

From: Marginal Jottings on Plato's *Symposium*

I

That soul is incomplete, the flesh
forever pilgrim: this
we cannot doubt;
 that blood is native
to the coldest rain, a dimmed
immensity of bruise and appetite
we guessed before we knew: fabric of brine
and toxin, fabric
of murmur;

but close your eyes and nothing comes by chance,
not darkness, or the miles of scrub and dust
where something darker than the usual skin
feeds on its own spoilt heart and calls it sweet
to draw the true companion from his den:
Erk König, Slenderman, Dust Devil, Spring-Heeled Jack.

II

When I think how I might have strayed into the hills
or wandered upstream to the black of a stranger's attic,

I wonder why this one room of the heart
holds nothing but a wash of fog and pines,

a psalm from long ago, the sound of rain
from somewhere in the house where no one listens.

Drift was the only rule I understood
back then, when I imagined I would find

the perfect shadow, like a second skin
or something feathered, so formed to my own

unknowing, I could stitch myself inside
and feel the knit of tissue, blood

as slipstream, while those phantoms in the woods
hallo-ed me back to a fire at the edge of town

where nothing ever ended - cat's-tails, snow,
the rainjacket filling with river, *ad infinitum*.