

Flake

When he shoved the pillow & threw off
the covers, left the bed
in a huff and strode across the room
to lean the length of his six-foot-four
two-hundred-twenty-pound body against the dresser
so that reflected in the mirror I saw
the back of his head, the squared-off
hairline the barber had carefully carved
at the base of his skull,
neat and military, the vast span
from shoulder to shoulder—when he said,
quietly, almost to himself
but not really,
I can't believe
you're going to fucking flake out
on me again—
it wasn't that I was any more afraid
than I always was, it wasn't
that I felt I owed him, in particular, my body
or a fuck or whatever,
it was just that a veil lifted
and I saw, in that moment, pulling the sheet
around my naked self,
the ledger
in all its graphite detail—
scrawled columns, additions,
subtractions.