

FIVE

A change in the lighting.

The fingers of the left hand, still affixed to the chair, have become slightly more cramped. Otherwise, same as before.

But its only now, in memory, that I am able
 To enjoy
 That music, now that immobility
 Makes me nostalgic
 For any form of movement or change. The music has grown
 Softer and more
 Listenable now, now that it's only
 An old tune
 Running through my head, an echo of old
 Echoes,
 A recurrence
 Of old correspondences.

But that night, when that music
 Was actually playing and I had no choice
 But to listen,
 I have to confess
 I found it loud and ugly and completely
 Unnecessary—its harmonies
 Seemed mocking,
 Its unity
 Oppressive—and the way all my senses listened
 As one—
 This only made
 My stomach queasy, my skin
 Clammy, while on
 The edges
 Of my vision, with each beat of my arteries, pulsated
 A shimmering
 Blue-white
 Pattern of frost—
 And even these
 Anti-musical symptoms, these boos and hisses
 From the barbarian
 Cheap seats of my disgusted body, were quickly made part
 Of that inescapable, devouring

Music—as from across
The marble hall, from a janitor's closet, I suppose, responding
In counterpoint
To the parasympathetic
Spasms of my bowels, there came the wafting
Scent
Of ammoniated
Mop-water, like a twittering
Lovebird's cry—

(He listens.)

Or a flute
In a forest of cut-out
Stage trees.