



*Patrick Toland*

**Brief Encounter**

As I depart, I say I love you  
Not because I felt it true

But as all other constituents  
Were right; the shuffling of light

Through passing carriages, our walk  
Towards the station in the snow.

There was even bathos in how  
You held your tearing face

As if it was a bud closing  
In the frost and altered gloom.

And such, I left most righteous  
And something in me celebrated

All your pain, like fine designs  
That hold back hydrogen with balsam.

It was only, later, when I saw  
That look of jubilee and fete

In my own consideration that  
Something in me fumbled.

There you'd be, eventually dry-eyed  
And sunshine melting all the braid.

There you'd be blossoming  
In a bar of never changing light.

It took all night to not step  
Across the platforms, try

My speech again and see  
If I could leave with the right reflection.

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