

“The Wish Foundation”

O holy talk show host,
who daily gives us twenty minutes,
no holds barred, on loneliness,

who has provided, for my particular
amusement, this fat hairy man
in a t-shirt that says he likes sex,

pronouncing himself an “impressionistic
person”: describe now for us the child
sent by the Wish Foundation. Hold up

her photograph, say haltingly, that
she died and is buried here,
as per her last request: to fly to

Los Angeles. Then to fly forever beneath
its shocked geologic expression.
To land in Los Angeles, like Persephone

descending the sunset stairs, out of sky
the color of pomegranite, and though the curved glass
of the ambulance hatch-to be photographed through

the lengthening reflections of exit signs. Persephone
crossing eight lanes, in the rapids of pure oxygen,
descending, recasting the tidy shape of elegy,

Under the overpass, where kids throw
things down on cars, through the gates
and over the machined hills to machined

stones: descending to be where she wished to be.
Where on clear days you can see the city,
Where you can see down the coast.

to the cones of the reactor, settling
on the slide, down to the famous rides
of the famous amusement park

where they load the kids into bolted seats
and spin them around a center fixed, but
on a moving foundation. O talk show host,

somebody had to imagine it: how
they would slide hard into what happens.
Fear and desire for more fear. No despair,

would you say? but that sense of black acceleration,
like a blacker wish. I'd say Grief put that new
dress on her. Grief combed her adorable hair.

Then: which hand said friendly old Death.
And she stepped away from the foundation
into a sky that all my life, dear

host, I've seen fill and refill
with indifferent valediction: overhead
those stupid planes from the base

flying wing to wing and their shadows
on the earth, somebody's stupid
idea of perfect symmetry.