

ROOMS



Brian Henry

There are rooms that know you, rooms you know
and can name, rooms that rise and stutter
into view if you stare long enough.

Rooms where nothing happened
but in your head, where the world went on
apart from you, you trying to rise to it.

Rooms with walls of white blocks,
one window, the only sound the bang
bang banging of the headboard
against the wall, your bed still.

The room where the bed fell on you,
the room where the hand going down
is not your own, the groping tongue
the proof. The room you talked
your way out of, four men of monosyllables,
thick arms and necks flushed pink,
closing in, emptying the air between.

The room where you were walked in on,
the room where you were the walker,
both times the last time in that room.

The room with no door, a woman
across the threshold, you crawling to her,
over her to the bathroom to press your cheek
against the white, your name
an indictment among stalls.

The room the sun never touched,
the sound of cars dropping you to sleep,
your pupils large and hungry for light.