On Marrying a Poet

Benjamin Morris

to E.

What shelters we construct: the words we lay like bricks, the houses built of stanza and rhyme. You knew the rooms ahead you would enter, their work of the tongue and the fingertips, their turn of mind that finds a comma in a breath.

Each evening spent at home, a form in which your bodies came to rest—searching for that grace a limb remembers, the lessons a body draws in the night. And so, now, the turn: you twist the plot so that its readers cannot grasp it, cut the pages one by one from the book.

For you

it was less about the ending than the way it could never be written, each new poem teaching what neither of you knew how to learn: the unloving, the scrubbing half your self from the plate. So bend your ear: to the wind rustling over the sheet. The music of the empty chair. Place the ring

inside the spine where it cannot fall, and from this day, wed not the lover but the love: where it left you, sifting through the debris, where it finds you, arm draped over shadows in your bed, and where it vows to send you once again: past that hollow room into the morning, where you will wake, and break the darkness open like a line.