposity
of an 'I' deigning to adopt
a position of affection
towards a miraculous
muscular constellation,
as if standing in authority
above it and surmising
with some superior judgment
that this living moving thing
is worthy of love.
And I laughed at this
comedy of errors
of this human propensity
to fall in love with a word
and hold it high -
this 'I' -
and look through it
at the world
and see in every thing
its own reflection
without ever

for a moment
stopping to detect
the lie that this 'I'
is invariable and real.
This shattered mirror.
This teardrop.
This empty line.
The promise is too tempting
to be broken by the offer
of seeing clearly.
Better to hold to a wish
and make-believe
that it is true.
My 'I' comes with a promise
to stop time and sustain
a passing moment
by the power of possession -
reaching into the river
and declaring it held
as empty fist clasps rushing water.
Oh, 'I'.
My love is blind.
Better to invest my life
in every losing bet
than face this empty space
without the comforting return
of your baseless vow.
'I'll define the undefinable,
grasp the ungraspable,
mask the unmaskable.'
The seduction of a crutch.
This 'I' stands up straight
in my place.
Imagine this.
A word to fall in love with.
An endlessly accommodating elision.
I will be anything you want me to be.
Put a pin in the world
and call it fixed.
Imagine this.
Design a word from scratch and say
this word can bring anything here,
make anything now
and take what's ephemeral
and make it last.
Too busy looking at what the word

is pointing at we forget to look
at how it works.
This magic word.
This simple spell
that posits certainty
in a universe of flux.
Say 'I' and feel it.
So charged with emotion
and power and weight.
And just a word.
Say 'I am great'
and feel it.
So convincing in the feeling.
This instantaneous invention.
'I am lonely.'
'I am broken.'
'I am yet to be persuaded.'
An infinite array of adaptations.
'I am happy.'
'I am weary.'
'I am delirious with envy.'
The possibilities are endless.
O little word
O simple trick
I think you're me
but you're really
barely there
not even quite a tick -
a scratch, a mark, a stick -
eloquent and defiant
this placeholder
can be relied on only
to capture my attention
in a moment's misdirection.
This magician's wand.
This number one.
This little lie
that turns my eye
away from life
into a fiction.