

the nines: apartment

I

The second floor with a red door inside a square brick building that sat just off the road my school bus rumbled along years before when forest rippled down the hills.

Two dirty little boys would emerge after the turn, waiting to climb aboard.

Angry wet eels dripping up the aisle. Suddenly we'd all shift to look out our window.

A one bedroom; ugly brown carpet, galley kitchen, palatial rooms and a washer dryer. A mansion.

II

A grey cave, smooth wood floors, one bathroom, three women.

Walls pressed into pyramids of brick soaked light. Slivers of space.

The neighbor's kitchen sink, their cats for company.

A narrow closetless room painted easter egg green.

An architecture of clinging to Jupiter's island.

III

Solitude. Bay window. Shipstern. Studio.

Ivory curved intestinal radiator.

Creaking, worn wood floors, unpainted oceanic stripped raw bathroom door. Fire escape.

TALL STREET FACING WINDOWS. Naps. Quiet.

Cove shelled arched white dividing wall.

AN ENTIRE WALL OF CLOSET SPACE.

Transplant. Mainland. Harbor.

Port along the river. Lowtide.

IV

Flat panelled planes of sun. Heavy hammered lanes of light.

Sandy bottom desert waves. Steps from the beach,  
the bustle, the crowd, the Pacific bellowing  
beyond acres of white. Vendors,  
shops, muscle beach. Hotbox, fruited flat skies,  
sandwiched, bellied. A whale mouth street  
of endless summer holiday. A neighborhood  
of canals, palms, thighs, wonder.

V

Complex. Third floor. Community.  
Three women (again). Black leather couches (again).  
Hand me down furniture, soft white carpet.  
A large bedroom, books shelved on the floor.  
Your own linoleum bathroom, gold plated frosted glass shower.  
Balcony blessed sun come over mountain  
line with coffee. Contemporary  
modern artifice, peelable, duplicitous.  
Post graduate retreat.

VI

Matte blue sky today and today and today and  
today summer long. Forever summer in paradise.  
Hollow white bungalow. Gravel  
yard, wood fence, light shadow passing  
pedestrian. Lush green quiet  
bicycle blocks. Beach.  
Piano.  
Backyard washer dryer.  
Steel box for three.

VII

Frigid freezer of shag carpet underground club.  
Feet of snow and ice, frozen  
laked town of the middle west, play pen. Family  
dinners, gray skies, cold wooden  
houses, sidewalks, baby sitting. Cave  
dwelling adolescent patina: futon,  
single bed, open concept, cinderblock,  
well positioned poster art. Pass words. Hand shakes.  
Climbing at walls in winter hats and snowpants.

VIII

Glossy gray kitchen cabinets, laminate light  
wood floors, no legal second exit, the district underground.  
The green garden of E and sweet black Atticus.  
The strange fit of another's city, upgraded abode of new spring love.  
The back alley fenced in entrance of piney branch.  
The multicolored, multi roomed, new kitchen appliances  
lining the hallway, bathroom in a back corner,  
caved in concrete floored, security deposit stealing  
grave of love.

IX

Mountain views. A little (gasp) yard.  
A wide smiling second story porch with blue wood chipped floors.  
Star commune, moon watch. Ripped window screens,  
inescapable laminate floors, pasted in tub, the ant return  
each spring.  
East facing plateau. Tree bound, circle wrapped dog walking route,  
down a gravel path  
with the hills, geese, deer, copse  
cloud and sinking sun.