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The Conductor [Excerpt]

[Unsaid women]

The end passes from your warmth.  
Call this trumpet blast the last hurrah  
    Of a fire-fly evening, where glasses cling & vastly  
Devour each other's juke play.  
You're past all the unsaid women      Your sleepy fight  
Between crawl up strangers & a bittersweet  
    Still life

To say what's on your mind: a look past all the flings;  
Downfall. A look past  
    Curves of a natural  
Flaw. I see the stranger unwrap  
    Your bell & ring twice, the *nice* girl. You wait

For a tender that simmers when it curves,      Kettle!  
Drink up before  
    We undress you  
    Oppose the dark, direction apropos  
Angles when the where defends the when  
    Until you say enough: *Your water's hot*

[From conductor to orchestra in this opera house]

Then it was the town

Without a nickname. I fumbled for the map To know *exactly* where we were. No  
colored dot, no symphony of “that’s enough”

a curtain

a curtain

Hides the backdrop & all the tops Which usually spin. No sound. A blueprint

Of where we once spent the night in

A run-down motel. No checkout before the afternoon.

No swimming pool. Not found.

Who holds this magic, this wand, this material “good” Not even bummed note,

Whereabouts? I should play my trumpet

Even if it means *if*. No *then*, a G-Clef,

Begs to return; Be let down by the usher who’s asleep in the row!

## Oars

A field of cities  
Without façade, near Ithaca,

Without street lamps for miles,  
Without lights at darkness' porch.

A boat we row is a rusty page, the train  
Of thought ends in tenor

Without lights at darkness' perch.  
This room is small: cannonball between us &

The birch. By shore. We  
Carve in. This rain

Disguises as river,  
The stations of the cross;

The curtains fold like oars of my  
Memory.

## The Conductor

### I.

Early ampersands;  
Hours. Sun ray; walls;

Here: fire-flies linger  
& applause signs

Flicker, divvying a line  
Between violent love

& the undertow: dunes, once  
Atmospheric dust,

encircle the spins of tea-cups;  
Slides & pinwheels,

Once shut, come undone  
Like eighties pop,

Choir & orchestra,  
Awry springs

Conductor with a modern  
Eye.

### II.

Ivy climbs up instrumental degrees. Rising mercury. The motion from  
The sea. The moon & its tree: A family of notation.

Papyrus

Let's build  
A pyramid.

You carry  
The rocks,

I'll blueprint  
The papers.