Surface Effects in Summer Wind

I’m learning to remember the sound
days make: one sky disdaining the idea
of clouds, sunlight surviving
its centrifuge, breeze keeping blessed September
at bay. Sweet smell of short-haired boys
I try to recall, having been away from skin
for so long, some youth theirs or mine,
sprint for shelter from an August
one o’clock, heat’s peak: season’s
entourage with a line of sweat
kissing the shirt to the chest, a valor.
I could believe the earth itself
thought well of those domesticated
demigods, adhering to new
sidewalks in several likenesses.
So walked beside water instead.
(Dear echo, lake, repeating
wake where I find my face awash
in rocks and algae, stuttered counterpoint
of surge and current.) Midnight,
look at the things I’ve done
in your name, in my dark, walking out
into the street that changes nothing, littered
with leaves and cellophane, giving a little light
back, giving it away. The promised pleasure
locked in a stranger’s careless body, his smell
in morning sheets; a jump of cards
in an idle man’s hands, and summer ends.

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