

# A Plagued Journey

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There is no warning rattle at the door  
nor heavy feet to stomp the foyer boards.  
Safe in the dark prison, I know that  
light slides over  
the fingered work of a toothless  
woman in Pakistan.  
Happy prints of  
an invisible time are illumined.  
My mouth agape  
rejects the solid air and  
lungs hold. The invader takes  
direction and  
seeps through the plaster walls.  
It is at my chamber, entering  
the keyhole, pushing  
through the padding of the door.  
I cannot scream. A bone  
of fear clogs my throat.  
It is upon me. It is  
sunrise, with Hope  
its arrogant rider.  
My mind, formerly quiescent  
in its snug encasement, is strained  
to look upon their rapturous visages,  
to let them enter even into me.  
I am forced  
outside myself to  
mount the light and ride joined with Hope.

Through all the bright hours  
I cling to expectation, until  
darkness comes to reclaim me  
as its own. Hope fades, day is gone  
into its irredeemable place  
and I am thrown back into the familiar  
bonds of disconsolation.

Gloom crawls around  
lapping lasciviously  
between my toes, at my ankles,  
and it sucks the strands of my  
hair. It forgives my heady  
fling with Hope. I am  
joined again into its  
greedy arms.