

This is what we do when it all comes back

Michael Gebelein

all it takes is a flash in the mirror of an old face to set me back
over 5,000 hours to a moment when all of that agony
was still fresh.

the papers were still crumpled and left sliding across the floor
from the wind coming in through the open doorway—

hours of unopened letters and
sideways glances across the hall

and maybe it will get easier when I can tear this madness away
but for now it just

clings to me like a shirt three sizes too small, constricting all
the flow of blood to my head until greasy yellow and green spots
stray across my vision and I beg for

my hand on a brown leg and no more nights

silently driving around town with static on the radio

because I'm not a saint either.