

Cure

Each one is a beloved in some sense each man unnamed each man  
walking through the middle of a poem is a way to point somewhere else

away from this stone yard of a body away from rusted machine parts away  
from scrap motors and this desert the constant humming something so charged or

the constant grinding something so stuck

when he is a man but harder when that man is memory or many men strung  
it is easy to name a man

together like prayer flags outside my neighbor's home each one different  
and the same each announcing time each later just color or movement of course

I think I know what it is to be lonely I think I know what it means to suffer  
I think I know what it is to wait

to salt a pig and cure it for months

my friend a new man another beautiful man told me about the pig  
in the bathroom at Christmas how his father and brother butchered it and rubbed it

down like some manifest prayer waiting until it grew smaller and smaller  
something that could finally be swallowed something manageable come spring

not dying exactly or pleasure but something new entirely because  
it was something old a habit borrowed from men long dead this pig

grew so salty and rich with the salt taste he could not even eat it he was  
surprised to see it hanging an act of love so obvious from such normally quiet men