Glove

The story of the life of hesitation.
Or.
The story of the life of crash and burn.

The body in which the life is sheathed
in either story
is like a bedtime glove

put on to aid
the absorption of unguents
but found in shreds at daybreak

as if it had been peeled from the windshield
of a yellow car, a bandage
furred by frost, or milk.

I don’t know which destiny,
the one of frost or milk,
takes the most desiring or the longest path to come to.

The universe of milk fills us with velvet
knowing that the universe of frost
occludes our ever having known.

But something wrings its hands,
and we cover up, or comfort,
that thing with our own hands—

Either way we feel
the story make a fist
just before what’s done

is finally done.
On Thursday She Began Saying Everything at Once

On Thursday she began saying everything at once
but her heart had a problem keeping up
so she took a bow tie and a half of the drug
which slowed her to where she could
speak out loud again but it fogged in

her brain so she knew then she would have to
live always in fog the way the citizens do
in Seattle where she’d once scanned
the ledges of mist, truly lost. The words there
were a mist and the thing to say

a bell buoy far off shore, ridiculous
to her in her raincoat whose lining
was secretly green as the sea where the only light
comes from the foreheads of surgeon fish
sulking and stalking the ledges,

as has been mentioned, of mist.
She hates that the onrushing
and also the blood-letting language
that mops up and maps the top layer
of dream is made out of the same words

we use to buy fish. Others have praised
this condition for centuries but she has always
hated it—like Mozart pumped into the fishmonger’s
briny speakers, beautiful scales shorn, hacked, slimed
to scales upon a scale.

What you do, she decided on Thursday, is
go on. Move forward. Swim. Like a fish. Or die. You go:
Here I come. You go: give me a break.
You decide that the words can listen
for once and pour you a cup of the coffee the
whole city will get famous for before
it becomes Thursday outside words
and the coffee an excuse to condense oneself
to saying something suave to someone suave
about some very suavey thing in a language

you speak just one word of: grande.
The consequence of which makes your heart race, bad.
And so you double up, two whole bow ties like a ballplayer
hefting two bats who’s about to smack open the bleachers’ screams
of nothing other, and nothing, and other, than all the words at once.
Frame

This is for the box kite
   framed by four sticks
of balsalm and glue
   and the suggestion of paper

that framed
   with two windings
and one intervening
   swath of air

one rectangular
   room that went up
above trees that framed
   the park where I consulted

the loneliness
   that framed
my terror
   of others also nine

who numbered twenty
   in the classroom framed
by towering chalkboards
   green as if

leaves had been smeared
   across utterance
before it began as if
   language were nature

and nature were natural and
   language were possible
once we had mastered
   writing it down

not up but the kite that
   was absent that day
rode up repeatedly
   scribbling its tail and

bellowed below
   to the green whorled world:
This is the girl
   and this is what great
distance from what
   you love makes possible:
her, whose kerchief is

battened down over her
   mind that frightens her like wind
each time a different way:
   I am the kite and this is the girl

Look below our chins:
   There’s a bow on a string that
keeps me up here there’s a bow
   on a string that keeps her, down there:

I am the kite and this is the girl. Say it.
   I am the kite and this is the girl.
Now, I am the kite and that is the girl.
   I am the kite that is the girl.