

ON CLOSING THE NOVEL

I reach, and feel the walls.
I hear my feet padding
down hardwood floors.

I touch my wrists, my hands
to prove this is my body.

(Why does that window stare
at the dark-ridged trees
as if it knew their names?)

The world where I have just been
is hiding itself away,
but lingering,

and all its people
are running down vacant halls,
not waving their arms.

But the feelings, the after-world of feelings
have folded themselves inside
and will not leave.

They are making familiar objects
strange--
the clock, the bed, the mirror--

I have come back--
(This is my world, I know)
but not yet wholly.

That other world is moving--
slowly moving away--
but like some dream

that upon waking
still inhabits the mind--
a taste, a smell, a touch,

a haunting,
a faint penumbra
around the moon.

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